



# The Flash Paper

## January 2021

Bob Gehringer, Editor



## Prez Sez

### Happier New Year!

I was welcomed with this slight change of phrase by a face-masked greeter in a store I frequent. While it

may be because I am easily amused, I thought the simple addition of one syllable was a clever way to address the past year and our hopes for 2021.

There is much to look forward to in the coming months. We will start the year off with an evening of “by request” fun with the team of Larry Brodahl, David Fox, and Jered Schaugaard that people have been asking to see. And while our club meetings will remain online for the immediate future, it looks hopeful that in-person meetings may not be too far in the distance, hopefully in time to gather together to celebrate our 100th anniversary as a club.

I would be remiss if I did not take a moment to thank Dave Arch for his leadership as club president over the last two years. Under his watch we saw the club grow and adapt to the new landscape we have been navigating and I look forward to having him serve as the Executive Director for our club in its new status as a 501C3 entity.

Here’s to a safer, and happier new year!

- Steve Nespor, President



## Hindsight for 2020

As we look back at our accomplishments for the last several months some might ask, “How should our club continue to grow and promote magic as an art form? Lawrence Hass called magic, “The artful performance of impossible things that generates energy, delight, and wonders.” To that end, the Omaha Magical Society has undertaken a number of strategies over the last several months.

Like many, our meetings needed to adapt to the reality of a Covid19 world and quickly adopted the Zoom platform to that end. Not only did our regular monthly gatherings go online, so did our weekly OMS Junior Magicians classes and the special interest group meetings. Our website continues developing to keep up with the club’s growing interests and emergent strategies allowing us to grow in a time when many other companies and organizations nationally and locally have shrunk or disappeared altogether during the pandemic.

Some of the things our members have seen develop include Special Interest Groups (SIG) for members to use in improving their magic. The first SIG was a group that worked together on a common performance idea with each participant bringing their own style to the chosen effect, such as Shadow Coins or the Ambitious Card. Members of the group constructively critique each other to bring out the most in each other’s performances. The next SIG that emerged was a group that works together to help each member’s individual routines in a forum of thoughtful feedback.

In addition, our “Cross Pollination” meetings are helping our assembly develop relationships with other clubs



around the country. Three of our members performed a 90-minute show/lecture in exchange for another club doing the same for us and this will continue in 2021. We have also continued to grow our OMS online video library with a wide range of offerings for seasoned performers and those who just want to learn a couple of magic tricks to show their children, grandchildren, family, or friends. The password-protected library now has over 70 historical and tutorial videos at all skill levels and is available to all registered club members. We also developed an online, members-only virtual Garage Sale to replace our in-person meeting that has always been a huge success, especially with our Junior Magicians who were able to get great deals on gently used props.

Our Junior Magicians group has also continued to flourish in the last year. It meets weekly with a team of four club members who lead classes using the Discover Magic curriculum as well as a Mark Wilson's Complete Course in Magic, our own Junior Magicians Video Library curated by Dave Arch that he developed for our young members, and Magic 101 - a YouTube channel developed by OMS member **Joe Cole** that features 50 beginner tricks. Other club members are also invited to drop in and teach an effect for our young members.

Many of the developments in the club have been due in large part to the vision and leadership of Club President **Dave Arch** over the last two years. In an effort to maintain the momentum of growth being experienced by The Omaha Magical Society particularly as we transition to an IRS recognized 501C3 nonprofit corporation, the OMS Board has asked Dave to assume the role of Executive Director effective January 1, 2021. Here's to 2020 in the rear-view mirror! - **Steve Nespor**

**2021 OMS Officers**

**President** - Steve Nespor ..... [omahamagician55@gmail.com](mailto:omahamagician55@gmail.com)  
**Vice President** - Jered Schaugaard ... [jered.incredible@gmail.com](mailto:jered.incredible@gmail.com)  
**Treasurer** - Bob Gehringer ..... [gehringerr@cox.net](mailto:gehringerr@cox.net)  
**Sgt-at-Arms** - Amjad Alawimari ..... [mrwho.magic@gmail.com](mailto:mrwho.magic@gmail.com)

**Check out our website:**

<http://TheOmahaMagicalSociety.org>



**THREE Videos Added!**

This month three videos have been added to the OMS club video library.

**Sleightly Advanced, Phase Four**



This fourth and final phase from our club's Vice President, Jered Schaugaard, finishes this exceptional series of card handling videos crafted into a multi-phase routine. Thank you, Jered.

**Bill Jab, Versions One and Two**

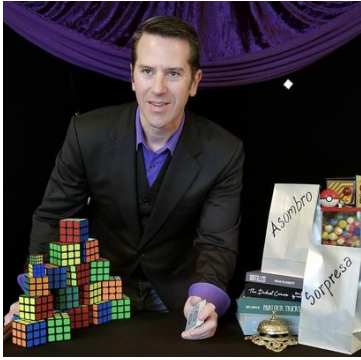


Anytime you take a piece of currency and apparently destroy and restore it you'll have the audience's attention that's for sure. Here are two versions. One uses a gently prepared bill and one a borrowed bill.



## Two New MAGIC Interest Groups

Helping get 2021 off to a strong start, The Omaha Magical Society will virtually offer two special interest groups led by two knowledgeable facilitators.



### Jered Schaugaard

From his childhood in Anchorage, Alaska, throughout his service in the Air Force and now as he and his wife, Betty, make Omaha their permanent home, current Vice-President of the

Omaha Magical Society, Jered's sleight-of-hand skill and gentle performance style continues to gain the respect of his peers.



### Tom Neddo

Tom brings to his role as an OMS Performers SIG facilitator 17 years of experience in close-up/walkaround, parlor and stage magic as well as clowning and balloon twisting. He has served as the Omaha Magical Society's secretary, vice-

president and president (2017) and was a recipient of the Top Hat Award in 2018. He has a genuine passion for building routines and working through the nuts and bolts of what makes good magic.

### Find Out More?

You can find out more about the two groups or express your interest in keeping notified of each group's development by visiting our website [HERE](#) or by directly emailing Tom [HERE](#) or Jered [HERE](#).

p.s. Participation in both groups require a current 2021 membership in The Omaha Magical Society. You may pay your \$20 annual dues online [HERE](#).



Our OMS Junior Magicians club continues to grow in the new year. We are now up to 10 young member magicians who meet via Zoom for an hour every Monday (yes, you read that right, every Monday) thanks to the dedication of our adult team of Steve Lindemann, Patrice Fisher, and Amjad Alawimari who tag team with me as we introduce our young people to the extraordinary fun of magic. Our 2021 New Year's resolution is to show the group the diversity of our OMS magic club members, so please consider volunteering 20 minutes of your time just once during the year to teach them a favorite, a favorite simple, child friendly magic effect. They are an incredible group of young people and a lot of fun. Contact Steve Nesor at [omahamagician@cox.net](mailto:omahamagician@cox.net) for more information or to get put on our schedule. Thank you in advance for your willingness to pass along the art of magic to a new generation.



## Reminder

All membership only passwords will be changed on February 1st. Please update your OMS membership online on our website (\$20) to continue accessing The Club's Online Video Library, Special Interest Groups, and the Facebook Virtual Garage Sale site.



## What's Your Magic Story by Patrice Fisher

Interview with

## Steve Wengel

So, after enduring 2020 and in preparation for a better new year in 2021, I finally decided to talk to a psychiatrist. Yes, I know some of you are saying, "Well, it is about time, Patrice," but you would have misunderstood me. The psychiatrist I sought out was Steve Wengel, a long-time member magician in our Omaha Magical Society.

It all began with a handbill. For those millennials reading this, a handbill is a one-page advertisement usually handed out to passers-by to entice them to a show of some kind. In earlier days it was easier to stand on a street corner and hand these out because it was easier to actually make eye contact with folks passing by. Actually, comedy clubs in New York still employ people to use these marketing flyers to get people to come into the clubs there. Usually, payment is in the form of giving a striving comedian a five-minute spotlight to perform and hopefully gain a few laughs and return audiences.

Anyway, the flyer Steve was given was for a magic show. It was from Howard Huntington, who was then in his eighties and still performing in a very statesman-like manner wearing tails. Steve was just seven or eight years old, when Howard would drive him to OMS meetings. About that same time, Steve met **Walter Graham**, who was the first magician he ever saw perform live at a Christmas show for children. Walter also supported Steve early in his magic journey and encouraged him along the way.

These professionals introduced Steve to other magicians in our OMS. Soon he was under the wings of the very well-known **Pete Petrashek** and **Charlie Gross**. Pete

invented his Pete's Purse trick, which he is known for in the industry. Basically, Pete would rip up a paper hat and magically unfold the pieces to reveal a purse! Now, Charlie had a bit more danger (seemingly) to his act. In the military, he developed an act whereby he would put razor blades on his tongue, swallow them along with a piece of thread and then pull the razor blades out of his mouth with them perfectly strung on the thread! He performed this trick his entire life to the gasps and then delight of white-knuckled audiences. In his last few years, Charlie would mail items like invisible thread pulled from his own socks while in his room at the rest home where he resided. Steve would bring these items to our club to practice new tricks and get ideas from members.



Steve was a shy youngster who benefitted immensely from the members of our club. At ten or eleven years old, he put together his own flyers to announce his



weekend shows. Donning a cape with his collapsible top hat and disappearing and reappearing cane in hand, Steve's self-confidence and talent grew. Our downtown Meyer's News Shop, with its magic counter in the back, was a destination where Steve looked forward to spending the money earned from his shows. This continued through high school, as Steve began to learn more card tricks and slight-of-hand, when he noticed those could attract the girls (or so he wished!).

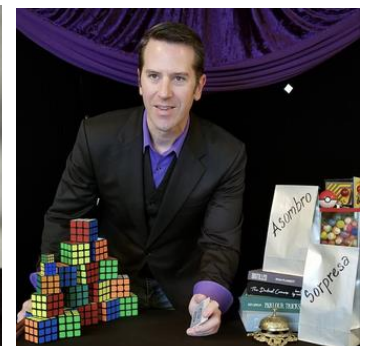
College at UNL and then medical school put magic on the back burner. But, once he began his career teaching at the University of Nebraska Medical Center, he found that every time he included a bit of magic in his lectures, it was always a hit. I contend that Steve's interest in neuroscience and the brain are connected to his love of magic. For instance, he explained that there are studies about the use of different hand movements and brain mechanisms for distraction. If you move your hand in a curved fashion versus a straight line, the curved movement is a more powerful gesture for distraction.

Steve's field of expertise is Geriatrics. As we talked about his work, it made me think of our junior magicians training and how their dexterity improves with practicing the tricks. The elderly can surely benefit in the same way, not only with dexterity, but with brain function in terms of focus, memory and stimulating creativity among other rewards. Recently, Steve's additional interest in stress-related conditions has earned him the position of Assistant Vice Chancellor of the new Department of Wellness at UNMC. We found ourselves brainstorming curriculum such as journaling, yoga, exercise, nutrition, meditation and even using magic as stress relievers. Did you know that there have been studies on people who have meditated consistently throughout their life and that they have shown less brain shrinkage with age?

Well, you can imagine how difficult it was to end my interview with Steve. We are very fortunate to have this longtime member of our club practicing medicine with a bit of magic thrown in for good measure.

## OMS January 2021 Virtual Meeting

Three Shows • Three Lectures  
Monday, January 18th  
7-8:30 PM



Under the leadership of **Larry Brodahl**, OMS members **David Fox** and **Jered Schaugaard** have presented Zoom magic shows and lectures for clubs in Kansas City (2020) and now are scheduled for the Houston and Fort Worth, Texas clubs in 2021.

In response to a number of requests from our own members, we now get to see what the positive reviews are all about as this team presents our January meeting complete with downloadable lecture notes on Monday, January 18th, from 7-8:30 PM.

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

Here's hoping your schedule allows you to attend.



## **Creativity: Your New Year's Resolution**

*"Never dismiss the ideas that come from your imagination. Don't ever think that just because they come from you that they can't be good. Trust yourself."* -Tommy Wonder

With a year of opportunities ahead of us, and a year of setbacks behind us, I think it may be an appropriate time to set a few goals for creating original magic in 2021.

Setting goals and deadlines for creativity is irritating and stressful, but it keeps your juices flowing and prevents minor bumps in the road from solidifying into permanent barriers. More than that, performance goals force you past the first performance of a new effect quickly. The hardest performance for a new piece of magic is the first one, so the earlier you can muster the first one, the better. Performing a trick once is all it takes to teach you whether you need to change something.

Here are a few goals for creating new magic you might consider adopting for yourself:

- (1) Perform a work-in-progress at every club meeting in 2021.
- (2) Promise a client a brand-new effect at this year's show.
- (3) Sign up for a competition at the next magic convention you plan to attend.
- (4) Each night, do not let yourself climb in bed without first recording a new idea in your journal of ideas. It could be a new *effect*, an untried *method*, or something like a story or line of patter to enhance your *presentation*.

- (5) Put together a team of collaborators—several people you trust to push your idea forward and make it better rather than crush it with criticism—and set a regular meeting time.

- (6) Every time you feel like buying a trick, choose to invent one instead.

Of course, you can pick and choose the goals you like from the list above, or you can simply use this list to springboard ideas for yourself.

The point is, every magician, including you and me, has the power to think up wonderful new ideas for magical effects and to bring those ideas into existence. Your novel ideas are a part of you, and when they succeed in deceiving and entertaining an audience, so do you. Developing your ideas into reality helps you manifest yourself in the world and provides a means for you, the only magician with your unique point of view, to say, "Here! This is what I think magic looks like!"

Setting goals will help you get there, and I wish you great success on the journey!

Sincerely,

**Theron Christensen**

January, 2021

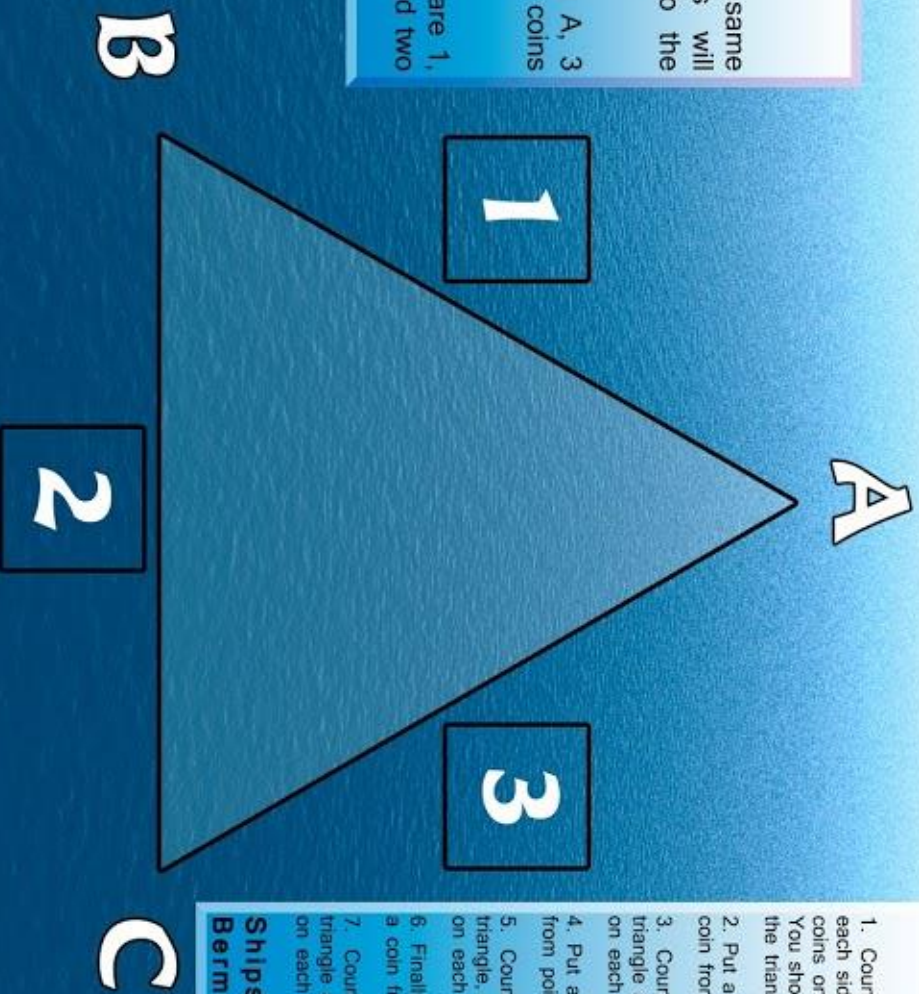


# THE MYSTERY OF THE BERMUODA TRIANGLE

## INITIAL SET-UP

You will need 21 of the same type of coin. 18 coins will represent ships sent into the famed Bermuda Triangle.

1. Place 3 coins at point A, 3 coins at point B, and 3 coins at point C.
2. Place two coins in square 1, two coins in square 2, and two coins in square 3.



## INSTRUCTIONS

1. Count how many coins (ships) are on each side of the triangle - counting both the coins on the letters and in the squares too. You should have eight coins on each side of the triangle.
  2. Put a coin (ship) in square 1 and move a coin from point B to square 2.
  3. Count the coins on each side of the triangle and you should still have eight coins on each side.
  4. Put a coin in square 3 and move a coin from point A to square 1.
  5. Count the coins on each side of the triangle, and you should still have eight coins on each side.
  6. Finally, put a coin in square 2 and move a coin from point B to square 1.
  7. Count the coins on each side of the triangle and you should still have eight coins on each side.
- Ships do vanish in the Bermuda Triangle!**



## Joe Cole's Schedule

**Sunday:** 6 to 8pm **Good Life Bar & Grill**  
20231 Manderson St, Elkhorn, NE

**Monday:** 6 to 8pm **Good Life Bar & Grill**  
180th and Pacific

**Wednesday:** 6 to 8pm **Good Life Bar & Grill**  
96<sup>th</sup> & Highway 370

**Thursday:** 7 to 9pm **Upstream Brewery Downtown**  
You can also see my schedule here:

<http://omahamagic.com/weekly-shows/>

13405 Marinda ST.  
Omaha, NE 68144

