



On the Cover
By [Karl Rabe](#)

Magic Messenger

September 2025

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SAM 88

The Magic Messenger



M. Assembly 8



The Official Newsletter of
The Ann Arbor Magic Club

John Russell performs his no-slight version of Cards Across.



President's Corner
By [Sean Howell](#)

Jean-Eugène Robert-Houdin said “A magician is an actor playing the part of a magician.” I firmly believe this.

To this end the AAMC has lined up John Sturk to conduct an improv workshop this month. While I understand it may be disappointing that there is an additional charge this month, it is for a good reason. What makes a magician entertaining is the delivery. The mechanics of our illusions are secondary to the presentation. We’ve all seen enough boring magic shows to understand this concept.

Participating in an improv workshop is one of the ways to sharpen our presentation tools. By learning how to roll with it using the concept of yes and... Every entertainer of every level can benefit from the practice of spontaneous presentation with other people.

In the workshop it’s a safe environment to explore concepts of humor and delivery without fear of ridicule, we’re all here to improve the art together.

Unfortunately due to a family emergency I had to leave for Tennessee to help my sisters out of a major pickle. I am sad and a bit disappointed that I will not be there as improv exercises are some of my favorite things to do. Speaking of shows, the slate for the Parlor show is set, emails will go out Thursday evening when I get back with rehearsals beginning the following Thursday.

Cheers,
Sean



Secretary's Report
By [Karl Rabe](#)

Club President Sean Howell couldn't be present for this month's meeting, so VP Mike Bogdas filled in and did a fantastic job.

April Barrett kicked us off as our featured performer. April co-starred with her rabbit in a hat puppet and put on a great show.

Mike then welcomed several guests, including Bill Morrison a former Plymouth Michigan resident who now lives in New Mexico. Bill was a former member of the AAMC and was in town for a visit which included attending the Abbott's Get Together.

Mike reminded us of the upcoming Improv Class to be lead by John Sturk. This is a great and unusual opportunity you don't want to miss. As well as the September Pop-Up Magic Shop and our Parlor Show in October.

Then Dan Jones presented the promotional business cards he and his marketing team, including Mike Bogdas, designed and had printed. Each member was given a business card holder with a stack of cards and another set of cards with instructions for a binary principle mind reading routine.

Then it was time for member performances.

- Dan Jones did a nice comedy Double Headed Animal

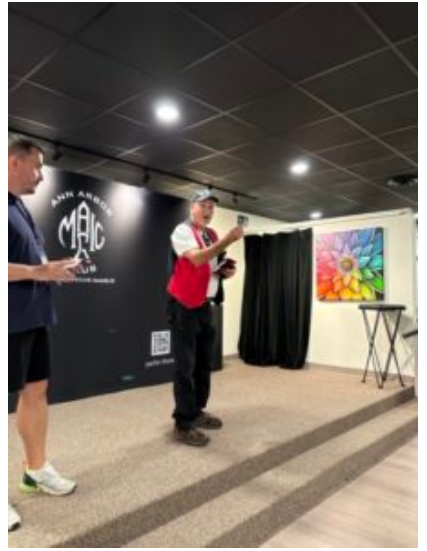
Prediction

- Mike Reuter performed an impossible name Prediction
- Phil Man produced sponge balls and other artifacts from the Dragon Box
- Alex Heath performed a Card Trick
- Tara – Performed parts of her Linking Ring routine she is working on for an upcoming show in Chicago.
- Mike Bogdas did a spectator prediction Card Trick
- John Russell performed a no-slight Cards Across with his X-Ray Specs and had a nice explanation of the routine.
- Our Guest Bill Morrison did a great Gemini Twins routine
- Lincoln Stone – Presented a routine he was working on to perform at an upcoming Michigan Renaissance Festival on Sean Howell's stage.
- Mike Doyle performed a Book Test
- Ron Hoole walked through a routine he is working on with a puppet and he introduced us to one of his rats.

After performances there was still plenty of time for members to socialize and jam.

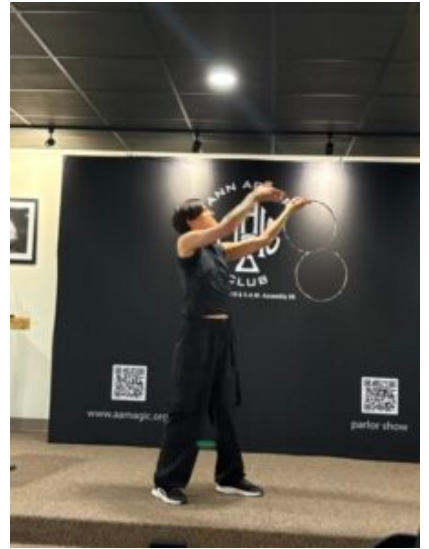














Around the Town
By [Karl Rabe](#)

Calendar of Events

Find details for all these events in the [calendar](#) on our website.

- You don't want to miss Improv for Magicians with John Sturk tomorrow (details below)
- There are still a few tables left for our Pop Up Magic Shop / Flea Market. [Details here.](#)
- There are still a few slots left in our [Parlor Competition](#)
- Tickets are now on sale for our [Fall Parlor Show](#)
- The Detroit Magic Club will be hosting a [Sal Piacente](#)

[Magic Lecture.](#)

<h3>Next Show</h3> <p>OCT 25 Sat 2:00 pm Fall 2025 Parlor Show Afternoon @ Plymouth Community Arts Council</p> <p>5:00 pm Fall 2025 Parlor Show Evening @ Plymouth Community Arts Council</p>	<h3>Club Events</h3> <p>SEP 10 Wed 7:00 pm Improv for Magicians with John S... @ Plymouth Community Arts Council</p> <p>SEP 27 Sat 12:00 pm AAMC Pop-Up Magic Shop (Flea Mar... @ Plymouth Community Arts Council</p> <p>OCT 8 Wed 7:00 pm AAMC Parlor Competition @ Plymouth Community Arts Council</p> <p>OCT 11 Sat 11:30 am Open House @ South Lyon Library</p> <p>DEC 10 Wed 6:00 pm AAMC Holiday Party @ Plymouth Community Arts Council</p> <p>FEB 23 Mon all-day Club Birthday</p>
<h3>Next Meeting</h3> <p>SEP 10 Wed 7:00 pm AAMC Monthly Meeting @ Plymouth Community Arts Council</p> <p>7:00 pm Improv for Magicians with John S... @ Plymouth Community Arts Council</p> <p>SEP 17 Wed 6:00 pm AAMC Monthly Board Meeting</p>	
<h3>Other Events</h3> <p>SEP 16 Tue 7:00 pm RING 22: Sal Piacente Magic Lecture @ Spirit of Christ Lutheran Church</p> <p>OCT 21 Tue 7:00 pm Detroit Magic Club Monthly Meeting @ Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church</p>	

Special Event

The AAMC has a very special event planned in place of our September meeting. **Please note this requires paid admission with a discount for AAMC Members in good standing only.**

Improve for Magicians will be a led by John Sturk on September 10, 2025 from 7:00 pm – 10:00 pm at the Plymouth Community

Arts Council.

Improv for Magicians with John Sturk



John Sturk is a Past National President of the Society of American Magicians, as well as a faculty member at The Second City theater in Chicago, one of the world's most famous improv training grounds.

John recently presented this program at The Society of American Magicians Annual Conference in Nashville to rave reviews, and now he's bringing it to the Ann Arbor Magic Club.

John will not be teaching tricks in this seminar – instead, he'll be teaching techniques to help you make the most of your magic and helping your audience volunteers shine. This program also relies on active participation by YOU! You'll be on your feet actually performing some of these exercises and cheering on your fellow attendees, so don't expect to hide in the back of the room!

You can expect to learn

- The “Yes, And” Principle
- Supporting Your Scene Partner
- Quickening Your Wit
- Improve Your Confidence

- Improvisation as a Means to Scripting

Cost

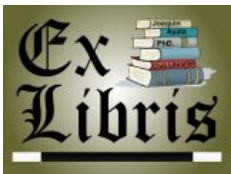
Because of the special nature of this 3 hour event **we cannot offer our usual reciprocal discount to local clubs.** Cash at the door please.

- AAMC Paid Members only – \$15 per person
- All Others – \$25 per person

This is a great opportunity to get a healthy taste of Improv from a professional for a very low cost in a short amount of time. You don't want to miss it.

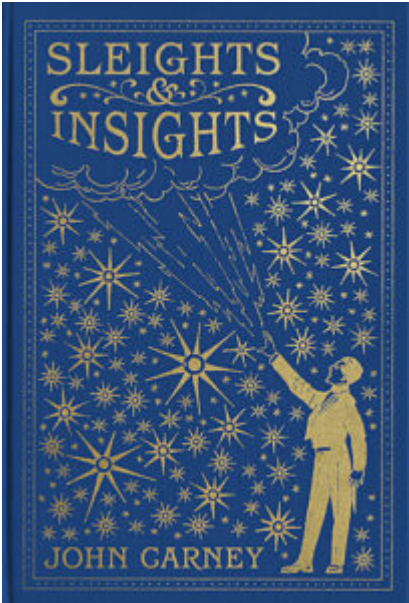
Other Calendars

- Check out John Luka's Magic page and his well maintained [list of Michigan Events](#)
- All AAMC Events and details can be viewed on the [website calendar](#).



Ex Libris

By [Dr. Joaquin Ayala de Cedoz](#)

	Issue	Issue 72, September 2025
	Book Title	Sleights and Insights
	Author	John Carney
	ISBN	N/A
	AAMC Library?	Not in the AAMC Library

Hello folks and welcome to the 'Ex Libris' article for September 2025! This month we will be focusing on ***Sleights & Insights*** by **John Carney**. This is a 315-page hardcover book originally published in 2020 by CarneyMagic, and as of this writing, it is still available from most retailers, and www.carneymagic.com, for \$80/USD. Pre-emptively speaking, worth every penny, according to the author of this article!

Yes, this month we will be focusing on the same author, but there is something you must first understand: this article is about a brand-new publication, not some wild pipedream...

Last month we looked at '*The Book of Magic*' by John Carney, a VERY worthy book of your attention. The book we are focusing on this month is an extension of that book, and its predecessor, '*Carneycopia*.'

This book is not unlike the previous two books written by/on the work of John Carney. That is to say that this book is based on history, personal, professional and performance philosophy, and all of it has been road-tested in every conceivable way by John himself.

In this tome, you will discover some older effects done in a

new way, such as the opening effect, '*I Love a Parade*,' which is reminiscent of the old '*Chinese Laundry Ticket*,' but with more than an upgrade and a clever, modern presentation.

Another of my all-time favourite effects in magic is the classic "Gypsy Thread." That is represented in this book under a very clever presentational angle that many of us will remember/be familiar with. How many of you remember (especially if you did make them) making the old "rustic telephones" by poking a small hole in two cans and tying a long string between them? When the whole unit is held taught, one person spoke into their can/cup and the other listened to theirs, and by miracles of science, you could *hear* exactly what the other person was saying! Using this rig, John has lent a certain creativity and relativity to the classic 'Gypsy Thread' plot – brilliant!

There are some classic effects brought up to date in this book, such as the wonderful and seldom-seen '*Silent Mora (3) Ball Routine*', '*The Homing Card*', and '*The Magnetized Wand*'.

In 1868, **Jean Eugène Robert-Houdin** published his classic tome, '*Les Secrets de la Prestidigitation et de la Magie*' ('*The Secrets of Conjuring and Magic*') In this book you will find a most glorious card effect called '*The Ladies' Looking Glass*'. This effect also appeared in the '*Royal Road to Card Magic*' (see the review article from February 2016), and besides myself, I have only ever seen two other people perform this effect: my friend **Michael Vincent** and **John Carney**. John presents a few wonderful solutions to the final two selections in that effect, the two cards being plucked from a shower of cards!

Many of my readers grew up in Michigan and close to Colon, the Magic Capitol. Many of them may have seen live, or on television, the famous **Harry Blackstone, Jr.** '*Vanishing Birdcage*,' which he closed his shows with. In this book, you will find a mini dissertation on that effect which covers

several types of cages, ways and means of vanishing them, and numerous ways of cleaning up after, depending on your previous choices. If you have ever seen Blackstone or even Lance Burton perform this effect, you know how strong it really is!

One of my favorite coin effects comes from the Scottish magician, **John Ramsay** and later, his only student, **Andrew Galloway**. It is called '*Three Coins in the Hat*,' and John Carney offers his '*Ramsay Redux*,' adding to the effect a new ending, his own expert handling tips, and philosophy, as well as some refinement on the necessary sleights.

There are some interesting comments on the '*Card Sword*,' catching a crumpled bill from a shower of crumpled paper, and even an effect where a hand puppet catches a selected card from a shower or fountain of cards!

There is a lot of material to unpack from this book, and since it is still in print, it is rather easily obtained – if any of the words in this review have sparked your interest, I hope it inspires you to pick up your copy if you already own it, and if not, seek it out from your favorite magic dealer.

That is all for this month – until next month, keep the magic alive and happy reading!

M.A.



Vox Pop

By [Karl Rabe](#)

Welcome to a new occasional feature of the Magic Messenger,

Vox Pop! From the Latin phrase Vox populi that literally means “voice of the people”, Vox Pop is a place for random member submissions. If you have something you would like to share, submit it in the form of an email to annarbormagicclub@gmail.com.

This month is a submission from member Ron Hoole. Ron attended our August meeting and performed a bit with one of his rats. If you don't know, Ron and his Wife run a rattery (a place where rats are kept and bred).

I realized, after my last visit. That I should have given you guys more of a heads-up about bringing one of our rats (to the monthly meeting). I had previously talked to Sean about bringing them, and that was a while ago. I just got so caught up with my life in the process. Time flies, too. There is so little known about the modern “fancy rat”, yet fears mostly stem from all the history associated with rats. When we got into this, it opened my eyes. I love animals a lot already, but learning about “fancy rats” opened up a whole new world for me. I started feeling sorry for them because, despite doing a lot of good, their actions are often overshadowed by the general perception of rats, which is that the average rat is gross, and I agree! But the “Fancy rat” is a totally different breed, with another story. These little guys have done a lot of good for society. But people fear the things they don't understand, and it becomes an easy target. So people don't hear, we have been going out and talking with people to spread awareness. But it's been a tiny platform to stand on to say much of anything.

I've been thinking about how to scale up, but the ‘magic’ in the mix made things confusing and would take us off subject. When a “puppet” dawned on me. The show was literally writing itself in my head. The funny part about this to me was when I first started getting into magic, I was trying to incorporate

puppetry into my earliest work. By the time I hit middle school, it no longer suited me. So I ditched the puppets, making this a full circle thing in magic for me. Combining things I know to teach and bring more awareness. This is something all the great masters, including Jeff McBride, have said: Add a little of who 'you are' into your magic This is a perfect pedestal for me to use in highlighting more of my work.

My character makes sense; I'm truly the "Rat Man" in life. Using a rat collector as my character makes sense as well. A Victorian-era rat collector sparked the "fancy rat" trend, which evolved into clubs among the aristocrats and gained popularity in the States by the 1920s. As the rat collector with a burlap bag, I'm telling the story "Narrestating" as I'm looking for rats. I introduce Reggie, my puppet, as one of the oddball "rats" that would go on to become "fancy rats" from out of the burlap bag. Reggie had already eaten some "magic cheese". That gives him the ability to do magic. That's how I get magic involved. I've been focusing on making it funny. The whole show will be in three parts.

- Part 1 is the main act, set against the background of the story of the rats using comedy and magic..
- Part 2 is a segment I call "The Price is Right," a little magic square Game Show I use to kill time for my wife to set up for...
- Part 3, the "Real Rats and Real Facts" section, using a PowerPoint presentation and videos. All of this came to me in an instant, and I've been managing everything myself and losing weight in the process.

Anyway, since I arrived unexpectedly. And without having the other half of my team, it was a little of a shock for both of us, that said. This is mostly my wife's operation, and she generally addresses people's concerns. We are like a Penn and Teller team; she's the straight man, while I'm the comedy relief, more or less.

Good questions came up (at the meeting) that were actually very useful for me in understanding what kinds of things need to be addressed. We are true professionals in what we do, spreading the “rat” message; this is new ground. So, forgive our intrusion on any fears. Rest assured, we do have a good name. The rattery world isn’t very well known; we are working on fixing that. To clear up any misunderstandings about what we do, I have provided a little background about us. I thought this might be an appropriate piece that “could” be added to the next Messenger to get some people up to speed.

Thanks

Ron Hoole



Ron Hoole

About Pure TLC Rattery:

It is owned and operated by my wife and me. I often joke about the fact that Tamara missed out by not becoming a grandmother, so our rats make up for it – only it's no longer a joke. Those rats are completely family to her, just as they are to me. With pride, we can say Pure TLC Rattery is a service that fills needs.

We both have experience working at PetSmart. This has benefited us in learning and understanding the various protocols and procedures used to handle all types of animals, including how to administer medication to them. We have applied our knowledge to our own rattery. We take great care and precaution with all of our rats. Like dogs, rats also have a pedigree to their lineage, which is followed. So everything is tracked and recorded. All of our rats are screened for 'RBF', Rat bite fever. Whenever there are any issues with any of our rats, they are taken straight to the vet. We have a rat specialist who examines all our rats. In addition, we are fortunate to have on board with our team. A licensed veterinary technician/ nurse, who comes over and helps once in a while. She has had rats all her life, so we don't need money; we have rats, it works just like cold hard cash.

Our adopted rats get a booklet of information. It includes a birth certificate, a family tree, and paperwork stating they are free from RBF, as well as any special care information. A cartoon page I created, featuring rat characters. Explaining what they need to have and what to avoid. All sales documentation.

Pet stores that carry pet rats don't know the genetic background of their rats. They're unable to spend the necessary time socializing them, which makes them more prone to biting out of fear.

Most pet shops today that still sell rats generally sell them as feeder rats for snakes. If you're trying to avoid some unknown disease, don't get a feeder rat. Not many pet stores sell rats as pets, which is why they are cheap! Many pet

stores stop selling them because they often end up as snake food. In the rattery world, people are more methodical and detail-oriented. When it comes to our rats and how breeders interact with the rat world, it's a mutually exclusive operation. Not many people are aware of that. This is what makes my presentation so effective and practical. The goal is to educate people more about the rat-breeding world. A fun way to engage people with diverse backgrounds in a light-hearted, wholesome manner, making light of people's legitimate fears of rats.

We consistently receive high ratings, and our reviews are consistently outstanding. We've had people drive a whole day out to get one of our rats—my favorite testimonial.

“You guys treat your rats so well, if reincarnation exists, I want to come back as one of your rats!”

Rachel Thaxon

And all of our rats are guaranteed to be the sweetest rats you can buy, or your money back! Because we live up to our name!



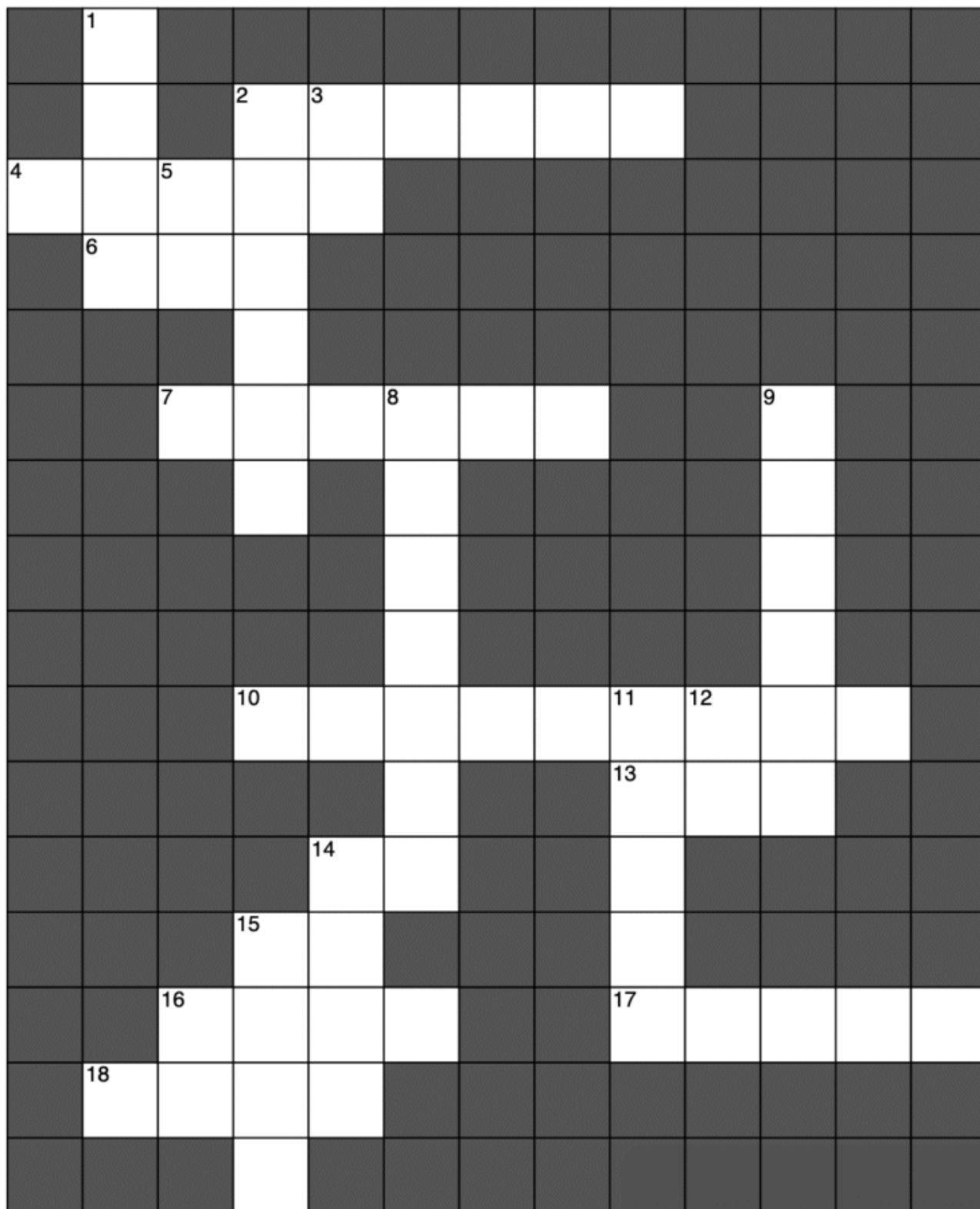
Funny Business
By [Karl Rabe](#)

This month's challenge...

Print and solve using this [PDF](#), or you can complete this puzzle online [here](#).

AAMC Hocus Pocus

By Ann Arbor Magic Club - Published on <https://crossshare.org>



ACROSS	DOWN
2 Alliterative "Girl" illusion	1 Paris Fumble
4 Magic Capital	2 AAMC Mind Reading Mathemagician
6 Pay or Pen	3 Fashionable
7 Room to sit	5 Calif City
10 Instructor with Nightmare	8 AAMC's 16th President?
13 Babe	9 Magician called "The" 10 across
14 Accepted to the group	11 Mild Oath or Japanese Magician
15 Neutral female title	12 Therefore
16 The Greatest Magician on the Stage	14 Copperfield's is Musha Cay (informal)
17 He has big shoes for Dan Jones to fill	15 3 Time Close Up Competition winner
18 Stern Magician	16 Howard Stern's alma mater (abbr.)

Solution will be published next month.

Swag is now in stock and for sale. Contact Treasurer Rob Krozal to get your's today!



Hat






Tee



Polo



Hoodie

	 <p>Visit the club website for past issues, calendar of upcoming events, and other features and articles.</p>		 <p>Join our Private Facebook Group to connect and exchange ideas and information with other members.</p>		 <p>Like our Public Facebook Page and share it with Friends and Family.</p>	
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The 2025 Ann Arbor Magic Club Board



President – Sean Howell



Treasurer – Rob Krozal



Secretary – Karl Rabe



VP – TBD



Sgt at Arms – TBD

Contact the board using these email addresses

- sean@howell.cc
- rkrozal@yahoo.com
- krabe@comcast.net

