



# The Flash Paper

## September 2023

**Bob Gehringer, Editor**



### A Letter from Lindy

For the last couple of years, **Ryan Chandler** has been doing a Magic Show in Rockport MO. The proceeds for this show go to a local charity. This year Ryan invited **Denny Rourke** and myself to join him. Ryan's vision is to have the O.M.S take over this event. Two or three members would volunteer each year, with the possibility of adding strolling magicians for the pre-show work. I really enjoyed the camaraderie as we discussed magic, and world events on the drive down to the Missouri boarder town.



Denny performing.

The Atchison County Memorial building houses the Liberty Theater, a wonderful venue for this event. A beautiful auditorium, complete with large stage including a green room and a sound man to run the show.

The organizers select a different local charity each year. For our show the proceeds were used to buy and repair band equipment. You'll hear more on this next summer.

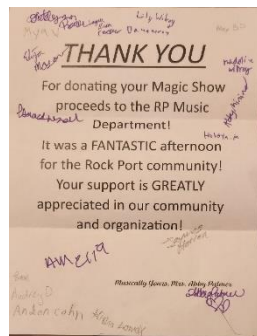
After a three-year hiatus the annual Boys Town picnic is back. Always one of my favorite happenings of the year. Bob Gehringer has been coordinating this event since its inception. This was our largest turn out ever; you can read more about the picnic in **Matt Spielman's** article.



I would like to THANK everyone who helped make this the event it was. It truly was a club wide effort. From the performers, both stage and strolling, stage crew, food committee, set up and break down. Everyone's effort made this a huge success.

The finals of the 2023 Omaha Show Wagon were held August 20<sup>th</sup> at the Omaha Conservatory of Music. Forty-one acts across different age groups qualified for the finals. The level of talent truly was impressive from these young people. After performing at the Boys Town picnic Junior Magicians, **Connor the Magnificent** and **Callen the Incredible**, tightened up a couple of things and put on a fantastic presentation in the competition. Though they didn't place, they can be proud of their performance. It was a great learning experience, and I would encourage all of our junior Magicians to participate in future talent shows.

This month's featured magician needs no introduction. **Lance Burton** is arguably the most recognized magician today. Hooked on magic after seeing his first show at





age 5, he had a rapid rise in magic circles. Lance won the first contest he entered. As a 20-year-old, Lance was awarded the Gold Medal of Excellence from the International Brotherhood of Magicians. He became the youngest person, and first American to win the Grand Prix award at F.I.S.M. His career took off after appearing on the Tonight Show (his first of 20 appearances). His run in Las Vegas started with an 8-week trial at Les Folies Bergere that earned a record 9-year extension at the Tropicana, followed by 5 years at the Hacienda, and finally 14 years at the Monte Carlo. 3 decades, over 15,000 shows for over 15 million fans.

For all his success Lance really is an easy going, down to earth person. He still performs when projects come along. Most of his time now is spent on his. 100-acre ranch doing chores, and tending to all his cows and chickens.



## Boys Town Magic Picnic

Boys Town's Great Hall dining room with a stage is a large enough space to very comfortably accommodate the few Boys Town staff, many resident students, OMS members and their families and friends. With its English university vibe, this space conjures up images of scenes from Harry Potter and the dining room at Hogwarts. With its wooden beams, like braces, holding the curved arch of the vaulted ceiling dramatically above the dark paneling, The Great Hall welcomed our band of magicians and we filled the hall!

As the chicken, a variety of side dishes, and desserts were being arranged for the feast soon to be devoured,

guests settled at tables to enjoy walk-around magic provided by our junior and adult magicians. Five members from our young magician *Discover Magic* program volunteered to perform tricks table-to-table! Even our newest and youngest student offered a card trick. It was great to see him walk up to our table and ask "How about a magic trick?" As always, our members were in fine form as well. Several of our senior and new member magicians also showed their talents at table magic.



After lunch, while enjoying the many desserts provided, the stage was ready for the main magic show. The Boys Town teenage residents broke into laughter, volunteered, and even cracked smiles for the more kid-corny bits.



Obviously, there are some mysteries and magic left that are new and interesting for a typical teen. It was glorious to see that age group set their phones down to watch the magic!

Our OMS magicians put on an excellent show filled with a wide variety of illusions that delighted toddlers and adults alike. It was a real event to spend a few hours enjoying good food, and conversation, while also entertaining Boys Town students, staff, friends, and family. The joy and laughter provided by our club to the community surely were a summer highlight for many. – **Patrice Fisher OMS Secretary**



On August 19th the residents of Boys Town along with friends and family of the Omaha Magikal Society escaped the summer heat and enjoyed a lovely afternoon lunch indoors followed by magic routines put together by our club's finest performers. Prior to lunch we had a group of strolling volunteers warm up the crowd. For many of the residents this was their first introduction to a magic performance and their reactions were a great reminder of why we got into performing in the first place. I strongly encourage everyone to volunteer in the future, it is a great place to try out a new routine and is great practice for our newer members. Over 130 people were in attendance including in the front row on the eve



of his 98th birthday, our own **Pete Petrashek and his wife Babe**.



**Jered Blake** kicked off the show as the MC followed by performances by **Connor and Callen Lindeman, Steve Lindeman, Dave Madsen, and Dave Fox**. Bags changed colors, rings appeared in vending machines, water traveled through the air, and somehow the winner of the paper/rock/scissors game between the entire audience was predicted.

Feedback after the show was very positive and will leave a lasting positive impact for many of the young people in attendance.



Dave Madsen



David Fox

A big thanks to everyone that volunteered, be it on stage or behind the scenes, to make the event the success that it was. - **Matt Spielman**



## Monday Night

*Magic*

**2ND  
ANNUAL**

SPONSORED BY  
THE OMAHA MAGICAL SOCIETY



### FEATURING **PIZZA AND PRESTIDIGITATION**

A Godfather's pizza buffet combines with sodas and an hour of Close-Up In The Corners™ - featuring four of our club's performers.

Each close-up performer presents in one corner of the room; the audience will be divided into four groups; and each performer rotates to a new group at the conclusion of their fifteen minute routine.

**FAMILY AND FRIENDS ARE INVITED TOO!**

**SIMULTANEOUSLY BROADCAST ON ZOOM:**

<https://zoom.us/j/4028718108>

**\$3.00 SUGGESTED DONATION PER PERSON**

**MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 18, 2023 | 6:30-8:00 PM (CDT)**

The Cross Training Center - 5030 N. 72nd Street -  
Omaha, Nebraska



## Larry's Logic

Practicing an act is not about any one thing. It's about the entire thing. The tricks are important, sure – but...so's the gap between tricks.

I have a fairly inflexible rule when it comes to doing an act. The time between me putting down a trick and starting the next trick can be no longer than 7 seconds. **7 SECONDS!** See caveat!

And this is where practicing the entire act really helps. If you're just practicing a trick, say the fountain of silks, you won't probably notice that you're putting the fountain back in the case ON TOP of the Chinese Sticks.

So, in a show, you go to do the Chinese Sticks and you have to dig through this mass of silks to find them. And in the process, you drop a couple of silks to the floor. This really looks unprofessional and UNSKILLED.

Whereas if you discover this problem during practicing, you can fix it and no one is the wiser.

I have also found out something interesting about statistics and practicing.

Let's say that there's a problem .... a bug ... a flaw in one of your props. Normally, you don't notice it, because it's a 1 in 100 chance that the flaw will cause a problem.

If you practice both the trick and the act frequently, you'll likely hit the error during practice and NOT during a show. Which means you have tons of time to fix it.

Now, some of the bugs can't be fixed. In which case, you devise an out or failing that, you devise a MECHANISM that will tell you the failure is imminent.

I used to do a trick called the NECKLACE OF SHEBA. You might recognize it in the picture. I occasionally still do perform it.



Basically, there's a gimmick that drops through the beads and comes out the bottom that makes it appear the beads were magically rethreaded.

And one day – in a show – it didn't work. Only about 70% of the beads threaded.

So, I spent some time trying to fix it, and couldn't. So instead, I extended the length of the string so that the gimmick would dangle out the bottom of the tube by about an inch.

So, when I did the trick, if I didn't feel the gimmick hit my palm, I knew it had failed. And I'd give the tube a 'slap' under cover of a magical gesture. And the gimmick would drop the rest of the way.

And this problem bit me because I didn't follow my own advice. This is essentially a self-working trick, so I didn't rehearse it much.

And I paid the price ... in a show ... in front of a paying audience.

### **Caveat to 7 second rule.**

I do allow a longer than 7 second gap between putting a prop away and starting the next trick. This ONLY is allowed when I have a bit of business or a gag or line that covers the excess time.



### **Keep An Eye on Your Email**

Be watching your email around October 1<sup>st</sup> - announcing the club's annual fundraising drive in which we attempt to find 15 members who will contribute \$15 per month for twelve months - covering our operating expenses (i.e., hall rental, Flash Paper printing and mailing, etc.).

More details to follow in the email.



## Greg Adams

currently serves as SVP & Chief Digital Officer for Best Western Hotels & Resorts, where a passion for technology drives innovation. Simultaneously, his deep-rooted interest in magic underscores the mesmerizing links between illusion and the digital space. Eager to learn and contribute, Greg is thrilled to blend these worlds, offering a unique perspective to the OMS newsletter. Away from corporate discussions, Greg often finds solace in studying magical techniques or exploring the latest technological marvels, always cherishing the wonder in both.

## ChatGPT: Your Digital Assistant for Crafting the Perfect Close-Up Card Act

By Greg Adams, enriched with insights from ChatGPT, OpenAI



The digital revolution has handed magicians a novel toolset. Among these tools, ChatGPT by OpenAI stands out as an invaluable assistant for crafting mesmerizing magic acts. This article delves into the art of eliciting the best magic advice from this AI powerhouse, ensuring your routines remain fresh and captivating.

### What is ChatGPT?

ChatGPT is a state-of-the-art language model equipped to offer insights spanning many topics. Whether it's the nuances of card techniques, the psychology behind a trick, or the artistry of presentation, ChatGPT can be

your digital mentor. You can view a two-minute introductory video to get you started here:

<https://vimeo.com/854766856/3298542573>

### Crafting Your Perfect Card Act with ChatGPT:

- 1. Define Your Objectives:** Envision your desired outcome. Are you aiming for a series of interconnected tricks or independent marvels? Knowing your act's length and central theme will shape the AI's guidance.
- 2. Engage with Expertise:** When framing questions for ChatGPT, approach with the mindset of seeking advice from a seasoned magician or instructor.
- 3. Be Precise with Your Prompts:** Precision in questioning is vital to unlocking the AI's potential. Here's a gradation of prompts to consider:

**Good:** "Suggest a series of card tricks for a 10-minute routine."

**Better:** "I'm crafting a 10-minute close-up card act that showcases varied skills and offers strong audience engagement. Can you provide a list and their progression?"

**Best:** "Drawing from expert knowledge in close-up card magic, provide a detailed list and progression of tricks for a 10-minute routine that ensures high audience engagement. Prioritize reputable sources."

**4. Review and Adjust:** ChatGPT's suggestions form a strong foundation. Fine-tune the advice to resonate with your unique style and audience preferences.

### An Example Routine Curated with ChatGPT:



Using the Best prompt, ChatGPT suggests the following routine: "Crafting a memorable close-up card act requires not only skillful execution but also an understanding of storytelling and pacing. Here's a recommended progression of tricks built upon the



teachings of renowned magicians and authoritative magic texts:

## 1. Engaging Opener: Chicago Opener (Red Hot Mama)

Source: Al Leech's Cardmanship.

Rationale: It's a two-phase effect that establishes your skill and is immediately visually captivating. The surprise color change of the card back catches the audience off guard, immediately piquing their interest.

## 2. Building Suspense: Ambitious Card Routine

Source: Dai Vernon's work, detailed in *The Stars of Magic*.

Rationale: This is a multi-phase routine that you can tailor to your liking. Despite increasingly challenging conditions, the repeated ascent of the chosen card to the top of the deck engages and baffles the audience.

## 3. Interactive Magic: Two-Card Monte

Source: Often associated with David Blaine, but its origins go further back.

Rationale: Directly involving an audience member breaks the potential monotony of a solo act and creates a personal connection. The unexpected transposition leaves even the most observant spectators bewildered.

## 4. Touch of Mystique: Mentalism Card Prediction

Source: Variations found in *13 Steps to Mentalism* by Corinda.

Rationale: Shifting to a mentalism piece deepens the intrigue. By correctly predicting a spectator's freely chosen card, you're not just showcasing sleight of hand but seemingly tapping into the mind.

## 5. Grand Finale: Card to Impossible Location

Source: Many texts, including 'Expert Card Technique' by Jean Hugard and Frederick Braue, detail the classic effect.

Rationale: Ending on a high note is crucial. Having a signed card appear in an impossible location (like sealed

within an orange or in a sealed envelope) gives a memorable finish, ensuring the audience will be talking about your performance long after it's over.

**Additional Notes:** Ensure smooth transitions between tricks. Each effect lasts 1.5 to 2 minutes, considering audience engagement and interaction. Remember, the act's flow is as essential as the tricks themselves. Keeping the narrative engaging and the pacing right ensures your audience is spellbound from start to finish."

Remember, the provided list is based on widely recognized and reputable sources in the magic community, ensuring authenticity and effectiveness in captivating an audience.

## Building Upon Our Magic with ChatGPT: Future Articles

ChatGPT's capabilities stretch far beyond mere trick suggestions. As we delve into subsequent articles, we'll showcase how to amplify the magic of our Example Routine with AI assistance.

You can look forward to insights on:

- Audience Rapport: Harnessing AI to devise techniques for a more profound connection with your spectators.
- Narrative Mastery: Employing ChatGPT to hone your act's storytelling - transforming tricks into tales.
- Psychological Depth: Gleaning insights from ChatGPT on the mental underpinnings that make a magical effect genuinely mesmerizing.

Stay tuned while we explore these facets and ensure your performances have depth, connection, and innovation.

## In Conclusion:

The melding of magic with AI opens a realm of limitless potential. With ChatGPT as your backstage guide, your routines—whether card tricks, illusions, or mentalism—can evolve, captivating your audiences and leaving them spellbound like never before.





## Fool Yourself Trick

This trick is based on the trick *Shuffle-Bored* by **Simon Aronson**. It fools me every-time I perform it.

For this fool yourself trick you'll need some playing cards that are all number cards. I'd suggest just removing the picture cards from the deck - leaving you a stack of 40 cards. The rest of my explanation will assume this is how you proceed.

Secretly arrange the cards prior to performance so that all even-numbered cards are on the top of the stack, facing down. Add a number-seven card to the top half of your stack as well. All odd-numbered cards (except for that number seven) are placed at the bottom of the stack, face-down.

Now prepare three written predictions. Print them on 8 1/2" x 11" sheets of paper, using large print so that most of the audience will be able to read them when they are opened at the conclusion of the trick. Seal them into envelopes. The three predictions should read:

1. **"There will be exactly 21 cards face-up."** (This number should be the total number [amount] of even-numbered cards in your card deck, plus the one odd card you added to the top half of the deck.)
2. **"There will only be even-numbered cards face-up."**
3. **"I will make a mistake. A number 7 card will also be face-up."**

The outside of the envelopes should be numbered 1, 2, or 3, so that you will know the order in which to open the predictions.

In order to tap into the very powerful force of curiosity, you might want to hand out these predictions throughout your show - saying something like:

"Here's a prediction about something that is going to happen in a little while. Would you please guard it for me?" That should pique some interest.

1. When you're ready to begin making your "predictions," invite two participants to come to the front of the room and, if possible, to sit down on either side of

you at a table. You will remain standing between them throughout the presentation.

2. Place half of the deck face-down in front of one of the participants and the other half in front of the other. Unbeknownst to them, you will have placed the odd-numbered (minus number seven) cards face-down in front of one player and the even-numbered cards (plus number seven) face-down in front of the other player. Merely thumb through the cards so that you can see the cards as you divide the cards into these two piles.
3. Invite either player to hand you a portion of his/her face-down cards from the top of one stack. The choice of who will be participating is up to the two players, as is the number of cards they hand you. This adds to the mystery.
4. Take the portion you are offered, turn it face-up, and then shuffle it face-up into the face-down pile in front of the other player. Again, invite either player to hand you a portion of their stack.

Eventually, they will be handing you face-up and face-down cards. This doesn't matter. You will always turn the stack handed to you over and shuffle it into the other person's stack. You can repeat this process as often as you wish.

5. Finally, invite either player to hand you their entire stack of cards. Turn it over and shuffle the entire stack into the stack of the other person. It will now appear to your participants that the entire stack of cards is a randomly-shuffled mix of face-up and face down cards.



6. Pick up the complete stack and look through it to make sure that the even-numbered cards (plus the seven) are face-up in the stack. They will either all be face-up





or face-down. If you find that the even-numbered cards (plus the seven) are face-down, merely turn the entire stack over before replacing it on the table.

7. Push the cards over to one of the volunteers and ask them to separate the face-up from the face-down cards. When they have completed that task, push the face-down cards off to the side. You won't be needing them again in this presentation.

8. Now ask the other volunteer to count the number of face-up cards in the pile.

9. As unbelievable as it may seem, you are now ready to have your predictions opened and read, one at a time. They will all be correct!

10. Of course, after reading prediction number two, the group will be certain that you have failed, since the number-seven card will be among those found face-up.

That will only heighten their amazement as they read your third and final prediction.

BONUS: Another presentation for this classic trick can be found here:

<https://www.thejrx.com/blog/2015/7/12/practical-magic-week-the-most-impressive-least-impressive-prediction>



## Alphabet Soup

This teaches you how to customize a classic observation test for any audience – helping them understand a little of how magic works!

Applicable to any theme, the following is a classic observation test. The rules are simple. Read through the following paragraph only once - counting the number of F's in the paragraph:

**FINISHED FILES ARE THE RESULT OF YEARS OF SCIENTIFIC STUDY COMBINED WITH THE EXPERIENCE OF YEARS.**

Most will find three F's in the sentence. Few will find all six.

If we take a moment to analyze why this works, you will be able to use what we find to build a them- related paragraph to use for a specific audience.

1. The first two words in the paragraph lead us to look for soft sounding F's. The ones we tend to miss are the F's that sound like V's in the word "of".

2. The improperly hyphenated word "scientific" gives further emphasis to the soft sounding F.

3. Finally, notice that the combination "of years" is repeated twice in the paragraph. Since we missed the F the first time, we are even more likely to miss it the second time.

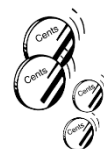
Now you can use what you just learned to construct a paragraph for nearly any content/theme.

Here's one example for the theme of customer service:

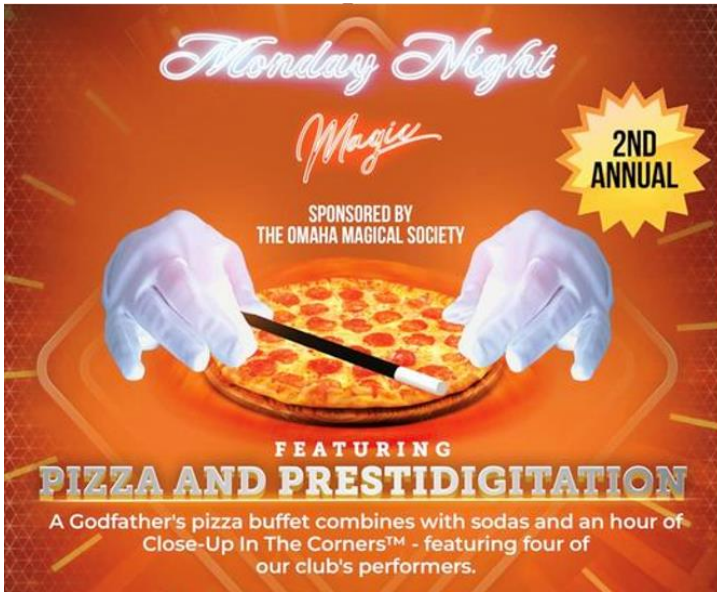
**FUN FRIENDLY EMPLOYEES ARE THE RESULT OF YEARS OF SPECIFIC TRAINING COMBINED WITH THE EXPERIENCE OF YEARS.**

Have fun building and customizing for your next audience!

I purchase one for 30 cents; fourteen for 60 cents; and one hundred forty four for 90 cents. What am I buying?



**(Answer appears elsewhere in this issue.)**



## Monday Night Magic

Monday September 18<sup>th</sup>

**6:30 – 8:00 p.m.**

Note the time change and the suggested \$3.00 donation for pizza.

Cross Training Center  
5030 N. 72<sup>nd</sup> Street  
Omaha, NE

Or just click on this link: <https://zoom.us/j/4028718108>  
(which is the same link we use for all of our monthly meetings).

### 2023 OMS Officers

- President** – Steve Lindeman..... [amazinglindy@gmail.com](mailto:amazinglindy@gmail.com)
- Vice President** – Bruce Jacoby..... [bruce@colorfulmagic.com](mailto:bruce@colorfulmagic.com)
- Secretary** – Patrice Fisher ..... [patricekfisher@yahoo.com](mailto:patricekfisher@yahoo.com)
- Treasurer** – Bob Gehringerr ..... [gehringerr@cox.net](mailto:gehringerr@cox.net)
- Sgt-at-Arms** – Tim Begley ..... [tpbegley@cox.net](mailto:tpbegley@cox.net)
- Executive Director** - Dave Arch ..... [dave@sandler.com](mailto:dave@sandler.com)

Solution to Puzzler: House numbers.

Check out our website:

<http://TheOmahaMagicalSociety.org>

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