



# WestsideWizards!



S.A.M. ASSEMBLY 291, LOS ANGELES

MARCH 2024

Next S.A.M. Meeting:  
Tuesday, **March 12, 7:00 PM**  
Theme: **Birthday Magic**  
(OPICA REQUIRES MASKS)

Next S.Y.M. Meeting:  
Sunday, **March 17, 3:00 PM (Zoom)**  
Theme: **TBA**

## Birthday Magic!

It may not be your birthday this month, but it IS someone's birthday! Are you ready to perform some birthday magic anytime? Perhaps you already have a few tricks you can always pull out for a birthday party. Perhaps you've never even thought about it.

So, this month, let's celebrate someone's birthday (maybe one of our fellow wizard's?) by showing off some great birthday-themed tricks. Do you want to reveal a playing card inside a birthday greeting card? Perhaps a surprise inside a gift box? How about an impossible object to an impossible location like a birthday cake (although that might prove to be a bit messy).

Let's have some fun with this and don't forget to bring your birthday hats!

Mark your calendar for **March 12, 2024 at 7:00 PM** and, as usual, we'll be meeting at OPICA (meeting location on the last page). Note that OPICA requires masks.



## Upcoming Meetings

Mar 12: Birthday Magic

Mar 17: TBA (SYM)

## Using Zoom

If you don't already have Zoom installed, go to [zoom.us/download](https://zoom.us/download) to get the free Zoom application for your computer or download it from the App Store for your mobile device.

**Note: Our meeting will start at 7:00 PM, but we will start letting Westside Wizards in around 6:45 PM before opening it up to the public at 7:00 PM.**

This month's Zoom meeting info:

Meeting ID: 885 1764 4034  
Passcode: 852517

[JOIN NOW](#)

Click on the link above and it will open Zoom and take you to the meeting. You will be then let in by the meeting host

# READING MINDS & DROPPING JAWS

## Mark Gibson Taps Wizards' Deepest Secrets At February Lecture

Members attending the Westside Wizards' February meeting were given a steep promise in last month's newsletter, which proclaimed: "Mark Gibson will make you mental!"

Gibson, an accomplished mentalist, more than lived up to that hype by presenting a lecture loaded with high-impact, audience-tested routines that use streamlined techniques and captivating methods.

His Bob Cassidy-inspired version of the Nova Envelope is a perfect example: a volunteer writes any "secret thought" on a billet, which immediately goes inside an envelope. Moments later, Gibson reveals their exact thought without ever having opened the envelope. "I carry it in my pocket for when I absolutely need to hit," he said, noting he once performed the effect on a cruise ship stage, and then again on the same ship when asked to do closeup for a VIP.

And yet, Gibson doesn't follow the "peek-the-word, get-the-word" formula that many magicians apply to mentalism. Instead, he designs routines that mystify on an emotional level. In his version of a Murder Mystery game, for example, he distributed five envelopes, each containing cards labeled "truth," "liar," or "murderer." Gibson, using a methodology developed by magician Greg Van Holsbeck, then ferreted out which participant was the murderer, in entertaining fashion.

"This just lives in my bag, that's the beautiful thing," said Gibson, a performing member of the Magic Castle for more than 17 years. "It takes up no space. We've all been at gigs where the ukulele player is throwing up in the bathroom, 'we need an extra five minutes, you got anything?' And I can just say, 'yep.' Even during the show, if I need more time I can just pull this out, it's ready to go, and it self-resets."

The only time a prediction attempt went south during Gibson's two-hour lecture—when he asked volunteer Bill Dow to "think of anything" and eventually named the wrong candy bar—he still impressed club members because he knew the answer was, of all things, a candy bar. "The beautiful thing about mentalism," he said, "is you can be wrong and still be right."

Gibson also shared a closeup routine that requires only four business cards and a technique perfected by Max Maven. "So many of us have 'mentalism guilt,' where the second any information is written you feel like you have to get it," Gibson explained. "Max Maven would delay that moment. It was really elegant, and this [business card trick] does the same thing."

"Elegant" is a good way to describe much of Gibson's work... including an opener that he can return to throughout the show. In a nutshell, it involves collecting slips of written information that the audience has freely placed into a box before the show, then having audience members draw slips from the box throughout the show, with Gibson divining whatever is written on the freely drawn slip. Best of all, it plays for both stage and closeup, and constructing the necessary gimmicks costs less than \$20.

"This is my solution to giant auditoriums," Gibson said. "I wanted a genuinely free choice and multiple reveals, without any restrictions—so they could take whatever slip they want. I've had people take multiple slips, choose one that they like, and then put the others back."

That ties to a performing objective that all magicians, mentalists or not, can certainly embrace. "I take as much thinking out of the process as possible," Gibson said. "That way I'm always focused on presentation, plot, and premise." – *Dan Cray*



# President's Message

## A word from Dan Cray...



Hello Westside Wizards,

Great lecture last month, right?

Thanks again to Mark Gibson, our guest lecturer, for sharing amazing routines, his own customized methods, and some innovative approaches to mentalism. Didn't hurt that he had a great presentation style and audience rapport, either... even when his audience was a bunch of jaded magicians! It was wonderful to host someone so friendly, skilled, and loaded with practical experience from working as a full-time mentalist for years.

Lost in the... uh, shuffle... was the fact our club just turned a very sweet 16. So happy birthday to us, the Westside Wizards!

Speaking of birthdays, you've probably noticed this month's meeting focuses on birthday magic—and not necessarily the kids' stuff, though that's fine too. Ideally though, this will be the material you'd use if an adult friend or relative asked you to drop by and perform magic at their birthday party. So maybe think twice about bringing the coloring book, okay?

I actually have a big-time stake in this theme because my wife, Jane (you've met her at our holiday meetings, and at last year's Summer Sorcery party), happens to have a birthday on March 12. We were thinking maybe we'd go out to dinner to celebrate... until I noticed the 12th is also the night of our Wizards meeting and jokingly asked Jane if the theme "Magic For My Wife's Birthday" might change her plan.

To my surprise, it did! (She really likes magic.) It also turns out Phil Goodman's birthday is the same week as our meeting, and as I mentioned our club just turned 16. Realizing we've never had a meeting devoted to performances for adult birthdays, we therefore have "Birthday Magic" (no longer just for my wife's birthday!) as our theme for March 12. We might even have a couple birthday-themed surprises in store.

See you at 7 p.m. on March 12!

*Dan*

# WESTSIDE WIZARDS 2024 DUES ARE PAYABLE NOW USING ZELLE

Last year we asked our members to pay their dues by using Zelle. It was very successful, and we would like to continue this process for collecting your 2024 dues.

Zelle is FREE and available at most local banks, including, Chase, Bank of America, Wells Fargo, One West Bank and more. Zelle is usually located in the Pay & Transfer section of your account. This is an instant transfer and is not reversible, so be sure to send your payment to the phone number listed below.



When you are ready to pay your Westside Wizards dues, set up a recipient in Zelle in the name of **Les Cooper** and phone number **310-621-8104**.

**Westside Wizards dues remain \$25 and \$5.00 for your spouse or partner.**

We will also accept checks made out to **Les Cooper** and sent to our home address, **1937 Midvale Ave., Los Angeles, CA 90025**, or you can pay your dues in cash or by check at our monthly meetings.

Thanks in advance for your continued membership in the Westside Wizards.

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## Open Mic Magic!

Do you want to perform magic with magicians from around the world, including the United Kingdom, Canada, Iceland, India, Germany, and other locations?

Do you want to watch other magicians perform live?

You can sit back, relax, and watch a free magic show, or if you prefer, perform for other magicians from the comfort of your home.

Every Wednesday at Noon, local time (8:00 PM in the UK), Kevin Peel hosts OPEN MIC MAGIC via Zoom. Shows usually last a little over one hour and feature magicians performing with cards, coins, silks, some parlour and more. Here is the link to get your free tickets:



### **Tickets are FREE**

Get your weekly dose of live magic in your home.

So, get your FREE ticket NOW! The link is:

<https://www.ticketsource.co.uk/open-mic-magic>

Open to beginners, hobbyists, semi pros, professional magicians, and anyone who loves magic.

And if you are a magician, hang out with other magicians for lively discussions about magic after the Zoom show.

Hope to see you soon on Open Mic Magic!

# Selected Upcoming Magic Events

## March 2024

March 15-17 - **Poe's Magic Conference**, in Baltimore, MD. [poesmagicconference.com](http://poesmagicconference.com)

## April 2024

April 24-27 - **Obie's 4F Convention** (Fechter's Finger Flicking Frolic, Invitation Only) in Buffalo, New York -: [www.ffffmagic.com/](http://www.ffffmagic.com/)

April 20 - **Magic Castle Swap Meet**, Los Angeles

## May 2024

May 17 - 19 - **AbraCORNdabra** in Des Moines, Iowa - Website: [www.AbraCORNdabra.com](http://www.AbraCORNdabra.com)

## July 2024

July 10-13 - **IBM Convention** in Tacoma, Washington. Websites: [www.ibmconvention.com](http://www.ibmconvention.com) and [www.magician.org](http://www.magician.org)

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## Other Los Angeles Area Magic Clubs

The Westside Wizards is not the only magic Assembly in the Los Angeles area. Several other Assemblies, Rings and clubs are in Los Angeles. Here is a list of other local organizations:

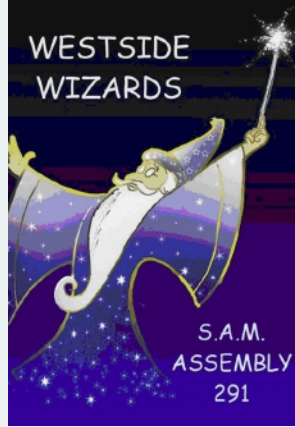
**S.A.M. Assembly 22** (Duarte) meets on the third Monday of the month, [sites.google.com/view/magicsam22/home](https://sites.google.com/view/magicsam22/home)

**IBM Ring 21** (North Hollywood) meets on the first Thursday of the month. [www.ibmring21.org](http://www.ibmring21.org)

**IBM Ring 96** (Seal Beach) meets on the third Saturday of the month. [www.ring96.com](http://www.ring96.com)

**IBM Ring 280** (Santa Clarita) meets on the second Thursday of the month. [www.ibmring280.com](http://www.ibmring280.com)

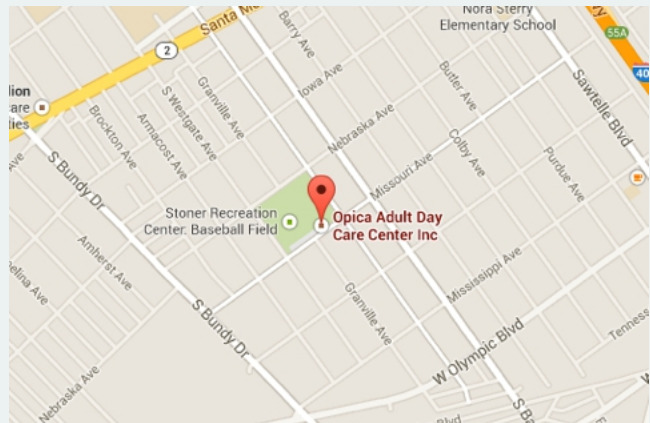
**Academy of Magical Arts** (at the Magic Castle), [www.magiccastle.com](http://www.magiccastle.com)



The **Westside Wizards** was formed to give the West Los Angeles area a Magical presence and hopes that you will participate and be active in Assembly 291.

## Westside Wizards Officers (2023-2024)

President	Dan Cray
Vice President	Phil Goodman
Treasurer	Doris Roach
Secretary	Brian Schwartz
Member at Large	Jim Witoszynski
Immediate Past President	Les Cooper
M.U.M. Editors	Dan Cray
Newsletter Editors	Phil Goodman & Dan Cray
Newsletter Proofers	Dan Cray, Les Cooper & Doris Roach



### Westside Wizards Meeting Location

Stoner Park OPICA Adult Day Care Facility,  
11759 Missouri Avenue  
Los Angeles, CA 90025

Between S. Bundy Drive and S. Barrington Avenue. Park off Missouri Avenue, next to the ball field

## Past Presidents

2021-2022	Dan Cray
2015-2020	Les Cooper
2013-2014	Bill Bedecarre
2011-2012	Frank Padilla, Jr
2009-2010	Raul Fernandez
2008	Les Cooper

**Contact us:** [WWW.WESTSIDEWIZARDS.ORG](http://WWW.WESTSIDEWIZARDS.ORG)  
[INFO@WESTSIDEWIZARDS.ORG](mailto:INFO@WESTSIDEWIZARDS.ORG) OR [SYM@WESTSIDEWIZARDS.ORG](mailto:SYM@WESTSIDEWIZARDS.ORG) FOR THE JUNIORS