

Survivor's Notebook

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A SALUTE AND A REQUEST

FIRST THE SALUTE to Bob Mills for his enthusiasm and willingness to go the extra mile for amateur journalism. Bob has been a force in three of the four conventions that I have attended in recent years. I feel that we need never fear for the survival of our hobby so long as people like Bob are with us.

Now for the request. This is specifically for those who will attend the NAPA convention in Carson, CA in July. I will be unable to attend in person, however in spirit I will be there.

NAPA holds a position of leadership in amateur journalism, and with such a position it also bears great responsibility. In my opinion, the responsibility includes the duty to promote and preserve the ideals that have long identified amateur journalism, and to seek means of advancing the hobby to include state of the art levels of technology as well as state of the art creativity. If NAPA is going to meet this responsibility it is going to have to change its philosophy. The bald truth is that unless the rigid adherence to one technology is expanded to recognize and accept modern trends and practices, the NAPA will cease to exist when the last letterpress printer ceases to print. **Can we not recognize that amateur journalism is more than a method of publication?**

My request is that convention attendees consider where NAPA is headed, and consider also the benefits of a change in direction. This is not to diminish the importance of letterpress printing—its rich heritage will always assure its survival. This request is that NAPA pull its head out of the sand and realize that the emphasis today is on using different technologies in addition to the traditional standards of the past. Furthermore, there should be greater balance between the various aspects of amateur journalism. More emphasis is due for writers; we need more members who are willing to print the work of others, and more writers who submit their work for others to print. This part of *ajay* seems to have fallen into disuse within NAPA. **Can we not encourage a more equal expression of journalistic talent?**

From my own year as VP, I am painfully aware that we have far more non-participants than active members. In effect, this means that the tail is wagging the dog; a few are running the show for all. Is that bad? Not necessarily, but should that few dictate the policy of our group to the

exclusion of all other voices? Absolutely not. With all due respect to the *ajay* giants of the past, we need to look at alternatives to a closed-mind type of government, and at least explore the possibilities of new thinking. **Can we not recognize that change is inevitable?**

As convention attendees gather for the 2005 business activities, I urge that discussion be opened to allow some of the ideas mentioned here to be heard rather than summarily dismissed as frivolous. #

--Hugh Singleton

BELATED THANKS

ONE OF OUR most talented writers has given up her membership in NAPA. Betty Simmons, who suffers from macular degeneration, has resigned from NAPA and The Fossils because of her failing sight. I consider Betty to be a friend, and it distresses me to realize that she has become so limited in a field where she is so talented. It has been my pleasure to print some of Betty's work, and I will continue to do so; I hope that she will not forsake journalism entirely, but perhaps by the use of a tape recorder, she will continue to give voice to her talent. Betty, we wish you the best that life can now offer, and we thank you sincerely for your journalistic efforts, with the hope that you will not abandon *ajay*, but will continue to prove that you are a survivor.

TURNABOUT

By

Betty Simmons

All right! Okay! You'll get your way.
I'll be your virtual slave.
I'll cut your hair and trim your nails
And give your face a shave.

I'll wait on you from dawn to dusk.
You finally wore me down.
You want to always be the boss
And take away my crown.

You'll be my master in control.
I'll follow every rule.
I have just one more thing to say,
Forget it! April Fool!

All life is an experiment. The more experiments you make the better. What if they are a little coarse, and you may get your coat soiled or torn? What if you do fail, and get fairly rolled in the dirt once or twice? Up again, you shall never be so afraid of a tumble.

--Ralph Waldo Emerson (1803 – 1882)