

MORTEM POST

The National Coordinator's Newsletter

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The Camarilla, a White Wolf World of Darkness Fan Club

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Making the Best of Where You Are or Going Where You Want to Be

With the winter doldrums kicking in for most of us, this time of the year is tough. It is too easy to get comfortable in your warm house and miss a game or three. It is easy to focus on the upcoming convention season and not focus on the here and now. But this is a mistake, because most of us have settled in to the rhythm of 2008, now is the perfect time to kick your IC and OOC plans for the Camarilla into actions.

Are you the only one in your game that is tired and stressed out? Probably not! This is a great time to plan a social. As a domain, go out to dinner, go see a movie, or just sit around and have a few drinks. This will build domain solidarity and make you much more excited about seeing these people at game. Socials are all too often forgotten in the Cam, but having a regular Social is a perfect reminder that the Machiavellian Prince PC is not the same as the guy who shares your love of miniature painting.

But, sometimes we need a change of scenery... No one understands this better than I do. So use this time to focus on where you want to go in the Cam. If some day you want to be the National Coordinator, work on building your resume to fulfill that goal. Most National Officers always have a project or two for those "when I get some free time" moments. They are all too happy to get one of those projects off their desk and into some capable hands. If being NST is your goal, I am sure they can use plenty of help for USCC (coming in May) or your RST may have a project or two for you.

If a physical change of scenery is what you need, start making travel plans for the upcoming 2008 convention season. The US National Convention, USCC, is coming quickly. After that, we dive into Origins, GenCon, and DragonCon, three great Cam attended conventions. We also have SWRE coming in July in beautiful Phoenix. If the dreary winter weather is taking its toll on you, I am sure thinking about Phoenix in July will help brighten your spirits!

How to Make Your Local Game Better

David Hoffman

Often times when speaking with players I hear complaints about how their local game isn't that enjoyable any more. Often times, this is followed up with a complaint about the ST staff.

Though in some case the ST's may be at fault, there are many things that players can do to make their game better that most don't know of or think of. It's been my opinion for years that we shouldn't use the term Story Tellers, but use Narrators instead. Players should be the ones telling the story, and the Story Tellers should be adding flavor to that and providing the environment that players imaginations runs free in.

The number one problem I see regularly in the Camarilla is the lack of people being prepared for game. Many people show up at a game with no idea IC or OOC why they are there or what they plan to do once they get there.

Before going to game take a few minutes and make a list of 3 things you plan to accomplish that night. This could as simple as insulting the Daeva Priscus (They are fun targets) to convincing the local order to use you to acquire books. Or you might have bigger plans like figuring out how to become that Daeva Priscus (this is especially fun if you don't play a Daeva) or blackmailing the Prince.

Next think up a few things that your character can talk about. In most games, there is some social time for the players while the ST deals with pre-game stuff or working with groups of players going off site to handle an issue. During times like these, people sometimes fall out of character because of lack of things to talk about. Make it a goal to stay in character for the entire evening. I bet if you do it, there will be several others that follow suit.

Just about every venue should have something to talk about. Awakening, Changeling, Mortals and Forsaken are easy because they have normal lives outside of their supernatural society. They can talk about gas prices, the weather, or the upcoming presidential election. They can make plans for a downtime scene where they go to check out this great new band/TV show/movie. If you really want to take it a step further, actually go check out the new band/TV show/movie and now you have material to talk about at the next game.

Vampire is a bit hard to come up with the mundane topics

of discussion, but should still be doable. Similar topic could be talked about, but with a bit different flavor. Kindred might complain about the drain their retainer has been on his resources recently due to the gas prices or the fact that they can't reach their contact on a certain night because he turns the cell phone off to watch that special TV show. Perhaps they are talking about there current attempts to influence local media to show off their power.

If you are having a tough time figuring out what your PC would talk about in Requiem, figure out what your character wants and find someone to help you get it. Maybe he is going to the big gathering next month and wants to present the Prince with a gift. Start asking for ideas for a good gift. Or if you have your own idea, find someone else to make it or procure it for you. Also, start promoting yourself for what your character can make/procure. A good business deal can provide great role play for several PC's.

Another thing to think about is hosting. Kindred should attempt to be the host of gatherings. And, Harpies should take notice. If someone isn't ever hosting the harpy should point it out. Why isn't he ever hosting? Should this affect his standing? If someone is always hosting, the city should take note of this. Perhaps their standing should rise because of that. Or maybe you should try to figure out what pull that PC has over the city, the city's resources, or the prince to be able to continually host like this. If done right you will have people bidding with the prince to host.

When you host a gathering, come up with a couple of things that are interesting to do. How about a party game or two? Trying to find out what was popular at parties when your character was mortal is always fun. Maybe a small contest among the kindred? If your PC is wondering who has contacts with the police, set the contest up so it requires police. Everyone has fun, and your PC found out a valuable piece of information. Puzzles with a reward from the host are generally a popular one. You could also get someone to volunteer to play a ghoul who will read poetry, sing or dance.

In the end players can make or break a game. So if you aren't having fun at game, before complaining about the ST's, try to make it better yourself.

Traveling in the Camarilla

John McBride

One of the biggest draws for many joining the Camarilla is the fact that there is a global game. It often draws many new members when they find out they can go to London, Montreal, or Sydney and game. Well, traveling out of the U.S. isn't in most of our budgets for a casual gaming weekend, but traveling to the game down the road or even the next state over is doable for many members of the Cam, but it can be daunting if you aren't used to traveling.

First thing to do is to make friends at a neighboring domain or city you want to travel to. You can email the neighboring domain coordinator or check out the CDBIE (Camarilla Double Blind Information Exchange) and ask for information regarding the domain you want to check out. The CDBIE is on the CRD (Camarilla Resource Database). They will fill you in on the gaming schedule, what venues they run and about their plot, providing you with an IC reason to go, and they might even list a few people that would be glad to provide you crash space. Another option is to network. When you read the email over the lists and you hear someone talking about a neighboring city, send that person an email. A simple, OOC message saying "Hey, I saw your message about XX, and I am thinking about traveling to your city. Can you fill me in on all of the details?"

The other way to make traveling easier is to have IC friends. They are likely to let you know what is happening at their local game. Or if they live six hours away, maybe you can meet up at the game 3 hours from both of you. If you head to your IC friend's game, I am sure they can help you come up with a reason. They might be having a problem with a tyrannical prince. You might get along really well and decide to join into the same cabal or motley. This gives you a reason to travel regularly and someone that you have made friends

The next thing is to arrange a group to travel with, because, road trips alone are not nearly as much fun as road trips with a friend or 2. Share with your friends that you have a date in mind for travel, have made plans for crash space (so you can enjoy afters without stressing about driving home super late), and let them know the plot for the games you plan to attend. Get them excited about traveling.

Besides the fact that road tripping with friends is more fun than road tipping alone, it will also help defray the cost of the gas for the trip (splitting gas money three or four ways is much cheaper than paying for it all your self), helps you not feel like a stranger there (because you have a car full of friends), and a few other people that can help you share with your domain how cool traveling and that domain is.

Another part of getting comfortable traveling is getting to know people outside of the game situation. Make it a point to get to the game early or arrange to stay late and go to afters. This will allow you to realize that the mean prince is really a cool laid back guy that shares a lot of common interests with you or that ice queen is really a warm and caring person, even though her character isn't. Don't hesitate to ask people for their email addresses if you seem to click ICly or OOCly.



Photo of Andrew Trujillo of the Hawaii Domain; Taken by Zarli Winn

I Want to Be an Officer

Mario Medina

In the Camarilla, it is all too easy to look at the Regional and National-level officers as “untouchable”, but remember, they are all normal people, too. They all started as new members. Some were new members “long ago” and some folks were brand spanking new as recently as a couple of years ago. One of the most common questions posed to the ANC Newsletter office is “How do I become an officer?”

First thing is start building your resume. Just like any job you want, it is important to be qualified for it. Even if you have the best ideas in the world, if you haven’t proven to someone that you can carry your ideas out, then you probably won’t get a job. Start talking to your ST/Coordinators; most of the time they will have an assistant position available. They might need someone to help run pre-game challenges or someone to help write plot. If you are more interested in being a coordinator, volunteer to run sign in or ask to see how they write their report.

Even though there is a big jump between domain level jobs and regional/national level jobs, don’t be afraid to apply. Every couple of months there is an all-call for an assistant position. The worst thing that can be told to you is, “Sorry, someone more qualified applied.” More often than not, when you apply for Regional or National level jobs and don’t get the position, usually the officer lets the assistant know that you want to help and you



Photograph of Julia Starr of the Houston Domain taken by Zarli Winn

might find yourself being tapped as a project lead.

Another thing to keep in mind is to find out what your “dream job” entails. Let’s say you want to be the NST, and you know you can tell a great story, but you don’t have any experience managing people or handling disciplinary actions. Find a position that lets you be a manager. Become the DST and manage the VST’s.

Showing that you can work with other people and manage their skills effectively is a HUGE part of being a Cam officer especially at the Regional+ levels. If you are weak on handling disciplinary actions, look at being an assistant who is responsible for this or start a dialogue with an officer who is skilled in disciplinary actions. A good mentorship is a great way to gain experience and to learn the “what not to do’s” without having to actually make the mistakes yourself.

Another way to find your way into a higher level position is to volunteer at conventions and Games of the Month. If you want to be a storyteller, offer to write plots, handle feeding tests or pre-game challenges, help out with IC Registration or be a narrator. If you want to be a coordinator, volunteer to work any of the other positions at a convention. Being a lead for a convention is a big responsibility, and officers know this when they evaluate your application.

Finally, offer to help out with anything. If you want to be the NC someday, contact him and offer to help out with whatever he needs. List your skills, your weaknesses, and your long term goal of being the NC, but don’t balk if he gives you a task the stretches your comfort zone. For example, if you are weak handling prestige reviews, maybe he will suggest you learn about this and then write an article for the national newsletter. Learning how to educate yourself and educate others on a topic is a vital part to most Cam positions.

By showing that you are willing to do whatever it takes, it shows you have the makings to be a great Cam officer. Once you prove that you have the “whatever it takes” attitude, that officer is usually willing to write you a letter of reference. And for Cam positions, have great references who can really speak to your skills, weaknesses and drive is vital.

So, start working towards your goals!



Photograph of Kristi Davis of the Hawaii Domain, taken by Zarli Winn

This month's newsletter is a bit shorter than usual. Part of the reason for this is we haven't been hearing from you, the general membership, about what you like, what you don't like, and your brilliant ideas to make the Cam rock. We are happy to take your articles, photographs, drawings, and comics. Also, we would like to publish a Fiction Feature, but to do this we need your short stories and poetry. So flood your ideas in to usnc.newsletter@gmail.com. Remember your thoughts and ideas are worth National Prestige!

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. They are looking for volunteers, so send your desired shifts and positions in NOW so you can arrange your schedule.

The South West Regional Event, SWRE, is being 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. Also, pre-registration is now available on the White Wolf Website.

ICC 2008 is being hosted in Detroit, MI, October 16th-19th! It is being hosted at the Hyatt Regency Dearborn. 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 to reserve your room. Pre-registration will be available soon on the White Wolf Website.

White Wolf New Releases

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