

No. 58, KNOXVILLE, TN – Smoky Mountain Mystics

Meets 4th Thursday at 6:45 PM each month

Messiah Lutheran Church

6900 Kingston Pike, Knoxville, Tennessee 37919

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Our February meeting is always full of excitement as we have lots of energy with just 14 days until the start of another Winter Carnival of Magic...this time it's our 49th with a dozen performers coming in from around the country and around the world. Twenty-one people attended (including four members via Zoom and three guests) and we had the briefest of business before we prepared to share our "signature effects" for the evening in which thirteen participated.

Bill Osburn attempted to pass a key through a coin and then showed his impressive progress in making the eyes of Alexander move in one of his posters. Ed Ripley performed a signature piece of his creation with seemingly magnetized money and cards defying gravity. Giving a little show and tell, Victor Agreda showed off his Scott Evest, talked about the book *Bend It Like Geller*, and then got the rattle in a metal cup to vanish thanks to Rubicup by Rubi Ferez.

Our sponge creator, Tim Pressley, produced a marshmallow from an invisible purse and proceeded to do several bits of manipulation like it was a sponge ball – the only thing missing at the end were some warm toasted S'mores! John Gyllenhaal showed his newest signature effect that he started performing back in November where a miniature laptop computer appears from a borrowed cell phone, and then the laptop morphs into a signed selected card moments later. We were glad to have Ray Adams back at the meeting as he showed us three months of progress juggling metal cups (first one, and progressively building up to six). Ray then filled us in on the history of mimes in France and shared his thoughts on the importance of character to an act.

Without musical accompaniment (... Wait! What?), Michael Priestap had nine random cards given to him from a borrowed deck and did an impressive Lie Detector revelation. Jim Stott talked about his signature warm-up effects for children's shows including how he picks volunteers and uses a few different props like the visual coloring of a clown drawing. Our guest and former member (who needs to rejoin the Ring!), Caleb Bailey, did a karate coin with a Sharpie and then found two selected cards in a very clean manner from a deck split in two.

Having read the whole book, Jack Wilson highly recommended the *Neon Dreams* book by Lance Rich which gives an enthralling history of magic in the town of Las Vegas. Bill Sturgis had taken a table-top card effect and turned it into more of a stage piece as a queen is put in a card box and it switched places very visually with an ace that had been left out of the box. Our favorite mentalist of the group, Roy Schubert, was at it again with another original creation where his volunteer was guided by an amulet and the number three. Finally, Tom Vorjohan via Zoom talked about his signature close-up effect: Ring and String, and how he had learned it from Dan Fleshman in the early '90s at one of Tom's first Winter Carnivals. He also did his version of Kate and Edith, and reiterated the thoughts of Ray Adams about sticking to your character. This was a great evening of magic!

Tom Vorjohan