

It's December, and for Ring 244, that means Holiday Show! As custom dictated, we began our meeting with a moment of silence for past members who are no longer with us, and then the new Ring officers were sworn in to their respective positions. And then it was on with the show!!

The show was hosted by the very funny Magic Al Garber, who graciously stepped in as MC at the last minute (Thanks Al!). Al began by producing from a Christmas Change Bag (even though, as he joked, he's Jewish) a Christmas ornament, a dreidel, and of course, a deck of cards, an interesting assortment of stocking stuffers indeed. After a spectator chose a card and lost it in the deck, Al found it by simply taking off his jacket (gotta love those playing card t-shirts).

Al introduced the first performer of the evening, Don Engstrand, and the "Holiday Spirits" must have been talking with him, because he predicted what hotel out of an entire guide book a spectator would stay in over Christmas vacation, and then a word freely chosen from a dictionary. He changed three ropes into two and then to one, and finally blew our minds by calling out the cards a spectator was holding after he took a portion of them out of a shuffled deck.

Next on the bill was Bob Weinowitz, who made the Ace disappear in a Three Card Monte. Since the cards were too small to see, he took out some larger cards, which all changed to Aces. And in case the people in the back of the room might have missed it, he brought out three jumbo sized cards, and no matter how hard we tried, we just couldn't keep track of where that queen went. I guess that's what they mean by "Holiday Cards". Next he performed a holiday rendition of "Run, Cookie Monster, Run", and concluded with a performance of "Blow Your Stack."

Jeff Miller followed with some balloonacy. Just when you thought his popped balloon puppy was no more, he placed the remains in a paper bag and, after some mouth to mouth, it was shown to be whole and intact. It was a "Holiday Miracle."

Al then brought up Dave Levitan, whose fancy rope work was truly mystifying. They were cut and restored, and knots that simply wouldn't budge were slid off with ease in the hands of a child.

Junior Ring member TJ Tana entertained the crowd with some holiday balloon sculptures, a folded card from mouth, and a Santa Hat Tear. Finally, he made a rather spongy Rudolph's nose vanish, reappear, and multiply in a spectator's hand.

Closing the show was Harry Mandel, whose sword through neck brought new meaning to the term "Holiday Tie". His finale, a chair suspension, was amazing, and a fitting close to our year. We wish all IBM members and their families Happy Holidays and a Happy and Healthy New Year! See you in 2010!

Bill Krupskas O.M.