

Raven's Herald

Vol. 17 Number 1

Habita Diem Gravis

Winter, 604

Crown Encourages Nimani Laws to Change

Long have the people of the Kingdom of Evendarr struggled with the dichotomy that is Niman. On one side of the coin, Niman is reputed to be a cultural center par none, with art, artists, and educational facilities matched only by the top universities of Draelonde, Myrr, and Quentari. Niman is also known for exceptional horses of great stamina and strength. It is ruled by Duke Vordan Nicadaemus, who is regarded by most as a model of noble society. He is known as a brave fighter and served with King Roderick in Evendarr. Although he rarely leads the

forces of Niman into battle now, he remains a capable horseman and champion falconer, a master at chess, a witty and charming raconteur and a connoisseur of fine arts, fashion and music.

On the other side of the coin are the dark rumors and half-truths that surround the land. That the true leadership behind the Duchy is strangely long-lived. That slaves bought at auction by important nobles

and merchants in years past have rarely been seen again. That few living beings dare walk the streets at night. That the armies of Niman double in size in the darkness.

What is known of its history is that Niman was once part of the Empire of Hadran, begun as a small fortress town known as Gorm Kherz. When the majority of Hadran's Imperial Family were destroyed in the backlash of a massive gating formal

gone awry, in the ensuing confusion, Gorm Kherz declared itself independent of all outside rule, and began to claim the lands to the north and east. Over time the realm expanded to its present configurations, and took for itself the old name by which it was known to the Quentari Elves: "Nimn," or "Niman" in Commonspeech. Some 40 years after, the Kingdom of Evendarr was founded. Nearly five centuries later, after an entire Healers' Guild was executed for Necromancy along the Ashbury/Niman border, King Roderick the



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Torturers Among Us?

I was traveling to Ravenholt with my two sisters and my brother-in-law when we were overtaken by a wagon from a caravan, which had been attacked by brigands. The teamster who was driving told us they had been attacked by brigands and robbed. Many things had been stolen from them but he told us that one item, a bronze urn, was particularly missed and would gain us a reward of fifty gold.

We were once farmers, but our farm was destroyed by Garn. With no way to earn a living we decided to move to Ravenholt City and seek our fortunes there. This reward would certainly help in getting us established in our new home. My sister's husband, Samuel, decided we should try to gain this benefit for ourselves. With high hopes, we turned back to the place where we were told the robbery took place, to track the brigands.

Sure enough, we found their tracks, clear as day. Many displaced farmers have taken to robbery to feed their families, and most lack the skills necessary to cover their tracks. We tracked them easily enough. Finding their camp, we waited for them to leave, then searched their pitiful campsite. They

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About the Barrier

The Raven's Herald has had numerous requests for information pertaining to the so-called "Magical Barrier" around the duchy. It is believed to have come into existence in 595, and no one is quite sure how or why, but it seems to be related to something called the Primus machine. Little is known for sure about that, although sources tell us the machine consists of numerous parts and may or may not have actually belonged to or been created by the renowned Primus. Several so-called "access ports" have been discovered over the years, but the validity of some of the claims leaves much to be desired. When the barrier first arose, it nullified all magical items within the confines of the duchy and prevented any from coming in. Over time, it has changed (some say evolved), although few know why or in response to what criteria.

Unlike its earliest years of known existence, it now allows certain types and levels of magic items to come through. Other items, it allows to come through, but requires the user to attune using small round crystals that seem somehow related to the barrier. It appears to have responded to changes made to various "nodes," or areas of particularly focused strong magic

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Trap Doors Appear around Ravenholt Guild Hall

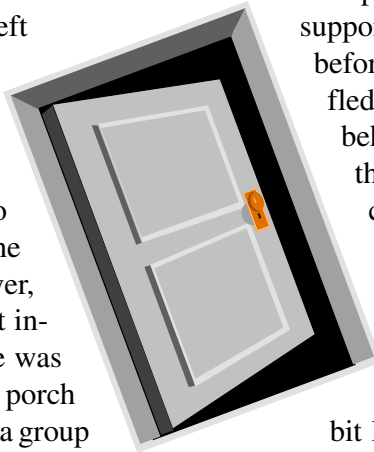
A mysterious trapdoor has been appearing around the Guild Hall in Ravenholt. The first time, it appeared in the ground out in front of the building. It had a seal on it that was a purple dragon, on a red and purple shield. Behind the shield appeared to be 2 staves or scepters, and a sword. The investigation of the first door lead to a trap-filled labyrinth. At the end of it was a circle of power, containing a suit of armor, a cloak, and a pair of gloves. The circle was approximated to be over 30 years old. The party investigating did not have the means to bring down a circle of power, and so they left and reported their findings. Upon leaving the trapdoor, it phased out and vanished.

A second trapdoor appeared on the porch of the Guild Hall. Very odd indeed, as while it was visible on top of the porch, there was no sign of it under the porch. This one looked the same, and had the same symbol on it. However, when opened, this one seemed to be different inside. The first one was very dry, and this one was noticeably dank and damp. It remained on the porch for quite a while. It took some time, but finally a group was assembled to investigate. As they were climbing down the ladder inside, the trapdoor began to phase out! Only part of the group was inside when it disappeared entirely. They said that the door had vanished from their side as well, leaving them wondering if they would be able to get out again. Happily, the trapdoor appeared a short time later, this time inside the Guild Hall itself. Out clambered the investi-

gating party, injured from an explosive trap but otherwise all alive (so to speak, as the whole town was undead-transforming at the time!) The second trapdoor led to a series of rooms. There were several traps found, and the body of an apparent thief who met an untimely end down there. In the end room of this area appeared a circle of power with a gleaming long sword sitting on a table. The group tried to grab the sword, and the circle of power was fading as they arrived. But the explosion of a trap, which had been set on a main support timber, caused the area to begin to cave in before they could reach the weapon. As the group fled back up the stairs, the rooms were caving in behind them. When they got to the top, they found the trapdoor had reappeared, and made their escape.

A third trapdoor appeared inside the Guild Hall on Sunday morning, as the town was moving out to stop the transform formal that was effecting all of us. Reports are that the third door had a symbol that looked quite a bit like the Healers' Guild symbol on it. Unfortunately, due to the pressing matters, no one was able to investigate this door. By the time everyone came back to town after the formal had been stopped, the trapdoor was gone.

Anyone having any information to contribute to these appearances should speak with the Guild Hall directly.



Lord Dire Falls in Battle with the Vampire Rhazohn

Reports have reach the Raven's Herald of the fierce battle fought Sunday afternoon on the 26th of October, 603, between the townsfolk of Ravenholt and the being known as Rhazohn, the once Stone Elf turned vampire, and his legion of the undead. The Raven's Herald has learned that Lord Dire was seen locked in mental conflict with Rhazohn, attacking him with a wild fierceness like the wolves from whom he takes his name. Our sources state that Lord Dire held Rhazohn at bay while the Quentari elf, Danny Silverbrook, carried out the death rite. Witnesses say that Lord Dire was still locked in mental combat with Rhazohn when the stake of woe was plunged into the vampire's heart, disintegrating his form and laying his spirit to its final rest. The state of Lord Dire is as of yet unknown. Sources have told the Raven's Herald that the Court of Capulus has returned the unconscious Lord to the Stonewood Forest to be cared for by his people.

Obituaries Voltreg, Beloved Citizen and Friend

The man known as Voltreg, a former citizen of Ravenholt and more recently ascended to what is often referred to as an "Alpha," specifically the bear Alpha, appears to have died his final death early this fall. He fell defending a gate that led deep within Tyrra, where something known to us now as the "Nothing" oozed and boiled away at anything living. He was engulfed by the vile goo, and his remains were barely recovered by Renard, the Fox Alpha, and those of Ravenholt who traveled with him at the time. It is unclear why he was overcome so quickly, but what is clear is that he gave his life to save many of those who work with the Alphas of Tyrra. While little is known about his barbarian life, as the Bear Alpha, he was a frequent visitor to the area and was well respected by all who knew him. He was apparently laid to rest in a somewhat private ceremony in a cave outside of town.

Strange Graveyard Appears in Ravenholt

Over the last weekend of October, a strange graveyard appeared just on the outskirts of Ravenholt city. In some ways similar to the Graveyard of the Four Winds, this place seemed even more desolate and bleak than that graveyard that appears this time of year on a regular basis. There were quite a few gravestones inside the fenced-off area, but only one had any writing upon it. It was etched with:

THORHEIM
<<—————>>
THEODORIK VARDIK

During your reign

*Murder of the Eastwyck family
Destruction of the Northmen
Destruction of the Biata*

Do you really deserve to rest with Heroes?

Individuals investigating the area later in the weekend found the gravestones and, indeed, the graveyard itself, had disappeared, leaving more questions than answers. Who was Theodorik Vardik? When was his “reign?” And most importantly, why is his gravestone floating around our Duchy! Anyone with information is asked to contact the Raven’s Herald for a follow-up story.

Letter to the Editor

To the Citizens of Ravenholt ...

I have been a visitor to your lands for several years now.

I arrived with many preconceived notions as to what I would find when I arrived in Ravenholt. I was told Ravenholt was a place full of thugs and that, once it was known that I was a citizen of Niman, I would find no friends there. I am happy to say that for the most part, you all proved them wrong. I have made many friends in your town - Kestrel, Keyla, Ulrick, many, many others, and to a bit of my surprise even a few people of the Nobility.

However, one weekend a few weeks ago events came to pass which cast strong doubts in my mind. When Rhazohn attempted to cast a formal upon the town and transform all its citizens into undead, your actions were suspect at the least.

Early on Friday evening we felt the formal begin upon us all. One of my friends within the Dasha Morbihan was dropped outside the Guild Hall. We managed to drag her inside the outer circle, and tried to revive her. She was being

Haunting Song Found

The following song was found tucked into a book of rough maps of Ravenholt’s baronies and surrounding areas that appear to be at least 40 years old. (*Ed. - Obviously the song must be more recent, as the Duchy was founded in 570.*) If anyone can tell us the name of the author or provide any connection for us, we would like to give credit where credit is due.

Ravenholt, Ravenholt

(to the tune of Capernaum, E. Miller)

If a’ the blood shed at thy Throne
Ravenholt, Ravenholt
If a’ the blood shed at thy Throne
Were shed in tae a river
It would ca’¹ the mills of Capulus
Ravenholt, Ravenholt
It would ca’ the mills of Capulus
For ever and for ever

If a’ the tears that thou hast wept
Ravenholt, Ravenholt
If a’ the tears that thou hast wept
Were shed in tae the sea
Where would ye find an ararat²
Ravenholt, Ravenholt
Where would ye find an ararat
Frae that fell³ flood tae flee?

If all the songs sung in thy halls
Ravenholt, Ravenholt
If all the songs sung in thy halls
Were gathered in the wind
It would shear the tops o’ Raven’s birks⁴
Ravenholt, Ravenholt
It would shear the tops o’ Raven’s birks
Till time was oot o’ mind.

If a’ the broken hearts o’ thee
Ravenholt, Ravenholt
If a’ the broken hearts o’ thee
Were heap’ed in a howe⁵
There would be neither land nor sea
Ravenholt, Ravenholt
There would be neither land nor sea
But yon rede brae⁶ and thou.

1. drive
2. new mountain
3. cruel
4. birch trees
5. low land
6. red slope/hill



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Panthergaust? What Panthergaust?

Early this year, we heard word that what was believed to be the very first Dark Elven panthergaust ever created had been let loose in Ravenholt again. There was some panic and trepidation, then...nothing! Not a peep for nearly 7 months. We've reported sightings of the dark beast sniffing about, mid-autumn, but again, no confirmation. There are two possible conclusions – first, that the initial rumors of this threat were highly overrated, or second, that it is biding time and gathering strength. We ask that all citizens keep watch, especially when traveling with any Vornae or Drae.

Raven's Herald Hiring

So much has been going on in and around the Duchy of late that our current staff is inadequate to the onerous task of both researching and writing all the news that's fit to print. As such, we're now hiring free-lance writers and researchers. Pay will be scaled according to word count and risk to the author or researcher. (Average pay per article between 2-5 gold.) If interested, please submit sample article on recent events about the Duchy to the Editor by January 25th, 604, for consideration for the February issue.

White Star Caravan Offers the Finest Goods

We procure the finest goods in the realm for sale, trade, or barter. If you need it, we'll find it! If you have it, we'll buy it! Send word to Thomas Velbright via Fleet of Foot if you have business to attend to with our fine caravans.

Dark Trolls Destroyed?

In the last several years, a small band of unusually powerful Trolls have been stalking the citizens of Ravenholt in the dark of night. With strange, glowing eyes and a ferocious aversion to alchemy, they were often found traveling in small packs that would take out townsfolk and bring them forth to what has now been determined to have been a Sessuar Mage. The Mage would perform a formal upon each captured being which would invariably end in the recipient's resurrection. Earlier this fall, it was discovered that there was a pattern to the attacks – the Mage was seeking out an individual of each primary race of Tyrra for a nefarious plan. While there is much speculation as to the end results he desired, what is known is that by the time he was trapped, he had created a grotesquery in the form of a skin made from pieces of all the races he'd gathered. We believe he has been dispatched, along with the majority of his strange trolls, but some few may yet have escaped. Any additional information on this matter would be appreciated.



Corrections and Apologies

The Editor deeply regrets that we have failed to properly fact-check recent articles about a minor plague that has been under investigation in Mallow. We have been working off of sorely out of date maps, and have been listing Mallow as being in the Barony of Eastwyck, when it is, of course, in Westmarch.

A Look Back

A Look Back is a feature in which we travel back through the annals of the Herald's publications to bring a fond bit of memory from days gone by. The full stories behind each item can be found in our archives.

This Month in History, 599

- Baron Johann of Capulus removed, Baron-Regent Gabriel Wolvestride titled.
- Roseheart Estate reappears at the hands of a Chaos elemental, after having been destroyed earlier in the year.
- Angus MacGregor, brother of now-Baron, then-Viscount Daramor Darkcloud, and husband to Dame Mother Merry MacGreggor, dies his final death in a Voltan border skirmish.

This Month in History, 594

- Sir Vandal Ravensblood of Baldor named Baron of Westmarch.
- Sakalid's lair discovered outside Mystic Wood.
- Countess Altair declares deSudbyr colors of Gold and Black with a Standard of Flames to be Common as deSudbyr and his team elude capture, while also changing the Cumberland colors to a white raven on a red field, in honor of His Highness Prince Basil Ravenhurst.
 - The Azrael Vardik (Blakeny) Newsletter, a slanderous periodical filled with secrets, innuendo, and outright lies resumes publication.
 - Mystic Wood nearly destroyed, restored by a bargain by Catahoula MacHine at the Goblin Market for a bottle of seeds that would "re-grow the Mystic Wood in one hour."

Niman from page 1

First repealed the laws against Necromancy. Shortly thereafter, Ashbury became a Duchy of Evendarr, and in several years, Niman was admitted into the Kingdom to act as a buffer between Ashbury and the Plains of Hadran, despite concerns regarding Niman's beliefs about slavery. In general, the Nimani considered slaves as property and not as sentient beings, and the Slavery Laws in Niman, in place until recently, supported this view. Anti-slavery activities would therefore be considered as theft or conspiracy to commit theft, and if the activities or conspiracies involved Nimani nobles, as treason. Niman's Incorporation Treaty with Evendarr allowed these activities to continue, despite both vocal and muttered concerns on the part of other nobles and commoners alike from elsewhere in Evendarr.

There has been an ever-increasing pressure upon the Crown by nobles of neighboring duchies and even those visiting the Kingdom from elsewhere, to rescind or change the laws that allow in Niman what is deemed illegal throughout the rest of Evendarr. Over the last several years, numerous ambassadors and visiting nobles have traveled to and from Niman's capital, Coventry, without much fanfare or to-do. Several of His Majesty's King's Knights have also made it a personal quest to encourage the nobility currently supporting slavery to change their ways. To that end, in recent years, Nimani leadership has agreed to move towards a program of Indentured Servitude, rather than that of holding slaves as chattel.

Indentured Servitude is a means by which one can willingly commit oneself to one's master to work in exchange for goods, services, training, and/or land, and which can conclude at an agreed-upon time by the fulfillment of a given contractual obligation (be it measured in years or gold and silver). Such a means has been in place in Myrr for centuries and being accepted for indentured servitude in certain households is thought by some to be of greater honor even than holding a lesser title elsewhere.

While the transition from a model of enslavement to one of indentured servitude is not expected to be an easy one, it is a great step towards a unified peace within all of Evendarr. Pockets of resistance have been reported, both within and without the boundaries of Niman, and some slave traders who have been granted working and travel papers within various regions may have yet to return to Niman since these changes have been enacted. This does not necessarily negate the validity of their papers, but should encourage them to return home in short order to be brought up to speed.

Concerns have been raised regarding the existing slave population – how will they be transitioned? How will their prior work be valued when considering what has already been “earned?” What penalties will be enforced on those people of Niman refusing to comply with the Crown's desired changes? How much support are the nobles of Niman providing, both

to their own citizens during this time of change, and to the slaves who must now be freed into servitude? How will the children of those in servitude be cared for? How are the people of Evendarr to behave in dealing with indentured servants, their masters, and slavers and slaves who have not yet been transitioned?

All of these are questions that are being studied by many, scholars, nobles, and commoners alike. None want to risk destroying the otherwise strong bonds between duchies within Evendarr by providing insult or making false claim through lack of knowledge of the evolving laws of the land. It is hoped that His Majesty will make a proclamation when these changes have been finalized, so that all can rejoice in the freedom of all the peoples of Evendarr.

In the meantime, Sir Derek Northridge, former Baron of Westmarch and now King's Knight, has made public commentary on behalf of the Crown, when asked about the differences between slavery and indentured servitude:

Good people,

There is quite a difference. The changes in Niman have been in the works for several years; it is only now that they are becoming more publicly spoken of. His Majesty is putting an end in every way to the practice of forced slavery. What shall remain, and only for those who wish it, is a system by which people can freely choose to commit themselves to servitude in exchange for homes, fields to plow, protection, and some measure of payment for services rendered. These people will be treated fairly and within the boundaries of the same laws you know pertaining to the relationships between Liege Lords and vassals.

This immense change in the fundamental economic and political structure of such a large populace cannot occur overnight and will in fact take much time to enact & enforce across the entire Duchy of Niman, but have faith! The time that we have spoken and dreamed of for so many years - for change in those lands and for those people, is now at hand!

His Majesty, in all His Wisdom, has heard His People and comes to their aid. To all who would read this and pass judgment of one form or another:

Please try to avoid criticizing the past or in other ways bringing negativity to what is and rightfully should be a joyous and momentous occasion. Let us celebrate and work together should His Majesty call upon us in the years to come, to help fulfill this dream of peace.

Good Day to you all. Humbly in service,

Sir Derek D.G. Northridge

Knight of the Royal Crown of Evendarr

Member of His Majesty's Orchestra

First of the Knights of Autumn

Grist for the Mill



Despite the need for necromantic healing, many townsfolk at the last gather of the season who were dropped in battle, mysteriously appeared to have been revived and fully healed although they were undead. Hmmm.

Squire Kerchek and Lilaiethyn (Lilly) Raenelindor seem to be hitting it off. Might we see marriage in the future for those two?

Lords Scout, Kade, and Ruinell of the Barony of Dinsdale, in Volta, along with Magistrate Glaive recently recovered the Douglas Colors. Baron Douglas was slain in 602 by a strong party of Un-

dead. The late Baron's colors will be presented to his son, Robert, in a formal ceremony later this winter. This noble behavior is quite contrary to the rumors we're being passed from Avendale that Zarak Redbourne, Scout, Glaive and Kade were all seen in Ashbury making deals with the Sessai to help overthrow the Ashbury Nobility, which we know can't be so!

Rumor has it that Kestrel has been enquiring to the local magistrates about a proprietor's license to open a massage parlor in the Duchy. Looks like Madame Baboinka's could be in for a little friendly competition.

Ever wonder where Baron Moonwind often disappears to? Well, rumor has it that the Baron is an avid sports fisherman and loves to sneak off any chance he gets to practice his fly fishing.

Someone's trying to spread ill-will about Avendale to the good folk of Ravenholt of late. For example, rumor has it, good Squire Amra of Cumberland dined with Karveki, a known Greater Vampire of some might, in the Tower of Zxaven! That can't possibly be so. Additionally, we're told a group of three Avendalians took Michiko, the Dark Elf, got her drunk one night, and buried her up to her neck in the ground. Ravenholt's Dark Elves would be in a killing frenzy

had that happened on our soil! Meanwhile, our people are helping the good folk of Avendale as much as possible. (*See News from Around Tyrra*)

Well, Sir Martimus is not so innocent as everyone seems to think. Sources have accounted a tale of the brave Knight of Capulus, who single handedly slaughtered a whole village of tiny munchkins and then baked them into pastries, which he proceeded to feed his court on Sunday morning.

Sir Garth to adopt little Cassie, the Mystic Wood Elf. It seems that the fatherhood bug has struck Sir Garth and he has petitioned the Duke to allow him to adopt Cassie, who through mysteriously circumstances was regressed to a 4 year-old child. Strangely enough, Cassie has been able to retain all her spell casting powers but none of the wisdom of age. We see a long road ahead for the soon-to-be Sir Daddy Garth.

Speaking of Daddies, what was with the undead children claiming Trivanus as their father a while back? And beyond that, who the heck was the MOTHER? Is that even legal?

Have Daenerys and Bedlam, formerly seeming friends, had a falling out? While until recently, they'd been cuddly, cozy "Grove of Life" buddies, it seems something's gone awry. Daenerys seems to be giving him the cold shoulder of late.

An unnamed source, purported to be from the Shaidu Garrison in Avendale, tells us that our own Telaris is rumored to be in danger of obliteration, even to the point of permanent death, should he return to Avendale...something about deep insults to the local Guildmaster on a recurring basis.

Meanwhile, emissaries of Volta have been seen in Ravenholt more frequently than in prior months, often seen traveling in full colors with several Black Ravens accompanying. We wonder if the recent influx of Knights and other nobles visiting from Dinsdale and other baronies of Volta has anything to do with this?



Vallentines Sought

It has come around again, that wonderful time of year for these messages of love. Started back in the day by our dear predecessor, Vallen, and named for her, the proceeds from these little notes will go to the orphanages of the duchy. Please submit your Vallentines for the next Raven's Herald as soon as possible. In order to make the appropriate issue, they must be submitted to the Editor for layout and typesetting by January 25th, 604.

Are you discreet? Trustworthy? Vigilant? Do you travel well and rapidly on your own? The **Fleet of Foot Fleet** is now hiring couriers of all security clearances for its new Ravenholt City branch office. No prior training necessary, but pay scale will be determined based on experience. Ability to read and write is not mandatory. Training available. See a representative of the Fleet during late day meals at the Tavern in the rebuilt Ravenholt quarters, or watch for recruitment notices posted around town.

Public Notices

To Baron Gabriel, Dame Seket, Lorien, Shatter, and Serrek,
of the Barony of Capulus:

Your aid to the people of the land of Avendale this September was a testament to your valor and chivalry. I thank you on behalf of myself and the Healers Guild of Avendale.

- Lilaiethyn Raenelindor

Looking for Components? Contact Funeral Parlor for renting of Formal Magic Scrolls, Formal Magic Casters and Formal Magic Components. Other regular items for sale as well.

FRESH HOMEMADE FUDGE and fine luxury goods are available at Cap's Trading Emporium. Daphne Green, Proprietor.

Dear UL,

I hope that summer has treated you well, and that you are preparing for the harsh winter that is to come. I am curious to know if you are still up for your offer of a quiet dinner. If so, please contact me. I'm sure you know where to find me.

Sincerely,
Celeste

To those who gave of themselves to form the Dryad Grove, I humbly request your presence in our Grove within the fortnight to discuss the most recent happenings and decide what we need to do to better protect ourselves and our Grove in the future.

I have found that it is unlikely that we will always be able to gather the help we need if danger threatens. Our bonds to the Grove compel us to do anything to ensure its safety, but those who do not feel that compulsion do not understand it.

I look forward to seeing all of you very soon.

May your footsteps lead you ever closer to home,

Daenerys Sjhon
Weeping Willow of the Dryad Grove
Warrior of the Order of the Grove of Life
Sister of House Ashwood
Daughter of House Silverbrook

Greetings,

The Barony of Capulus would like to extend its thanks to all of the town for pulling together and doing what was needed to stop a great evil. In the course of this gathering we have come across some formalistic materials that are not found in any of our libraries. If someone who was working on the formal could contact me via messenger I would be happy to discuss what we have found.

Sir Garth of Capulus

I wish to say thank you to any who were present on Saturday night that I did not get to thank personally.

The spirit of Hanable came to me as I slept that eve. Both he and his sister are now at rest, thanks to your honorable and valorous deeds.

Many vampires were slain, removing one more of the groups under the vampire who calls himself "the master". To my knowledge, there are still two lieutenants yet. Beyond them lies this Master.

Apparently, it would seem, that I misjudged my own fate. I did not believe I was fated to carry this blade and the task that it carries any longer. I was proven wrong by your deeds and your actions.

When I looked behind me, as I progressed into the woods, I saw something I did not expect to see. Friend and Stranger alike, gathered with me, following me into what could very well have been certain death. I am honored by your sacrifice and support for the quest which has been placed upon me.

Know this, that by my honor, I will repay this gracious deed.

May your deeds bring you honor, may your resolve be strengthened by valor, and may your foes be sundered by fury.

Jar'Nok Frumgajutar a' Moraumang Bajrak

Ketzuyado dochi ne gai Joru –

Ijiru doko ni anatayobi mashen samairu hihai soshite finto otoko summei

- Ichi Dare masho Shoeishin dochi ne Kansaeshin

Natalyia liked Ravenholt so much, she is coming back in the Spring. This time with more exotic goodies from the East and other lands to tickle people's palates, and food, too! Maybe some hooch, if she can find a good vintner. Be Well, Come and Buy, and Buy some More!

News from Around Tyrra

Avendale:

Ravenholt's Baron Gabriel, Shatter, Lorien, Dame Seket and Sir Leopolde, of Evendarr, were able to successfully save one Sir Griswald from his undead fate. Sir Griswald is a Royal Knight of Evendarr who had been missing for over 5 years, turned into an undead and made to work for Goliath, the Vampire that has been threatening to oust Karveki for the last several years. The search for Sir Griswald has been long and difficult, and the rescue party had to destroy the magicks upon him, which turned him undead. He has recovered and has been reinstated in the King's Orchestra after re-swearing his oaths of fealty.

Ashbury:

Baron Justice McCoy of Ashbury is reported to be investigating the availability of Baron Hagen Merik of Nordenn's, daughter, Brenna, for courting. Baron McCoy is currently married to former Guildmistress Shalazar, who is on extended duty for Evendarr in Marshaven. McCoy was recently named Baron when Radric Helfax failed to report when all nobles were called back to Ashbury to resolve the ongoing Sessuar concerns. It is reported that Princess Lillian Rotari signed writs to make all active Barons barons of Ashbury, rather than their own baronies, to support the whole of the Duchy during the Sessuar difficulties.

Hinterlands:

For almost nine years a Null-magic force has been expanding from Tazzleworm. It had recently jumped across the last barriers, which contained it, threatening to plunge all the Hinterlands into a dead magic state. Over 500 soldiers from the combined armies of the Hinterlands were lost at the perimeter battles before being turned upon their own people. Shadow creatures fought encroachment at every turn.

Recently developed Formal Alchemical magical solvents had held the anti-magic away from crossing a moat dug around the home of the founding adventurers of these lands. No one knew the Formal Alchemical liquid lost its effectiveness when frozen. November's cold weather has rendered it inert. A difficult battle gained access to the device, which created the barrier

- but nothing could scratch its master-crafted surface.

Just as the anti-magic expanded to the magical

bridge across the now-frozen and inert moat, virtually the whole community pushed across, with a trap-maker and production components being carried by half the party. The bridge was destroyed as they stepped off in a do-or-die effort to get to the now well-protected device. Fighters protected those carrying the large trap pieces, being able to be helped only by small healing elixirs. Three liquid lights were circulated whenever a Shadow began the brief process of "merging" with a party member, their way of initiating full control over the adventurer. Soon, however, light failed and the party was slowly taken. When the trap was set, a lone dark elf threw himself against the trap, but was stopped a yard short. Somehow this unnamed hero regained the strength to crawl the remaining distance. Lunging for the trap, he and many nearby were destroyed, but fortunately, even the master-crafted box collapsed. Immediately the darkness fled and the Shadows sunk into the earth. Although the anti-magic zone was destroyed, hundreds of citizens and perhaps thousands of humanoids remained inhabited by Shadows, although the control seems dormant for the moment.

Orders have come from His Royal Majesty that healing arts are to be utilized on all citizens. Any found with two spirits are to ingest an item on which a liquid light or light spell has been cast. This process results in the Shadow being dispelled. If the second spirit remains, the person is to be placed in the hands of the nearest lawful authority as soon as possible.

Ashton:

Stone from the quarries around the Ashton area is going missing during the nights. The dark dwarves have established a city deep in the hills below Ashton. No connection is reported. Circles and Greater Wards in the area have been displaying disturbing behavior of late, and Nature magic is getting more powerful the closer it gets to the winter solstice.

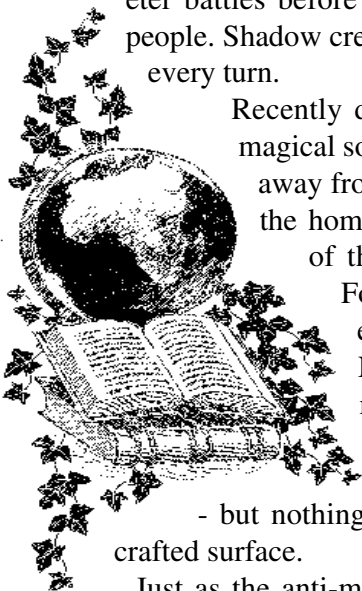
Therendry:

Citizens of Therendry, Be it known to all persons within the confines of the Duchy of Therendry that conversation with the entity known as "The Incarnation of Evil" is outlawed and punishable by death. It is, as of this moment, considered, by me, to be an Enemy of Therendry and its presence is to be reported to the nearest authority with all possible haste. If it is seen in conversation with anyone within the borders of Therendry then that person is to be reported to the nearest authority as well.

By My Hand and Seal

Ellis Pinetree, Sovereign Duke of Therendry

Continued on page 10



Torturers from page 1

must have sold most of the things they had stolen, but the urn was far too distinct to sell nearby. It was hidden amongst some scrubby brush and we found it with almost no effort. Covering our tracks, we fled the place and headed to Ravenholt to collect our reward.

We reached Ravenholt after nightfall and decided to camp in the forest since we had no money to rent a room in the Inn. With empty bellies we made camp and I took first watch. I am a mute, born without the ability to speak. I use sign language. Midway through my watch, I heard people moving in the woods. I was sure the brigands had found us and I roused my family to guard the camp.

Several figures moved in the darkness through our camp, bringing no light with them. Certain they meant us harm (why else would they sneak into our camp?), we attacked. We were easily cut down. When I came to consciousness, I was unclothed, both my shoulders pinned to the floor by swords. I was in a cabin with some nasty man and an ugly cat person. The man was apparently teaching the cat person how to torture people. There were others in the room, but I could not see them, only hear their voices.

I could hardly believe they had chosen me to bring back to torture for information. Samuel is the man of the house – he would have been a better choice. What ill fortune caused them to take a lowly mute? I knew that no matter what, I would die, but I tried to communicate just the same. They gave me a pen and some paper and told me to write. My every move was agony but I tried to answer the evil man's questions. He asked why we attacked them and accused us of being brigands. I could not answer his questions legibly and eventually someone else in the room told him to end his torture, so he killed me. I had no trial, and neither did my sisters or brother-in-law. We were given no chance to tell our story.

Samuel, my sister's husband, thought that bringing us to Ravenholt would be our salvation. Instead we took yet another unwarranted death. Evendarr is no longer safe; Ravenholt is a frighteningly lawless place. Samuel has decided we will move to the Northlands, perhaps we will meet with a better reception there. I advise all other people displaced by Garn to do likewise.

I warn all travelers; stay clear of Ravenholt if you value your life. Between the brigands, the undead and the citizens themselves, it is a nightmarish pit of evil and lawlessness. Many people are starving and have turned to crime rather than watch their families die.

I will not sign my name to this for fear of retribution from the torturer. I despise and loathe you, but lack any power to avenge my family. I hope the unicorn you were looking for sees how evil you are and avoids you.



Barrier from page 1

scattered throughout the barrier, though again, what patterns exist, if any, are as yet undetermined.

Earlier this year, the barrier began to fluctuate wildly, and suddenly changed again to now allow “one shot” items to pass through without needing to be attuned by the user. It also started passing through a large number of high magic scrolls that were previously somehow prohibited passage.

In recent times, sets of gates have opened, allowing access to the interior of the barrier. There are beings within who seem to have already garnered knowledge of the barrier and are willing to talk to those who enter seeking knowledge (*Ed. Note: they are often referred to as the “Iron Circle,” although we cannot find out why*). The gates open apparently at random, although there are reported to be various indicators as much as an hour ahead of time, including glowing regions on the Tyrran Map, which formed earlier this year.

The nobles' stance on the barrier is that anyone may investigate the barrier, but no changes may be made without first informing a noble of the attempt and getting permission to do so. Many other things have been discussed about the barrier, but what is fact and what is rumor is up to the listener to try and determine.

What is known is that of late, there have been increasing reports of shifting and unusual magics at the barrier's edge, similar to, but more severe than those reported earlier this year, prior to a shift in the barrier's control.

Fleet of Foot Fleet Seeks New Branch Offices

Neither goblin, nor troll, nor undead lich shall keep them from their task! So goes the unofficial motto of these hardy messengers. While they started out small in the city of Ironvale, they have become invaluable to the people of Ravenholt for transporting letters, verbal messages, and small packages in and around both the Duchy and the Kingdom. Thus far, the furthest a messenger has had to travel (so says inside sources) was to the border of the Dreadlands to deliver a message to a citizen traveling there this summer. However, given the appropriate pay and suitable time, these brave transporters of our most intimate words will carry notices anywhere on Avalon. When they go, they also seek out new venues for branch offices as they try to expand their base of operations. If you have traveled afield and either are interested in working for the service or know of a location in dire need of the skills of the Fleet of Foot messenger fleet, please leave word with an office near you. The Ravenholt City office is managed by Shedia Silverthorne, of the Silverthorne Mercantile. Missives can be sent to her between gathers and she will schedule an appointment to meet with you.

Tyrre from page 8

Lomari Protectorate/Greyhall:

Applications being accepted for governmental positions: Captain of the Town Guard - This individual will be responsible for raising a town guard to help patrol borders and insure the safety and well being of residents. Minister of Trade - This individual will coordinate merchanting endeavors into and out of the Town of Greyhall. Minister of Justice - This individual will be well versed in not only the local laws of Greyhall, but also in the provincial laws of Celeb-Arra and the remaining provinces of the Lomari Protectorate, military justice of the Paladin Order, and serve as advisor on legal matters to the Captain of the Town Guard and the Advisory Council. Grand Magus of Greyhall - This individual will be well versed in all matters relating to the field of magic, and will be available to coordinate the studies and training of all interested mages residing in Greyhall. Responsibility for town circles of power will reside with this individual. All interested parties should contact Magister Lucen Trevarius directly, at the Merchants' Guild.

Greyhorn:

Orc attacks are intensifying along the river towards Elmstar. Numerous spirits also have been spotted, sometimes attacking locals, other times not. However, lizard attacks seem to have lessened with the onset of cold weather, even though, strangely, snake attacks continue unabated.

Whitestone:

It would seem that all manner of undead are disappearing from the lands in and around Whitestone. It is unclear as to why this is occurring, but thus far, no one is complaining! At the same time, reports from the Northwest portions of the kingdom detail farmers, merchants, and soldiers, all suffering from some rotting affliction. Although it somewhat resembles leprosy, there are too many similarities to undead. Panic and fear are beginning to grip the populace.

Blackwell:

Extensive redcap activity has been noted in the area. Large insects have also been seen at night, although what sort is unclear. Spirits from the old Elven Kingdom have been sighted more and more often of late. It is rumored that the Sessuar have a citadel hidden in town – all effort is being put forth to find and destroy it.

North Portus/Galerus:

Gnolls attacked and destroyed a three mile long stretch of the Flavius Wall. Reports of the Gnolls riding on flying vessels are surely just the talk of storytellers.

Mandrake's Landing:

The main hall of the Plowshare Tavern recently filled with flames and smoke. The kitchen is also burning, although the downstairs rooms seem to be unaffected. No one has been able to douse the flames and with the tavern building rendered, the fire is not likely to stop.

Talis Ferry:

The derelict port in Westholm is being restored. Already one great ship from the north has come and gone, leaving in its wake much excitement and fanfare. Barges can be seen leaving Talis Ferry and heading down the river to Westholm. Construction has begun on a new dock to replace the previous fledgling one. However, a man fell into the river from the construction site. He was saved from drowning, but when asked he claimed he was crossing a bridge.

Myanthea:

The whispers are spreading that Myanthea is on rocky ground, as news of the permanent death of one of Myanthea's four Barons reaches the outside world. Questions are being asked by Evendarr, who have heard that King Jason and Queen Tenili have taken a trip away from Myanthea, for reasons unknown - and Evendarrian sources fail to report the whereabouts of the Royal Couple. Meanwhile, a beautiful woman, the epitome of grace, elegance and royalty, is rumored to have made her presence known in the town of Harrow, in Myanthea. Those who spoke to her say that she is the Queen of Tyrre - what nonsense is this? A Queen of Tyrre? And yet, if you ask those who spoke to her, they will tell you, if not in those exact words, in words that say the same thing.

Volta:

After pulling out of Ashbury, where they had been sent to aid in the restoration of that Duchy, it appears that the Voltan army has been not been demobilized. Instead, they remain fully battle ready in the field. In fact, Baronial militias have been called into service as reserves, to what end, we know not.



Letter from page 3

first-aided, but any healer knows that you cannot first aid a dying person. Healing had no effect, and as she had no metabolism, I felt the first aid was a hopeless gesture. We were told almost immediately - "Do not let anyone dissipate, we don't know if that will help the formal progress!" Understanding that we were transforming to undead, I took the step of assuming that the only course was to cure her by casting that which would heal the dead - necromancy. And so, I cast a cause ligh wounds spell upon her. We were outside of the Hall, off to one side, and I cast it very quietly. No one knew. As the weekend moved along, I knew the ramifications of what I had done. In my homelands, it is allowed. Indeed, as a trained healer of the Nimani Academy of Healing, I had to learn the basic usage of necromancy to complete my study. If you expect to heal damage that may be caused by necromancy, what better course than to know exactly how it was inflicted? That aside, suffice to say I knew I had broken your laws.

However, what I did was support the current dictate of "do not let anyone die."

At a quiet moment that Saturday, I placed myself at the disposal of Magistrate Kovan. I explained in private what I had done, and my reasons for it. My sentence: To suffer a death. Magistrate Kovan did allow me what leniency he could by sentencing me to a single death and not obliteration. The sentence was carried out by the Magistrate immediately. He was considerate, professional, and respectful. Magistrate Kovan, please know this - I hold no animosity towards you. While I think your actions were unfortunately short-sighted, you were performing your duty and I respect you for that. That does nothing to change the fact that my effort to keep a spirit from possibly fueling the formal was wasted. I accepted the probability that I would be executed by weighing it against the belief that it was more important to serve the greater good of Ravenholt. A death later as opposed to a death during the formal casting. But, the steel-shod inflexibility of your laws and land would not allow this. Necromancy is bad, and must be dealt with! That is your rallying cry. And so I paid my debt and served my death. A death delivered during a transform formal being cast upon the entire town. I managed to find my way to the Healing Circle - I am not sure how or why, as we were told that spirits were resurrecting on the field near the map. That is where my friends were expecting me to appear. Within the sanctuary of the Healing Circle, I was brought back to life.

I watched, over the next day and a half. For most of it, my friends and I were gravely wounded. We relied upon protective magic and armor to keep us alive. Time and time again we fell. As I watched throughout the days I saw many people fighting bravely. I also saw many people who seemed much healthier than they should have been, given the amount of

fighting that was being done. At least one other time I awoke after being taken down, only to find that I was 'healed' more that I should have been from just being first-aided. I submit to you that there was more that a little casting of necromancy over those days. I would be interested to know how many of the rest of you obeyed your own laws and turned yourselves in ...

I will be traveling to the Academy at Lake Hollym for the winter. If any wish to share thoughts, you may forward correspondence through the Healers at Hollym. I may return to Ravenholt sometime in the Spring. The lands of Ravenholt are ripe with promise for a great future. Her people are generous and welcoming. I do fear thought, that there is a deeply hidden blight within Ravenholt. When the laws do not apply evenly to all, and when all do not evenly live up to the laws, that is not justice. Those who administer the laws should live up to them to an even higher level that those whom they oversee. If one was to consider the citizens to be leaves on a tree, I fear there is a weakness deep within the trunk of the mighty oak called Ravenholt.

Respectfully,

Toulurin McLennis,

Traveling Healer and Law Abiding Citizen

Bandit Attacks on the Rise in Capital City

Reports of general banditry have been increasing since early Spring, with the majority of targets being small groups of travelers or minor merchanting caravans. Raids are often at dusk or dawn, and usually consist of two to four attackers doing a rapid sweep approach. Rarely are people actually killed, but rather they are often taken down via a combination of waylays and alchemical means. Additionally, they are not always stripped of all usable goods, but sometimes just specific types of gear. Often times they are left with enough equipment to protect themselves further should the need arise. Few have reported horses and carts being taken. Stranger still, in several attacks that may or may not have been related to the majority, a single individual was targeted by one being with rogue-like skills or a pair of rogue and mage. In the solo attacks, the victims were searched, rendered unconscious, and nothing was reported to be taken. Three young Sarr men, four Quentari women, and one young gypsy woman fell victim to these attacks within a month long period. There does not appear to be any pattern to the larger-scale attacks.



The Signpost

Messages to and from travelers lost at...The Crossroads

Winter, 604

Death of a Montecarlo

The Crossroads experienced its first permanent death at the last gather. Reuben Montecarlo has passed. As his brother, Padriag, put it best about Reuben: "His whole life was different from the rest of us, always going out on his own, doing his own thing, never doing as he was told...(when I arrived at The Crossroads I) was so happy to

see my brother in this new place. We got caught up, we told stories of times forgot-

ten and of new adventures. It wasn't long until we were adventuring together. But it would be our last adventure together."

Three members of Darksphere may have been the last beside his immediate family to see Reuben alive. Several townsfolk near the inn saw the Montecarlo family accosted by a couple of coyotes on their way to town from the tavern. They succeeded in fending the beasts off before aid reached them, and seemed pretty pleased that they had done so, despite the toll that the struggle seemed to have taken on them. Reuben told Darksphere of his plan for the

family to follow the river to find the skin of a grey river snake, and invited the three to join them. Based on their state at the time (the Montecarlos tired, and the Darksphere contingent lacking their best fighters), Darksphere counseled waiting form a larger or more formidable group.

The Montecarlos evidently decided to proceed on their quest unaided. The next morning, Reuben's brothers and cousin reported that they all had seen death, and that Reuben had not returned. As the news spread around town, many townsfolk could be

heard expressing a distinct lack of surprise; most know of at least three other encounters Reuben has had with Death.

That evening, Reuben's spirit manifested in the tavern, among his relatives and some dozen other townsfolk. The spirit spoke a few words to his kin, then faded out. The group in the tavern held a wake for Reuben, with several speaking on the loss of a friend. Talon and others noted Reuben's rashness and impetuosity, which had probably led to his demise. Padriag, Perrin, and Roxy led a group carrying Reuben's corpse to the field outside town, where it was consigned to the flames in a respectful silence.

Out-of-Game Information

Special Thanks and Welcomes

It's hard to believe that I've been running this chapter for three and half years, and even more difficult to believe that our plot team has been working together for three of those years. As a team, we have developed and run nearly ninety different storylines in that time – a number that seems overwhelming, on reflection. We've learned a

great deal in the process, and have come to be good

friends, where once we were mostly strangers with a common love for NERO and more specifically, for Ravenholt.

This year, three of our original crew chose to retire, each for various real world reasons, and we will miss them dearly. Mike Chin, Bev Nichols, and Rick Pierce have all chosen return to the world of PCing, although all have said that they would be willing to come back for cameos, so don't expect we've seen the last of any of them! Mike's career as a financial advisor has kept him enormously busy

of late, and Bev's work also requires more of her weekends than before. Rick simply wants to spend more time with his wife than he's had opportunity to in recent months – not an unreasonable desire! My thanks go out to all of them for their dedication and support.

Joining our crew are Nicole Guerard (best known as Fallon of the ARC), and Chris Herbert (Toulourin/Kendrick). Please welcome them and give them your support as they get up to speed with our whirlwind campaign.

Things NERO Mass Needs

Longswords
Claws
Other weapons
PACKETS!!!
Shelf units
Standing storage units
Did we mention...
Packets and weapons?
Heavy duty costume racks
Coat hangers
Baby wipes
Gatorade powder
Cloaks
Shirts
Hoods
Leather armor

New Program: Student Good Grades Discount Vouchers

This year we're taking a page from one of our fellow chapters, and trying a new program for high school and college students to reward them for good grades. If you're a current full-time high school or college student, and you bring Rachel a copy of your transcript, you will receive one event per semester (to a max of 2/year) at 50% off the regular cost. You must preregister in order to receive this discount, and need to provide the transcript prior to registering.

Bob Hawkins' Liver Fund

Just to update everyone, Bob Hawkins (Baron Alan Moonwind/Crossroads Plot) is doing much better after being in the hospital for a few weeks due to some long-term ailments that have begun to cause his liver to fail. He's back home with his family now, and sounding much healthier than he has in a long time, with many of his lesser medical issues cleared up, but he's now on the liver transplant list. When he first went in, he was considered to be in dire need of one, but since they brought things under control, he's on the slightly less critical list. It's unclear when he'll come off the list, but when he does, he'll be going in for a full transplant, which has some consequential recovery time.

Bob was hit by one of the later rounds of layoffs at Lucent, and therefore has been both without work in recent months and without health insurance, making his current medical expenses burdensome. As such, his family has started a fund to take donations to help out. If you'd like to contribute, please make checks payable to "Bob Hawkins' Liver Fund," and send them to Spencer Savings Bank, 93 Main Street, Rutland, MA 01543.

NERO Mass Returns to Its Roots: Scouting Program Needs Advisors

We are working with the director of our region's Boy Scouting organization in order to sponsor a Venturing program. For those who are unaware, in our earliest days, NERO was an Explorers' Post for the scouts. Venturing is sort of Explorers Version 2.0, providing specialized content for young people from ages 14 to 21. In sponsoring such a program, we become eligible for many scouting resources, including connections to teens who have specifically expressed interest in fantasy/sci-fi, theater, and other categories, as well as to advertising and camp facilities. The primary reason for us to get involved is as a source of new players, both as NPCs and PCs. Several other chapters have had great response from the scouts in their area, and have enjoyed working with their local Venturing programs.

The intent is to begin all Venturing scouts as NPCs, with the guidance and help of people interested in being the adult

New Player/New Character Guides

If you are interested in being either an in-game or out-of-game guide for new players for any of our campaigns, or if you want to help people new to given races who want assistance with their role, we need you! These are not the same as the old style race marshals, but instead, are positions intended to help smooth the transition into game play for other players. New players need help understanding the general ins and outs of the game – whatever our limited new player training time doesn't cover. They'll need help developing and submitting character histories, getting good, inexpensive garb together, knowing who they need to go to for various in-game and out-of-game issues, and how to play their race correctly in terms of makeup and presentation, and where to get good supplies to do so. If you're interested in helping out, please send Rachel an email so she can add you to the YahooGroup for this project (NEROMassNewPlayerSupport).

Evaluate Items Cannot be Turned in for Max-Out

Please be advised that the *only things* that can be turned in for max-out are NERO-legal coin and properly stamped 10 gold-piece green gems, unless the tags clearly specify that they can be turned in (we will only accept Ravenholt tags in this case). While items are often put out with a coin value for merchanting and in-game evaluation purposes, these are intended to be sold or traded in-game for coin, and are not equivalent to literal coin for the purposes of the treasure distribution policy, nor for max-out.



supervisors for the program. The BSA tries to have all Venturing programs work towards some aspect of leadership development, so we'll encourage teamwork and have the group work on specific small game-supporting projects they can really make their own.

In order to qualify for this, we need several 21+ adult guides for the program. We are required to have at least one of each gender if we are providing a mixed-gender program. The time commitment will be twofold – first, leaders will need to commit to on-site meeting time with the Venturers just prior to each event, and second, will need to commit outside time of various amounts to help on specific projects the group will work on, such as a single mask-making day or a props inventorying day, etc. If you are interested, please let me know as soon as possible. (owner@neromass.com or 203-426-7729. Thanks!

- Rachel

Ravenholt Plot Presence Available for Team Meetings

If you are holding a big team meeting off season or between events, and would like a plot presence there, either just to listen or to answer questions in-game or out, please contact plot with plenty of notice (minimum of 3-4 weeks) as to time and location and we will attempt to schedule accordingly.

Memberships Policy and Rates Changes for 2004

Between increased newsletter mailing costs and our new insurance policy, which has nearly tripled in price this year (now up to \$4000 annually), I felt it only fair to share the cost of the increases between all of our players who are covered by the policy, and not just those who choose to keep their character cards in our database. Camp rental costs have increased over prior years, as well. To that end, I am making some adjustments to both event costs and membership rates.

The membership costs for those NERO Mass members willing to receive their newsletter via email will be going down, and there will now be a special "newsletter only" subscription available for those who want to receive a paper copy all year 'round, but who keep their character records elsewhere. Event prices will increase by \$5 per person to help cover the event insurance costs. To make record keeping more manageable and to make it easier for me to provide members with their membership cards in a more timely fashion, I am also moving to a calendar year membership.

We will also be allowing new players a single trial event without the need to purchase a membership. Players will have to purchase the year's membership at their second event, whether PCing or NPCing.

If you have a current membership that expires between January 1 and June 30th, 2004, you will receive a half-year's credit. If your membership expires between July 1st and December 31st, 2004, you will receive a full year's credit. If your membership needs renewal as of December 31st, 2003, it will be renewed for a calendar year. Memberships bought before June 30th of each year will be \$20 for the full year with an email newsletter, or \$30 with the newsletter via snail mail. Memberships bought after June 30th will be prorated to \$10 with an email newsletter, or \$20 with the paper newsletter. A paper newsletter-only subscription can be purchased for \$15 per year. Event costs will be \$65 preregistered for standard weekends and \$75 for long weekends (\$80 and \$90 for week-of/at-the-door registrations, respectively).

Staff Contact Info

Owner: owner@neromass.com

Rachel Morris (203) 426-7729

Event Registration: register-online@neromass.com

Phone: (203) 426-7729

Mail: NERO Mass, 25 Aunt Park Lane, Newtown, CT 06470

http://www.neromass.com/register.html

Character Update: update@neromass.com

Melissa Gaudette (508) 226-4507

Newsletter: newsletter@neromass.com

Mail: NERO Mass, 25 Aunt Park Lane, Newtown, CT 06470

Adjudication: adjudication@neromass.com

Jeff Collins (508) 261-8842

Chris Herbert (508) 835-4393

Ravenholt

NPCs: npc@neromass.com (Gary Strong)

Logistics: logistics@neromass.com (Cathy Robinton)

Plot: plot@neromass.com

Crossroads

NPCs: crossroadsnpc@yahoogroups.com

Logistics: crossroadslogistics@neromass.com

Plot: crossroadsplot@neromass.com

For additional staff contact information, see:

www.neromass.com/staff.html

2004 Schedule

<i>Arisia</i>	1/16-18/04	
Ravenholt Revel	3/5-7/04	1/10/04
<i>Intercon-D - LARP Convention</i>	3/12-15/04	
All the following dates are TENTATIVE! Locations TBD		
Ravenholt Season Opener	4/23-25/04	3/20/04
Crossroads Season Opener	5/14-16/04	3/20/04
Ravenholt Long Weekend	5/28-31/04	TBD
Crossroads Weekend	6/11-13/04	TBD
Ravenholt Weekend	6/25-27/04	TBD
Summer Break		
Ravenholt Event	9/3-6/04	TBD
<i>Noreascon (World Fantasy/Sci-Fi Convention)</i>	9/2-6/04	
Crossroads Event	9/17-19/04	TBD
Ravenholt Event	10/1-3/04	TBD
Crossroads event	10/15-17/04	TBD
Ravenholt Event	10/29-31/04	TBD

Convention Help Needed – Arisia and Intercon-D

Hi, all – it's that time of year again, when our winter thoughts turn to our favorite conventions. We've got a room at Arisia which we're sharing with NERO Boston, and we will be doing a combination of demos and modules on Saturday from noon to 4 pm. Arisia is one of Boston's most active fantasy/sci-fi conventions with a variety of panels available on tabletop, LARPing, literature, costuming, and a variety of related topics. The convention is **January 16-18**, and we'll need help all weekend, but the most help (well garbed NPCs) from 11:30 am to 4:30 pm on Saturday. For more info, check out www.arisia.org.

At Intercon-D, we'll be running a single 4 hour mini-LARP which will be a continuation of our module from last year, in which the pirates of Byrne's Bay were overtaken and led astray by wayward strangers to the island. Intercon is a LARPs-only convention with upwards of 30 different genres of LARPs in one weekend. Intercon runs from **March 12-14th**. (www.intercon-D.org)

It's also a good time to start planning for this year's WorldCon (Noreascon), which is being held in Boston this year. It runs Labor Day weekend, and usually has between 10-20,000 fans attending the 5-day event. If you're planning on attending, I suggest you get your passes now, as they are already expensive, and get more expensive by the month. Check out www.noreascon.org for info.



Staff Position Available – Setup/Shutdown

We are looking for a devoted individual who attends both Ravenholt and Crossroads events regularly, and who can both get to site early (between 4-6 pm) and leave late (usually by 5 or 6 pm). Responsibilities include ensuring that all the necessary weekend paperwork and materials have been distributed to cabins and around camp (such as Ward signs, Marshal Notes, garbage bags, and so on) and setting up things such as the PC Gatorade and water canisters, plus occasional help with event-specific setups. During the event, you will need to ensure that the drink coolers are kept filled and that common area garbage cans are emptied and re-bagged. Shutdown procedures include helping with the cleanup and shutdown of shared spaces such as the tavern and the fields (monster camp handles module sites), and then doing a walk-through and final evaluation and neatening of the cabins.

2004 Cancellation Policy for NERO Mass Event Registration

· **21 Days' Notice:** Credit card charges other than PayPal and checks are not deposited until (at most) three weeks prior to the event. If you cancel prior to this time, your card will not be charged and/or your check can be voided without penalty. People paying with PayPal will receive credit via their PayPal account.

· **14 Days' Notice:** If you cancel at least fourteen days prior to the event, you will receive full credit for it, either in the form of a refund or a credit for a future event if the charge has gone through.

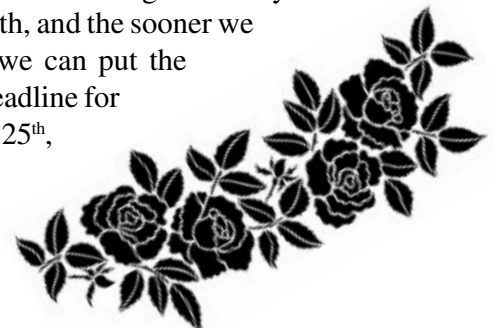
· **7 Days' Notice:** If you cancel at least seven days prior to the event, all effort will be made to fill your spot from any waiting list for that event, in which case you will receive credit. If there is no waiting list or if we are unable to pull someone from the wait list for any reason, you may find a replacement on your own. (Note that you cannot substitute someone for your event slot if we have a waiting list, so as to be fair to those who preregistered and were put on the waiting list first.) If no replacement can be found, you will receive goblin stamps, but will not receive a refund or credit.

· **Week-of Notice:** If you cancel in the week *prior* to the event, and there is a waiting list, we will attempt to find a replacement given time, or if we are unable to do so, will allow you to find a replacement if need be. If no replacement can be found, you will receive goblin stamps equivalent to the base event blanket, but will not receive a refund or credit. You **MUST** let us know prior to the event in order to receive credit. **PLEASE NOTE: Due to some unfortunate abuse of our prior policy of refunding in cases of emergency, we regret that we can no longer make special exceptions for such situations, but will make every attempt to find someone to take your spot, given proper notice.**

Refunds will be in the form of event credits or repayment via the method paid (cash will be repaid via a check from NERO Mass). In the event that NERO Mass must cancel an event, you will receive a refund or event credit as you choose.

Vallentines Needed

Please begin submitting your Vallentines for the next newsletter ASAP. We need often get as many as five or six pages' worth, and the sooner we get 'em, the sooner we can put the issue together. The deadline for submission is January 25th, 2004.





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 Newtown, CT 06470
<http://www.neromass.com>

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*Registration for Ravenholt Revel begins
 Saturday, January 10th at 10 am!*

The Back page

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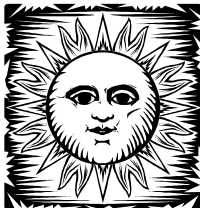
www.neromass.com

Ravenholt Campaign Web Page

www.neromass.com/ravenholt.html

Crossroads Campaign Web Page

www.neromass.com/crossroads.html



nero international chapters

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 * NERO DarkReign (MI) * NERO Empire (CO) * NERO Epic (TX) * NERO Florida (FL) * NERO Hartford (CT) * NERO Las Vegas (NV) * NERO Memphis (TN) *
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