

# Raven's Herald

Vol. 20 Number 1

Habita Diem Gravis

January, 607

## Report From the Front: Winter, 606

As armies continue to funnel forward to the front, a significant portion of Ravenholt's Armies are poised to defend the north from the armies of Theodorik. Losses have declined over the last few months, with many of those casualties resurrecting successfully. Many of the Barbarians and Biata within Theodorik's armies, however, were not so lucky. The harrying of the Death Hounds, whose piercing, ethereal howl can be heard shrieking out across the battlefield, is wreaking terrible losses upon the formerly "immortal" Barbarian Horde.

The Eastwyck Front has settled down considerably, with troops from His Grace's armies, as well as those of Baron Shoshoto, holding the line. Barbarian incursions have all but ceased across the River of Fire, and any raids have been quickly contained.

The Cumberland front, which has taken the brunt of the onslaught, has finally stabilized in these last few months. Forces under His Grace, including several Planar Brigade

members, identified by their black robes, hoods and servant elementals, have been working to solidify the lines and provide caster support to the line. In addition, armies under His Highness Prince Roderick, currently based in Longhope Castle, have provided invaluable support and assistance in organizing the Cumberland Militia into an efficient fighting force. These forces have been presented to Baron Amra, who is quickly and efficiently placing them upon the front.



Caravans under Baron Amra's direction have begun flood-

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## Mission Gone Wrong

December 18, 606 ER, we were scouting near the Kragen Moor. Our orders were to watch for agents of the enemy who might be trying cause trouble in Northern 'holt. If possible we were to take prisoners if the force was too big we were to watch and send for aid. It was a good unit twenty five mounted men under Lieutenant Morgan, a hard man but fair, and he knew how to avoid those undead what're helpin' in the effort.

Strange, to fight alongside those dead heroes.

We were on our way back to camp when we saw them. A short woman and a tall elf striding Northward without a care in the world. It was more than passing strange so we went to investigate. Would that we hadn't.

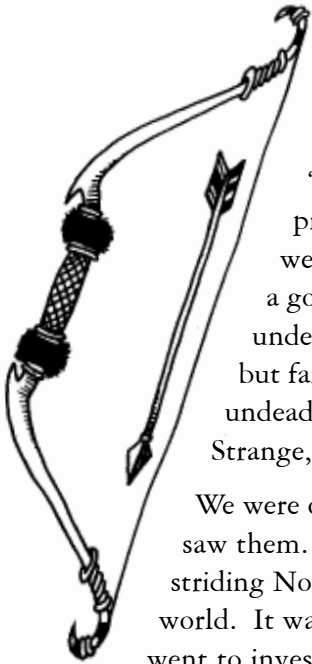
At twenty five paces we halted in their path. Lt. Morgan called for them to identify themselves. The elf looked at us disdainfully the woman called back "We are

passing through - you don't want to hinder us."

There was something odd about these two. They were both wearing collars; the woman had some paint on her face and was wearing furs. She had in her hand a stick that had something small and white on its head. The Elf was wearing greens and browns, he looked a woodsy sort. His bow seemed to shimmer in the faint winter light. Well the Lieutenant he told them that they were going to come back to camp. The woman she just looked up and down the line of us, very deliberate like then as clear as you please she says "You don't have enough men".

It was about then that all heck broke loose. The air shimmered around the two and they were surrounded by barbarian warriors. A shaft of light went straight through Lt. Morgan's shield and he fell from his horse, I never even saw the elf move. Someone called for a medic and the second called for a charge. A shaft of light killed my horse and it went down on my leg. The barbarians stood their ground; it was like they didn't care if they died. The woman and the elf just kept walking. She walked right up to the healer

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## A Call to Gather

The nobles, commoners, and allies of Ravenholt are called to gather at Wyrmbane Hill by the evening of March 9<sup>th</sup>, 607 ER. (Travel via central Westmarch, cutting from Goblinsbane through the Northern Downs, or with great care, up the Winterwurm River, only so far as Doeric, before cutting north to Wyrmbane Hill.)

Warren Ainsworth, advisor from the Court of the King, will be joining us there to share his knowledge of some of the northern barbarian tribes. From this encampment, we shall send forth forces to determine the enemy's strength in the area. In addition, an in-depth study is to be conducted on several aspects of the magicks of the enemy.

By my hand and seal,  
Johnas Stemple  
Duke of the Lands and Peoples of Ravenholt



## Lava Creatures Attack River Guardians

For the past few months the land around Ravenholt has been breaking open, allowing lava to rise up and form rivers. From these gouts of rock and fire, a wide array of creatures rise up, many causing harm to various living thing in their paths. One particular sort of creature appears to

be targeting forest and river guardians, and has been showing up more and more often. Little is known about these foul creatures, although they are believed to be harmed effectively by both ice and weapon blows, and they can apparently rip from lesser binding spells.

Some of the newer adventurers to Ravenholt kindly volunteered to help one of the river guardians clear her home of the creatures. Markland, Arias, Fayden and several others came to the rescue and managed to solidify the lava that was destroying the surrounding land. Just as they believed themselves safe and secure once more, a final blast of fire rose and died, along with an unidentified voice that seemed to be reciting a ritual of some sort. More information was unavailable to the *Herald* at press time.

## Curses You Say?

After months of all-night puzzle solving and a grueling amount of ale drinking (all on business mind you!) Ravenholt's nobles and citizens—under the direction of Sir Jason Askani—once again averted the destruction of the world as we know it. The dreaded eight-fold curse, foretold by Lady Bashian of the Rue di Fortuna clan many moons ago, began to take effect across Ravenholt this gather. Formal Magics became much more expensive to complete and people began fading from sight. Rumor held that if unchecked, the curse would culminate in utter corruption among the nobility and the cessation of healing magic in the land. Luckily for Ravenholt such dire forebodings did not come to pass, as Sir Askani and his team quickly assembled the (many) pieces of the puzzle. From silver chains dangling in trees to bits of red parchment jigsaw pieces scribbled with obscure rhyming hints, the team gathered hints of what tasks came next. Divided into eight groups, each crew faced unique tests, finally acquired a tablet engraved with one of the eight symbols.

In a highly entertaining and confusing series of rituals on Sunday morning, the team had to assemble the tablets in a particular order and then lead new groups of chosen individuals (they were picked according to certain criteria such as experiencing true love or demonstrating true nobility) in toasts. Using Marklin's Cup, each group got roaring drunk, an inexplicably necessary portion of the festivities. Who knew saving the world and inebriation could be mutually compatible?

Hindering the merriment, which had to go off like clockwork, were a band of chaos-marked beings. Fierce fighters, despite their attachment to bowler hats and black eyeliner, these "irregulars" attacked from all sides. Attracted to the scene by the impending chaos and power, they continued to attack until the curse was broken. That the curse *was* broken speaks volumes of the organizational and leadership abilities of Ravenholt.



## Darkhorse Demolitions Available to Ravenholt City

Salutations!

Darkhorse Demolitions is pleased to offer all forms of Destruction. If you need something disempowered, disenchanting, destroyed, detonated, devastated, exploded, imploded (my personal favorite!), knocked over, blown up, torn down, sapped, sabotaged or stripped - look no further! Rates are negotiable. For more information, please contact Ezekiel Darkhorse via Fleet of Foot in Ironvale, or via Whispering Wind.

With Darkhorse, destruction is assured - discretion is guaranteed!

## The Legacy of Alaric Malinruin

In the autumn, when the Graveyards appear in Ravenholt, I have occasion to think on the men and women who have made a difference in the history of this land.

I have long considered myself lucky for the months I spent in the companionship of Alaric Malinruin. In the quiet days between the adventurers' gatherings at Ravenholt City, Alaric sometimes reminisced of the time years ago when the adventurers of Ravenholt were so well coordinated that any looming threat upon the land and people was addressed swiftly and confidently. Upon his return to gatherings in the winter of 603, Alaric's ability to organize the adventurers in common cause was again gifted to us. His final death in June 605 wounded Ravenholt greatly, for it was the loss of the hub and heart which united us.

In his knighting ceremony more than a year ago, Sir Jayson Askani spoke of Alaric and of his desire to take on the responsibilities of a noble again in service to this great man's memory.

In the late summer, portents came to Ravenholt from the gypsy Lady Bashian de la Rue de Fortuna of an Eight-Fold Curse, and in September, mysterious representatives of the aspects of the Eight-Fold Curse challenged adventurers to their trials. When Sir Askani passed the test of Nobility's aspect, he quickly involved himself in every detail of organizing the town against the Curse.

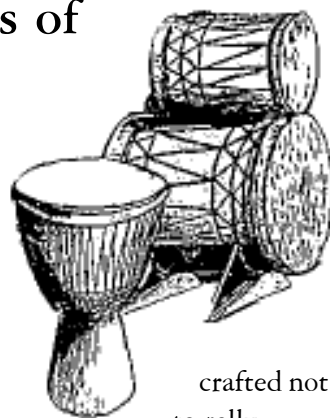
At October's gathering, Sir Askani worked closely with Assistant Guildmistress Omi and myself to unravel the cause of the Eight-Fold Curse: elemental Chaos energy that had manifested during the absence of an Icon of Chaos. The cure to the Eight-Fold Curse revealed itself to be an elaborate ceremony held on Sunday morning that recognized and celebrated the commonalities of the adventurers present in Ravenholt.

Organizing members of noble courts, the guilds, and commoner teams to meet the challenges of the Curse in a timely fashion required great effort of leadership and dedication. Sir Jayson Askani serves as a knight of the Barony of Capulus; in unifying us against this Curse, Sir Askani has also shown he is a champion of the Populace of Ravenholt in ways I have not witnessed since Alaric Malinruin worked bravely and wisely against the forces which threaten this land and her people. Sir Askani will not boast of this, for a knight must be humble, so I take up my pen unprompted on his behalf. May my words be recorded in history.

Lilaiethyn Raenelindor  
Guildmistress, Healers Guild of Ravenholt

## Sound the Drums of War

Nothing stirs a warrior's courage better than the martial tones of a battle drum. Sir Cadoc of Westmarch completed his land bond quest with that thought in mind. Using the hide of the dire boar he slew during the previous gather, Sir Cadoc one but two instruments designed



crafted not to rally

Ravenholt. After the vision song gifted to him by Guildmistress Lilaiethyn, Sir Cadoc's drums could do more than just make music. They were magic! In an incredible combination of personal sacrifice and dedication, the small group that joined the Guildmistress and the knight under the guild's tent on Saturday night made magical history. Their efforts produced the first known formal (to this reporter, at any rate) harmonic magic item.

Sir Cadoc brought the drums into battle against the scarecrows the very next morning. Aply played by Keme, with assistance from Sir Greavard Morbihan, Alle Jongleur, Assistant Guildmistress Omi and others, all who heard them could resist the fear spread by their foes. Moreover, some even appeared to receive magical protectives. With this equipment on the field Ravenholt will surely stay upbeat!

## Strange "Trash" Golems Seen Wandering City

Little is known about several unusual creatures that were seen patrolling the outskirts of the city but, due to their unusual appearance, some have dubbed them "trash golems." They do bear a slight resemblance to other golems, but rather than the expected stone, wood, or gemstone seen so often, they appeared made of scraps of a wide array of items, ranging from broken weaponry to shattered vials, scraps of bent and dinged up jewelry, cloth, torn scroll paper, and more.

It was reported that at least one silvery construct from within the Mages' Guild Basement helped a hapless band of inexperienced adventurers who were trapped by the strange golems, and fought some of these creatures off at one point, but soon succumbed to their power, albeit allowing the adventurers to escape with their lives.

These golems seem to be searching for something, but what, and how they came to this area, is unknown at this time. Any information about these odd beasts would be appreciated.

# Tidbits of Time (and other delicacies)

by Squire Anwyn Greenward Ahora of Westmarch

A short reflection on Graveyards, also known as boneyards, ossuaries, cemeteries, burial grounds, charnels, potter's fields and necropoli.

This past All Hallows, as in days past, the two major graveyards of Ravenholt appeared once more, although this time there was a new addition (see *Grave Prospects*, this issue). As the *Herald* from November of 592 indicated,

“When a Hero permanently dies his or her spirit does not travel to the plane of Dreams, but instead is called by the Hero's Graveyard. It is a great honor, but no one knows exactly how or why it works. Perhaps the Graveyard is sentient. No one knows exactly what is meant by a “Hero” but speculation states that one must have led an honorable life, fighting for good and that your work must have benefited many. One does not necessarily need to be a fighter or a spell caster to be a hero... Currently, known people from Ravenholt in the Hero's Graveyard include: Galen Cumberland, Cecil Swordhand, Nathaniel Kent, Alaric Malinruin, Boran Westmarch, and Theodoric Vardik. There is also another graveyard where very evil folk who have done much harm are resident, the Graveyard of the Four Winds. Vandal Northridge was known to be “buried” in this graveyard. [along with Sakalid among others].”

Now in 592 the two ‘yards engaged in a little war, as they did again in 596 [for details, see the *Herald* of November 592 and November 596]. Clearly being mortal in Ravenholt can make you a tool of the dead, as well as of the undead and of the living. I provided you with the extensive quote

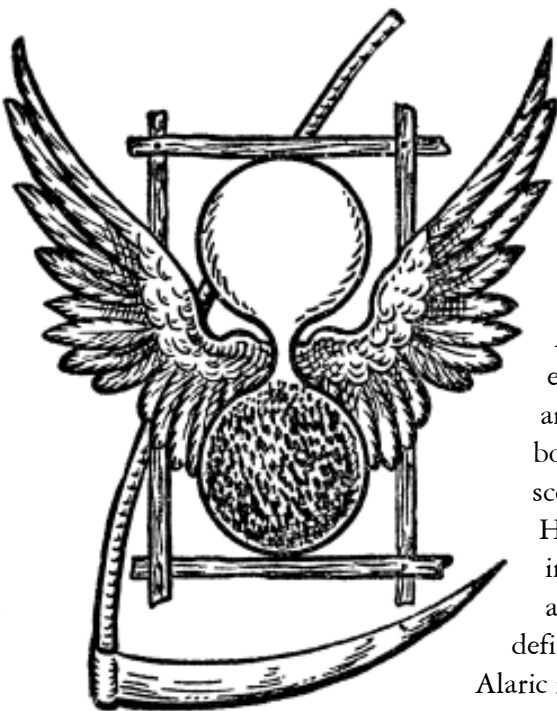
from our earlier paper not only for its nostalgia factor, but also for the valuable clues it provides in light of this past gather's events. As we might expect, Theodoric and Alaric were both firmly ensconced in the Heroes Graveyard in 592, chosen according to its definition of the term. Alaric re-appeared the

following year, and remained until his current [and final death this past year]. What is far more interesting is that the current apparition of Theodoric's, Alaric's, and Jericho's headstones in town indicated that the graveyard was not doing the choosing. Rather, something had changed (at least for the three days of October 31<sup>st</sup> to November 2<sup>nd</sup>, 606). I had quite a chat with the Keeper. He informed me that the stones had appeared in town because those spirits were in transit between the worlds. Ravenholt's denizens needed to decide where these spirits would reside. Moreover, they needed to receive the remembrance and ceremony they deserved in order to maintain their place. The townsfolk are now in charge of the criteria (if I am interpreting the Keeper's words to me correctly) for Graveyard membership. Did others investigate these stones and talk to the Keeper? Did they eventually appear back in one of the (now) three Graveyards? I was not able to determine that as we left Ravenholt for Blackpool. I also wonder why were the wonderful spiritfarewells we held in town this year insufficient to help them to their rightful places? I believe this is of paramount importance with a wide range of potential implications and would like to open dialog with others on this issue.

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## Plagues and More Attend Arrival of New Graveyard

In some way associated with the arrival of a third Graveyard (see “*Grave Prospects*” this issue), wave upon wave of foul creatures attacked Ravenholt with the tolling of bells at each midnight and noon of the October gather. A horde of rats and twisted corpses believed to be plague victims crawled out of the Graveyard of Lost Souls and fought until returned to the earth. Scarecrow-like golems grew up from the husks of disease-laden corn and tried to propagate throughout the town. The tormented spirits of one or more wars rose out of the yard next, to relive the battles in which they died. Lastly, several liches walked in daylight, leading a final battle that either purposefully or incidentally coincided with the legions of Chaos attempting to halt the final ritual to stop the Eightfold Curse. Ravenholt's citizens and its allies fought long and hard to ward off these heinous enemies, but as we have come to expect, persevered.





Gather round adventurers mine and bend your ears to a tale both tall and true, a song to chill the blood and rend the heart. As those of valor, virtue and vagary gathered for

the thinning of the veils this autumn in our fair city, something quite surprising awaited them. A new graveyard, one for neither champions fair nor villains foul, had appeared to join those of the Four Winds and Heroes. This plot, reserved for those deemed “Lost Souls,” proved the focus for much of the ensuing mischief, from waif-like ghosts to scarecrows and magic headstones. No sooner had this boneyard appeared than townsfolk began to hear the pleading cries of children. Tortured to death by the fiend Renfield, these innocents sought peace in a final resting place they had never received in life.

It soon became the town’s dilemma: in which cemetery to place them? They were not courageous warriors tested on the battlefield any more than they were miscreants worthy of a cur’s stone in the Four Winds. The Keeper of the yards, wandering the town at day’s end with his glimmering lantern in hand, revealed he could help build cairns in which to keep the youngling’s souls, but only if they could be tempted to gather in a single location. The choice seemed obvious: these urchins were most assuredly lost, thus this new burial ground seemed an ideal option for their final rest. Yet after a single attempt to place a child at rest in such a suitable location, a host of additional difficulties literally appeared. An extraordinarily irate spirit demanded to know who had desecrated “his” ground with the bones of said child. Attacking and berating townsfolk, along with his undead henchmen, this small yet powerful being vowed to continue his persecution until the (still undisclosed!) individual was revealed. Luckily the town found another option the following night.

Imagine standing under the stars, a frigid wind nibbling your ears and working its kittenclaws under



## Grave Prospects

the edges of your armor as you stand in a cemetery echoing with children’s ghostly calls. Branches scraping on headstones become a banshee sharpening her nails in your overwrought mind. Lights bob in the corner of your eye. Just as you turn, they vanish, only to appear further in the woods. The mages’ chants to bind these innocent souls in their final home seem ageless and interminable as the cold starlight glinting off of your sword. Finally, as you believe your fingers will really fall off from gripping the hilt that hard, the last soul is coaxed to rest. The spell is done. But peace is far from yours, for this was not the only challenge at hand.

From that first night in town the new ossuary spat forth a loathsome variety of new foes, including scarecrows capable of casting fear upon their opponents. Although it took until the final battle against these stuffed shirts to discover it, they were the minions of Fear himself. Dressed all in black and attended by Tia, the new handmaiden of Death (a visitor to Ravenholt, Tia regrettably suffered her final death the evening before and was given the dubious honor of her new position), Fear ranted to the town for a bit before the pull back to Blackpool.

A corollary to this coronary tale: on the same night the Graveyard of Lost Souls appeared, three headstones also materialized in Ravenholt. The Keeper, when pressed, revealed that the memorials for Jericho and Alaric appeared in town because their souls were in transit. The town was supposed to decide in which graveyard they were to remain. Oddly, Theodorik’s headstone also showed up in town, although he was far from “recently passed.” Was this ever resolved or is it too late now? A terrible thought for a trying time.

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## New Icon of Chaos Visits

With surprisingly little fanfare, but leaving behind the “chaff” of the former Icon (in the form of a small smattering of undead who happened to wander the land during the day until dispatched), Strife, a renowned minion of Chaos, was recently placed upon the Seat and ascended. He came to Ravenholt City last gather for a brief visit, seemingly just an administrative check of sorts, then went off to his (presumably vast) iconly duties. If it can be said that there were a popular favorite amongst the citizens of Ravenholt, Strife may have led the list. Last seen regularly just prior to the last Dragon/Elemental war, he was a key player in that lengthy engagement’s final battle.

# Vallentines



Due to the generous contributions of the people of Ravenholt, the Raven's Herald has collected over 50 gold for the Orphanage in Griswold this year. His Grace generously offered to match the Raven's Herald Donation, and personally donated over 75 gold.

The Raven's Herald has sponsored the drive for the Orphanage for many years and has collected several hundred gold in that time. At the advent of the funds drive, His ghnness Prince Basil Ravenhurst declared that February 14th would henceforth be 1 as "Vallentines Day" in honor of the selfless efforts of his adopted daughter, then-Chief, Her Ladyship Vallenesse Brynlydon.

As the raven wild, so my wayward heart  
Will playfully from branch to branch alight  
Seeking treasures each peerlessly imparts.  
How brief that taste before she must take flight,  
For readily we heed the call to fight,  
And seek the goodly deed in all our quests.  
Triumphant when in that hour of delight  
Returns the one where love has built her nest.

Accompanied by troops who march to drum,  
A stalwart knight rides to the northern war.  
The maidens often to that sight succumb.  
Loyal to his men; yet I still adore.  
And what of he who captains woodland corps?  
In common cause we take our common rest.  
We find our paths so often touch before  
Returns the one where love has built her nest.

Sometimes a spark ignites where least I sought  
Affection borne for he of honor sound;  
Quick mind and wit have admiration wrought  
As coupled skill of word and blade are found.  
And then I think to he the dark surrounds  
My wiser will against desire protests  
My weakness entertained. Light and unbound  
Returns the one where love has built her nest.

I wander through the bramble and the thorn,  
Beyond the pale, with yearning deep possessed.  
Oh, Tyrra! My hope, that I not forlorn  
Return to him where love has built my nest.

~Lilaiethyn~

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To Three Dear Ladies from a soldier:  
A, you are solace, ever-lasting.  
A, you are mystery and temptation.  
L, you are unexpected kindness, aspiration.

Three Dear Ladies, my heart is yours.

Johnas –

When last we parted, thou wert young and fair,  
...How beautiful let fond remembrance say!  
...Alas! since then old time has stolen away  
Full thirty years, leaving my temples bare.—  
So has it perished like a thing of air,

...The dream of love and youth!—now both are grey  
...Yet still remembering that delightful day,  
Though time with his cold touch has blanched my hair,  
...Though I suffered many years of pain

Since then, though I did never think to live  
...To hear that voice or see those eyes again,  
I can a sad but cordial greeting give,  
And for thy welfare breathe as warm a prayer—  
As when I loved thee young and fair.

-CMF

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Y-Not:

You are my hero! Your words inspire, you speak what I think. Be mine!

~B-Cuz

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Dearest Kitten-mitten:

I'm glad you're back, I missed you. Never go away again!

Snuggles



Nightshine

If all the Barbarians were like you, we'd lose the war along  
with our hearts.

-Dare Not Say

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To the Herald of Eastwyck:

Your dulcet tones are music to my ears. Your stirring  
speeches ring from the rafters. Speak on, speak on, bold  
Forscythe!

An Admirer

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Baron Al-Qadim - It's about time!

A Cumberland Fan

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Beautiful Anwyn...

Light, so low upon earth,  
...You send a flash to the sun.  
Here is the golden close of love,  
...All my wooing is done.

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Deere Fill –

Yoo ben gone a long time and I missus you. How cum yoo  
never rite me no more vallintines?

Bertha

\*\*\*

Grak –

You are the best shade of green ever.

- SA

Lorien -

I will show you a philtre  
without potions, without  
herbs, without any witch's  
incantation—if you wish to  
be loved, love.....

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Cupid is an idle toy.

Never was there such a boy.

If there were, let any show

Or his quiver, or his bow,

Or a wound by him they got

Or a broken arrow shot.

...Money, money makes us bow:

...There is no other Cupid now.

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Why dost thou shade thy lovely face? O why

Does that eclipsing hand of thine deny

The sunshine of the Sun's enlivening eye?

Without thy light what light remains in me?

Thou art my life; my way, my light's in thee;

I live, I move, and by thy beams I see.

Thou art my life—if thou but turn away

My life's a thousand deaths. Thou art my way—

Without thee, Love, I travel not but stray.

My light thou art—without thy glorious sight

My eyes are darken'd with eternal night.

My Love, thou art my way, my life, my light.

- Wilmot

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To All the Squires of Ravenholt -

Follow the Code and follow your hearts and Knighthood and  
pleasant nights will be yours to cherish.

A Lady



# news from around tyrra

## Evendarr

Several dozen orphanages throughout the kingdom have had all children and staff present disappear in total. These disappearances have been scattered over the last few months. Obviously, local militia throughout the kingdom are on high alert, attempting to determine what has happened and to prevent future incidents.

## Aztir'Oth

Last month, three adventurers were attacked by a horde of zombies during a routine convoy escort. The adventurers escaped with their lives however the crew was either missing or the zombies. In a follow up investigation of the site there appeared to be foot prints leading north

According to Royal Scout Commander, Ashton D'artur, an army of desert trolls is approaching from the north towards the Sunfire Valley. They are currently on the northern side of the Saltz River in the badlands.

Commanders of the 6th and 7th Corp of the Royal Defense Force are looking for new recruits to help bolster the lines. Also, Her Majesty's Scout Corp is also looking for experienced Rangers, Scouts and Trackers to assist in missions for preservation of our small kingdom.

## Cinder Valley

Adventurers, Scholars, Miners, and Healers! Gain Riches and Fame as one of the Discoverers of a New Realm. Join the Heroic Joint Expedition of Discovery to the Southlands. You will be in Noble Company, under the commission of Count Dugnar and Viscount Serri, worthies of both the Great Kingdoms. Those of you who are Strong and Adventurous enough to Undertake this Grand Expedition should present themselves to the mustering point in Calowyn, from where it will commence to the South.

## Stratos

Tet'Pa is wanted for smuggling children out of a local orphanage to sell to local Gnolls as food. His partner in crime, Comas, the Headmaster, admitted his part and was obliterated for his crimes. Tet'Pa is considered extremely dangerous.

## Avendale

Avendalian Army, Shaidu Garrison, and numerous adventurers move on Goliath, long-standing Vampiric nemesis of the region. Meanwhile, Greystone was tormented when planar tears caused the entry of numerous planar beings to Tyrra, forming beings that melded multiple elements together into one. These creatures seemed to be passing judgment upon those native to Tyrra, but to what end is unknown.

## Westhaven

Let it be known that on the 21st day of October of 606 in the town of Hawthorns Bluff His Highness Arturus Frederick, Prince of Westhaven did raise one Tiger de Dannaan, former Baron of Argentum, to the rank of Knight of the Principality.

This was witnessed by members of the town of Hawthorns Bluff as well as myself. I swear these statements to be true and without falsehood.

Hail Sir Tiger de Dannaan Knight of Westhaven

Written by my hand

Sir Chey Grimhold

Ambassador of the Principality of Westhaven,  
herald to her wishes

Guardian of Westhaven,

Knight Commander of Grimhold

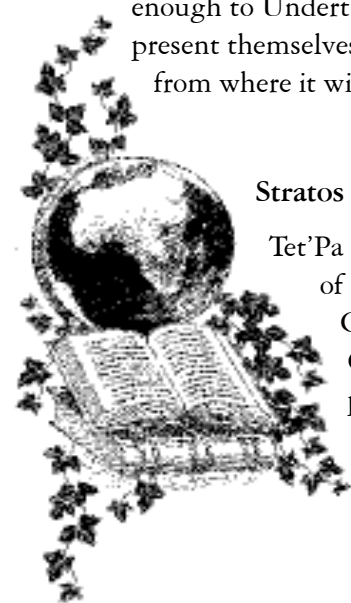
## Tyrangel

Your presence is requested on behest of His Highness, Prince Arturus Fredrick and Her Excellency, Countess Amaris Blackwind on the 1st Saturday of the 2nd month of the New Year, to the Reaffirmation of Manath as the County Seat of Marentha. Also on this occasion we shall witness the Naming of Sir Robert William Randolph to the rank and position of Baron Of the Isle de'Hoenig.

## Blackwell

Darkstriders in the region are losing their fur due to an unknown illness. The Order of the Gryphon seeks new members. Pirates are becoming more frequent – many bear a tattoo of a crescent moon with three stars. They often travel with undead minions.

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## Varos

The Green Well is currently looking for new members. Anyone with Alchemy or trap skills can join. We Can provide training for aspiring alchemists, research options for master alchemists, and plenty of adventuring opportunities for those looking to use their trap making, disarming, and lock picking skills. Guild members also receive discounts and credit at the Green Well's shop. If interested send me a pigeon.

-Bixli Goodspirits,  
Exemplar and Guildmaster of The Green Well



## Territory of Willowdark

Extensive battles in southern Fallwin as the undead of Aerikin continue to invade Elmrisen. Militia groups and local military are slowly destroying them. Fort Vanguard has been reestablished in the Hangman's Pass area. Warlord Lycor's brigand encampments in the Grey Forest are being wiped out. Trade is increasing in the region.

## Therendry

Ice elementals, distressed at the unseemly temperatures, blamed local travelers for the heat and attacked in force. Ultimately, they were guided by a highly skilled greater elemental that could rift at will, until the townsfolk and numerous visiting adventurers went to the Plane of Ice to aid in a ritual which severely limited its powers.

## Stonethrow

The Healers' Guild of Stonethrow is recruiting. A warning is given that Elros the Elf may be under the influence of strange magicks and acting (unknowingly) as a spy.

## Akliceium

Hail one and all nobility and citizens of Akliceium:  
Let it be known that the Kingdom is fully aware of the insurgency of creatures from across the mountain ranges to

the southwest of Akliceium. We have sent many troops around the mountains to bolster our varied allies among the Sarr tribes. We have stemmed much of the bloodshed being passed to them and are now working our way through the mountain range and back into the country. We are here to bolster all of our countrymen, and would see this threat thwarted and defeated before the snows among the higher elevations would break. We will be the deciding factor and the end to this threat.

By my decree,  
His Majesty King Arios Cromwell  
Sovereign Ruler and King of all Akliceium

## Fengate

Duke Garric Runehammer of Fengate has declared Cotton the rabbit scaven as criminal and an outlaw in his lands, and has promised to bring his own troops to bear should Cotton (sometimes known as High Lord Executioner Cotton) and Crimson (sometimes known as Lord Crimson) make trouble in his lands as promised.

## Ashton

Baron Valimar Oakenbrow, Barony of Ashton, County of Oakwood has made public his new court, including:

First Knight, Sir Alrion Westgate  
Lady Seneschal Kaeleigh le Au'cuparia  
Lord Dow  
Lord Logenn Marr  
Lord Kivuli Nyamaa  
Squire Tidus of Clan Silver Fox  
House Healer, ViviAnn of Clan Whitebear

## Evermore

By the noble decree of Lord Thane Silverbrook, Zalarian Ravensflight (Grymm) is hereby being sentenced to obliteration until permanent death, loss of all property and Banishment within the lands of Evendarr for the murder of a noble (Lord Thane himself) and admitting to being a necromancer. Let it also be known that because accomplices may have been present, anyone seen aiding through assault on other adventurers who are trying to dispense justice upon him, or anyone seen casting any non offensive spell on/at Zalarian will be sentenced with accomplice to treason (and therefore sharing the same fate as Zalarian). A reward is also being

Continued on page 11

# Resurrection Circles Flawed

There have been several reports of fallen bodies dissipating but not showing up in the expected nearby earth circles throughout Ravenholt since the beginning of the new year. Family members approach the circles expecting to see their loved ones, only to be received by a confused Healer's guild member who has not seen a spirit come through, despite evidence of the body having dissipated. Nor have these missing individuals reappeared where they were killed, so it's likely they have not permanently died. One distraught family member accused local healers of actually abducting

the resurrected somehow, and another was sure the healer had created a hostile environment for the spirit over some past slur. Specifics are hard to find, as some believe these "missing" spirits aren't missing at all, but simply took the opportunity to resurrect elsewhere.



## public notices

### WANTED!

-Skilled craftsmen or scholars of ANY trade willing to pass on their skills to individuals of a growing community in Eastwyck. Applicants must be good with children. Particular interest will be given to applicants trained in skills related to the following:

- \*Animal Handling (Greatest need)
- \*Farming
- \*Finances\trade
- \*Storytelling
- \*Reading\Writing
- \*Leadership
- \*Non-Violent communication (Greatest need)
- \*Cobbling
- \*Tanning
- \*Wilderness Survival\Hunting (Greatest need)
- \*Carpentry (Labor only)

Employees hired in service of the community will be paid in kind for their labor. If you are interested and would like more information about potential work please direct letters to the Rosharryh aviary, post-marked to the name of Marklin Elmsworth.

## Front from page 1

ing the north with new supplies, weapons and soldiers. These supply lines have strengthened all of Ravenholt's Northern Armies, and it is clear that the Baron's experience as a merchant is invaluable to the logistics and support of the Barony. Morale among Cumberland Troops is the highest of any of the armies on the front. The sons of Cumberland seem to have new resolve and strength with which to fight their enemies.

The strange lands of the Kragen Moor continue to provide surprises and assets in the war. Many Dark Goblins, under Murdok, have rallied the trolls and ogres of the Moor to fight against Theodorik. Even several of the elusive Ogre Magi have been seen in these forces, directing battle and healing these monstrous soldiers. The undead army, now known to be the same unit that appeared during the gathering at Quagmire, has begun launching devastating raids into occupied Cumberland territory, their spectral forms immune to the effects of the River of Fire.

In addition to the Armies present on both fronts, magically-trained troops under Viscount Telaris have been seen moving throughout the Northern ends of the Duchy, providing support wherever they are able, and seeing to the needs of the Healers' and Mages' guilds and guild encampments on the front.

From Westmarch, the first few units of Heavy Cavalry, led by Sir Cadoc, have been deployed to central and northern Cumberland. One battle involving these chargers caused a total of over 300 barbarian deaths, with only 10 losses due to a small section of the unit encountering Tempered and Annealed forces, which spooked their horses. In addition to these, several Dwarven Sappers, presumably working for Darkhorse Demolitions have been seen near the River of Fire, and several full units of Dwarven Soldiers from the Ironvale Guard have been seen laying waste upon the battlefield.

In addition to all these forces amassed in the Northern Reaches, the small army of Westmarch militiamen, under the direction of Vladdymir Nevoco has continued to contribute to the war effort. These forces, in one battle, flanked and routed a force of tempered and annealed, exploiting their lack of mobility and quickly turning them into molten slag.

It has been a difficult war for Ravenholt, but this new-found will to fight against the corrupted spirit of Theodorik continues and has led to major gains. The Fire River itself remains somewhat of a conundrum, and is still impassible, but forces are at the ready to press across, the moment an easy egress is discovered.

## News from Tyrra from page 9

offered for Zalarian's permanently deceased head of 100 gold pieces (payable by Lord Thane).

### Aeran'or

Freeton has had numerous sightings of Death Elementals and, although none have yet reported to attack citizens, they have spoken extensively of their Icon. AGI Mercenary Guild is currently seeking new members for all careers.

### Greyhelm

Information is sought in regards to a Quentari dragon known as Traegor. Also, a bounty has been placed on information leading to the female vampire that escaped during last gather. A 10 gold reward will be given for information leading to her capture.

### Hawthorn's Bluff

Let it be known that on the 21st day of October of 606 in the town of Hawthorns Bluff His Highness Arturus Frederick, Prince of Westhaven did raise one Tiger de Dannaan, former Baron of Argentum, to the rank of Knight of the Principality.

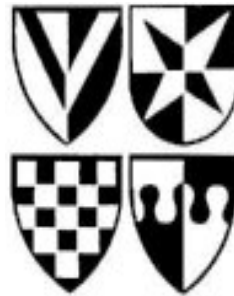
## Gone Wrong from page 1

and the commander, who was just rising off the ground. Her club swung out twice, I saw the healers shield magic pop and he fell. The commander went for his sword but three shafts of light pierced his chest and he tumbled backwards. "Kill them all," she was taking the cantrip tome off our healer, then to the elf, "We will continue on." He nodded and that is what they did.

To my shame, I could only watch as they killed my companions it didn't take long. When they came near I pretended that the horse had crushed me. Then they were just gone and I was alone. I managed to drag myself out from under the horse and started a signal fire, wasn't long before I was picked up by another patrol and brought back to camp to make a report. Damn, I hate being a soldier.

## Chivalry School

By order of His Grace, Duke Johnas Stemple, those wishing to participate in the study of Chivalric Arts should attend sessions of Chivalry School to be held at every gather this season, no matter where they are held. To learn more, speak with Sir Martimus Wilder of Capulus.



## Out-of-Game Information

### March 9-11 Revel Selling Out Fast!

As of January 21st, we have only 14 spots left for PCs at the upcoming March 9-11 Revel at Ye Olde Commons LARP Camp in Charlton. It's HIGHLY recommended that you preregister for the event, as there may not be at-the-door spots available this time out. (Remember, Ye Olde Commons has a smaller capacity than Brimfield, so we're capped at 75 PCs right now.)

This event looks to be a good one, with a guest directing team that consists of experienced staffers from Ashbury, some of the older NH campaigns, and elsewhere. If you're looking to get the barest hint as to what the revel might be about, you'll want to read this issue's IG sections closely - there's more than one clue tucked away - not all as obvious as the call to arms by His Grace. For a number of reasons, I can highly recommend this event as a good one to bring new-to-NERO players to - it's likely to be a great jumping off point for people just getting started in the game!

### Ye Olde Commons Food Service for Revel

PCs attending the Revel: If you want to make use of Ye Olde Commons' Food Plan, please use the \$20 Meal Plan (or the two options with additional "Kitchen Cash" if you want snack food money) or the soon to be added \$25 Expanded Plan. The Standard meal plan includes Saturday hot breakfast, Saturday dinner, Sunday cold breakfast. The Expanded plan adds lunch to the standard plan. Additional anytime snacks of fruit, candy, and drinks are available for kitchen cash. To sign up, go to:

[http://www.yeoldecommons.com/wst\\_page6.html](http://www.yeoldecommons.com/wst_page6.html)

Registered NPCs will automatically be covered for the Expanded meal plan, but may want to bring some extra cash for snacks, especially if you get hungry late night.



## Between Event Submissions

To Our Players:

Ravenholt Plot is lifting the moratorium on between-event actions during the winter break.

Though we're still short-staffed, we want to make sure that we take into account the actions you'd like your character to take.

There are a few rules for this:

- 1) please keep your submissions general in nature.
- 2) please be patient - we will respond to everything, but we can't guarantee that everything will get a response right away.
- 3) please make sure you send everything to [plot@neromass.com](mailto:plot@neromass.com), so it goes to all of us.
- 4) please keep in mind that we've got limited bandwidth - we can answer one or two actions, but we're not able to sustain a constant back-and-forth with you regarding your actions.

Thanks!!  
-Ravenholt Plot



## Staff Contact Info

### Owner:

Rachel Morris (203) 426-7729  
[owner@neromass.com](mailto:owner@neromass.com)

### Event Registration:

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

### Character Update:

Rick Pierce (203) 445-1176  
[update@neromass.com](mailto:update@neromass.com)

Ravenholt Plot: [plot@neromass.com](mailto:plot@neromass.com)

Logistics: [logistics@neromass.com](mailto:logistics@neromass.com)  
(Cathy Robinton)

NPCs: [npc@neromass.com](mailto:npc@neromass.com)

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



## NERO Mass Needs List

- ✓ Packets
- ✓ Orange Packets
- ✓ Arrow Packets
- ✓ Longswords
- ✓ Max Length Claws
- ✓ Short Swords
- ✓ Two Handed Weapons
- ✓ Lightweight Shields

## Student Rates Program Being Dropped in 2007

Due to limited usage and the challenging logistics needed to track the good-student discounts program, it is being discontinued for the 2007 season.

## NERO Mass 2007 Schedule

Ravenholt March Revel 3/9 - 3/11/2007  
(at Ye Olde Commons Camp)

*On-Season Events Scheduled for Springfield Boys Club Camp (Brimfield)*

Ravenholt Opener	4/20 - 4/22/2007
Secondary Campaign	Fri 5/4 - 5/6/2007
Ravenholt May Event	5/18-5/21/2007
Secondary Campaign	6/8 - 6/10/2007
Ravenholt Late June	6/22-6/24/2007
Ravenholt Long Weekend	8/31-9/3/2007
Secondary Campaign	9/14-9/16/2007
Ravenholt Late September	9/28-10/1/2007
Secondary Campaign	10/12-10/14/2007
Ravenholt Halloween Weekend	10/26-10/29/2007

### IMPORTANT NOTE!

**Due to the Brimfield Camp going up for sale this year, our schedule has become tentative again. Updates will be posted in the newsletter and on the website as they become available.**

## Ravenholt Playtests - 2007

The Following Nationally Approved Playtests will be in use in the Ravenholt Campaign in 2007. This list is not changing from the 2006 list.

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.

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## Coin Exchange Bargain!

We want your silver (and your gold, but mostly your silver)!! We'll be doing a special rate of exchange for the Revel and Season Opener to encourage you to dig up those piles of coin you've buried in your back yard.

\* 90 silver pieces (NOT gold pieces) for a Green Gem or a Platinum, only (no gold exchanged in this case) – Get a whole gold's worth of return on your investment!

As always, we'll trade 10 gold pieces for a Green Gem or Platinum if you want. We are not looking to swap silver for gold right now...sorry!

Please let us know in advance if you'll be bringing a lot in, so we can have the proper coin on hand to exchange with you. The special silver exchange rate will be good through Season Opener, but if you aren't attending the Revel or the Opener and still want to make a swap, please contact Rachel about making arrangements.

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## Current Legal/Medical Paperwork Needed for 2007 Season

To ensure that we have current legal and medical paperwork for all our players on file, everyone will need to complete a new set of paperwork for the first event they attend this season. For the under 18 set, this means you'll need to make sure your paperwork is completed with both your parents' signatures and those of your on-site guardians. If you want to have this ready to save time at check in, remember that you can print out our forms from the EVENT INFO: LEGAL/MEDICAL RELEASES options on the NERO Mass website.

## Temp Tags Reminder

Please remember that ALL temp tags put out during an event must be turned in at the end of the event at which they were put out. To get them converted to valid tags, you must turn them in to the small box that is left at check-out. If you need them mailed to you, please note as much on the envelope, and include the mailing address to which Cathy should send them.

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## Reminder About NPC Vouchers

Just a quick reminder that if you're short on funds to PC as often as you'd like, a good way to go about earning cheaper PC events at NERO Mass is to NPC for us. NPCs who wish to receive the discounted event vouchers (presently \$25 for the event based on current camp costs) on top of the usual free food and goblin/blanket benefits must do the following:

- Preregister for the event you'll be NPCing
- NPC from game on to game end in full
- Make sure you check in and out each time

Remember, these vouchers expire three years after they're earned, and are non-transferrable. To use them, you MUST preregister as a PC and inform Rachel that you want to use a voucher. You cannot use vouchers at the door. To preregister, either as an NPC or as a PC, email [registration@neromass.com](mailto:registration@neromass.com) or phone 203-426-7729. In both cases, please provide your full name, home chapter, phone number, and if you have a strong preference towards combat or roleplaying (no guarantees, but again it helps us when planning roles).

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## Receiving Proper Event Credit

Please note that in order to receive proper event credit, you **must** turn in your character card before you leave in order to assure you get game credit for playing. This is the only way we can be sure we have a record of your blanket(s) for the game. There will always be a box in the tavern (before game end it will be under a table or otherwise out of the way) in which you should be putting your cards. This is doubly important if you are an out-of-chapter character, as we must inform them of your attendance.

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## Prices for 2007

At present, event prices are expected to remain the same as 2006, at \$70 for preregistered regular weekends and \$80 for long weekends, with an \$85 week-of/at-the-door rate for regular events and \$95 week-of/at-the-door rate for long weekends. There is a slight chance that rates will need to be raised if our camp costs go up considerably due to the impending sale of the Brimfield camp and subsequent possible move of our events to another camp.

12/8/2006

## NERO Mass for Sale

Dear friends and players of NERO Mass/Ravenholt:

It is with highly conflicted emotions that I announce that I am now officially putting NERO Mass up for sale. In July of 2000 when I bought the game, I had a seven year plan for my ownership. That seven year period is fast coming to a close, and I need to get back to my own life's evolution, and let the game proceed on its next phase, as well, under new management.

I'm looking to find a new owner or owners who understand that NERO is not something to get into for the fiscal return, but for the love of the game. My preference, although not a requirement should a solid offer come along, is to sell it to someone who is a long time participant in the Ravenholt campaign, and who appreciates the history and all the richness that comes from being the founding chapter of such a long-lived and impactful game. I will not be rushing to take just any offer that comes my way, but will be thinking through the merits of any I receive and how best the game can continue as successfully as possible. I don't anticipate a rapid sale proceeding, and do expect to continue as owner during much if not all of our upcoming season, despite the most recent juggling act the Boys' Club camp sale has thrown my way.

I will only discuss price and total goods included in the sale with interested parties who can show me that they have both valid resources and a solid plan of approach to running the business. Anyone wishing to bid and proceed to the next level of discussions will be required to sign a confidentiality agreement, on advice of my lawyer. I have fiscal records and rough inventory lists available for review should matters proceed to that level.

If you're considering making an offer and need a basis on which to bid, I will let you know that I purchased the business in 2000 for a total of \$11,000, plus resolving a further outstanding debt already against the business at time of purchase which resulted in an actual initial purchasing expenditure of roughly \$17,000. At that time, the tangibles included a single large crate of costuming and several dozen weapon reps. Events being held at the time ran with between 40 and 60 PCs, and 10-15 NPCs.

I have put roughly \$50,000 more in un-returned capital investment into the game since then. Present goods amount to several storage facilities' worth of props, costumes, weapons, and other sundries plus numerous software and management tools, including among other things, a customer database of approximately 1600 people, credit card processing software, and newsletter layout software. Events are running with between 75-90 PCs and are averaging around 30 NPCs. Additional goods included as part of the sale will include a database of campgrounds and evaluations of their suitability within Massachusetts and the surrounding region, customized on-line character resources, multiple NERO-related domain names, and extensive document resources such as historical documents pertaining to plotlines, game history, event paperwork and templates. Extensive statistical information can be provided on our player base, as well. Additionally, if the new owner wishes to make use of my time, I will provide limited support, training, and input for the transition for a period of six months from point of sale.

I believe that fresh blood can reinvigorate the game and the player base, and that in both the long run and the immediate, new ownership will be very good for NERO Mass. There is considerable room for the business to grow, with increased advertising, expansion of staff numbers, and so on.

I'm sure people will have questions and concerns about this matter. If so, please send them to me directly and I will do my best to answer (although I may not be able to answer everything given the nature of such negotiations). I welcome any and all questions, as your concerns may clarify for me some areas that were previously overlooked in giving thought to how to transition the game to new management. I ask your forgiveness in advance if my responses are either overly emotional or overly clinical – the game has been an enormous part of my life for the past decade, and it will be (and already is) a difficult transition for me. On the plus side, I look forward to playing Ravenholt with many of you again on a regular basis!

Please remember that this game lives or dies by the enthusiasm and support of its volunteer staff and players, and that it quite literally wouldn't exist without you. Thank you very much for your time and devotion to the game we've all come to treasure through the years, and for your support during my tenure as owner.

Sincerely,  
Rachel Morris  
Owner, NERO Mass/Ravenholt

# Plea for Help: Keeping Ravenholt Running Strong

I'm putting a call out to all of you who have loved and supported the Ravenholt campaign for the past 16+ years...the game needs your help! This game runs on its volunteer staff, and without enough volunteers, we can't keep it going strong.

The most common answer I hear when I invite people to join plot is "But I love PCing Ravenholt!" The second most common answer is "I don't have the time..." Both of these are understandable, although they're incredibly frustrating to me, since if everyone said no to staffing, we wouldn't *have* the game that you enjoy playing! No doubt, staffing Ravenholt is definitely hard work at times, but it can also be very rewarding as you help shape the game world that so many of us enjoy.

Unfortunately, the fewer people we have helping out, the faster our existing staff burns out – I know I, personally, really need to retire from being on plot, but feel badly about leaving only three people to juggle such a large campaign. I'm looking for more people to add to staff so I can step down as soon as possible!

So, even if you aren't able to commit to a full-fledged staff position, I'd like all of you to consider what you can do to help the game out this year – whether it's simply taking a few minutes more to help set up or clean up camp when you attend events, making packets in front of the TV, or just spreading the word to bring in new players.

What we REALLY need, right now, is to have people submit plot write-ups – and you don't need to commit to being on the plot team to do this. We accept submissions of many different sorts. Some examples:

## Team-Run Weekend:

Put together a proposal for your team to run an entire weekend's event. In general, we recommend you have 2-3 large plotlines and about 7 minor plotlines for a full weekend. We recommend at least one person taking charge plus several other writers, and a base NPC group of people who usually PC to support you. The plot team will help make sure your ideas mesh with the larger picture and will provide backup material as needed.



## One-Event Plotlines:

A weekend-long plotline consisting of something to be resolved over the course of half a dozen modules and encounters or so, or a smaller plotline (say, 1-4 modules with some kind of encounters to tie them together) that you're willing to run with the support of monster camp, and possibly even bringing in your team for NPC shifts to run it. To do this, you don't even have to give up PCing!

## Ongoing Small Plotlines:

Got a plotline that works better over the course of a few events, but that you could do by taking one four hour NPC shift per event to handle it? We'd like to hear about those, too!

## Write-but-don't-run Plotlines:

If you've got ideas, but don't feel comfortable running things, we welcome plot ideas that we can have our Core team run. (Just be aware that if you hand things off to them, you'll have a little less control over how they run.)

## Some Do's for Plot Submissions:

- Start out with a one to two paragraph proposals – if there's something similar already in the works, we don't want you to waste your time.
- Look first at stand-alone plotlines – things that are unique and contained to your idea, rather than things that have massive tie-outs to historical events or other NPCs.
- Make sure what you propose is viable within the NERO rules – if you have a great idea but can't quite figure out how to make it work, let us know and we'll try to suggest ways to adjust the plotline.

Remember, if we use your plotlines, you get goblin points galore!

If you're interested, please send your ideas to [plot@neromass.com](mailto:plot@neromass.com). If you're interested in helping out even more, consider one of the staff positions we still have open for Ravenholt:

- Monster Master
- Head of Plot/Plot Administrator
- Campaign Plot
- Adjunct Plot

Thanks to everyone for your continued dedication to the game!  
-Rachel



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



Sign Up for the March 9-11th  
 Winter Revel at Ye Olde Commons Camp

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# the Back page

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NERO 8th Edition Rule Books are available on the web at:

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NERO Mass Web Page  
[www.neromass.com](http://www.neromass.com)

*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 Hartford (CT) \* NERO Las Vegas (NV) \*
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