

From Out' The Wizards Sleeve...

By Barron Stringfellow

Part I. : Politics and Prestidigitation Don't Mix!

I found S.A.M. when I was about 14. We had a local Assembly in my hometown of Las Vegas...and, Figuring this was just one more great outlet for my budding magical addiction, I went to a few meetings. "Meeting" is, perhaps a misnomer..."Arguings" would more befit the context of these get-togethers. The President (All Powerful & Egotistical) wanted things "His" way...as did all of the other (seemingly) knowledgeable folk there.

How they all agreed to get Arnold Furst there, let alone where to hold it is a complete mystery! (It was decided to have the seminar in the living room of the Presidents Apartment, darn good thing more of us didn't go!). The lecture was deemed a success, and that was my last meeting. I felt it was a dismal failure that so few came, that it was in an extremely non-conducive arena for a lecture, and that the Politics had over ridden the Potential Success of the Lecture...ah well.

That Assembly fell, and was replaced, then fell and again replaced, there is now a new assembly (for awhile, anyway!). The members go their separate ways.

I went back to attending Gary Darwin's Magic Club...No Politics. Gary's club has one rule: NO Rules! We have over 200 members, more if you count the Transient visitors who do magic that drop by the clubs meeting places. No disagreements, no dues, no affiliation. We Meet, See Lectures, Perform, Discuss our newest successes/most dismal of failures, ask for (and Receive) help with this and that, and then disband around 5:00 in the morning...to go to work, or breakfast...until next week (Yes! A weekly meeting that was always well attended). We are a small enough club to get away with that! **[By the way, we celebrate our 40th Birthday this September (Wednesday, The 21st) contact Gary Darwin or Barron Stringfellow for details.]**

SAM can't get away with having so little structure; we simply have too many members. National Offices...all that jazz. So, how have the founders attempted to maintain peace, To eliminate ego, and to preserve tradition? They gave us a Constitution and Bylaws. Set up the Rituals, and have put all this information at our disposal! This is as good a time to ask as any: Do you have a copy of these tools? Our Constitution? Bylaws? Have you compiled a "Big Book"? I have it all on Disc, send me a CD-ROM and a Self Addressed Postage Paid Envelope, or Four Bucks (US Funds) or so to cover the disc and mailing, I will be

happy to supply you with one. It is each member's duty to Obtain, Read and Improve these documents. Learn what the Organization has to offer...and it has s-o-o-o-o much more than a Magazine!

That, dear Compeers, will be the subject of these articles. Not the Failures, The Egos, the Politics, not the things that pull us apart...but the Foundations of our great organization, that which keeps us together: One of the Greatest Magical Fraternities on the Face of The Earth! I will leave you thinking about The Society of American Magicians' Credo, Do you remember it? Do you understand it? Can you abide by it?

MAGIC ~ UNITY ~ MIGHT

Until next time, remember...Magic Happens!

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