

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

VICTOR AGREDA, JR., President

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This was our annual election of officers, and we welcomed our President back for a second year as well as a few new faces for 2023-2024: President – Victor Agreda, Jr.; Vice President – Michael Priestap; Secretary – Tom Vorjohan; Treasurer – Jack Wilson; Sgt-at-Arms – Bill Sturgis; Program Chairman – Victor Agreda, Jr.; and the four-member Board of Directors – Andrew Hyder, Michael Messing, Tom Raidy, and Mike Stratman. The installation will take place next month.

Prior to the start of the meeting, many of us were reminiscing about our long-time member, John Hopper, who just passed away a week ago from kidney failure; John was a dedicated member who will be sorely missed at our meetings and at the Winter Carnival of Magic. Rest in Peace John. There were a dozen members and one former member, Steve Conner, at the April meeting which was themed around “String” or any of the variety of thicknesses. Former Intl. President, Mike Stratman, opened the performing fun with a large metal ring and piece of rope; he did a penetration of the ring onto the rope followed by dropping the ring onto the rope secured with a knot. Tim Pressley shared his obsession with Houdini, then had Andrew Hyder secure his wrists tightly together with a nylon luggage strap...but Tim was out of the strap in a matter of seconds.

Steve Jerden did a penetration of a large hardware nut through a string that it was threaded on and tied into his closed fist. His grandson, Cayden Goodman, followed with a “Mike check” and a fun presentation of a mini Pom-Pom stick ending with the tube in two pieces. Bill Sturgis was all decked out with a neck tie with a deck of cards on it...and when the selected card was not found on the tie, Bill produced the card from behind the tie. Our newest member, Jim Stott, did a couple versions of a self-tying instant knot, then a couple effects with a ring on the rope, and he finished with the G.W. Hunter knot appearing in a rope without letting go of the ends. He even shared the method with the group by teaching Andrew Hyder.

Our president and program chairman, Victor Agreda, showed us a Fantasma created penetration effect with a small ring tied on a string that went through a door with just a hole big enough for the string. He also shared a new book, *The Magic of Electronics* that he recently purchased and a “Flipper Zero” made to be almost like a universal remote. Andrew Hyder (just back from St. Louis with his wife, Jessica, for the “Senior Tour” close-up convention) did his three-phased ring and string routine that he learned from former Ring 58 member, Bob Knigge. As the meeting was winding down, Mike Stratman showed the shoelace knot vanish and Jack Wilson did his version of the G.W. Hunter knot where the rope is tied to your thumbs, or can be done to have the knot appear on a ring that is on the rope. Our guest, Steve Conner, then did a couple instant knots by snapping the rope out to the sides. It was a short meeting, but fun-filled with magic.

Tom Vorjohan via Zoom recording