

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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The October meeting had sixteen members present, plus our secretary, Tom Vorjohan, logged in via Zoom from Las Vegas while he was visiting with our former member, Ben Young. Our President was also absent, so Michael Priestap was presiding over the business and acting as our Program Chair for the evening. Only some brief business to talk about food for our Christmas party as well as a potential lecture by Scott Robinson in the next few months.

Victor Agreda has been coming up with some creative themes for our recent meetings, and tonight it was “Squish or Shrink” to challenge our more creative members. Andrew Hyder performed the first trick he ever bought from a dealer: the Two-Cent Atom Smasher. This is a quick but visual shrinkable trick! Tim Pressley demonstrated how he uses spring snakes for his kids’ shows with his new double-loaded book that is available through Barry Mitchell.

After a volunteer initialed a chosen card, Sherman Wires was able to have it swap with another signed card while he and his volunteer held the cards in their lips. Talk about a change of style, Bill Osburn followed with an endless supply of ice cream cones (a little squishy)! And Ed Ripley was able to split sponge balls – now that’s really squishy – into two again and again, but each time they shrunk little by little. Ed got bonus points for shrinking AND squishing! Roy Schuber did another one of his original creations of mentalism in the form of a book test; his volunteer was offered a choice from a sack of books, and other audience members chose the page, the line and the word in from the left on that line. This single word exactly matched a word chosen by a member of the audience and written on a note card before the meeting began!

Using three cups and a duck, Jim Stott was able to smash the two cups that did not have the duck underneath without looking. Jim also brought in the program from the 1963 I.B.M. Annual Convention that was held in Knoxville, Tennessee, as well as sharing the Willard the Wizard poster that he received at that convention; his memories of that first convention were fun to hear. Michael Priestap brought out some soapy bubbles, and he was able to catch one of the bubbles as a solid, clear marble. Using some squishy sponge bunnies, Bill Sturgis had gotten these while he was at Magic on the Beach convention last month “so I could always pull a rabbit out of my baseball cap!” he said.

As the performances began to come to a close, Danny Justice turned a napkin into an egg with multiple appearing eggs along the way. It was great to get some advice from John Gyllenhaal about how he uses the “Bigger Wands” that progressively get bigger and bigger. He did his routine with his magic hat producing an armadillo, Paw Patrol character, and bunny ears...all the while using Star Trek Transporter sound effects which he controlled from the hat.

Tom Vorjohan via Jack Wilson