

Raven's Herald

Vol. 18 Number 2

Habita Diem Gravis

April, 605

Undead Activity Unusually Systematic

Our fair Duchy enjoyed a fairly quiet winter with few reports of undead activity. However, the melting snows and softening earth seem to be raising a fresh crop of vile creatures of chaos. Of particular concern is the apparent organization of the majority of these undead attacks. Patrols and commoners have reported units of well-coordinated creatures that seem to be under the Voice Command of more powerful beings. The Herald has received reports from many quadrants, but the problem seems especially troublesome on the borders to the northwest and southwest.

Undead activity in Westmarch is deemed to be nearly triple what is common for this time of year, with Eastwyck seeing similar activity. Capulus, while slightly less active, has reported multiple attacks on Midlothian, Ripplemead, and Sercia, all along the Green River, which borders Westmarch. The small community of Reese, between Midlothian and Ripplemead, was nearly decimated by a marching horde that moved from south to north, raising up new soldiers of the night as they moved. Said one local merchant who barely escaped with his life, "I guess I got an image of what our warriors faced in that Necropolis thing in Ravenholt City. It was like they never ended...wave after wave of them, all

working precision-like. I've seen the Capulan armies on drill and patrol, and they were good, real good, but they're human and they bleed and die when they're hit. These things just kept coming back up out of the ground."

In Eastwyck, Burnisham Falls and Bestrick were subject to a similar attack; the outlying community of Burnisham proper was caught in the middle as the undead swept from north to south. Westmarch was hit by a force moving from Greater Bromley towards Thyren, but the creatures were routed and destroyed before reaching Kyran's Citadel, their apparent target. In several locations, citizens report that some of the more intelligent creatures did, indeed, appear to be searching for something, but whether it was an object or a person was unclear. Cumberland reported a minor incursion near Norumbur on the northern border, but the invaders did not seem to have the same level of organization as the other attacks, and therefore did not continue onward.

A woman with "some military training" who was a combatant against the forces in Westmarch, and who spoke on condition of anonymity, said "I suspect it's them Black Rose

Continued on page 2

Desolation Increasingly Unsafe

Reports have reached the Raven's Herald indicating an increasing number of attacks on travelers through the area of barely recovering lands around Ravenholt often referred to as the "Devastation." Travelers passing through these already treacherous lands have reportedly been set upon by brigands and had their wealth stolen. Worse yet are reports of undead attacks which have led to a number of resurrections. Duchy officials recommend that anyone planning to travel through this region do so in groups or along the cleared routes set up by the Barony of Cumberland and the others who work to protect the region. Be well prepared for dangers beyond the desolate nature of this area. One ray of hope: the land itself has begun to regrow somewhat along the edges and along well-tended routes, and local sages believe that eventually it will be restored completely. Several towns that were lost have made strides towards reconstruction and there is no limit to the available work for skilled craftsmen.

Acrid Circle Remnants Reported

Several individuals from various outlying regions around the duchy have reported a curious occurrence of late: the discovery of charred, sometimes smoking, circular patches of land, which smell of acrid burning materials. Scraps of what one mage described as "likely some consequential components" were found at one circle in the mountains of northwestern Capulus near the Westmarch border.

Said a hunter who found one such circle near his favorite stand, "There warn't nothing living staying near that awful stench! A perfectly good spot for buck and it's ruined!"

These burned patches have been reported outside of Cecil, in Eastwyck, by the lake in Waterdale, Cumberland, at the edge of the Falconrest Forest near Sorentine, Westmarch, and at the base of the mountains by Rockslide. Anyone with information about these or other similar patches are asked to report them to Ducal or Baronial representatives immediately.

Healers Flock to Eastwyck

Since our report last issue of the exodus of Healers from Eastwyck over the winter, it seems as if a number of families and individuals have found the idea of steady work and the protection of Eastwyck's militia a powerful lure. We have spoken with more than one group eagerly traveling to the northern reaches of the barony in search of jobs and guilds in which to work. While some prefer a less militant environment and choose to relocate, there is a definite draw for the enthusiastic and adventurous sorts now moving in.

Undead from page 1

fellers. They never did like Westmarch, and what with all the political upheaval and all these days, I figure they're making a move. All that other stuff, it's just a distraction. They always do that – they make you look the other way while they're sneaking up on you. These things, they was just way too organized. I don't know nobody else what's got so many undead at their disposal, do you? And if there is somebody what's more powerful than them, I don't want to meet them, thank you very much!"

Descriptions of several of the incursions reveal a definite pattern of attack, in which a vast number of minor skeletal forms would pass through the area first, sweeping straight across the region. They would engage any forces in their path, but would keep pushing forward. Defenders who tried to flank behind them soon found themselves pincered between the first waves and a more powerful mix of ghosts, ghouls, and revenants, seemingly grouped by units of controlling warriors, and maintained by necromancers of some power. In each unit, there were also 2-3 roving necromancers, who focused less on maintaining troop "health," as it were, and more on targeting the populace directly. Each cluster was filled out by protective forces. They came in sets of 3 units or more, and triangulated around those trapped between them and the skeletal wave. A man who resurrected after fighting at the Burnisham Falls incursion reported that the last thing he recalled were "Glowing eyes! Glowing eyes that never seemed to stop coming! And in the middle of them all, I'd swear there was this creature that had no face at all. He musta been 7, maybe 8 feet tall, and no face. No face." When asked to clarify, the still terrified man stuttered, "Not like a skeleton. I mean no face. No mouth, no eyes, no nose. Just nothing there. But I knew he could see me, 'cause when I saw him, he turned, looked at me, and pointed with this long, dark hand. That was the last thing I remember."

Obviously, anyone with news regarding these matters or further insight into the purpose and plans of these legions of undead, should immediately share it with local militia or nobility so that further such attacks can be stopped and the source of them discovered.

Another Unusual Map Song Found

Last winter the Herald reported that one of our scholars had found a song tucked into an old book of maps of the realm (See Winter, 604 issue). The song, titled "Ravenholt, Ravenholt," was clearly more recent than the book itself. We would not have recalled this matter, except that a gentleman who collects maps recently gave us the following. He told us he found a book of coastal maps of Evendarr with a worn parchment tucked inside it with the following song or poem inscribed:

Call all hands to man the cap-s'n
See the ca-ble flaked down clear,
Heave a-way, and with a will boys,
for old Endarr we will steer.

Chorus:

Rollin' home, rollin' home
Rollin' home across the sea,
Rollin' home to dear old Endarr
Rollin' home, fair land to thee

Let us all heave with a will, boys,
Soon our cable we will trip,
And across the briny south sea
We will steer our gallant ship

Chorus

Man the bars with perfect will, boys
Let all hands that can clap on,
And while we heave around the
capstan
We will sing that well-known song

Chorus

To Tyrrangel, her lovely daughters,
We will bid a fond adieu
We shall ne'er forget the hours
That we spend along with you

Chorus

Up aloft amidst the rigging
Blows the wild and rushin' gale
Like a monsoon in the springtime
Filling out each well-known sail.

Chorus

Round Cape Horn one frosty
mornin'
All among the ice and snow
Ye could hear them shellbacks singin'
Sheet 'er home boys, let her go!

Chorus

Now we're close to the Western
Islands
The lee riggin's hangin' slack
She's a rolling off her knots, boys,
Hear the main t' gallant crack.

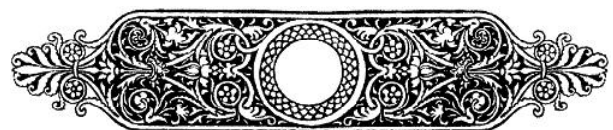
Chorus

Now the Lizard Light's a shinin'
And we're bound up to the Nore,
With the canvas full and drawin'
Soon we'll be on Endarr's shore

Chorus

Ten thousand miles now lays behind
us
Ten thousand miles or more to roam
Soon we'll see our native kingdom
Soon we'll greet our dear old home

Chorus



Public Notices

Akikaze-haido Joru Shoketzuyok dochi gai Shokan
Ayokudenki -

Kudasai komto homu. Anato ketzuyado nido anata.

-Natsuka Tsukimi Joru dochi gai Shokan
Ayokudenki

To all citizens of Ravenholt, as new Guildmaster of the Ravenholt Healers' Guild, one of my duties is to determine the membership of the guild. If you believe you are a member please come speak to me as soon as possible. If you believe you are not a member, but would like to be, please come speak to me as well.

I'm looking to the future of the guild and building it to better serve the duchy and the needs of the members of the guild. My vision for the guild is not restricted solely to healers or those of vast experience. Please speak to me if this sounds interesting to you.

Jericho
Guild Master
Ravenholt Healers' Guild

Alaric wishes to return lost artifact to you. Please contact Omi at the Mages Guild to finish business.

Omi

The Fleet of Foot

Fleet Messenger Service

When your delivery is important, choose Fleet of Foot, now with offices in Ravenholt City, throughout the Duchy, and growing. Delivering messages, both verbal and written, as well as packages, locally and regionally. Reasonable fees, speedy service.

Obituaries

We are saddened to announce the death of one of our own. Violeta Dana Monika Linas Sorin passed on recently, as winter gave way to spring. She loved life as few do, treating every moment like a wonderful gift. She was a beautiful flower, still in the bloom of youth, taken from us far too soon.

- Lucia Audra Rasa Linas Stelian

Dear Rime:

I miss you, and hope you'll visit again soon. Bring me some of your brownies!

-Shedia

Let it be known Ren, former member of the Clan of the Rising Moon is branded as RENEGADE TRAITOR by Kyrana of the Clan of the Rising Moon. Any and All whom have any Honor or Race Loyalty, contact me as soon as possible.

Kyrana
Clan of the Rising Moon
Citizen of Kushakowa

Missing:

Quint Goblehoe, age 7, son of Betsy and Quarrick Goblehoe of Davit's Orchard, Westmarch. Last seen in Merick. Please contact the Guilds at Kiran's Citadel with information.

Chester –

I suspect we'll meet again, though it may never be the same.

O. Probrium



Are you a skilled cardsharp? Are you bored with the easy winnings of your local game? Do you have strong moral fibre and a good work ethic? Then ante up! Avalon's Champion Entertainment & Diversions wants you! We're looking for a few gamesmasters who can deal a good game and keep a table running smoothly, even in the roughest of dockside bars. You'll get a cut of the pot and excellent benefits, including opportunities to travel and participate in inter-kingdom tournaments. If interested, please contact Aaron Witherspoon in Ravenholt City, Saturday, noon, of the upcoming gather.

News from Around Tyrria

Whitestone

Sir Midnight receives sponsorship from the Sovereign Realm of Kerkosa, to form an adventuring group, to be named "The Companions." Sir Midnight is offering a class on the art and practice of the Code Of Chivalry. Those wishing to become members must pass this class and swear a personal oath to uphold and adhere to the Code of Chivalry.

Avendale

Upon the death of Karvecki, the Scorpion clan was released from his control. Part of the clan had already been in rebellion against the main host, which were controlled by an undead chieftain, Forthas. He had been under the control of Karvecki. When Karvecki died, Forthas took control of about half of the clan, consisting primarily of necromancer shamans and those loyal to those shamans. The rest were welcomed into the rebellion led by Ranshal the warrior shaman.

Handy's Landing

Handy's Landing is all that remains of the Southern Marches of Avalon; a place once called the Marshaven Territories. In the second month of 605 E.R., a massive earthquake rocked the peninsula. The earthquake was so strong that its shock wave was felt well into the center of the continent. Evendarrian Rangers were dispatched to the area to investigate. Their report was grim. All that remained of the Marshaven Territory was a tiny atoll. The small port village of Handy's Landing was spared.

Terran Valley

On the morning of March 20th 5775, His Royal Highness King Pereguinalthamus Lanothyr was crowned as the High King of Terran Valley. His Royal Highness proclaims title and ownership of all lands previously known as New Terran, Territories of New Terran, New Haven, and Territories of New Haven.

Blackstone

The Great Dark Swamp is engulfing neighboring lands at an alarming rate - about 40 feet

a day - and that rate seems to be accelerating. The region is losing valuable farmland and entire towns are now at risk.

Ashton

Barbarians are moving closer to Ashton. Small groups of them have threatened travellers. Late at night, local residents have heard a strange howling sound echoing through the woods.

It is rumored that Lady Diplomat Lanana Turalien was murdered by Sir Edwin Sonapri as she made her way to an encounter with her true love, Gavin Whitehawk of the New Empire.

Elysia

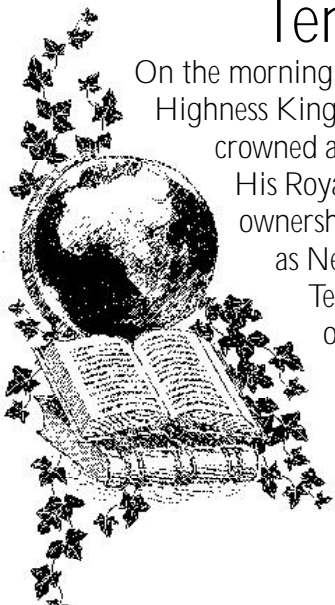
A plague affecting elves is speeding through the barony of Woodhaven. Any elf displaying the symptoms - fever, excessive sweating, uncontrollable chills and shaking, and feelings of "burning up" - are commanded to report to the nearest healer's guild or trusted healer immediately. They are further commanded to not make physical contact with any being under any circumstances.

Aeran'or

To all Travelers,
Bats, Rats, and Wolves are banding together in odd groups and attacking individuals rather openly. During the day the local guard has been able to keep their numbers under control; at night, however, we recommend that you stay indoors or travel in well-armed groups.

The Guilds of Freeton

The Raven's Herald needs you! We pay gold and aid in training costs for stories about recent events and articles of general interest. Contact Percival Blanche, editor, for more information.



Requested and Required

It is at the behest of His Grace, Duke Maximillian Greystone, that all Nobles and their Courts of Ravenholt do hereby present themselves at the opening Ceremonies of the first Gathering of Spring in Ravenholt City, in full force and presentation, as does befit and do honor to our Lands. It is requested that any Commoner team wishing recognition in service to the Lands and to King Mykel do so present themselves, additionally. All visitors, both Courtly and Common, are asked to present themselves thusly, should they be visiting the Duchy, for suitable recognition by all.

Belated Vallentines

The following Vallentines arrived too late to go to press in our last issue.



To my Lady, though the distance between us seems greater than an ocean, I shall forever keep your wishes in my heart

~ B.F.



Bedlam, you wild man, your Vallentine brought me joy and I wish you the same. You are equally remembered.

~ Vallen

Alyndale Honors One of Their Own

At their early Spring Celebrations, Alyndale honored Crystal Stone for her outstanding efforts in helping those in need after the Garn Devastation. According to those that she assisted, they would not have made it through the tough times without the help she provided. She provided food, shelter and money to people left homeless after the Garn Devastation. One farmer stated "She was there all the time, either her or one of her lieutenants, they were everywhere, making sure we had enough to survive, while the nobles were otherwise occupied. If it weren't for her efforts, I think my family would have died. Keep up the good work." Crystal has spent most of the last several years in the area of the Devastation and has only recently returned home for a short visit before going back to the area around Ravenholt City.

Tilon Merchant Company Holding Auction

Come one, come all! The Tilon Merchant Company is proud to announce that it will be visiting the fair city of Ravenholt! On the second day of the April gathering we will be selling goods we have gathered from across the lands of Tyrra! Of special note, we will be auctioning off a blade of exquisite craftsmanship that has been magically enhanced. All are welcome to come and view our wares inside the tavern at the first hour after noon on Saturday of the gather. Wares of all sorts will be available for sale and trade! We hope to see you there!

~The Tilon Merchant Company

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.

April, 600 E.V.

- Necropolis gains new allies in the form of chaos-tainted band of trolls.
- Death Knight takes town of Ayren's Crossing during daylight hours.
- Duke Greystone increases reward for Enemy of the Duchy, Nork, to 1000 gold, for questioning relative to "The Resistance."

April, 595 E.V.

- "Advice to the Lovelorn" column in the Herald seeks advisees.
- Baron Thomas Pelgar of Westmarch proudly announces his intent to wed Sanpal Tristemere Mirabad, Guildmistress of the Ravenholt Wizard's Guild.
- Baron Vandal Northridge declares the Brothers known as "the Redbournes" as wanted in the Barony of Capulus for the crimes of desertion and oath breaking.

April, 590 E.V.

- Series of racist letters, sent anonymously and signed only with a small holly leaf, threaten all non-humans.
- Goblin Army moves through the Northern Downs, on the attack.
- Baronial Tournament held for the Golden Shield honor.

The Signpost

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

April, 605

Ruckus Missing?

Word around town has it that Ruckus may be running out of components to make Rucki. Fewer and fewer have been spotted around town. To boot, Ruckus himself has not been seen in some time. Knock on Wood. Some of the local "neutral" Highlanders have had reports of the larger minions of Ruckus out and about making their own independent mischief.

Maybe these wandering greater minions are out making more baddies for Ruckus. Maybe Ruckus has given up on his Golems entirely and turned to undead, which would explain the increase of regular undead around town at night. Some people even say that they have seen standard ghouls travel-

ing with the Alchemical Ghouls. Personally I don't believe it and haven't seen any myself.

Maybe, just maybe, if we're all lucky, Ruckus got overthrown by his minions in a failed twisted ritual, his green corpse last seen in the gullet of a sea drake shortly before being removed from our world only to be added to the bottom of the sea in small digested pieces. Then again, last time we didn't see or hear from Ruckus for a while he showed up with a tusk-less grin and a new toy to try out on the town.

So buckle down, Crossroads, because Ruckus may be playing with your spirit next.

News from the Crossroads

Strange as it may sound to those of you who know the folks known as Sarr, or Gorbe, as their proper name may be, many people of this island have spotted what they are calling undead cats. I didn't believe them - that is until I saw them with my own eyes. Undead Sarr.. err, Gorbe, sorry, didn't mean to offend.

They are horrible creatures. Rotting, shambling corpses with the cunning instincts of their forefathers. Maybe shambling isn't the word I should use to describe them, they do everything but shamble. They wait in the shadows of the night until you are in just the right spot then... BLAM!! The next thing you know, you are sitting in a dark room across the

table from a rather unfriendly fellow who is debating whether to give you your own spirit back. Not very nice, that's what I say.

I know that scenario from experience... yes, even I, the great Z, have fallen pray to these creatures of undeath. It is unknown where these new foes are coming from, or if they are being created, or

Continued on page 7

Lind-El's Thoughts

This land has not always been so empty as it is now. This can be seen in the occasional ruins that are unearthed from time to time, the haunted remains of T'Sean, and the sheer variety of the creatures which pop up from time to time to threaten the people here.

It is this last of which I refer to now. For four years I have watched and warded this small bastion of civilization at the foot of Bramble Hill, and always there has been trouble. Some of this I have kept from you by misdirection and direct force. I must tell you that as the haze around our shores fades away, the troubles get only worse. I have seen undead, the likes of which were but tales of former lives, emerge from holes in the ground and bring death to all they touch. I have tracked more kinds of trolls than ever. I have even watched some who I first thought were townsfolk, and slipped away as they revealed their true nature.

Become ready, for there are those who look to be like you and yet are great in powers never seen in all my time as a huntsman. Yes, there is Avaleen, who seems kindly and is a Vampire. There are the many restless ones which are leaking from T'Sean. The Sea Drakes have grown bold or desperate, and can be found far inland near pools and damp caves. Giant snakes lie dormant in their dens, awaiting only the warmth of spring to come and sate

Continued on page 7



Notes from the Signpost

Greetings,

Has anyone seen some rather strong undead roaming about the land as of late? I am used to the common visitors such as Rucki, which really aren't undead are they? But Skeletons, those diseasing ghouls and regular ghouls, but I have recently run into some horrid adversaries. I would like to keep in touch about such things, at it may pay off down the line to be informed.

Please post here if you have any news,

~ Nicholi

Nicholi-

Yes, indeed my good sir, I have met these "stronger" undead. However I have also noticed that they are not just stronger, but they are not simply skeletons or zombies. In my home of Eastwyck we would have called them Revenants. Are these the creatures of the night you speak of? If so, heed my warning, good sir...stay away from them, do not try to be brave as they are nothing to frolic with.

Safe travels,

~ Hubert

Dear Sirs,

Please do be careful out there in the wilds. A few evenings ago I saw an insubstantial, indistinct form walking about outside my domicile. When some foolish young men tried to intercept the being they got a deathly chill. I waited until

the creatures were gone they ran out to heal their wounds. These creatures were not frail by any means, and yes I did fear them. I have not seen any of these revenants you speak of, but by your words of them I would not want to. Oh, I truly do despise undead.

Be safe and swift,

~ Emily Crowhill

ATTENTION TO ALL!!

I saw a frightful sight last evening! My traveling companions and I ran into a rather large group of skeletons. We decided to take them on, and yes it was a bit of a fight, we are strong warriors, but not champions. My friend Nathaniel was fighting in a straight line as he often does, until he came up to a rather large skeleton. It was quite different from the rest; its bones looked like they made armor around its body. Nathaniel hit this large foe, and his sword bounced right off of it. The large adversary they proceeded to crush my companion in one blow. Poor Nathaniel. We tried to take our revenge, but none of us could break through its armored bones. We ran, while I am ashamed, I am glad I did, as I am alive now to warn you all of this formidable skeletal warrior. Be wary of this creature, stay indoors, as I do not believe there is anyone here that could strike though it's thick armor.

Safe nights,

~ Gabriel

News from page 6

maybe they are just one more messed up thing about this place to add to the pile of what we have to deal with while living in this cursed place...

Sorry, I suppose I'm just a little bitter about meeting death for the first time since being back at home... ah, yes, home... where the ale poured freely and the women were free as well... well, maybe they weren't free. But I ramble on. At home there sure wasn't any undead Sarr running around. Isn't that against their culture? Don't Gorbe hate undead? I thought that was why they ate their dead, so this kind of thing wouldn't happen.

Anyhow... word to the wise.... if you see a cat, that isn't quite a cat... don't approach it, don't talk to it, don't try to feed it mint... just run away.

~ Z

Lind-EI from page 6

themselves on an unwary traveler. Kobolds are a constant, as they have always been.

And there is something else out here. Something which leaves its victims alive and well of body, but wholly empty of mind. One can hear their fading screams in the dark of the night and find them in contorted twists, still in their bedding, weapons still sheathed. It is this thing that worries me most, for I can not track it, save the few footprints it leaves just aside the victim.

Be safe, and hunt only what must be hunted.

~ Lind-EI

Out-of-Game Information

Ravenholt Playtests - 2005

The Following Nationally Approved Playtests will be in use in the Ravenholt Campaign in 2005.

Addl. Spells Volume I	Magic Item Slots
Archery Aura	Master Craftsman
Base 5 Alchemy/Harmonics	New Character Rebuild
Base 5 Damage/Healing	One Handed Block
Blade Fury	Physical Attacks
Cantrips	Racial Skills
Carrier Attacks	Resurrection Modifier
Critical Parry	Return
Critical Slay	Spell Crossover
Damage Types	Staff Thrust
Detect Magic Modifier	Stop Thrust
Harmonics v14	Storage Locker
Limited Reset	

Additionally, it is clarified that Curse of Transformation does indeed stop the Death Count.

Site Setup Weekend, April 15-17

Starting Friday evening, April 15, around 5 pm, through Sunday, April 17th, mid-day, join us during setup. There's room to stay over in monster camp, and you'll be fed, not to mention earning some gobbies (now useful for both Ravenholt AND Crossroads characters). Please bring tools!

Things NERO Mass Needs

Solar powered path lights (metal spike kind only, please)	Luon (4x8 sheets)
Solar powered lanterns	2x4x8' boards (sets of 4)
UPS Power Packs	2x3x8' boards (sets of 4)
LONGSWORDS	Gatorade powder
Staves	Cloaks
Polearms	Shirts
PACKETS!!!	Hoods
ORANGE PACKETS	Cake Makeup (Mehron)
Heavy duty costume racks	White and Silver hairspray
3/4" Plywood (4x8 sheets)	Leather armor
	Masks (specific)

Ravenholt Core NPC Team

The Core system is a dedicated NPC (Non-Player Character) program in which you receive training on how to marshal (field, rogue, formal, module, etc.), how to manage monster camp, how to run modules/adventures, how to stat monsters (both for the field and for modules), and how to support and train other NPCs, among other things.

We encourage you to gain confidence and strength in as many aspects of the behind-the-scenes elements of running NERO as you possibly can. In exchange for your commitment to being involved and gaining the additional experience, we count on you for some of the weekend and long-term key roles, as we know you will be in attendance for the majority of the season's events. Having a Core team allows Plot to plan for events and roles more confidently.

While you'll gain training in every area, if you have particular areas of interest, we will support your desire to excel by trying to ensure that you get involved in those aspects more than others.

Being part of the Core team is certainly not required in order to become heavily involved or to get interesting roles at NERO Mass, but if you're planning on NPCing the majority

of the campaign's events, it will get you more thoroughly involved throughout the year. You'll also become part of a highly valued team!

To get involved in Ravenholt Core, send an email of interest to Gary Strong, the Ravenholt Monster Master, at npc@neromass.com.

Some of the Things You'll Learn as a Core NPC

Who's Who in Monster Camp

- Monster Master
- Assistant Monster Master
- Core Lieutenants
- Core-in-Training
- NPCs
- PC-Shifting NPCs
- Plot
- Guest Directors
- Guest Plotline Directors

- Marshals
- Owner/GM

Playing a good monster role

- Playing to the stats you have
- Playing to the intellect of the monster type
- Playing to the skill level of the PCs (when to stay, walk away, or RUN!)
- Learning to handle complex stat cards successfully

Developing a solid NPC role

- Creating a personality
- Character flaws and foibles
- Creating a continuity of information, plotline, etc.
- Tracking of information gathered and given
- Moral alignment or moral ambiguity
- Habits and quirks to make it distinct
- Costuming appropriately
- Developing a suitable skillset
- Keeping what you learn to yourself (but share with plot!)
- Have a code of conduct for your character (what would s/he do or not do)
- Remember, it's a game – don't take it personally if the character dies
- Play logically (for the character)
- Having personal goals
- Studying your game history
- Believe in your own character ("A villain is a hero who has chosen the wrong way to achieve his ends")

Desk training

- Using the monster database
- Managing NPC groups for the field
- Handling treasure distribution for the field
- Managing NPC groups for modules
- Managing treasure distribution for modules
- When to ask for help
- Organizing NPC groups for the field
- Organizing NPC groups for modules

How to create stat cards

- Using the monster database for basic stats
- Using the rulebook to create PC-based stats
- Statting a monster that has base + PC stats added
- Build based statting
- Effect or skill based statting

Overall statting techniques

- How to balance for a field party
- Maintaining balance for the field overall
- Creating a single character encounter
- Statting for a pre-planned plotline (modules and field encounters)
- Skills and stats needed for low NPC numbers
- Skills and stats that can negatively impact the player base if used inappropriately
- Direct evaluation of the field as a marshal – how to tell when a field is well balanced and entertaining
- Developing stats for multi-level groups
- Developing stats for a scaled module or party

Marshal training

- Rogue marshaling
- Field marshaling
- Module marshaling
- Plotline marshaling
- Rules marshaling
- Formal marshaling

Rules training

- Read the rulebook!
- Read the errata!
- Know which playtests we use at NERO Mass
- Handling rules lawyering
- Making a rules call on the field
- Making a rules call in a module

Scenario training – dealing w/ disgruntled players, creating on the fly, etc

- Improvising an encounter when a plotline goes differently than expected
- Handling an Out of Game pissed off player in a module
- Handling a disgruntled NPC in a module
- Handling an NPC who wants bigger stats
- Handling a plot shift that needs major adjustment to a plotline

Module running – from setup through run

- How to read a plot write-up
- Getting additional information about a plot write-up
- When to adjust a write-up and when not to
- Gathering props for the module
- Doing module space setup

Continued from page 9

- Appropriate treasure for a module
- Appropriate stats for a module
- Hooking a module – the trials and tribulations
- When to be in-game and when to be out-of-game
- Shaping the environment for the PCs, without overdoing it
- When to make adjustments midstream
- How to scale the encounter up or down in a hurry
- Knowing when to let it go
- Knowing when the plotline can overlap other plotlines and when to get a plot team member to handle things

Running Character History Plotlines

- Delicate handling of character histories
- Know your character background!
- Involve numerous PCs
- Be extra careful not to spill private information

People skills

- Finding your niche(s)
- Clear communication with others
- When to ask for help
- Dealing with those pesky Plot people
- Handling complaining players
- Handling cheating

Leadership training

- Playing a minor role to let others learn and grow
- Observing others and providing positive feedback
- Knowing when to let the PCs lose (this is harder than you think!)
- Avoiding “us” vs. “them” situations
- Keeping a positive approach
- Teaching by doing
- Watching out for inappropriate behavior towards others
- Managing your own frustrations
- Encourage reporting of player problems

New NPC training

- Teaching new players the basics (combat, primary rules, etc)
- Teaching players teamwork/paired skill use
- Developing roleplaying opportunities with new players
- When to help new players stretch their abilities

- Making sure new players are having fun
 - Creating a team environment, not a competitive one
 - Dying well
 - Handing out the information you’re given
- ...and more, with every role you play!

NPC Earned PC Event Voucher Price Change

Due to rising expenses, NPC event voucher prices will be increased from \$15 to \$25 per event. All vouchers earned in full prior to January 1, 2005, will still be credited at \$15, but any partially earned vouchers will be at the new rate. Remember, to earn these considerably reduced rate events, you must pre-register to NPC, and must actively participate from game on to game end at three NERO Mass events. These vouchers are nontransferable and must be used within 3 years of earning them.

IMPORTANT Food Announcement for NPCs!

In order to better regulate NPC food costs (our second largest expense behind camp rental), and to help discourage wasted food, we are trying a new approach to the meal plan for NPCs this season. Rather than just an open-ended food plan, we are setting dollar amounts available to each NPC per meal. (This stems from the fact that a few individuals have a tendency to grab \$10-20 worth of food at a meal and leave half of it lying on the table when they head off to do something else!)

This means that if you want to eat more than the dollar limits at a given meal, you’ll need to pay for the additional food yourself. The amounts we’ve assigned are based on a year + of meal analysis to get the average expenditure by NPCs.

Under this new policy, we will be dropping the restriction on sodas and so on, so you can “spend” your food dollars on anything that Annie and Bobby sell – even the junk food! Feasts will still be covered for NPCs, so you will be able to opt for either the feast or the dollar-based meal (but not both) on weekends we have a feast.

Breakfast Amount -	\$5
Lunch Amount -	\$5
Dinner Amount -	\$7
Late Night Amount -	\$5

Student Good Grades Discount

As a reward for high school and college students to reward them for good grades, we've got a Good Grades Discount. If you're a current 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, showing the most recent semester's grades of all B's or better.



NERO Mass Info Only Mailing List

As a reminder, in addition to the nero-mass@yahoo.com out of game mailing list, there is also the NEROMassInfoList@yahoo.com list. This list is designed for individuals who have PC'd, NPC'd, or staffed an event at the NERO Mass chapter, who wish to receive informational announcements such as housing lists, cancellations, etc., without the traffic of the NERO Mass OOG list. To sign up, send email to: NEROMassInfoList-subscribe@yahoo.com or sign up via groups.yahoo.com.

Staff Contact Info

Owner:
 Rachel Morris (203) 426-7729
 owner@neromass.com

Event Registration:
 Phone: (203) 426-7729
 Mail: NERO Mass, 25 Aunt Park Lane
 Newtown, CT 06470
 register-online@neromass.com
<http://www.neromass.com/register.html>

Character Update:
 Rick Pierce (203) 445-1176
 update@neromass.com

Newsletter:
 Mail: NERO Mass, 25 Aunt Park Lane
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 newsletter@neromass.com

Adjudication:
 adjudication@neromass.com

Ravenholt
 Plot: plot@neromass.com
 Logistics: logistics@neromass.com
 (Cathy Robinton)
 NPCs: npc@neromass.com
 (Gary Strong)

Crossroads
 Plot: crossroadsplot@neromass.com
 NPCs: crossroadsnpc@neromass.com
 (Mike Holdorf)

For additional staff listings, see <http://www.neromass.com>

2005 NERO Mass Schedule

We are looking at Brimfield for all dates except Labor Day Weekend of 2005, which will be at Camp Kinderland, in Tolland

Event	Event Dates	On Sale (10 am EST)
Pre-Season Camp Work Weekend	4/15 - 4/16	N/A
Ravenholt Season Opener	4/22 - 4/24	3/26/05
Crossroads Re-Opener Weekend	5/13 - 5/15	3/26/05
Ravenholt Long Weekend Event	5/27 - 5/30	4/9/05
Crossroads Weekend	6/10 - 6/12	3/26/05
Ravenholt Event	6/24 - 6/26	4/30/05
Inter-Chapter Ravenholt Long Wknd	9/2 - 9/5	4/30/05*
Crossroads Weekend	9/16 - 9/18	3/26/05
Ravenholt Event	9/30 - 10/2	8/20/05
Crossroads Weekend	10/14 - 10/16	3/26/05
Ravenholt Season Closer	10/28 - 10/30	9/1/05

* NOTE: Early on sale date to allow travelers to get optimal airfare for event.





NERO Mass
 25 Aunt Park Lane
 Newtown, CT 06470
<http://www.neromass.com>

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JOIN US AT THE SITE SETUP WEEKEND
 THIS WEEKEND STARTING AT 5 pm FRIDAY!!

Register for Ravenholt & Crossroads Openers
 Spaces available for both as of April 9th. Ravenholt
 Memorial Weekend on Sale Now! NPCs Wanted, all events!

The Back Page

8th Edition Rule Books Available Online
 NERO 8th Edition Rule Books are available
 on the web at:
<http://www.neromass.com>
 via our Amazon.com link

NERO Mass Web Page
www.neromass.com

Search Service available for used and rare books in all fields. If you are interested,
 please email Drucilla Meany at bookshop@charter.net, or phone at (508) 835-4738.

LarpWare.com - Your one-stop shopping center for all your Live Action Role Play-
 ing needs. 139 Maple St, Manchester, CT 06040, <http://www.larpware.com>, Email:
sam@larpware.com

Center Stage Costumes - Leather goods, leather garments, Minnetonka moccasins,
 clothing, games, jewelry, etc. <http://www.centerstagecostumes> 978-469-9728 (As
 seen at the Labor Day '03 Faire weekend)



JOIN US AT THE SITE SETUP WEEKEND
 THIS WEEKEND STARTING AT 5 pm FRIDAY!!

NERO International Chapters

* **NERO Massachusetts/Ravenholt (Founding Chapter)** *

- * NERO Avendale/Ashbury (CT) * NERO Boston (MA) * NERO Central Ohio (OH) * NERO Chicago (IL) * NERO Chronicles (IL) * NERO D/FW (TX) *
- * NERO DarkReign (MI) * NERO E. Kansas (KS) * NERO Empire (CO) * NERO Epic (TX) * NERO Florida (FL) * NERO Hartford (CT) * NERO Las Vegas (NV) *
- * NERO Legends (LA) * NERO Memphis (TN) * NERO Metro (DC) * NERO Michigan East * NERO Middle Tennessee (TN) * NERO Midwest (IL) *
- * NERO New Brunswick (Canada) * NERO N. Georgia (GA) * NERO Northwest Pennsylvania (PA) * NERO Ohio (OH) * NERO PRO (PA) * NERO Piedmont (NC) *
- * NERO Santa Cruz (CA) * NERO S.Georgia (GA) * NERO Tennessee (TN) * NERO Toronto (Canada) * NERO VALOR (VA) *
- * NERO VORPL (VA) * NERO West Virginia (WV) * NERO West (CA)