

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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It was a great night for “dropping” in on Ring 58, and eighteen members were there to have some fun. Our business portion included moving the September, October, and November meetings up to the third Thursday of the month, then we added a “Magic Trunk Show” (like a giant flea market event) for Saturday, September 9 at our regular meeting location. We thanked our members who performed for the church’s Mother/Daughter Luncheon earlier in May: Tim Pressley, Michael Priestap, Bill Sturgis, Ed Ripley, and Michael Messing. The church wrote us a beautiful thank you note and included an honorarium for us to use to benefit magic in the area.

After our own Mike Stratman, Past International President 2002-2003, installed our new officers for the year, we got down to some magic. Our President and Program Chairman, Victor Agreda kicked things off for the evening – that was themed around “droppings” – with a comedy invisible dove that left a “dropping” on the top of his case! Sherman Wires had just gotten back from a road trip with Michael Priestap to the one-day Tampa Bay Festival of Magic, and had blast “dropping” a line or two on travelling with Mr. Priestap – “like watching grandpa at a filibuster meeting.” After Sherman “dropped” a silver dollar, Tom Raidy talked about the difficult he’s having learning the trick Catch, and said, “I’m doing more ‘dropping’ than catching!” Then he did his time-tested routine with the Strat-O-Speres “dropping” the balls in the tube and box.

Michael Priestap pulled a golf ball from a mini briefcase that he “dropped” on the table, found a spectator’s card in miniature in the deck, and then showed a deck of cards from WWII. Bill Osburn used a copper and silver coin in each hand, and one vanished only to be discovered that it “dropped” into his pocket. He did a great bar bet with a rather full bottle and a straw – challenging us to pick up the bottle and water with a straw. Bill did it – no “drop” here! By the way, Mike Stratman “dropped” the news that Darlene and he are moving from the home they built in Tellico Village to another home in Knoxville next week; rather than performing this month, he was trying to find takers for a lot of his magic. Bill Sturgis did a presentation of Grandma’s Necklace by TCC with emerald-cut jewels that “dropped” off the velvet cords. The Hydys performed in tandem a piece of MAK Magic from the early 70’s: the Orange, Checkers and Rice. Andrew was the front man, and Jessica provided the comedy relief (and beauty!) behind him for this great triple transposition (“dropping” some rice on the floor!) that most of us had never seen.

Jim Stott had a beautiful polished wood “Chop-A-Lot” food processor, and took the wrist of a tentatively eager Tim Pressley for a fun demonstration where Tim’s hand did NOT “drop” off! Roy Schubert had three miniature cards chosen from a deck, they vanished, and appeared inside a box of Cracker Jack inside the sealed “Toy Prize” package! That was a jaw “dropper!” Tim Pressley used both hands to do a trick called “Long, Long Rope” where a long hank of rope mysteriously turned into five loops of rope that he “dropped” onto his arms with no ends

anywhere! Our photojournalist and newsletter editor, Michael Messing, put down his camera long enough to “drop” some knots off a piece of rope. In from Florida for the day, Tom Vorjohan did a few tricks including a feat of instant memorization from Tarbell 3 (page 134...he remembered that, too!) and a Bary Mitchell version of Pom-Pom stick which he customized just for his last line which used a real “dropping.” John Gyllenhaal “dropped” in to show us his custom “The Hare Shorter” trick – like the boomerang trick except so much better and more baffling. To end the official performances, our treasurer, Jack Wilson, attempted a test of a woman’s intuitiveness by a series of free choices that he “dropped” on a card of each suit (from his recently acquired complete set of Nick Trost books!). We hung around and talked until after 10:00 PM – a wonderful meeting!

Tom Vorjohan