



SAMLETTER 181



The next **Assembly 181** meeting is **Thursday, March 1, 2018**, when **Randy Butters** will lead an exciting workshop on his **"Everybody Wins"** routine including ideas on how to incorporate it into a mentalist chair test routine.

Following the workshop, we will open the stage to others to perform in our **"No Judgment Zone"**, so bring something to share.

Society of American Magicians Assembly 181 of Hightstown meets the first Thursday of every month, September thru June at the **First United Methodist Church, 187 Stockton Street, Hightstown, NJ 08520**. Doors open at 7:00PM. Meetings start at 7:30PM



KIDabra Chapter 1 is being revived and relocated. Starting on **Thursday, February 22, 2018** and then every 4th Thursday of each month **KIDabra** will be meeting also at the **First United Methodist Church** in Hightstown.

KIDabra is an organization for Kid Show and Family entertainers. If you are a Children's Entertainer or are interested in performing for children this is the place to be. Our first meeting will be a discussion about Library Magic Shows. Children's entertainer **Dennis Thomas** will perform a few routines from his **"Reading is Fun Magic Show"** and then discuss the routines and the thought process that goes into creating a magic show for libraries.

From the President



If you took my last editorial to heart, you should already be out there performing some more magic than you were before. I know at least I am. The problem that I have is, that I hate carrying extra things in my pockets. I already have them filled with a pad and pen, a phone, a wallet, and keys. Sometimes, I appreciate the cold weather since the extra clothing affords me some more pocket space. Since I have issues with pocket space, it occurred to me that others may too. So over the next few months, all my product reviews will be about something you can carry with you and not add additional bulk to your already burgeoning britches.

Today I performed my go-to effect for the type of clientele that I serve, which is a trick called *Sobriety Test*. The premise is that you are pulled over for a sobriety test and the officer shows you four face up cards and asks the silly question "which one is face down?" The obvious answer is none. When the cards are spread out again, one is actually face down. This repeats until each suit mysteriously turns over one by one. Phase two is that the backs change color and phase three is they all turn into beer signs except for the last which turns into a Coca Cola™ sign. The point is that during the first phase, just after the first card turned "face down" one of the spectators yelled, "you have five cards there not four" (he was right). I stopped for a second and said to myself "I know I didn't flash the fifth card, what do I do, should I continue"? I looked at him for a moment and then the other guy watching and said "he's a clever guy, isn't he?" almost with a tone that would indicate the exact opposite.

I decided to slog on. The other three cards dutifully turned over, the red backs turned into blue backs and finally, the three top cards turned into beer signs and the last to the Cola sign while delivering the final punchline. It was at that point the second fellow shouted to the first "and you think one extra card can do all that?" To which the spoiler was forced to admit "I guess not, that's why it's called magic!"

I walked away with a smile on my face almost wishing to tell that guy he was right, that there was an extra card, but that would spoil the moment. That scenario gave me food for thought, which is, we have to take a look at our place in the world. Creating moments of wonder for others is a rare event and we have the opportunity to do so. Once again, make 2018 and onward the year(s) you carry your magic on your person and in your heart.



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TRICKS FOR THE STREET



I imagine it is not easy doing tricks on the street. Robert Francis has been performing regularly for nearly ten years as the Dork of Deception on the famous Asbury Park Boardwalk. He opened his workshop on Street Tricks with the same Flipstick routine he uses on the boardwalk and then went on to discuss other great tricks for street workers.

For those of you who are out of state, Asbury Park is a seaside city on the New Jersey coast. It is known for its beachfront boardwalk and live music venues, which have hosted native New Jerseyans Bruce Springsteen and Jon Bon Jovi.

Rob also performed his signature, and original, cup and balls effect with a Beefaroni can. At the workshop, Rob showed, for the first time, the work behind the effect. I think he fooled every cup worker in the room because the Beefaroni can is real and is handed out at the end. All the final loads are real fruit, no fake fruit with Rob. Chef Boyardee would be proud.

After the workshop, we opened the stage to those who would like to perform. Larry was first in the "No Judgment Zone" with a "\$100 Bill Switch" and a second effect, "Origami Money". Two effects that he has performed for children and audiences around the world.

All of us have tricks in our closets that we lost interest in and have left them unused. Have you ever wondered why? Something inspired us to purchase them at the time. Jeff found a set of

“Linking Ropes” in his closet. Gave them a quick cleanup and performed a wonderful routine for us.

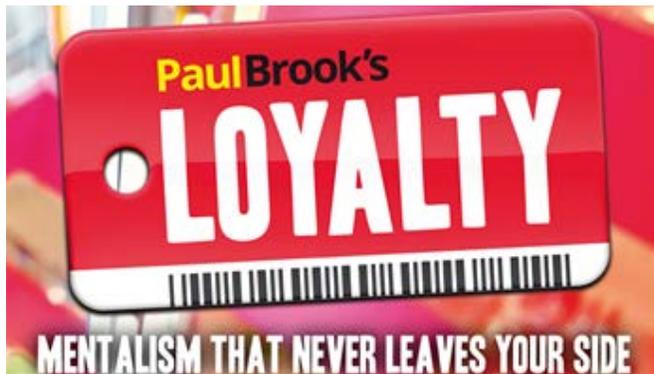
The real Magic Mike did “Where’s the Water” impromptu with some Styrofoam cups and a little something else.

Randy Butters performed the “Picto Transpo” from his favorite magic book, Gene Anderson’s “The Book”. The effect requires a little bit of arts and crafts beforehand, which is explained in the book and is well worth the effort.

The Dork went back on the stage to perform both a “Two Card Miracle” and Aldo Colombini’s “Three-Way Miracle Prediction”. Reba Strong closed out the performances with the same multiple card revelation routine which she used to win first place for close-up magic at both the M.A.E.S. and S.A.M. Assembly #4 competitions. Watching the routine, you can see that both Reba and the routine are winners.



Psycho Path - Magic for the Mentalist



Does prop-less mentalism scare you? Do you hate memorizing algorithms, anagrams and mnemonics? Would you like some light weight, easy to carry mentalism that packs flat? Well, you can't get much flatter than Loyalty by Paul Brook.

Loyalty is an effect that fits on your key ring. It is basically three key ring tags which look like the kind you would get at supermarkets, drug stores, gas stations and other businesses you would frequent to accumulate purchasing points as you scan them at the register. Always sitting there waiting to be used, the Loyalty tags can be a one, two or three phase routine, depending on how much time you have and how you feel the spectator(s) is responding. Like all magic effects there are the pros and cons, and with this one, you would have to decide for yourself whether the pros outweigh the cons.

Loyalty is reasonable in price. It's not a super bargain but you are getting three custom-made heavy duty plastic tags to put on your key ring. I can see these lasting for quite a while. Another advantage is that they stay in an innocuous space on your key ring until you decide to use it, you can never leave it home without them. There are three completely different performances on the tags of which a couple can be intertwined. The tags come with a downloadable video and PDF file which covers the use of the tags thoroughly. I should also mention, the tags are nicely designed.

The negatives are personal pet peeves which you may or may not take issue with but I would like to state them for the record. The first is the issue I have with all these effects that replicate "real"

franchises and businesses. Which is, they don't sound like real business, at least here in the US. For example, these tags are from Cinema Club, Hobby Zone, and Ethical Foods. Although very attractive, they may raise suspicion. Secondly, the routines as far as I'm concerned are what I consider basic mentalism. Of course, that shouldn't stop you from buying it, if you are looking for a small prop to use, but I would approach the three routines given in a different although more complex way.

Overall, I would consider Loyalty a good purchase for someone who would like a small portable prop type version of a drawing duplication, word prediction, and number prediction.

To see a trailer of Loyalty click here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=SBHZiM41bRY>



The Conjurer is by Early Netherlandish painter Hieronymus Bosch completed around 1502. A 21" by 26" Oil on Wood, it is located in Musée Municipal, St.-Germain-en-Laye, France.

Tricks are for Kids - Magic for the children's performer



Packing a ton of fun into a small space to entertain some kids is a tall order, however, you can find something if you search long enough. Enigma by Spanish magician Paulino Gil just may be the thing you are looking for. Enigma is a multi-phase routine using some short lengths of string and chain. Nothing else is needed, it is extremely lightweight and is suitable for all ages. With only some string Gil assembled a routine in which the strings change places in your hand, penetrates your fingers and ultimately become linked. The routine is modular so you can use as many phases as you wish. The origin of this trick is unknown thus its beginnings is an enigma, hence the name of the trick.

Luis Matos, the Portuguese version of David Copperfield, delivers beautifully made products under the name of Essential Magic Collection. He offers complete four DVD albums of some of the most famous names in magic and also has what he calls singles. Enigma is one of those singles and the only offering by Gil that is produced by Matos. Filmed in Matos' studio, the video is well made, very thorough and entertaining to watch. All the moves are explained in multiple angles and there should be no confusion as to what is needed to do to make the magic happen. You are supplied with all you need and an instructional DVD.

Included with the DVD are two lengths of silk string about 3 feet long, one red and one white. Also included is a thin chain the same length. The silk string is probably 3mm in diameter and because of its thinness, the dirty work is easily concealed. The chain is equally as light but mine broke in practice. I went to Michaels craft store to purchase a sturdier piece but ultimately dispensed with using the

chain altogether since I felt that phase was unnecessary. If you intend to do this as a stand-alone routine, you are good to go after some practice. The move needed will require a little dexterity, it is not hard but requires timing.

Since my personality dictates that if I am going to carry something, I might as well make it multi-use, I played around with using parachute cord, leather lace, and shoelaces. All these other types of chords are thicker than the string provided so you have to make sure you are quite adept at the required move. However, using these other types of cordage will allow you to segue into other routines that would require a heavier chord such as ring on string and Leather and Steel by Al Bach. Enigma is a cute teaser that will perplex everyone that sees it.

To watch a trailer about Enigma click here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yA1GLortG-A>

Rabbits Against Magic



Do you believe in magic? - Magic for the general magician



"Hey Bud, you got a wallet, hand it over". Well, if you aren't going to hand it over at least keep it loaded with some magic. Almost everyone carries something like a wallet, a purse or at least a

business card case. Why not have some kickin' magic thrown in there as well? You should carry Withdrawal by Jeff Prace and Josh Janousky in that credit card slot. Withdrawal is a multi-phase routine where you pull actual money out of a \$25 Starbucks™ gift card.

The trick appears as such, you produce a \$25 Starbucks™ gift card from your wallet and mention you really need some cash. You are holding the card and instantly a dollar bill falls from the card and the denomination changes from \$25 to \$24. Not enough? You pull \$10 more out of the card and now the balance shows \$14 on the plastic gift card. This trick can be used anywhere, even at a Starbucks™ being the gift card look so authentic. If you are not at a Starbucks™, no problem, ask if you can use the gift card there. Of course, they will say no, shrug your shoulders and feign disappointment. But wait, pull the cash from the card and buy what you want. There are a dozen ways you would come up with to use this prop.

When you get Withdrawal it will come with everything you need to build your gimmick. Yes, there is some crafting involved but not too much. The final gift card that has the \$14 left on it, can be handed out for inspection. There is a link for downloadable

instructions (which is a trend I do not like) and everything is explained in detail there from constructing the gimmick to the handling. All the moves are totally justified and will not look out of place. With Withdrawal, you can become your local coffee shops resident wizard. Couple this with a few tricks from Coffee House Conjuring by Gregory Wilson and you just may get a few "on the house" for entertaining the local baristas.

*Spoiler Alert: I got Withdrawal when it first came out and it was an actual reproduction of a Starbucks™ card. Since then it had to be changed to a reasonable facsimile for obvious reasons.

To watch a trailer for Withdrawal click here:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=580eO6Z_ZQE

Modern Day Proverbs

If at first, you don't succeed, then skydiving isn't for you.

A day without sunshine is like... night.

You have the right to remain silent. Anything you say will be misquoted, then used against you.

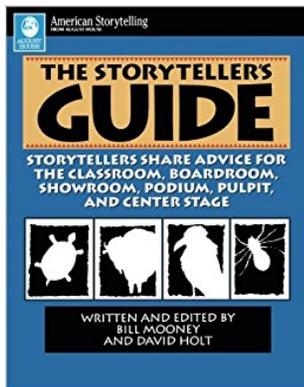
On the other hand, you have different fingers.

I feel like I'm diagonally parked in a parallel universe.

Despite the cost of living, have you noticed how popular it remains?

Remember, half the people you know are below average.

The Magic Library - A Book Review



Who wouldn't want to tell a good story? If you think about it, when you communicate with your friends and family, deal with customers or perform on stage, it is all storytelling. Stories can send a message without seeming like a lecture. It isn't easy that's for sure. There are sources though that can help you craft story into all that you do. The Storyteller's Guide by Bill Mooney and David

Holt is a great investment if you want to improve your storytelling skills. Both of these gentlemen are well-known performers and storytellers in the performing circuit.

The book is comprised of 27 sections assembled with contributions given by America's greatest storytellers. The chapters take you from getting started, rehearsal, overcoming stage fright, marketing your services and resources. The reading is easy and the insight is valuable. Even if you didn't want to go into storytelling the advice is applicable to scripting magic and performing.

Whenever I buy magic books, I want them and keep them in pristine condition. However, books such as this where it is not my main interest, I don't mind a slightly bent cover or mark in the book if it is going to save me some money. Once again, the great resource that is the used book market is where you want to go. Whether you go through Abe Books or Amazon you can find great books in almost any interest, used at a great price. New this book would cost almost \$20 but I got mine in near perfect condition used for \$8 shipped. If the condition is not important to you, then you can assemble an extensive library on all forms of performing arts for a third it would cost normally. Learning to tell a good story can help you in all aspects of your life. Check out The Story Tellers Guide, maybe you'll discover the storyteller in you.

MAGIC CALENDAR

	MON FEB 12	I.B.M Ring 6 , The Delaware Valley Conjurers Club regularly meets every 2nd Monday, with a meeting on Monday, February 12, 2018, at the Hancock United Methodist Church, 542 Wesley Road, Springfield, PA.
	MON FEB 12	S.A.M. Assembly 161 meets on the second Monday of each month at the Stoney Brook Grille, 1285 Easton Turnpike in Branchburg, NJ 08876. February 12 lecture is by Timothy Paul. https://www.facebook.com/groups/SAM161CALENDAR/about/
	THU JAN 18	S.A.M. Assembly 4 will be meeting on Thursday, February 15, 2018, at the Polish Home, 9150 Academy Road, Philadelphia, PA 19114, usual time; 7:00 PM.
	TUE FEB 20	I.B.M. Ring 200 meets on Tuesday, February 20, 2018, 7:00 PM at the Stelton Community Center, 328 Plainfield Ave, Edison, NJ 08817.
	THU FEB 22	KIDabra Chapter 1 is being revived and relocated. Starting on Thursday, February 22, 2018 and then every 4th Thursday of each month we will be meeting at the First United Methodist Church, 187 Stockton Street, Hightstown, NJ 08520. KIDabra is an organization for Kid Show and Family entertainers. Our first meeting will be a discussion about Library Magic Shows. Children's entertain Dennis Thomas will perform a few routines from his Reading is Fun Magic Show then discuss the routines and the thought process that goes into creating a magic show for libraries.
	WED FRB 28	I.B.M. Ring 123 will be meeting on Wednesday, February 28, 2018, at the King of Kings Lutheran Church, 250 Harmony Road, Middleton, NJ 07748 starting at 7 PM
	WED FEB 28	Wednesday Wizardry has a new show at the Glover Street Playhouse, 433 Glover Street, Woodbury, NJ 08096 on Wednesday, February 28, 2018, at 7:30 PM. Come out and see John "The Barber" Mansi, from TV's Wizard Wars, Dan Hauss and our headliner Kevin Bethea with our Emcee Mike Sloves. Tick ets are only \$20 for an adult, \$10 for children and are available online from Eventbrite.
	THU MAR 1	S.A.M. Assembly 181 meeting is Thursday, March 1, 2018, at the First United Methodist Church, 187 Stockton Street, Hightstown, NJ 08520. Randy Butters will lead an exciting workshop on his "Everybody Wins" routine. Doors open at 7:00. Workshop at 7:30 PM. http://magicsam181.com

Visit the Magic Calendar on our SAM 181 website at http://magicsam181.com/?page_id=95