

CRAZY AS YOU WANNA BE - ENTREPRENEURS MAKE MISTAKES

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Being an entrepreneur sounds pretty glamorous until you try it. Many entrepreneurs like me have no choice. No one will have us or we can't fit under somebody else's roof. We find ourselves on our own and outriders beyond society's protective fringe. Only if we get lucky do we get lucky. Otherwise we live by our wits and on a shoestring. A lot of astrologers are like this.

Here is a good example of one hair-brained scheme I dreamed up that was all kinds of fun to create but that went absolutely nowhere. The time was 1969 and I was surviving by cleaning the toilets in an office building and helping out my brother Stephen and his partner John Crofoot Sullivan at their metaphysical bookstore, Circle Books. It was the first such bookstore in Ann Arbor and opened on the spring equinox of 1968.

Somehow I imagined that since Michigan had hundreds of small town fairs, cherry and asparagus festivals, and you-name-it, that all of these little events really needed to have some astrology and somehow get that the New Age perspective. Anyway that was my excuse to dream this up and so I did.

And as this dream went I would build a little astrology cart, one that was collapsible and that would easily fit into my 1966 Dodge Van, the same that I used for my music group the Prime Movers Blues Band (a lot of people thought we were a moving company). Then I would visit these county fairs and little towns, wheel my cart around, and sell tarot cards, books, and especially the "Circle Books Astrological Calendar" that had just come out. By the way, that calendar is still alive and published yearly, some 42 years later. That might be a record.

Anyway, with my own two little hands I designed the enormous cart you see here, with interfacing panels that snapped into place, a big wooden banner-like sign all around the top, and plenty of space inside to store the books and materials. I even hand-carved the two oak handles and made the oversized wheels, axel, and cotter pins. And of course I designed all the art, colors, and painted it myself. And it does look like I painted it myself. I love things like this: design, color, themes. You get the idea. I was dreaming.

The reality of it all is that this thing weighed a ton and I had to almost completely dismantle it every time, including taking the wheels off the axle (if I remember right). Somehow I would manage to get it into the back of my van all by myself and drive hither and yon to this or that little town. It almost killed me each time just to get it out of the van and it took forever to assemble and load the books and then....

And then no one was interested in it, the books, the tarot cards, or me.

I had failed to consider that these small towns were not Ann Arbor, were not liberal, were not interested in New Age "anything," and that the words "Astrology" and "Palmistry" were just the very last thing they wanted to see at their precious town fairs or events. Hmmmm. Why didn't I think of that?

The bottom line is that after several such outings I got the message. By that time I was also totally sick of moving the enormous cart around and more than happy to consign it to history. I

am sure that Circle Books was kind enough to finance it and probably did not torture me about it afterward.

So anyway, the year was 1969, the place the Midwest, the entrepreneur yours truly, and the result a complete failure. However as a poster maker, etc., I did have a lot of fun using bright colors, designs, and seeing "Astrology" in large type. Now if I only could learn to letter properly!

So this shows that for every entrepreneurial success there are many, many lame-brained ideas like this one. But I had fun for a while.

Did I tell you about my idea to go around to local farmers and offer to paint huge sacred symbols on the sides of their barn for free? I will save that for another time....

