

MORTEM POST

The National Coordinator's Newsletter

Volume 2, Issue 1, January 2008

The Camarilla, a White Wolf World of Darkness Fan Club

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2007 Wrap Up

The Camarilla did a ton of amazing things in 2007. Between the conventions, the charity work, and the fact that our membership numbers keep soaring, we are doing great as an organization!

In 2007 we had the pleasure of attending 4 great regional conventions! SCRE 2007, held in Tulsa, OK, was the second largest regional convention seen. A huge amount of money was raised for the charities! SERE, held in Atlanta, GA, was a blast. This con began the tremendous PC driven plot we saw in 2007, especially in Requiem and Awakening. Also, Requiem by candlelight is phenomenal. If we could have only kept the AC running, it would have been perfect! NCRE and NERE for being 2 of the smaller regions in the Cam, they managed to pull off amazing conventions. Because they were smaller everyone got to play a starring role in the plots.

USCC Cleveland was amazing! The ST's did a remarkable job with the plot. Also the players did an awesome job making this con RULE! No one will forget December Carnivale and Josephina Chabot leaving the Carthian Movement for the Invictus. Or everyone trying to figure out what was going on with Lukas Von Sanger's torpid body being run through the con.

ICC Nashville ROCKED! When we sell out the initial hotel... Then sell out the overflow hotel... Then fill up the extra bedrooms and floor space of all the local Cammies, you know as an organization we are doing things right. Yes, yes, there were great stories told and a couple of kill boxes too at the con, but the best part was spending time with all of our friends (new and old).

All this is a credit to a new Master Story Teller, new National Coordinator and a new National Storyteller who are all just getting settled in. All this has of course meant a lot of new faces on their staff, but it seems like everyone is settled in and enjoying themselves. If this is what they look like when they are just getting off the blocks I can't wait for everyone to hit their stride! THANKS!! YOU ROCK!!

Get 'em! (That was your plan? Get 'em?)

John McBride

"I wanna Kill that guy!"

"He needs to die!"

"I must end his Requiem."

Too often said, perhaps too often done. According to the source materials the Requiem is an intricate game played by inhuman monsters. Ultimately these monsters are immortal and are so wrapped up in "continuing" their own lives that they endure a horrid state of being. Such as drinking blood and living in a constant state of wanting more. Further their darker side is constantly struggling to come to the forefront. All of this combines to logically create a creature that would be likely to avoid committing actions which are likely to get itself killed. One of the actions that is most likely to get you killed is "actually killing" someone else. Think of the old mafia style where they would go after the guy, but not his wife or daughters. The reason is that they didn't want "other" people to go after their wives or daughters.

I feel that it is the ST chain's responsibility to enlighten people on this issue. However, I feel that simply saying "No you can't" is insufficient and a recipe for potential issues. I believe that peer pressure is a better tool than an authority figure preventing the issue from coming up. To that end I am writing this to give ST's, and players alike, some food for thought. Raising awareness about an issue is a great tool in reducing its occurrence. Are there other options? Of course!!

Here's just a few with some examples:

You can take out someone's influences:

A key figure in the Domain is much less secure if his foundation is being picked away at slowly.

Their status:

Whatever group loves them it can be turned. I mean just make IC friends with friends of theirs. Over time you can get closer and closer. (A lengthy revenge is all the sweeter.)

Turn their allies against them:

Along the same lines as status. If the person in charge protects them socially, then what's to stop you from becoming more important to them? The hardest part about this type of scenario is having to eat crow and handle IC prejudice. But some really great movies/books are built on people who endured hell

just to get to a position where they could get revenge. (Remember our chronicle lasts YEARS in real life. Why rush things to a head in a month or two?)

Little stuff:

Key their car, egg their home, find out where they get dry cleaning done then buy the place and ruin their clothes. Truly proud PC's will be enraged at a stream of little petty attacks. It will show them that they are not all powerful in every area. And seriously, what is more fun than watching the person try to figure out where the trouble is coming from?

Make a fool of them:

Have them show up ready for a costume party when it's really a formal gathering.

Get them to owe you:

Wait and wait and wait until they have a need. Then be ready to fill it, or put yourself in a position to fill it. Or, make a situation where they need you... If you are keying their car and happen to own a body shop, minor boons add up quickly. If you own all of the dry cleaners in town, they will need to get their suits cleaned occasionally, so force them to come to you when they ended up with blood on them. The scene where they have to ask you to help them is better than the best killbox ever!

You can even get yourself to owe "them":

The logic being if you owe them, it would be like burning money for them to kill you. It also lets you get closer and closer to them to find out their weaknesses and maybe feed that info to their enemies

Kill their retainers and contacts:

Even if they regenerate the resource it's still a major inconvenience. Trusted mortals who normally do favors for the person becoming whole new people that have to be retrained are a great area to insert your people as spies.

Turn the crowd against them IC:

Let it go and slowly turn the PC's who frequent the same "gatherings" against them. Especially for players who travel a lot, there is nothing more fun than getting an entire domain to ignore them when they enter town. And if the neighboring Prince/Priscus/Primogen "never got their request" you have either set the hounds out on

them or are in a position where you can say “Please don’t hurt him, I will speak for him” (See “Get Them to Owe You”)

Do NOTHING and WAIT!:

Part of the problem is that folks often jump to violence when they see no other way. Well nothing says you have to “see” another way immediately. You can appear to just let the go. Wait for something to come up. Remember: “Wait Long By The River & The Bodies Of Your Enemies Will Float By.”

More Personal Options:

Well for one thing you may very well have to slow down your “UNHOLY REVENGE” and actually study the character. I mean really study. You should know them better than their close friends; where they haven, how they feed, who they care about. Does he have a favored progeny, does she often talk about her collection of art, do they often chat about their “Crone” Allies.

Once you know what the “enemy” likes you can set about excising it for them. Turn their progeny against them (or better yet their progeny’s coterie), or get the progeny to owe you? Get some mortal thugs to break into their “art gallery” and spray paint the entire place. Make friends with the Crones yourself.

These are not “incredibly” subtle but they are far less radical than shoving a tree in someone’s chest and lopping their head off then burning it and blowing up their haven.

One key thing to remember is that if you kill many of your enemies. Then new enemies will see how that path leads and then they will go after you physically. This can quickly degenerate a game into a series of long attempts on each others lives. The players “involved” might find this a cool pursuit of tactics and strategy but others might not. Many players don’t design their PC based upon combat ability or even their Disciplines. They lean toward the flavor of the PC, emphasizing skills and merits. In a violent game, these PC’s literally have no reason to show up. We should all strive to make a balanced venue in order to allow the “most people” to have maximum fun at any time.

Transitioning from a Troupe Game

BJ Altman

Members of this club come from all manner of sources: table top groups, theater, and more. Those coming from a troupe game could be said to have the easiest time of it as a troupe L.A.R.P. has many similarities to the Camarilla. These similarities instead highlight the differences between your average troupe game and the Camarilla. Without understanding these differences the transition could become a frustrating or miserable experience.

The primary difference between a troupe game and the Camarilla is the scope. Quite clearly the Camarilla is a global organization whereas the average troupe game is not. This is the source of all the differences. Some of these are easily surmountable issues; others are simply benefits there for the taking.

The largest detraction of this club is the bureaucracy that necessarily exists by virtue of being a global organization. In a troupe game all you need to play a character is your ST’s approval. In the Camarilla it is more complex, potentially involving communication between affiliates or approvals through the ST chain. This can make the process arduous, and even long time members of the club often want to avoid dealing with these mechanisms. Where at first blush these are detractions, they can be strengths if you choose to make them so.

If you want your character to be from another domain or country you need to get the approval of the ST with jurisdiction there. It takes a bit of effort but it also presents an opportunity to meet and converse with players from across the globe. These are people whom you might later meet in person at a convention or other game. The simple wealth of opportunities that come from this is dazzling.

This also leads to the biggest advantage: the go anywhere card. Being a global organization the Camarilla has games all over the place. Most major cities in the U.S. will have a Camarilla presence. If you travel at all this is a great advantage, not only for the games but for the social experience. You can connect with people at their local games, at their regional events, at conventions, even online, and allows a vehicle to make ready friendships almost anywhere in the world.

The whole experience also breathes life into the game world. When talking to the Prince of a foreign domain, it’s not necessarily your ST. It’s quite possibly going to be another player, one who has their own motivations and background built to a depth that an ST is hard pressed to conjure for every city. This organic environment is much more dynamic that what you would find in your average troupe game where your domain tends to be the center of the world.

Within both games your actions have consequences. Within the

global game this is more the case as what you and other players do in another domain can impact your gameplay. If you take action against another character, that person's allies from across the world may descend upon you, and vice versa. This rarely happens in a troupe game and yet can easily occur within the Camarilla, especially when a neighboring domain is only an hour or two away. The flipside of this is that you can build national or global organizations in character. This opportunity is very real in the Camarilla where it is non-existent in a troupe game.

The approval process is, arguably, the single most daunting mechanism of the club. It is intended to keep some balance on the distribution of rare items and to otherwise beat special abilities senseless until they are balanced. These are good things, though often of little solace to a member, especially when their heart is set on something in particular. The approval process provides members the occasion to consider their characters and motivations. The question to be asked upon approaching it isn't "how much work will it be" but "is this right for my character". As you work to justify the approval you want, you have the opportunity to strengthen your vision of the character

You should also remember that where the approval process can be a lot of work for you, it is likewise a lot of work for your Storytellers. You should approach it as a cooperative process that will better the game as a whole rather than an adversarial one.

The other part of the club that may cause issues for a member transitioning from a troupe game is ego. Let it go. No matter how big a fish you were in your troupe game, you will start as a small fish in the Camarilla. Where this isn't

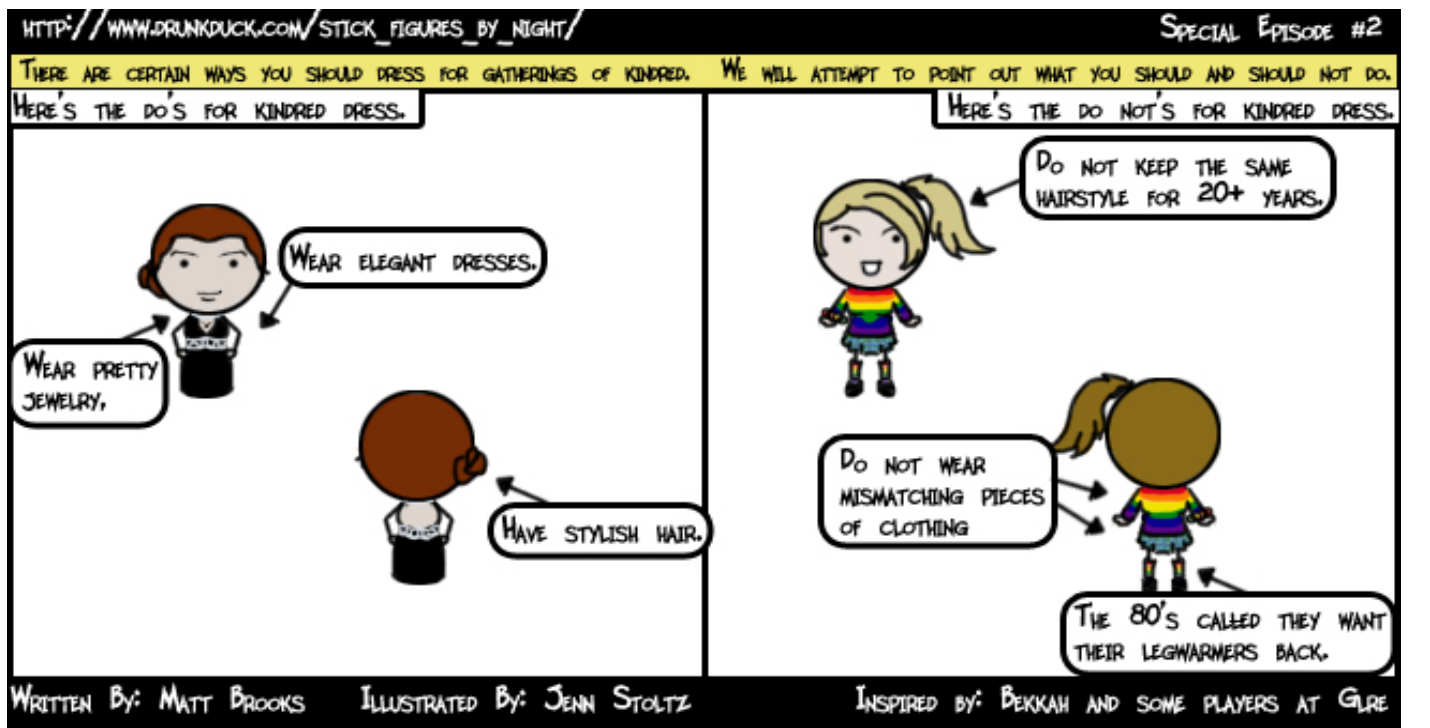
really any different from joining a troupe game, the scope of the Camarilla and its global game may magnify this.

Take the time to test the waters and forge friendships. If you come to the club with the idea that you will hit the ground running you may be in for a shock and the overall experience may color your impression of the club.

Part of this is enforced by way of the Member Class system, which rewards active out of character participation in the club. Coming in you will likely have a much weaker character than other people. Where this may seem initially discouraging, anyone who actively works to benefit the club can gain prestige and thereby Member Class. Where you might normally help out at a troupe game anyhow, the Camarilla chooses to recognize the time and energy that people put into making it better.

Just like any other game, the Camarilla is a social experience. You will find the key to having a healthy gaming experience is having a healthy out of game experience. Unlike most troupe games the Camarilla facilitates this through domain and chapter activities as well as charity drives. These activities are a marked departure from the average troupe game and serve to better both the Camarilla community and the greater community.

In closing, remember that the club is full of good people. Take the time to get to know them and work with them as fellow members. Participate in the social events and charity activities the club sponsors. The Camarilla is more than just a game.



How to Be A "Good" Cheese Monkey

Vic Cross

Okay, so I admit it. I'm a cheesy, power-gaming, number-crunching, occasionally-min-maxing member of the Camarilla. While everyone *may* not be guilty of it, as long as the Camarilla has been around I strongly suspect that every one of us has gone through the books with a fine-toothed comb, or joined a wonder-coterie to gain some amazing amount of cheese. Don't feel bad about it; most of us are right there with you. The cheesing isn't necessarily *bad*, per se, but those who are consistently irresponsible with their cheesy power-gaming soon find themselves ostracized from the rest of chronicle and in an isolated category of Power Gamer that the majority of Camarilla Members want nothing to do with.

The path to power-gaming is a quick one. Only months after my first Camarilla Game I was hopping on IRC and subscribing to lists listening to veteran members boast about their approvals and compare notes on who had the cheesier Majesty/Claw/Sword/whatever Dice pool. In a game in which cheese, occasionally, breeds survival many may deny their instant impulse to follow along with the herd...but the truth of the matter is that we all dabble down that road at some time or another. The key to portraying a character who is, by definition, cheesy (be it a Bloodline, a legacy, a custom devotion, or a custom shotgun that launches agg-dealing ponies) is balancing your character *concept* and the nature of your approval. It's absolutely necessary that players never enter the realm of "my character is: lists all approvals", as that stops the focus of the game from being on the *role* play, and more on the *roll* play.

Possibly the most important thing about portraying a special-approvals character, while still providing ample opportunity for role-play and continuing to foster positive in character relations is to ensure that *before* utilizing your special shiny, is clearing the use of your ability *through* the player who will be subjected to it. Now, obviously, this doesn't work for combat situations, in which you feel the need to launch agg-dealing-ponies, but in most social role-play circumstances, consulting with either the player whom you are targeting or an ST supervising the scene to ensure that they don't consider the instance an abuse of the approval, tends to ensure that no one gets upset or has their feelings hurt. Under no circumstances should special approvals be used to 'win' LARP. The Camarilla Chronicle is an on-going game in which a *large* number of individuals devote time and effort to enjoying themselves, 'winning' should have no place in the club.

Finally, one of the more irritating facts about those who obtain special approvals (while it understandable to a limited extent) is the tendency to brag. While everyone likes to feel special and enjoy praise for obtaining their custom item, always be conscious that those around you may feel that you are attempting to exert superiority over them. This is the cause of a number of arguments. It tends to leads to strained in-character relationships and broken real life friendships. Always be mindful of your setting, the power-levels of those gaming around you, as well as how *you* can most benefit the story and the Chronicle as a whole, and you (and your cheese) should be fine.



Photograph by David Holler; Model is Heather Davis

How to Get Into Character

Mario Medina

*“That’s an interesting point, but let’s get into character.”
-Jules Winnfield, Pulp Fiction*

Well, I wish I could say I was the ultimate authority on this. Further, I wish I could claim that I could encapsulate the “art” of getting into character for you in a few paragraphs and that we could then claim mastery over all things “Dark and Nerdy.” However, it just ain’t so. I can however say...I’ve been doing this for a while and here’s some stuff that has helped me out. ☺ Lastly, please send me your ideas as I am always looking to improve. Suunyata@gmail.com

Getting into character for me starts with the creation process for the PC. (*Any rules system, tabletop, LARP, pretend to be cool at a bar ...uhm...scratch the last one. <cough, cough> is this thing on?) I follow a fairly simple system and then I build on it. As a long time player and ST I’ve been able to help people “find the character” fairly quickly with this method.

1: Pick an emotion.

One of the core things about being people is that we gravitate toward finding a balance in our lives. (We may not do so well, but we keep tryin’.) A key way to make your PC memorable, to both yourself and others, is to capture one emotion. All other feelings are tiny satellites of that core self. This will also make the PC subtly inhuman.

This does two things:

- A) It helps you quickly find the character and run with any scenario. This is especially useful in the beginning when all you have is written prehistory for the PC, but no real experience playing it with/against other PC’s.
- B) Really helps write the background. If you know what the PC will embody, then you will more easily create situations that “made them” that way.

Example: PC is Envious. Perhaps she started out loving and caring, but since every time she tried to grow she was beaten down by circumstance or “an individual” she now loathes those who have more than she. She had to fight for every scrap, and so hates anyone having it easy.

2: Pick Song(s)

You can pick a video, or movie, or book also. I prefer songs because of their ability to concentrate so much into

a relatively short period of time. I recommend 1 key song, and then a few more to accent aspects of the PC.

This is awesome because it lets you listen to the songs on the way to game, or even at game and get into the PC even more.

NOTE: This song list is not necessarily set in stone. If you ever find a better match then change it up. I always transition slowly though. I add a song to see if I dig it, before I drop a song. Unless I have a radical life change for the PC. (Found true love, Lost true love, changed Covenants, was discovered to be a murderer, etc...) Then spin the wheel. Heck you can have someone else choose songs at random and try to change your core to adapt. The Stress of doing so will convey the PC’s inner turmoil at combating past vs. present Modus Operandi. (You didn’t think I knew French didja?)

3: The clothes make the man.

Choose an article of clothes, or even several pieces, and put it (them) on in front of the mirror.

This will anchor that moment in your mind as “being IC.” This helps quickly “find” the PC by association. I know it sounds odd, but how many of you “take your hats off” when the scene is frozen for adjudication. Oddly enough as the ST says “OK get back into character,” you put the hat on. (Creepy but true)

4: Quotes

Get some quotes. Find other PC’s that will have background ties with you at creation and work some stuff like that out.

You can put together a list of these and just repeat them into a mirror until you are IC.

Especially useful if you are walking out into a big scene. You want to REALLY BE the PC at that time. Reinforcing speech patterns (Especially if you are doing an accent) just drives this home for me.

One thing to avoid: Don’t try to be Chris Williams. He is cooler than the rest of us. You can’t set the bar that high. You might pull a cool muscle and wind up being all nerdy for the rest of your life.

But seriously, one thing I try to do is to make it a game. (I know the game is a game. I mean getting into character is a game.) Look for different ways to do it yourself. Explore and have fun with it.

I hope this helps and remember LIFE IS GOOD!!

Let's Look Lost

Sean Mooney

Welcome back, kiddies! It's time to resume where we left off and learn how to look Lost. This month we're going to go over those magical creatures that go bump in the night. These sneaky fae have transgressed and paid with sanity for their crimes. They are...

Darklings

Darklings generally have a few common traits: Pale complexion, transparent skin, and thin bodies. Some Darklings have extra hair, sharp fangs, and pointed ears. Some of these things cannot be portrayed in a live setting... at least I don't *think* there is a way to make your skin transparent. If someone does know this trick, please let me know. I'll pay well for the secret.

Until we figure out that snazzy diet that makes you see-through, we'll go over methods of altering your appearance to fit the above stereotypes.

Fangs

Fangs, for those of you who haven't worn them for your Requiem characters, are fairly easy. The first step is buying a pair of prosthetic fangs. Scarecrow is a good brand, and is reasonably priced. You can do a Google search for 'Scarecrow Fangs' and find several sites to purchase them.

To start, take out the fangs and test them out on various teeth. Figure out which spot would look best before you start setting the mold. Once you have a good idea where the fangs will work best, we can move onto creating the mold.

Please note: Each brand of fangs has a different type of mold, so the following may not apply to non-Scarecrow brands.

Take the carrying case out, twist the sides of a capsule and pour the powder into the deep end of the case.

Take the bottle out, snap off the tip and squeeze 5 drops onto the powder. Tilt the case in your hand and stir slightly with the stick. Within 20 seconds, the substance will become tacky. Stir it into a glob and scoop all of the material out into one fang. Use the stick to spread it

out on the front and back of the fang, as filling the cavity will cause more of the mold to stick to your tooth than on the fang itself. Hold the fang in place for five minutes. Make sure it is angled naturally, as it is going to set in whatever form you hold it in. Keep it still for 5 minutes, gently remove the fang, and clean the excess mold off your teeth. Repeat the above with the second fang.

Pointed Ears/Chin

Pointed ears (or a pointed chin) are easy to apply, but can look much better if combined with a bit of makeup to make them look real.

You will need the following materials: Fake ears (Google 'costume pointed ears' for some good online sites), Spirit Gum, Spirit Gum remover, Liquid Latex, Ben Nye makeup (pick a color that is close to your skin tone, or the color you intend your Changeling to be) and a pair of small scissors.

Place the fake ear on your own. You'll notice it is much larger than it needs to be... this is where the scissors come in. I recommend having someone else trim the excess plastic, though you can try it yourself if you feel confident. Either way, be very careful, else you will have shorter ears rather than longer ones.

Once the ear is appropriately trimmed, visually note where the latex is touching your skin. Remove the ear, and brush a light coat of Spirit Gum on the area of skin where the prosthetic will be attached. Wait for 20-30 seconds for the Spirit Gum to dry a little. The substance should be tacky before applying the ear. Hold the ear in place for 45 seconds to a minute to ensure it sticks.

It's time for liquid latex. Brush on a small amount of liquid latex on the edge of the prosthetic and actual skin. Wait for the latex to dry, then pick off the excess clumps.

To finalize the ear, take your Ben Nye cr me makeup. Coat the prosthetic ear, the liquid latex, and the skin around the fake ear. Blend the makeup in towards your ear with your finger to give it a gradual fade for the most realistic look.

Look Thinner

Unless you are naturally gaunt, this won't be something you can portray as effectively. Since most of us are not three inches around the waist like those pictures in the book, we'll have to improvise.

Some fashion designers suggest wearing dark clothing to make you look slimmer. Vertical stripes also give the wearer an appearance of increased height and slimmer features. Fortunately, black is the Darkling's color, and stripes will give you that nice inmate look.

There is always the option to wear corsets as well to accentuate the tiny waists that are often seen in the Darklings.

Look Pale/Dead

Some of the physical manifestations of the Darkling Mein are very reminiscent of low Humanity Kindred. To avoid plagiarizing my own work and wasting precious space in this newsletter, I'll direct you to the article back in October, 'Costuming: How to Look Dead'. It will not only give you the information you need, but give you an excuse to re-read the other awesome articles in the October issue.

Alright my fellow fae, that concludes our session for this month. Keep an eye out for next month when we go over some tips for the wonderfully versatile Elementals.

In each and every edition of Mortem Post, I write about how this Newsletter doesn't come together without *YOUR* help. This month it is especially true! So, if you have ideas, articles, art work, or questions, PLEASE send them to USNC.Newsletter@gmail.com.

White Wolf New Releases

<u>Release</u>	<u>Scheduled Release Date</u>
Fall of the Camarilla (Requiem)	January 23
Midnight Roads (World of Darkness)	February 6
Rites of Spring (Changeling)	February 6
Banishers (Awakening)	March 5
Lords Over the Damned (Requiem)	March 19

Convention Corner

The EC Region will be hosting USCC 2008 at the Sheraton Cleveland Airport Hotel May 8-11, 2008. This is the same hotel as last year, but we will have the run of the ENTIRE hotel! To book your hotel room (and book them early), call 216-267-1500. The room block is under: The Camarilla. The Room Rate is \$86.00/night. If you are interested in helping out, please contact An Doyle or Ki Hauser at nca.office@gmail.com. There will also be all calls for the various positions in the upcoming weeks. Also, the website will be up in the near future.

JeremyCon, I mean SWARE (South West Regional Event) will be held in Phoenix, AZ on July 17th-20th, 2008. Our "home" for the weekend will be the Crown Plaza Phoenix Airport. Check out their webpage at www.cpphoenixaz.com. To make reservations, call (602) 273-7778 or (800) 315-2621. The room block is under "The Camarilla Organization". Be sure to use this code to get our room rate of \$79/night.

ICC 2008 is being hosted in Detroit, MI, October 16th-19th! It is being hosted at the Hyatt Regency Dearborn (right near the airport). Because we are expecting another big crowd for ICC this year, be sure to book your hotel room early! The room block is under the "The Camarilla". Call (313) 593-1234 or check out the hotel's website at www.dearborn.hyatt.com. Pre-registration will be available soon on the White Wolf Website.

The Canadian National Event, CAINE, is being hosted in London, Ontario, March 16-20, 2008. London is only 2 hours from Detroit! Check out CAINE.Camarilla.ca for more information!

Unfortunately, this year there will not be an Eclipse, but keep your eyes peeled for a large FGotM out of the EC Region.