

The Boston Mini-Wizard

The Official Publication Of The John Calvert, Boston Area Assembly No. 29 Of The Society of Young Magicians

Vol 9 • No 6

June 1998

The Next Event Of
S.Y.M. #29

Will Be On

Fri, June 19th, 1998

at

Hank Lee's
Magic Factory

(Directions Inside)

6:30-9:30pm

This Month:
Performance
Workshop

Read David's Article
for the details!



Magic-Improvement

by David Oliver

Most of you are just starting to do shows at birthdays and other small events. Some of you have a little more experience, performing at school, kindergartens, nursing homes and banquets for friends of your parents. All of you need to find out what it takes For you to put together a successful, workable, quality "show."

Some people look down on birthday shows as a low starting point in magic. performing at a birthday party for a group of seven-year-olds in a small living room is not an easy task. In fact, it can become (*and should be treated as*) real work. because it is real work. Ask yourself these questions... How do you take all those tricks that you have, all those props, that cool tie your mom bought with the playing cards on it, and turn it into a real "magic show?" How do you pick volunteers? How much should you charge? Should you perform for free? Should you use animals? Music? How do you pack for the show? One big case or three little ones? Do you give away balloon, animals? Where do you set up? Do you wear a suit, tux or clown outfit? How do you handle hecklers? Do you let them take pictures or video? When does the show start? When should it end? What if they don't like you? Should you take up stamp collecting instead of magic?

Are we really going to get the answers to all of these questions at the meeting? Probably not all of them. But, at least these will get you thinking! This month, bring your- favorite routine or trick that you do at your birthday party shows. Be ready to show it to us at the meeting. Also bring a written list of five questions you have (*like those above*) about your own show or performance. As a group, we'll discuss the possible answers and solutions, and maybe even share a couple of ideas. Sounds like a great idea to me!

On another note, if you missed the last meeting (*shame, shame*), you missed out on some **Important Information**. So, here it is...

If you are an S.Y.M. #29 Member and you are planning on attending my summer magic course at Minuteman Tech in Lexington, you have a chance to go for free! Thanks to past-S.Y.M. president Sam Hamilton's mom, Lisa Hamilton, part of the **Pettus Foundation Grant** that we are receiving has been designated for summer-school scholarships to Minuteman. **There are three, full four-week scholarships available.** To apply, you (not your parents) need to write a one to two-page essay on what magic means to you how Magic has helped you, and why you feel you should be considered for one of the scholarships. Include your name, age and address. A select committee will look over the essays, and choose the winners. (*Kissing up to me Is not acceptable. Sorry.*) Winners will be notified by mail, and will be listed in the BMW. **The deadline has been extended, but it is still approaching quickly. Your essay must be either be mailed to me by the meeting, or brought to me at the meeting!!!!** No essays will be accepted after- June 30th, 1998!!

See you at the meeting!!!



BOSTON

Christopher Britt
President

Noah Kistler
Vice President

David Condon
Secretary

Matt Griffin
Editor

Julie Babayan
Librarian

Nils Marthinsen
Chosen Ones

David Oliver
Adult Director

Derrin Berger, Ryan Glidden
Ray Goulet, Logan Hennessey,
Hank Lee, Todd MacDonald,
Ali Shelly, TJ Shimeld,
Alex Vlachos
Advisors

Marc Oshry
E.M.T./Treasurer

Debbie Grigas
Membership

John Lacey
Steve Ullman
Pizza Guys

Mark Roseman
Debra Glassman
Claque Directors

The Flamangs
The Condons
The Frickes
The Greens
BMW Family of Publishers

S.Y.M. NEWS

CHOSEN ONES

The following people need to have a trick or routine ready to perform at the meeting:

Joe Grassia
Chris Toomey
David Kahn

SYM Library

The S.Y.M. Library is still available for use for current members of #29. Books are free for members to borrow, for a month at a time. You can't beat a free book...

Call Julie @ 781-899-0472 before the meeting if you want her to bring a book from the library to loan to you.

The New

S.Y.M. #29 Web Site

Yes, the S.Y.M. #29 web page is back in action, and new Webmaster Chris Britt promises me that he will keep it as up to date as humanly possible. Let's he does a better job that our last webmaster did. The page has changed locations, as well as administration, so surf on over to:

www.angelfire.com/ma/sym29/

Go check it out and let Chris know what you think. He's still working on transferring the contents of the old site, but the new one is well on it's way to completion. Surf's up!

BMW NEWS

The BMW is always looking for contributors. If you feel so inclined, write an article about something magical that interests you. It can be about anything, a magic book you read, a TV special you saw, a live show you went to see, practically anything related to magic. E-mail your article to SYM29@aol.com or mail it to:

BMW Article Submission
38 Pine Lane
Framingham, MA 01701-3802

The deadline for the July issue is:
Friday, June 26th, 1998

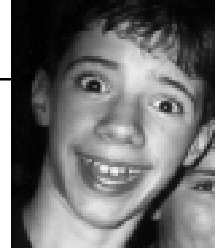
BMW By E-Mail

Yes, now you can get the BMW by E-mail, as soon as it's completed. You'll still get it by regular mail, but now you can get it before anyone else on your block. If you want to be on the BMW E-Mail list, send an email to SYM29@aol.com

You'll also need to grasp a copy of the Adobe Acrobat Reader. It's the application that'll let you read the BMW on your computer and print it out if you so desire. You can download a copy from www.Adobe.com

Boogie-Woogie Britt

by President Christopher Britt



Last month you heard the beginning of my interview with Alexander, King of Fools. Here's the continuation:

You don't go on stage unless you think you have something special to share, right? If you trust yourself enough to do that, than why just throw it at people in a hurry? All of us in the audience will lean a little closer and be more attentive if you purposely share a moment with your audience on stage before you begin your 'schtick'. This is an under-utilized showmanship principal: Before you start, let the audience check you out. Hit your mark on stage or in front of the microphone or wherever, and then just wait. Look at the audience and let them look back. The audience is composed of humans, and humans are really just another warm blooded animal. Like all warm blooded animals, when we meet a new one right in front of us, we gotta look at you and then sniff! I'm serious! Let us fill our eyes with your visage, let us breath in your scent(symbolically, of course!) After this little break, a breath or two, perhaps an exchange of glances, we trust you more and then relax. We tune in. As and added bonus, the longer that you intentionally wait before starting, the greater is the intrigue that you build in the audience.

The same principal is true when it comes to taking your bow. This is even harder, especially if you are a soloist. How often have you seen a solo act begin doing his or her next bit while people are still applauding the last bit? It is soooooo common! I've been working a very full-time schedule for years and I still catch myself doing it. What's the hurry? I think half the time when we rush applause, what is going on in our head is a little dialogue that goes something like this: "Thank you. You're too kind! It's just little ol' me up here, and I'm not an egomaniac, so I will rush to my next thing quickly before you lose interest in my act" This is bogus! But so often we feel pushed to rush to the next thing. A video of your performance is an excellent way to find spots in your act where you might be doing this. Please do not confuse accepting applause with begging for applause. This is probably just a personal peeve, but I hate watching a magician do a trick and then immediately bend over in a bow and say "Thank you very much" or else make an ad-lib that goes something like: "yes, when I first saw that trick, I was too stunned to applaud myself"

This may be excusable if you've got a dead crowd and trying to liven them up early in the show. Or if you are performing outdoors and you're trying to bind the passersby into a tight and lively unit. But most of the times I think this is a weak move, especially if done repeatedly. A solid performance that ends in a punctuation mark (which will require that all important pause!) will earn you spontaneous applause. That's a promise. Even a less than solid piece can get spontaneous applause if you put great care into your the way your character acts at it's concluding moment. This gets you booked at The Ritz. Begged applause gets you Motel 6. So have the courage to wait. Leaving space in a performance is magic. Ahhh "space the final frontier!!"

"...let us breath your scent..."
- Alexander, King of Fools



Finally, let's come back to solo performers benefiting from outside help. This stuff we've been discussing about character and showmanship is not really part of any school curriculum that I know of. Variety performing is not a college subject yet. I know of only a few small schools in Europe and one in California that even touches on this stuff. Experience is the main teacher here. But don't underestimate the benefits of both apprenticing and mentoring. I see this happening at the SYM already and applaud. Personally I have am both

an apprentice and a mentor and will continue to be, I hope. Fortunately, the Boston area has more than it's share of full-time variety artists. There are many artists here who are more than willing to mentor if the conditions are right. David Oliver or myself can steer you to them. Meanwhile, I still carry the bags of

those artists who inspire me!!

Well Britt, you happened to ask me about one of my favorite subjects, and I happened to have just been discussing this when I read you're

E-Mail. As you know, I usually don't actually speak during my show.

This reminds me of a quote from Marcel Marceau, "The reason that mimes don't speak is that if given the chance, they just won't shut up"!

Best wishes with your many efforts,
--Alexander

WOW! THANKS! There is so much to learn from what he wrote!

Last meeting's location was a fun place to be! George Lentros' magic barn was very historical and interesting. On the car ride to his barn/mansion we were joking about what farm animals we would see, ...but wow! You would never believe what kind of a place lies behind a factory called Lentros Engineering in Ashland. It was filled with rare magic memorabilia and stunning architecture.

Summertime! I am looking forward to a very magical summer. Tannen's camp will be fun and I'm also going to the July's SA.M. Convention in New Orleans. I am going to work on my close-up magic this summer more than anything else. I also hope to do many shows, too.

I am also trying to get symers to participate in the new private sym chat room, on the internet. I think it would be useful to talk to several symers at a time, outside of the regular meetings. I will try to make it to the chat room every Saturday at 7:30. You can visit this site at:

www.angelfire.com/ma/sym29/chat.html

but keep it a secret with other symers and parents. We'll see what happens.



Well, I've given a few tips here and there and little bit of advice on how to handle show mishaps, but I thought I might talk a little bit more about dealing with things that go wrong in the middle of a show that have to do with your magic rather than things just surrounding it. "Why?" you might ask? Because this past weekend I did a show and something went wrong I never thought could mess up. So, we'll talk about a little something called "outs" or things to save your butt when you're in trouble!

I don't quite remember where I heard it or who said it, but someone once said that the great thing about messing up in magic is that you can always just move the target. He was basically saying that the audience doesn't know what to expect anyway, so if the outcome is different from what you wanted, no one will know you messed up!

Here's an example: suppose you really lose someone's card in the deck, it was supposed to be upside-down somewhere in the middle, but for some reason its lost. Now, after the person names their card and you start to realize it's not where it's supposed to be, it suddenly occurs to you that you can still sneak out the card and pull it out of your pocket. You do it, and the

person is still amazed! Even though it didn't turn out the way you wanted you still managed to do something magical for your audience.

A few days ago I was at a show and was doing a sort of card stab, something I never thought could go wrong, but it did. I threw the cards in the air, stabbed in the middle of the them, and came down with nothing. For some reason, the card was just not there. I quickly thought of how I could save the trick (as well as some dignity) by glancing down and noticing a small pile of cards on the ground. So, without pausing, I just stabbed down at those cards on the ground and came up with the winner! To the audience, it looked fine. To them I just threw the cards and found the right one from where they landed. They had no idea it was supposed to happen in the air.

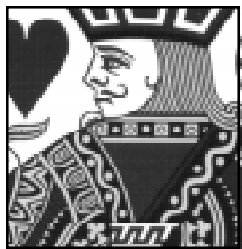
So, how can we be prepared for things like this? Easy, just take all the effects in your show, try to find as many things that can go wrong with each one, and then figure out what you'll do if it happens in a show. Most of the time you'll end up finding things like this out when they actually happen, but it doesn't hurt to see what can go wrong with a prop or if you drop something, etc.. Some will be easier than others (i.e. card revelations) will and some will seem

impossible (i.e. doing the silk to egg and dropping the real one). You might even come up with a better trick because of it. Or you might find that the same thing keeps going wrong with one particular trick and decide to change it.

Whatever it is, just remember Murphy's Law: if something can go wrong, it eventually will. Be ready for when it happens, and be able to do something magical no matter what. Someone else also once told me that you really know your tricks well when everything about them has gone wrong and you know what to do with them. It's good advice. After doing the same show for a few years, I've been able to come up with "outs" for almost everything I do. On some occasions I've had to use them, but it only mattered to me. I managed to pull everything off, and the audience had no idea of what actually happened. So, until next time...

May your lefty's stay hidden, your wands keep spinning, and your rabbits doing whatever rabbits do.

-Derrin



The Secretary's Synaptic Secretions

By *Secretary David Condon*

At the last meeting we did something totally different, we made a visit to the Magic Barn in Ashland. This place is unbelievable. The owner of the barn is Mr. George Lentros, a devoted amateur magician and the owner of a manufacturing plant. The barn itself has two floors packed full of magic and circus memorabilia. Everything there was unique or very rare and was worth a lot more than all our future college tuitions combined. We were very lucky to get to see this stuff. A lot of it was very fragile and, being accident-prone, I'm glad we didn't have any mishaps, (I swear I didn't touch the carousel horse...the tail just fell off on it's own). There was a soda fountain and an ice-cream bar downstairs which Mr. Lentros was nice enough to let us use. Plus, there were all kinds of video games and gambling machines (can't start the kids too

early!) to keep us amused. On the second floor there was an impressive fold-out stage where we had our meeting and our performers. This month's chosen one was Dane Grigas who performed a very funny card routine. I hope we make a visit to the barn an annual event. Also, since I didn't get an article into the last paper I just wanted to say how great last months Chosen-Ones were. Despite a recent traumatic experience, Mr. Sklaar's lecture, both Josh Greenstein and Erin Rosen gave great performances. First, Erin confidently performed a baffling card prediction. Then, Josh did a hilariously off-the-wall routine involving burrito mix?! Back to this month's meeting. We also had the parent's show this month. Dane's Dad did an impressive job as M.C. I won't list the performers here because I forgot my note-book at the meeting; sorry everybody. I apologize, but I will have a list of them in next month's column. I'll see you all on the 19th!

David

Friday, June 19th, 1998

S.Y.M. #29 Monthly Meeting
at Hank Lee's Magic Factory
6:30-9:30

July 6th - 31st, 1998

12th Annual Summer Magic Course
with David Oliver
@ Minuteman Summer Camp
in Lexington 781-861-7150

July 8th - 11th, 1998

S.A.M. National Convention
New Orleans, LA
(check your SYMbol for details)

July 17th, 1998

S.Y.M. #29 Monthly Meeting
(event & place TBA)

Sunday August 2nd, 1998

The Annual S.Y.M.#29 Cookout
more info to come...

August 8th-15th 1998

Tannen's Summer Magic Camp
Only a few spaces left!
Call Tannen's @ 212-929-4500

Every Tuesday Night...

(for parents only)

Magician's and Spirits

at The Green Street Grill in Cambridge.

Top area magicians and a few special guests from
out of town. 9-10PM, random acts of magic at the
bar.

10:00pm Cabaret Show.

Great Food. Fabulous Show. Easy Parking.

For Info call

Joe McClure at 617-491-8609

Directions to:



Hank Lee's MAGIC FACTORY

FROM THE NORTH

Take either Route 93 or the Mystic-Tobin Bridge to the Central Artery. The Central Artery becomes the Expressway South. Take the Expressway to the Kneeland Street exit. As you come out of the exit, you will be at a set of lights. Go through the lights (bearing slightly to the left) and drive one block to a second set of lights. Take a left at these lights (Kneeland Street). Go two blocks and take another left. This is South Street. We're on the left side of the street at number 127.

FROM THE SOUTH

Find your way to the Southeast Expressway (Route 3). Take the very last exit, marked Downtown-Chinatown. As you come off the exit ramp, you will be at a set of lights. Take a right at these lights, then your first left (you are now on South Street.) Go up South to number 127, on the left side of the street.

FROM THE WEST

Take the Massachusetts Turnpike to the very last exit marked Chinatown-Downtown Boston—Kneeland Street. As you come down the exit ramp, you will be at a set of traffic lights. Take a right at these lights (you are now on Kneeland Street). Take your second left off of Kneeland Street. You are now on South Street. We are on the left side of the street at number 127.

If You get lost :617-482-TRIX

Don't You Dare Miss The Meeting...

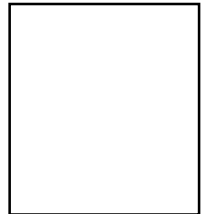
**@ Hank Lee's
Magic Factory
This month:
Performance Workshop**

**June 19, 1998
Friday,**

The Next Meeting of S.Y.M. #29 is on



The Boston Mini-Wizard
c/o 41 Norman Street
Rockland, MA 02370-2017



Please Rush!!!

The Boston Mini-Wizard

The Official Publication Of The John Calvert, Boston Area Assembly No. 29 Of The Society Of Young Magicians