

The Yorik Adventurer

ad captandum vulgus

July, 2024 A.T.

Massive Smuggling Operation Uncovered

A group of local adventurers, following up on rumours about a relic bearing the power of Kazzok, God of Fear and the Infernal, happened upon a large scale smuggling operation in June of this year.

Although listed as abandoned, the principle location contained hundreds of gold worth of contraband, including illegal toxins, as well as some stolen goods. Reports indicate that the seize materials were only a small

fraction of the overall material that the smuggling ring had handled.

Illegal goods have been destroyed, and every effort is being made to ensure that stolen items are returned to their original owners.

The *Adventurer* regrets to report that the seizure of the illegal warehouse storing these goods for further transport led to the unintended deaths of three.

Further action taken later in the same day found a barricaded fortification within the boundaries of the town of Yorik. This emplacement seems to have been a rallying points for an illegal caravan train.

Once again, The *Adventurer* encourages any readers that see something unusual to report it to the Guard. Although we have stemmed the tide of illicit goods, it is unknown how long this operation has been ongoing.

Being Known as 'Apex' Critically Wounded, May Be Defeated at Last

A strange hive-mind known as 'Apex' has been harrying travelers and townsfolk these past few years. Finally, with a great effort from some of the town's heroic adventuring population and a similar being that rose to oppose Apex, the plant-creature appears to have been defeated.

Although the precise cause of this incursion into our reality is difficult to definitively pin to a moment, the problem has recently been escalating. The 'void portals' that were so much an issue in the past few months seem to have been related to or tied to Apex.

At present, *The Adventurer* cannot definitively state that the being known as Apex is truly gone, but their ability to affect our reality has been severely limited if not entirely.

In the interim, if you identify any creature or being that identifies itself as 'Apex', townsfolk of Yorik are advised to maintain a careful distance. Although foreign to our reality, this being has proven very capable of creating beings that can work considerable harm on our native life forms, and we would not wish to provide it with such opportunity.

Portals Continue to Dump Strangers in Yorik

Recent evolution of the strange void portals has led to strangers from far-off lands appearing in the Yorik region. Most recently, a delegation of partisan fighters were offered respite in our humble town, despite not seeking to be here.

These portals seem to be growing in frequency, and recent portals have seemed to focus on the areas around Hammerfrost with some traipsing into the Broken Reach. These strange magical anomalies can be closed, but their strict origin is as yet still ambiguous. It is perhaps possible that some strange magics that have

led to the undead recreation of an ancient king of Hammerfrost may be related to this recent spate.

If you see a portal, described by viewers as a tear in the world, be cautious. With no way of knowing where these portals originate, it can be difficult to determine where one might take you, or what might come out of one.

Remember that these portals are not stable. While every reasonable effort will be made to recover any lost townsfolk, please be aware that it may be a long walk home.

Adventures Abroad

Enormous Bear Harries Scarsinvale

The town of Scarsinvale in the Broken Reach was recently harried by an enormous black bear (estimated to stand fifteen feet to the shoulder while rampant). This is yet another case of a creature dumped into an unfamiliar area by the strange portal magic that has been afflicting much of the Lakes region.

Although enormous in size and immensely strong and resilient, the black bear behaved much like a similar creature of normal proportions. Unlike grizzlies or ice bears of the North, black bears tend to shy away from conflict.

The townsfolk of Scarsinvale were able to drive off the enormous creature through the use of loud noises, making themselves seem large and aggressive. The retiring bear was susceptible to such tactics and thus was driven off, to places unknown.

It bears remembering that even large creatures may not be aggressive when facing off against a creature that does not run from it. While it is never bad to tactically withdraw, opportunistic predators will not attack a creature that stands its ground or charges, favouring easier prey.

Apencan Infernal in the Broken Reach?

A strangely aggressive creature identified as an infernal and appearing to serve the cause of Apenca has been seen in the area of the Broken Reach near the town of Scarsinvale.

This being appeared to be well-dressed, confused, but polite, and did not take aggressive action against the persons from the settlement. However, she did firmly advocate for non-violent solutions in almost all cases, and while willing to accept that this solution may not be equally valid in all circumstances, was almost smothering in her efforts to advocate for

this cause.

An interesting exception arose in this non-violence advocacy for the undead, where the apparent infernal advocated for the thorough destruction of the undead by any means available to hand.

Although often ambitious and seeking personal advantage, infernals that have aligned themselves to the interests of a god will often become zealous advocates for that god's primacy in an area, and some (potentially legitimate) interpretation of that god's dogmatic views.

Elves Assassinated Near Eldershire Border

A campaign of murder appears to be occurring within the Broken Reach near the Eldershire border. Reports have been made to the *Adventurer* that a number of bodies of bona fide travellers and merchants have been found near the border of Eldershire.

This appears to be a continuation of a campaign to blacken the name of Lord Donovan, previously cleared of any such murders by the joint work of the Harodom government and efforts within the Reach. Given this, the brutal murders are not merely unsettling but also fruitless.

The murders of Eldershire citizens seems dedicated to sparking a new war between Harodom and Eldershire. We can only speculate as to the motives of those that seek this aim, but a number of groups did profit from the previous war, and with tense negotiations about intervention in the current undead crisis, it may be that many wish to keep these once close nations from becoming close once again.

The *Adventurer* will continue to report on this as further information becomes available. It has been deemed a matter of public interest.

Intrigue in Portnos!

A group of persons deemed suspicious by the governments of Harodom and Eldershire has made efforts of late to spark tensions between Eldershire and Harodom through targeted killings within the Broken Reach.

Last month, there was an effort to commit murders within Scarsinvale that would (to one not well versed in international diplomacy) appear to break the contravention against political interference in the Reach set out in the treaty of Sashkissed (2019).

Further investigation revealed that this was not

the case, but the hired killers have revealed that their contact is to be found within the City-State of Portnos.

Since its declaration of independence from the nation of Harodom following the events of the Eldershire-Harodom war, Portnos has cast its net more broadly in search of trading partners. By way of consequence, the city's taverns and dens of iniquity may be said to have a greater than usual population of roughnecks and mercenaries, which seems to have been the idea behind this plot's management.

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: What constitutes self-defense?

The area around Yorik, while being in the middle of the country, is nevertheless often compared to a frontier; there are large areas of relatively unsettled land, and in addition to the largely peaceful people hereabout, there are also creatures that may threaten you. In addition, we have seen several wars, as well as bandit activity.

For the creature alone, it would be a reasonable step for a wary traveller to carry arms or armour about their person. It is generally considered polite to not simply carry weapons in all circumstances, particularly if one is in an inn or lodging place, but it is only in the presence of nobility that full disarmament is usually demanded.

With this in mind, when facing creatures or monsters that prove an immediate threat (such as dire wolves, chimerae, etc.), there is no duty to retreat (although it may be advisable). However, in the case of a confrontation with another person (as so defined by law), you should take pains to deescalate a situation, retreat if possible, and use minimal necessary

force if forced into a physical confrontation. If someone throws a punch in a bar brawl, and someone else draws a blade, the law will most certainly view that as an escalation.

It is the right of all persons within Harodom to travel the king's highway unmolested, with the exception of tolls, checkpoints, and similar impediments put into place by landed nobility or under the Royal seal.

In the event that you are waylaid by bandits or footpads on the king's highway, you have the right to defend yourself using all reasonable methods available at your disposal. Use of illegal methods (such as garrotes) are still forbidden.

Rax Treegrinder's Orcish Wares "Make our orc-food your fork-food"

Generously sponsors this newspaper in an effort to inform a deserving public about their
FINE ORCISH IMPORT GOODS

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 31st – Jan 28th)

Lend a hand to a neighbour, and you never know how they might be able to return the favour later on. Your community thrives when you participate in it, and a rising tide will raise all boats – but you have to get out there and set that tide to rising.

The Harp (Jan 29th – Feb 27th)

Sometimes things of value come in unexpected forms. Be open to new opportunities this month – but be wary. There is a shadowy presence lurking that means to do you harm, and will surely succeed if you are not extra vigilant this month.

The Fount (Feb 28th – Mar 30th)

Your luck will overflow this month – but not just good luck. Both good and ill tides are flooding your way, and it will be up to you to navigate the tides. Beware the offer of power without talk of responsibilities or consequences; it is often the case that such offers have a hidden dagger.

The Dice (Mar 31st – Apr 28th)

We cannot control the dice of fate, but we can control the circumstances in which they are rolled. Be mindful of

how your choices impact your chances, because while you are not helpless in determining your fate, small decisions will often have large impacts that can be difficult to anticipate.

The Arrow (Apr 29th – May 27th)

There will be a hard choice coming up, and making the choice will commit you to a course of action that may take you to places you would not otherwise have gone. Consider carefully – but remember that *not* choosing is also choosing, except that you will no longer have a say in the course.

The Stone (May 28th – Jun 25th)

Don't let recent mistakes dissuade you from future courses of action. Learn from the errors of the recent past, because the lessons that they teach will be relevant and impact your near future. Be careful – sometimes the obvious lesson isn't the correct one.

The Coin (June 26th – July 28th)

Be good, or be good at it. There may be opportunities for you to gain an advantage soon using underhanded means. If you're capable and swift, you could profit from spreading misfortune to others... but the wages of failure may be death or worse. If you stray from the path of the righteous, fear consequences.

The Spade (July 29th – Aug 30th)

There is a great shadow arching out across the world. Stand against it, run from it, deal with it – the only thing you will be left unable to choose is 'ignore it', because it will not ignore you. You stand a better chance withstanding this presence with friends and allies.

The Blade (Aug 31st – Sept 27th)

The path of the hero lays out before you if you wish to take it. That might be with mighty spells and daring blades, or in simple acts of kindness to others. You are in a unique position to make your mark upon the world, and to receive recognition for it.

The Mask (Sept 28th – October 31st)

A truth that sucks is still the truth. You can lie to others, but lying to yourself will only win you unhappiness and ruin. Be careful how often you tell a lie – it is often said that the punishment that the gods give to liars is that they come to believe their own mistruths.

The Shield (Nov 1st – Nov 29th)

Nihil unquam deperditum est, ut sepeliatur – nothing was ever lost to be buried. Just because something is out of sight does not mean that it is out of capacity to affect your life. Consider that anything that you bury may once again come to life – and then consider that in the near future, there is a good chance that such a thing will happen. Your lucky numbers are four, seven, and eleven.

The Hearth (Nov 30th – Dec 30th)

Wars in distant lands will soon be a matter of concern at home. Take the time and resources that you have to prepare for such an eventuality, but remember that there are no actions in this world that entirely stand on their own. Each result is the child of a million million decisions and actions taken before you were even born, and your own actions will affect others.

Better Know a Guild: House Ramses

The guilds that serve the kingdom are comprised of specialists in a trade or skill, or who perform a service that betters the quality of life of the people of Harodom. In this article, we will discuss the merchant House Ramses.

Based in Michian, House Ramses is one of the three great houses within the powerhouse trifecta of the Lakes Region. Much as House Toth is based in Harodom, and Davidoff is based in Eldershire, House Ramses has strong trade agreements with the Michian Empire and its leaders, giving them an advantage.

Recognizable through their yellow and black heraldry with a golden capital 'R' in the center of a bifurcated yellow and black field, Ramses is known to carry magical components and occasionally even magical items.

The Empire, unwilling to divest themselves of the authority to trade in such goods entirely to the Guild Arcane, granted license to House Ramses to trade in such goods. In addition, the kereste groves of Michian deal almost exclusively through House Ramses for their international trade, and this special material also advantages

Ramses in international commerce.

In the early days, Ramses used the motto *rerum sub nummum*, or 'all things under the coin', indicating that the merchant house had broad reach and deep pockets. However, as their agreements with the Empire were better formalized, they shifted the motto to *merces pretium habens*, or 'wares worth having', a reference to the Michian phrase 'all things worth having have a price'.

During the Michian war, there was an embargo on goods from Ramses – this sales slump reversed

During the war with Eldershire, as Michian forces coming to the aid of Harodom improved the desirability of Michian goods.

Like many of the older parts of the Michian empire, direct authority in House Ramses is difficult to perceive. Several senators and the Imperial family are thought to have some portion of the shares in Ramses as a trade house.

In general, House Ramses is a provender of quality and resilient goods, and holds a reputation for standing behind the goods that they bring to market.

Community Board

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

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

A town-to-town peddler has been spotted offering people the chance to put coins into her 'good luck jar'. She claims that good luck follows anyone who makes the donation.

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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.

Copses of mushrooms have appeared across the fields and forests of Harodom. It is as yet unclear if these mushrooms are natural or portals for the faerie folk.

Portents: Carrion birds behaving oddly. The distant smell of perfume. Odd things happening in fives.

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!

Has your sword become sordid?
Is your axe un-axe-ceptable?
Rearm yourself at **Isaac's Arms!**

Special requests? Special materials? **NO PROBLEM!**

Every weapon guaranteed *Yorik Strong!*
Trust the blade with the brand displayed!

Editorial: International Affairs

There is an innate inclination among people regardless of their species, to treat all perceived persons as rational actors.

This isn't a bad thing – if you see something that looks like it might behave rationally, treating it that way opens up a world of possibilities that hostility will close. The problem arises when you use that same logic on things that go a little further afield than strangely-shaped persons.

In this, I am specifically referring to nations.

Nations are made up of people, but have interests that may not correspond to the desires or wills of their component parts. People have friends. Nations have interests.

Please understand that I do not object to the idea that we can and indeed should behave kindly to one another on an international scale. But when trying to predict what a country

will do, the specter of national interest will impact that decision making process.

And nothing happens alone.

We are moving into an area of history where some of the traditional barriers we have put up are coming down. This is good, and international cooperation will only help to make our people rich and prosperous enough to share that wealth. But always keep an eye out for the interests of nations.

Oren D'vann Freedman, Editor

Matters of Faith

Holy Days Just Past

June 12th: Mother's Blessing (Atha)

The Feast-day of Atha recognizes the gift of the Earth mother as the last of the spring crops begin to come ripe. It is common for gifts of food and coin to be donated to temples, and farmers and miners will often seek the blessings of Atha upon their labour. The Feast of Mother's Blessing is also a common time for new priests of Atha to formally take up their vows.

July 10th: Hand's Day (Astrid)

Hand's Day is a recognition of the story of Astrid and their ascension to divinity. Shrouded in secrecy, this day is most often observed by Astrid's faithful, who counsel thieves in their skills, duties to their divine patron, and the balance between a thief and their community. For the rest of us, watch your valuables and perhaps purchase stronger locks – Hand's Day is notoriously rife for burglary.

Forthcoming Holy Days

July 16th: Summer's Fair (Marius)

The feast-day of Marius is often marked by trade caravans and bazaars, and is considered to be a lucky day for new trade contracts to be signed or negotiated. It is considered bad luck to cheat or swindle someone on Summer's Fair, with Marius said to be watching over every transaction. In Marius' role as the god of travel, new voyages are often begun on this day.

August 8th: Mushroom Feast (Blythe)

The holy day of the god of rot, poison, and disease is one most often celebrated with a visit to the local physician. While the faithful of Blythe may be abroad on this day – and every reasonable care should be taken to avoid them – in Harodom and tradition has formed for ensuring that your own health is good... and not leaving your food or drinks unattended.

A Message of Faith

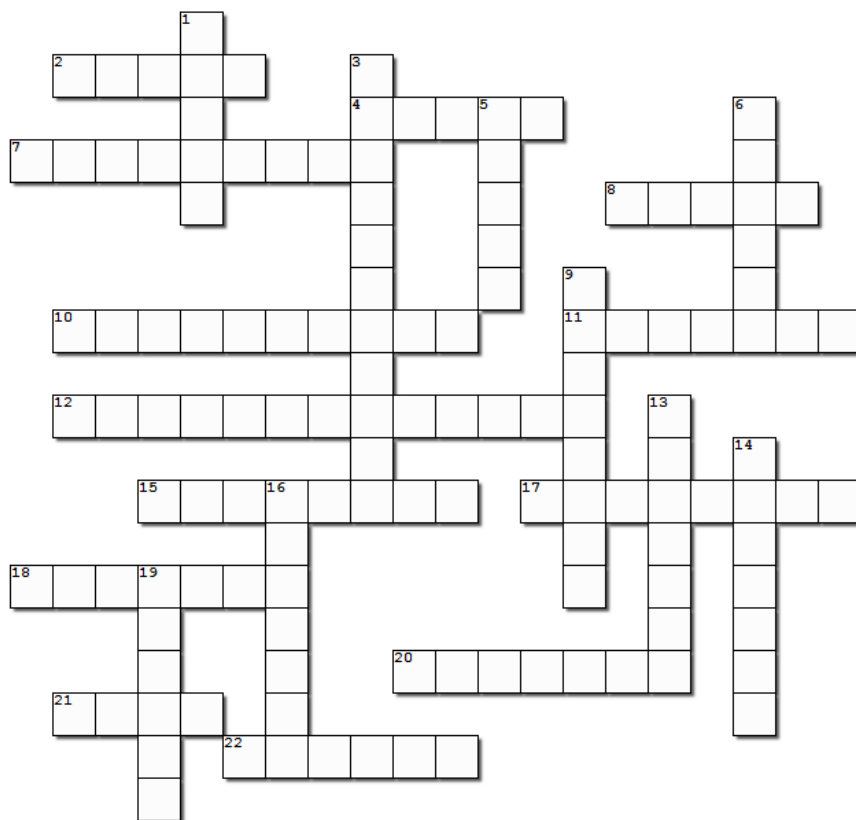
I would speak on the love of things.

It is not an inherent vice to take pride in one's craft, or to have a fondness for a reliable tool or favoured possession. Indeed, many is the time in my own workshop that I have spoken to a tool as if it were a familiar friend.

We can show this love of things by seeing to their needs. Weapons break, tools lose their edge, and finery corrodes. Taking the time required to keep equipment in good shape can be as holy as any other prayer.

But evil slips into this world when we begin to treat people like objects. A tool or a blade used to further your own end does not truly require care or compassion (with the exception of some notable magical items). But if you simply treat a fellow person like they are expendable or worse, disposable, you stray from the path of love.

Crossword



Across

- 2. Used in buying and selling
- 4. A loosed shaft
- 7. Alwyn's spear
- 10. Unbreakable metal
- 11. A collection of written works
- 12. Blythe holy day, Aug. 8th
- 15. Padded armour
- 17. A being with a lunar cycle.
- 18. Bloody remains
- 20. A magical horse that comes to a point.

- 21. "Stop" to a horse
- 22. Something that's gone missing due to Astrid.

- 13. Major foundry city near Hoggport.

- 14. Good luck or bounty
- 16. Something that helps someone.

- 19. To mend, or a spell that does the same.

Down

- 1. Bones that are affixed to the jaw
- 3. Alchemy that detects magic
- 5. An allium good in stir-fries
- 6. The goddess of winter and spite.
- 9. Not all that does this is gold

Riddles

Riddle 1:

We guards can be short,
We guards can be tall,
But without guards like me,
Your building would fall.

Answer 1: *llaw A*

Riddle 2:

My skin has been stretched,
My body beaten,
Again and again,
To keep the time.

Answer 2: *murD*

Riddle 3:

I start the day,
And end the end,
And do the same
For your dear friend

Answer 3: *D rettel ehT*

Riddle 4:

I flatten out the round,
And show the nature of the
ground,
Should you lose your way (or
worse)

It's likely that you lost me
first.

Answer 4: *pam A*

Riddle 5:

Alive, but I don't breathe air,
I'm known as vibrant and fair,
I prick when I'm held,
I soothe when I'm smelled,
And my musk is quite
debonair

Answer 5: *esor A*

Riddle 6:

I bite not nails,
But attack them,
And hit them with my head.

Answer 6: *remmah A*

Room to Grow: Yorik Construction

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 Repair of the Town Guard Barracks*

Status: Underway

Overview: Town barracks are the home base and offices of town guardsmen. These officers are responsible for upholding the law and defending the citizenry. The barracks include a small gaol. The town barracks were badly damaged last year, and needed rebuilding.

Progress: At time of printing, this project has been completed, and will soon open.

Construction Project: *Repair and expansion of nearby roads*

Status: Underway

Overview: The highways and roads of Harodom allow for most of its trade commerce. By repairing our roads, we encourage new trade to flow into town, as well as making exports of our existing goods easier. As well, this decreases the likelihood of bandits being successful in preying on traffic.

This project also makes it more likely that town amenities – as they are constructed – will earn outside revenue and support from other towns in our region.

Progress: At time of printing, this project is about ¼ 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 open Yorik up to the world.

Other Projects: Once the estate construction is completed, other community improvements can be fruitfully pursued.

- **Farm Rebuilding:** Given the dangers inherent to the local roads, shipping in food from other towns in the barony is less feasible. Rebuilding our farms should be a priority.

- **Rebuild the Old Mill:** The main structure and mechanisms of a mill that predates Yorik's founding, still stand by the river that feeds the Yorik town creek. Rebuilding this mill will bring in trade from out of town, and enrich our citizenry.

- **Local School:** There has been some discussion of creating a school for the children of local residents, farmers, and workers. This 'public school' would improve literacy rates.

- **Public Baths:** There has been some call for public baths, to improve local hygiene.

Creature Feature: “And Stay Down”

The Adventurer seeks to highlight a few of the strange creatures that adventurers may find in their travels, so that people can better learn about them before they get jumped. In this article, we will discuss creatures that don't want to stay down when defeated.

It can be difficult to maintain morale when a creature that has been thoroughly defeated refuses to acknowledge that fact. With creatures such as zombies, night hawks, and trolls, natural or supernatural regeneration can lead to further woes.

Taken in the general sense, there are a number of creatures that must be defeated in a very specific way in order to stay defeated. In other cases, you can effectively defeat a creature, even if it is still animate – zombies may still reanimate themselves after being defeated, but without limbs, their peril drops immensely.

In the case of most creatures, removal of the head is a good place to start. While some creatures (such as trolls) can regrow their heads, others, such as zombies, are blind and reduced without them. The same

goes for limb removal, if someone is an adroit weapons specialist.

Some creatures, such as trolls, require specific types of injuries from which they cannot regenerate. Cauterization of wounds is the only way to stop a troll's prodigious regeneration, requiring acid or fire to seal the wounds before they can regrow.

Some creatures like the demonic 'Night Hawks', require something be done with their body after their defeat. In the case of Night Hawks, they will continue to grow whole unless their

head is removed and taken at least a few feet from the body.

If you encounter a new type of creature that seems to have some ability to continue being a problem despite being conventionally dead, try the following techniques:

- Different elemental damages may help to defeat this creature
- Try removing the head from the body – this can often slay creatures that can otherwise regenerate.
- Watch out for any signs of how the creature is regenerating (e.g. a glowing heart upon falling)

Comical Strip: Dungeon Buddies



Recipe of the Month: Lemon Crumb Squares

After a heavy meal, a bit of lemon can help one to feel refreshed and even a little better. We are fortunate to have fresh lemons grown in the area... somehow.

- O Freedman

Ingredients

Oatmeal Mixture

- 1 1/4 cup all purpose flour
- 1/4 teaspoon salt
- 1/4 teaspoon baking soda
- 1/2 cup butter (at room temperature)
- 1/2 cup brown sugar
- 1 1/4 cup rolled oats

Lemon Filling

- 1 can sweetened condensed milk
- 1/2 cup lemon juice
- Zest of one lemon

Directions

Preheat oven to 350 degree F.

Mix butter and brown sugar together.

Mix the flour, salt and baking soda together.

Add the rolled oats and flour mixture to the butter/sugar mixture and combine with a fork until crumbly.

Press half of the crumb mixture into the bottom of a 7 1/2 x 11 3/4 inch buttered glass pan.

Mix together the condensed milk, lemon juice and lemon zest. Add this mixture to the top of the crumb mixture. Top with the other half of the crumb mixture, but do not press it down.

Bake for 20 to 25 minutes until golden brown.

Remove from the oven and cool for about 20 minutes.

Cut into squares and refrigerate until completely cooled.

Remove from the ice chest for about 30 minutes before serving. Keep leftover squares in the ice chest if available.

A sweet treat best enjoyed in good company. In the event that longer-term refrigeration is not available, eat swiftly – they do not last as long on the counter, owing to the condensed milk.

Have a Tale for the Table?

We here at the Adventurer take our name seriously. Adventuring is the act of going out, taking chances, and living to tell the tale.

We are paying a gold piece for tales of adventure, excitement, and daring-do written down in 300 to 500 words. Inspire your neighbours, brag to your friends, and see your story in the paper.