

# The Adventurer

*de novo*

February, 2025 A.T.

## Legendary Monster Sited During Local Festival

A local festival thought to be in observation of a mythical monster from the depths of Ire was interrupted by the appearance of that same creature.

In truth, it appears that the monster was real; as the 'offering' - a collection of goods and coin traditionally donated to locals in need, as an act of service to the community - was dipped lightly into the water, there came a great rumbling from underfoot.

As the gathered locals and newcomers alike looked on in horror, great tentacled limbs burst forth from the ice, grasping a local and a member of the adventuring community alike, dragging them beneath the water.

Even as this occurred, further tentacles burst forth. It is a fact that even at a supposedly peaceful event, there are no shortage of adventurers going armed, and conveniently so - they rose to do battle with the great leviathan.

As the fight progressed, the head of the great beast emerged, and bellowed a terrible roar - something like the head of a great turtle, with a huge armoured plate on back of its head that resisted shattering blows and assassin strikes alike.

Eventually the monster was defeated, but not before several more adventurers were dragged beneath. Happily, all were recovered - but whether the great beast is truly dead is a matter as yet undetermined.

## Adventuring Community Invited to Participate in Local Festival

Despite not being geographically distant from such metropolitan areas as Adder's Point or Stelton, the community in and around Sandy Bay have their own ways and customs, and it was an honour for the local adventurers to be invited to participate.

Each year, in recognition of the defeat of a great monster emerging from The Ire being driven off by an ancient hero, the locals give an 'offering' to the beast to encourage it to stay dormant. In truth, this offering is barely dipped into the freezing waters of the Ire - this package is intended for charity.

Nevertheless, the ritual requires many steps, and the adventurers participated in each. The construction of costume armour, for the 'hero', who would do battle with an 'Ire Monster' (another townsfolk in similar garb). Sacrifices indicating the death of winter and the rebirth of life in the spring.

Oddly, one of these latter was distressingly easy to find - a hand, grasping a sword, was found half-frozen in the ice on the Ire. Although this was deemed a reasonable sacrifice, anyone noticing that they are missing a hand should contact The Adventurer.

## Locals Mystically Affected By the Fae?

With the visit of powerful faeries to the recent masquerade party held by locals to the Sandy Bay area, more and more has been revealed about some odd traits shown by those who have been present for some time.

They describe near locales - such as Stelton - as unreachable. Some have described lifespans within the low hundreds of years, and are reluctant to share their names, or may not know them readily at all.

One local, abducted by a great monster of the Ire and dragged underwater, was nonetheless able to

speak and cast magic normally, despite being fully submerged beneath the ice.

None of these are in themselves problematic - *The Adventurer* is proud to know no small number of persons affected by magic in strange and unusual ways, no less friendly or able for it.

However, it does suggest that for whatever reason, local magic is powerful, and strange bindings may have been laid upon this region. With the news of an undead Fae King awakening in this region, it would be good for all to be wary.

# Sy Says:

## Wit and Wisdom For Those in Need

*The Adventurer has tried in past to run advice columns, and with the receipt of a series of articles submitted all but anonymously in a neat hand through the mail, we are attempting once again. The Adventurer has no knowledge of the identify of this 'Sy', so take this advice accordingly.*

Q: Hey Sy,

I'm tired. This move has been a lot, I don't know what I'm doing right now and I don't know how to tell my friends I'm empty and need space right now. How do I handle this? How do I restart feeling like myself again?

*Grumpy & Sleepy*

A: G&S,

We've been through a lot these last few months and our emotions have gone through it's trials, as well as our bodies. Our

magic may be able to heal our bones but we need to look after our hearts/heads too.

This move may actually be exactly what you need. There is a peace that can come with a new home. Slowly settling in and making it yours, bit by bit and putting your heart into it is one way you can look after yourself.

Grab a couple of your friends and ask them to do a quiet party with you. Always be safe about it and never go alone. Go out into the woods and sit down with them on the ground and just listen to your surroundings. Allow yourself to slow down and let things go from your head.

You may have to do this a few times but this can help you restart yourself. It can also help you start talking to your friends and be honest about how you are

doing.

You don't have to know how you are doing all of the time. It's ok to feel stuck, just don't stay there for too long. Maybe try something new and you could find some inspiration in an unexpected activity or friendship! With all of the 'new' things going on, give yourself some patience. You will adapt at your own pace!

- Sy

*Anyone seeking assistance in adaptation or struggling with the changes involved in moving to a new area should feel free to reach out to the Adventurer to help to share your story. We are happy to be a sympathetic ear, and it may be helpful if you are willing, for others to hear the travails that you are undergoing to know that they are also not alone.*

## Sink or Swim: What to Know About Water Safety

*In an effort to support safety as many readers move to more aquatic-adjacent locations, The Adventurer has taken the liberty of reaching out to Captain Bartholomew Hibiscus Aquarius Brian Agueforth the 7th, captain of the fishing vessel Not For Sail, to provide knowledge and safe habits for newcomers to the area.*

So ye wants to explore the depths of Lake Ire, aye? Listen close, landlubbers! The waters may be beautiful, but they must be respected, lest ye find yourself a watery grave!

The waters of Lake Eire chill you to the bone, regardless of the season! Aye, the surface from late spring to early might take on a more comfortable temperature, but any deeper than the shallows - or worse, a dive during the winter - will leave ye stunned and weak! Maritimers working during frigid seasons shill

our bounty aplenty to magic folks that can cast Resist Frost - this be one of the few ways to stop yerselves locking up in cold water.

Yer best best is to have yer hands and feet free to keep ye mobile: Keep both yer feet free to tread in place, and at least one hand free to swim through the chilly waters. All these adventurers coming in with greatswords and war axes and the like... Good luck! Anything more than one hand, and ye can forget it! Only thing that'll protect you 'neath the waves that can strike worth a damn are daggers, spears and tridents.

Those looking to dive deep for sunken treasure best know how to hold their breath! As a rule of thumb, the tougher the sailor, the longer you can survive. Can't take a hit fer shite? Time to stay warm and dry! Spend too long, and the world goes dark.. Much like waters

after ink.

All in all, if you respect the sea, whether you are jumping into the waves or admiring from a distance, Ol' Barty recommends that you be careful!

*The Adventurer will run this column repeatedly as a public service for any new adventurers to the region planning voyages out to explore the near shores of Lake Ire.*

*We would also like to take this time to thank Captain Bartholomew for transcribing his own accent.*



# Ask a Magistrate

*Some questions of law have been asked, and Magistrate Oren D'vann is here to answer them! Please consult a magistrate or guardsman for case-specific legal questions.*

**Question: I heard that I have to turn in magic items to the Guild Arcane. Is that true?**

The Guild Arcane was originally permitted to operate in Harodom – and to maintain a monopoly on the practice of arcane magic – because it took on the responsibility of ensuring that magic was safe for the citizens of Harodom.

Under its previous structure, the

Guild Arcane requested that magic items discovered in ruins or otherwise captured be turned over to the Guild for inspection. These inspections could take several days, or more if magical resources were not available to analyze these captured goods.

Under the current Guild Structure, while the Guild Arcane still has the responsibility to investigate arcane mysteries, much of its authority and responsibilities are diminished. Much as hedge mages (non-guild affiliated arcaners) are no longer executed, magical items no longer need to be turned over to the Guild for inspection under penalty of law.

It should however be noted that doing so is still a good idea. Magic items that were constructed in areas with high magic concentration, or where some error crept into the production, can develop ‘curses’ - unintended magical effects, usually negative, which are difficult to remove.

Knowing the properties of a magical item is one of the services that the Guild Arcane can provide. Having some registry of who has which magical items also allows them to direct problems that might be resolved with magic appropriately.

While it is not required by law, it is still a good idea to work with the Guild Arcane on matters of magic.

*Sometimes when you go fishing, you catch a **big fish**.*

**If a sea monster sees you, see it finished!**

Made *Yorik Strong*, Isaac's weapons are reasonably priced for the adventurer on the go!  
“Trust your blade to the brand displayed!”

## Horoscopes

*The future is an unknown country. However, ideas and visions of the future may stem from information of the present; your decisions help to make the world you live in tomorrow. To that end, we have published a generalized horoscope for each of the Calendar Birth Signs, and hope that it will serve to amuse and enlighten. Horoscopes provided by Seer Oren Freedman.*

**The Shroud** (Dec 31<sup>st</sup> – Jan 28<sup>th</sup>)

Reason is a tool that serves the hand that wields it wisely, well. You will soon come across a dilemma that is best solved with your reason, if you think to reach for it – but a blade might solve it too. Seek the wisdom of **the Stone** when you do not know the next step.

**The Harp** (Jan 29<sup>th</sup> – Feb 27<sup>th</sup>)

Do not allow the drive to act stir you to act rashly; act with purpose, and you will reach your goal. In the near future, you will be challenged on a matter you thought settled – remember how it was settled the first time, and decide for yourself if that still covers it.

**The Fount** (Feb 28<sup>th</sup> – Mar 30<sup>th</sup>)

When you are halfway through the woods, keep going. You will find yourself faced with a crossroads; in the immediate sense, it matters what route you take, but halfway into the woods, every step is taking you out of them. You will be offered an opportunity that is more than it appears.

**The Dice** (Mar 31<sup>st</sup> – Apr 28<sup>th</sup>)

You can still catch yourself one step before disaster as long as you *do* catch yourself that one step before disaster. Be

bold, but do not underestimate the risks that you court. Wisdom is knowing when to shy away from that one step too far. **The Mask** will have something that you need soon.

**The Arrow** (Apr 29<sup>th</sup> – May 27<sup>th</sup>)

Know what you need, what you want, and what you cannot live without; be mindful of the distinction between these points, and you will be able to negotiate for at least the things that are most essential. A large bump of curiosity will serve you well in the near future, if moderated with caution.

**The Stone** (May 28<sup>th</sup> – Jun 25<sup>th</sup>)

Fear is there to keep you alive, but it is not a smart instinct; it reacts to danger, but does not measure itself or consider circumstances. Listen to your fear when it rears its head – and soon it will – but do not let it be your master. Your will and knowledge guide your hand best.

**The Coin** (June 26<sup>th</sup> – July 28<sup>th</sup>)

There are new things under the sun, but it is less likely that you will encounter them this month. Instead, be prepared to view familiar challenges with fresh eyes. While your past experiences will prove a useful guide for your future actions, don't let your preconceptions about a challenge blind you to its reality.

**The Spade** (July 29<sup>th</sup> – Aug 30<sup>th</sup>)

Now is a time for boldness. Take a chance, because that chance may be your opportunity to better your purse, your person, or even your soul. Work well with **The Harp**, but remember that high stakes can be lost as well as won; be careful which befalls you.

**The Blade** (Aug 31<sup>st</sup> – Sept 27<sup>th</sup>)

If you lead, people will follow. If you take a chance, people will take it with you. This is a blessing and a curse, because it may mean that you find yourself feeling responsible for the actions of others who were simply following your lead in the near future.

**The Mask** (Sept 28<sup>th</sup> – October 31<sup>st</sup>)

There are rules that are in place to protect persons, to protect property, and to protect power. Not all of these rules are good – not all of these rules are bad. Advancing your own cause may require that you consider which rules apply to you, and why they were put into place.

**The Shield** (Nov 1<sup>st</sup> – Nov 29<sup>th</sup>)

As you grow stronger, you will find that some things that used to be very important to you don't seem as important anymore. This is a form of loss, and allowing yourself to grieve it will mean that you are in a better position to learn from that change and choose what comes next. Beware someone who says that you have no chance or hope; they do not believe it, but need you to do so.

**The Hearth** (Nov 30<sup>th</sup> – Dec 30<sup>th</sup>)

Knowledge is knowing that a thing is mythical; wisdom is knowing that myths have their feet in truth. Before you dismiss the wisdom of someone who is trying to advise you as wrong or irrelevant, consider where it may be coming from; the wisdom, or the intention. It may be that their guidance is irrelevant, but the intention behind it may still be good.

# Better Know a City: Hoggspport

*The capital of Harodom, Hoggspport is a center of art and culture in Harodom, as well as being home to the King's court. Metropolitan and diverse, Hoggspport is worth a closer look, and so we shall do so in this article.*

The city of Hoggspport is considered one of the jewels of the Lakes District. Founded in the last gasps of the Age of Blood, Hoggspport has traditionally been the seat of power for the house of Haro, who met there with the other regional powers to form a united Harodom in June of 1705.

Although the nation has both waxed and waned in size since, Hoggspport remains the nation's capitol, and the seat of royal authority. The Court of Hoggspport is elegant and pleasing to the eye, made from marble quarried from the region of Lake Ire.

Although Hoggspport has a well developed warehouse district on the shores of Lake Haro, a great deal of the shoreline remains undeveloped. Rather than maintaining full-time estates in the expensive city, a number of more distant nobles rent or maintain town

houses closer to the city center, when visiting the city.

Hoggspport is a center for the arts, with over a dozen theaters and countless private galleries. The University of Hoggspport is smaller than the University of Portnos, but has been home to the development of a number of advances in natural philosophy and magic in the past century.

The city is threaded with tunnels unseen to the average traveler, and is rumoured to have been built upon older settlements, not uncommon within the

Lakes District. These tunnels have only just begun to be properly explored, but are thought to range well beyond the city limits.

Hoggspport has fallen twice to foreign invasion in the last fifteen years – the Estovic invasion of 2011, and the Eldershire invasion of 2016. Nevertheless, a proud and resilient population has rebuilt and repaired damages, although many of the City of Scales' treasures have been lost in those invasions.

Worth a visit – but especially if you have business before the court.

## Community Board

*This section is reserved for information about the community, and may include unverified information as well as community events.*

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The *Adventurer* continues to offer a full year-long patronage or any artist or artisan willing to produce one piece of sponsored work within a calendar year.

Any or all forms of art are encouraged, provided that they are suitable for public display. Please contact editor Oren Freedman for details.

\*

A woman from Upper Deckick mentioned that she had seen 'an anomaly', but refused to go into greater detail, beyond saying "it had like, colours, woah".

The theater season has opened once again in Hoggspport, and The Adventurer is pleased to report that the sale of spoiled tomatoes and rotten eggs is once again off the charts.

\*

Portents: Animals behaving unusually aggressively, the sea rising up to meet you. Strong winds carrying the scent of rot.

If you have **news**, an **announcement**, a clever **contribution** or a piece of **art** you would like displayed, don't keep it to yourself! The *Adventurer* is happy to help you reach a broader audience!

Forewarned is forearmed.

Unarmoured is ignorant.

*Handsome cuts of armour for the best looking customers on Ariel*

Sunbeard Forge Armour is worn by warriors, wizards, knights and lords – all of them alive.

*“When in duress, dress for success!”*

# League of Adventurer Charter

## Provisionally Approved

The League of Extraordinary Adventurers, or the Adventurers League for short, is in active talks with Magistrate Oren D'vann to renew their status as a recognised guild of the realm after a major restructuring of their policies.

Formerly the Adventurers Guild, new leadership enacted the name change to reflect a wider reform, which focused on the ethos and structure of guild activities. "We wanted to simplify things," shared Dominic REXXEN, Leaguemaster of the new Adventurers League. "Nothing's gonna stop new people showing up looking to kill themselves looking for gold and glory - so we figured, why not teach them how to not die, and how to make good coin in the process?"

Dominic claims the League's official charter now consists of

a singular page, pared down from the previous administration, with a comprehensive version in the works for legal purposes. The League aims to equip new members with the resources and knowledge to

survive day-to-day adventuring such as bartering, tool repair and resource management. The League also organises quests and rewards based on the community's needs, so members can walk away with "full pockets and fuller stomachs." Mr. REXXEN makes a point to emphasise the League's open-door mindset: "Everyone is welcome. We did a lot to make the amount of boring admin stuff that members do is the smallest possible. Everything is on the leadership team to make function - just pay your dues, show up and profit."

With such a significant

reorganizing, the League is in the process of renewing their status as a recognized guild with the duchy, which provides certain legal protections. Magistrate Oren D'vann, an individual with a long-standing relationship to the League and its predecessors, has been crucial in this process, which Mr. REXXEN reiterates. "Oren's been great. The League wouldn't be able to go in the direction we wanted without their insight, so there's a lot we owe him. We just want to help people, and Oren is helping facilitate that."

With no delays or hiccups expected, the Adventurers League is expected to assume unimpeded function as a recognised guild within the month.

Interested readers are invited to speak with Leaguemaster Dominic REXXEN for more details.

## Taq's Tales:

Taq is a lizardfolk with red and yellow scales; he is a Yorick town guard cleric of Alwyn. On the lovely day of the Yorick fair Taq was talking to two older gentlemen Slag, an amazing dwarf archer, who is a master blacksmith, and Oren, the magistrate of the town, a minotaur that can do almost any job. Taq can't remember what was said but, suddenly in the conversation a crack of lightning shot down upon the earth. Taq, being an Alwyn Knight, quickly came to investigate.

Turns out that this was a big purple elemental dragon that needed help. Taq said "I worship Alwyn and you being of lightning nature do you need help?"

All Taq heard was 'yes', before being struck by lightning and then arriving at the tavern.

Turns out the dragon needed an elemental save from a prison so a team was assembled. The team consisted of Taq, Slag, Raven, a 8th circle Alwyn Knight with a black outfit, Trundle, a dwarf curtainborn cleric of Callis bearing a big shield, Sir Schrodinger, a knight of Yorik who is a skilled warrior, SZZAURYAK, a green lizard folk who worships Clovis, and Muston Chestmore, a dwarf with an ax and a future as a Beldon cleric.

The team gathered at the first of four gates (Taq can't remember the order in which the gates appeared), but each one had something to do with the four elemental gods of Alwyn, Atha, Beldon, and Callis.

The group went through the first one, while the dragon stayed behind. There were large stone

golems that had huge slam attacks. they pushed forward. What the heroes did not realize was that each gate was going to zap them from behind with lightning spells like spark.

There was also another electrical problem: small rodents that were bright yellow that attacked them. All it said was the haunting words "pika pika".

After they pushed through the gates which had to be opened with elemental spells they saw a massive field at the end was a cage where the dragon's elemental friend was.

The party marched toward the cage and we freed the elemental and it was now time to run. The group made it through the gates with very little resources left and saved the day.

# Editorial: Doing Without

If you told the average Yorik citizen that their lives were ones of luxury, they might laugh at you. Some of them might also knife you. The chief takeaway is to be careful with your words and audience.

That said, Yorik did provide some amenities that, now that the majority of its adventuring population has moved on, we are having to learn to live without. While we are still building out town facilities, lack of judicial facilities and

easy access to merchant caravans are a bitter pill to swallow.

We may get there again in time. The area around Sandy Bay is only a day's ride from Stelton, and less than a week from Yorik. But it's off the beaten path, and right now, resources are thin on the ground.

Let's find what we need, and what we don't. Work to ensure we have the former, and work

(but more slowly) to produce the latter. We can have the niceties of life again, but it will take time and effort.

In a sense, the lifestyle of the adventurer is inherently one of doing without until you can afford better. We may need to go through some rough sledding, but we can improve the quality of life for ourselves and for the people local to this new area earmarked for settlement by the Duke.

*Oren D'vann Freedman, Editor*

## Matters of Faith

### Holy Days Just Past

*March 21<sup>st</sup>: Spring's Birth Festival (Apenca)*

The first day of spring, as well as the holy day of Apenca, the Spring's Birth festival is often observed in parts of the North as being the official 'birthday' of children born over the winter, as it often marks the point at which winter babies are most likely to be guaranteed survival. Apencans will often help with lambing and calving at this time, in agrarian regions.

*April 1<sup>st</sup>: Fates (Anajaream)*

The festival of Anajaream is often marked by pranks and jests, as the devout of the god of chaos seek to show that strict law and order alone will not carry the day every day. However, not all such pranks are harmless – there are some who will seek to enforce misrule. In either case, it may be wise upon this holy day to treat anything that you may learn with a dose of healthy skepticism.

### Forthcoming Holy Days

*March 21<sup>st</sup>: Dragon's Feast (Strega)*

It is the philosophy of Strega that the self is the greatest interest of all; the acquisition of power, wealth, and acclaim. To that end, the faithful of Strega will often choose this day to begin ambitious undertakings to improve their status and resources. During the Dragon's Feast, those who would see fortune in the coming year are advised to make sacrifices to Strega.

*May 9<sup>th</sup>: Order's March (Brack)*

The faithful of Brack will often observe Order's March in quiet meditation and reflection upon the paradoxes of law in a civil society. Some superstitious followers of Brack will begin regimes of crackdown on criminal activity on this day, in hopes that the Lawgiver will bless them in this endeavour. It is advised that legal documents be signed on this auspicious day, by priests of Brack.

### A Message of Faith

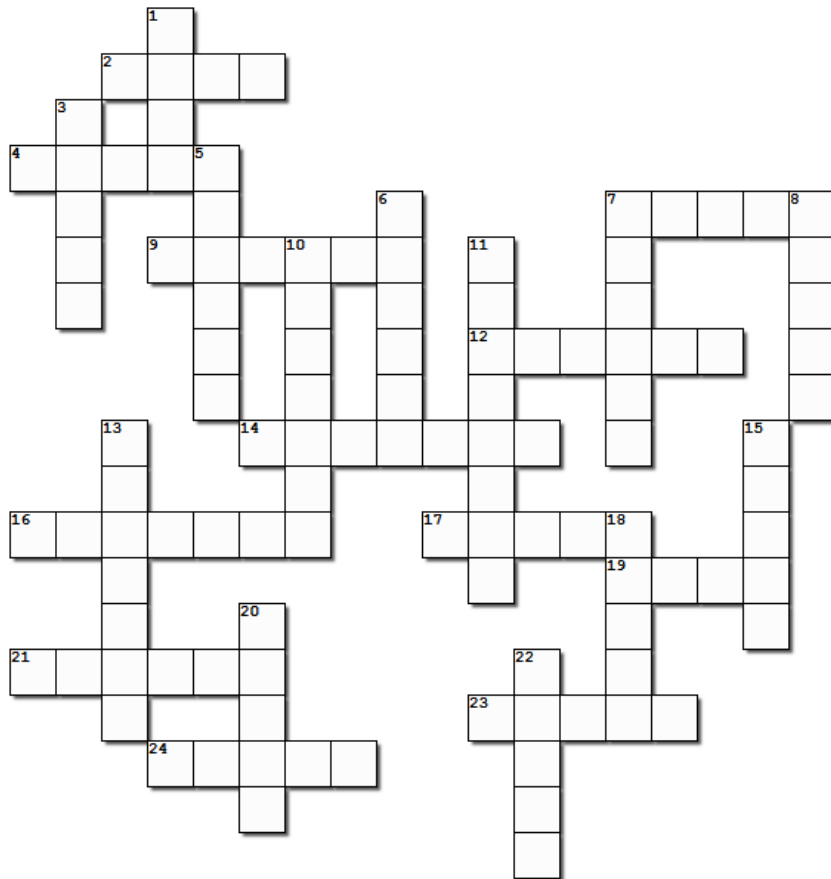
I would speak on faith in the face of the novel.

In a sense, novelty is difficult for faith to embrace. Many traditions of faith – even among the Anajareamites, who observe tradition often only in its absence – are built upon precedent and a structured understanding of the world. This matter is this god's domain – this matter belongs to another.

Viewing new things, wholly new, can therefore be of great challenge to those who desire a clean if sometimes untidy order.

The truth is, the gods are one way to frame the world, and because of the diversity of their portfolios, a useful one. The fact that something new arises does not mean that the gods are not relevant; it simply means that our understanding of their roles, and their relationships, may be forced to change. Let your faith bend in the wind, like the willow.

# Crossword



## Across

2. Pepper's accompaniment
4. Female monarch
7. A feather pen
9. A spout of superheated water
12. A divine servant
14. Sour wine product
16. A quiet word
17. A number or a finger
19. Amorphous slime
21. Air of life
23. A grievous injury
24. Direction often marked 'up' on maps

## Down

1. Large body of water surrounded by land
3. Instrumental or vocal song
5. A sliver of metal
6. To do with mage magic
7. To mine for cut stone
8. A metal bar pulled for effect
10. A professional warrior
11. Makes locks, traps
13. A large 'chirping' insect
15. April 1st
18. Poison or venom
20. Not blunt
22. Panic or concern

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# Riddles

### Riddle 1:

I'm in your tears,  
Or in the sea;  
Your flavoured dish  
Preserved by me.

**Answer 1:** *tlas*

### Riddle 2:

I wear two plates of armour;  
And I'm snail's-pace slow  
as well -  
Please don't be much  
offended  
If I hide within my shell.

**Answer 2:** *eltruT*

### Riddle 3:

Curtain's pricking,  
Demon holes,  
Tapestry of fate-  
And souls.

**Answer 3:** *sratS*

### Riddle 4:

Enough of me together,  
And we jingle as you pace;  
A merchant smiles  
For many miles,  
When they can see my face.

**Answer 4:** *nioC*

### Riddle 5:

Some say I bear forth wisdom,  
Some say 'clear a troubled  
mind'  
But I know when you are  
sleeping,  
It's my stories you will find.

**Answer 5:** *smaerD*

### Riddle 6:

I've a spine but no head,  
And leaves but no branches,  
I'm bound but not with  
manacles,  
And can carry you away.

**Answer 6:** *kooB*

# Room to Grow: Construction Update

*In an effort to keep you informed about construction and growth in our community, the Adventurer intends a bimonthly column that will update on the status and needs of existing construction projects, and of potential upcoming projects that townsfolk can become enthusiastic about and work toward completing.*

**Construction Project:** *The Expansion of the Town Guard Barracks*

**Status:** Begun

**Overview:** Town barracks are the home base and offices of town guardsmen. Completing the reconstruction of the barracks, the barracks are now being improved and expanded to better serve the public.

**Progress:** At time of printing, this project has begun, and is just under two-thirds to completion. Check at the local planning office to help out.

**Construction Project:** *Further expansion, paving, and patrolling of local roads.*

**Status:** Underway

**Overview:** The highways and roads of Harodom allow for most of its trade commerce. By expanding and patrolling our local roads, we reduce the chance for banditry to be successful, eliminate some wear and tear on carts and wagons, and allow for the easier transit of persons and tonnage between towns, cities, and other settlements in and around Harodom. This will help to increase merchant and local profits.

**Progress:** At time of printing, this project is just shy of 1/2 complete. Further funding, as well as materiel and skilled labour is required in order to finish this ongoing project. Check at the local planning office to find out how you can help increase prosperity.

**Project Forecasts:** Likely projects that will help the area of the as-yet unnamed township remain stable and prosperous.

**Granary:** A fortified structure hardened against flood, vermin, and the elements, a granary is designed to be a safeguard for a town's surplus food and perishable goods.

**Inn and Tavern:** A place for travelers to rest and locals to recreate, an inn and/or tavern helps an area to attract merchants and others to build and grow the connections with other parts of the region.

**Fisherman's Wharf:** A dedicated fisherman's wharf can help an area to harvest aquatic bounty, and to gather such foodstuffs are available for local construction and trade.

**Brewery:** Supplying the local market, a brewery creates potable beverages from excess grain or crops.

## Tool Highlight: Locks and Traps

*The Adventurer seeks to highlight a few of the tools useful in the business of adventuring, and how to use them to the greatest effect. In this issue, we explore the fruit of the mechanic's trade; locks and traps.*

Not for nothing, mechanics are frequently referred to as 'security experts'. Although insufficient simply by themselves, locks and traps can deter or dissuade would-be thieves from trying their luck. A chest with a lock that a thief may or may not be able to bypass is a less appealing target than a container without such a security device.

Locks can be picked or shattered, and there exist spells

which allow the caster to open even complex locks as if they had the key to hand. Still, this proves an impediment; casting spells takes time and energy, and a chest with a couple of complex locks increase the chance of a thief being discovered, or using up resources they would prefer to retain.

Traps are devices that create effects when an action triggers their mechanism. Traps can vary in complexity, and in effect; many are familiar with the hunter's snare, and certainly anyone with an ear for tales of adventure has heard tell of the cunning death traps so popular in ancient ruins.

In truth, the aspiring mechanic

should know that there is legal limitation to their trade. Setting a trap in an area frequented by people may be assault, although a trap on personal property such as a box or a home is generally permissible. It may be advised to put a warning sign, with a picture in bright colours near a trap; this leaves it still useful against most undead and animals, for instance, while warning other people there may be danger about.

Locks and traps can be useful, but the art of using them effectively is subtle and can take some time to learn. Being thoughtful with their use can help to keep you and your possessions safe, and be a lucrative trade.

# Dwarven Numbers Game

In this traditional dwarven accounting game, no number should appear twice in a vertical or horizontal line, or in the same square of nine numbers.

4				2				8
7			1	5		4	6	
		5			9			
3	6		2			9	5	
				9				
	2	9			3		1	4
			4			7		
	5	4		8	7			3
8			5					9

1			4			9		
4				1				8
	6			9		2	1	4
	9				1			
6				2				3
			6				9	
8	7	2		4			3	
5				3				2
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## Recipe of the Month: Apple-Cinnamon Cake

*This recipe is tasty and moist, and the apple helps you to pretend that it's healthy if your physician asks if you have been eating enough fruit.*

- O Freedman

### Ingredients

#### Batter

1/2 cup butter  
1 cup white sugar  
2 eggs  
2 apples (diced)  
2 Cups all purpose flour  
1/2 Tsp salt  
1/2 Tsp baking soda  
1 Tsp baking powder  
2 Tsp vanilla  
1 cup buttermilk

#### Topping

2 Tbsp cinnamon  
1/3 cup sugar

### Directions

Preheat oven to 350 °F . Mix cinnamon and sugar and set aside. Cream butter and sugar. Add eggs and beat until blended.

Combine dry ingredients. Mix vanilla with buttermilk. Add dry ingredients alternately with the buttermilk mixture.

Spread one half of the batter into a greased and floured bundt pan. (batter is quite thick)

Sprinkle with one half of the topping, stirring a little. (I use a fork to stir it in).

There is a lot of topping to add, so don't be concerned if it is not totally stirred in. Top this with the chopped

apples.

Carefully drop and spread (with a spatula) the remaining batter and sprinkle with remaining topping. Once again stir the cinnamon mixture into the batter.

Bake for 35-45 minutes. Check with a cake tester or toothpick until it comes out clean (no crumbs). Let it sit in the pan for about 10 minutes and then slide a knife around the edge of the bundt pan to ensure the cake is free from the sides. Turn it out on a cake plate.

It is nice served warm, but will keep ( covered) for a few days at room temperature

## Have a Tale for the Table?

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