

# THE IRON CITY POST-INTELLIGENCER

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## IRON CITY HOSPITAL OPENING! By DR. JAMES M. MCCOYNE

The fledgling Iron City Healer's Association announced that its planned hospital will be opening on October 8th. The facility will be located in the same building as the Spirit Lodge.

This project is triply ambitious, as the Association has not yet held its first official meeting, finalized its name, or voted in Officers.

The physicians and healers of the association felt the town's needs were too great to put off opening the hospital any longer than absolutely necessary. The association reports that donations are still desperately needed as the hospital will be operating with minimal supplies to start. Donations should be directed to Dr. James M. McCoyne, c/o Iron City Blood Lodge.

The hospital will be staffed by volunteers from the association. They hope to have one surgeon and one nurse on duty or on call at all times.

During a recent discussion, one notable town physician said, "Mr. Carrington and his staff have been most gracious in allowing us to commandeer part of the Cog & Sprocket for emergency triage for quite a while and we are deeply grateful to him and his staff for accommodating us, but the town is growing and needs a full time medical facility." Other members agreed and expressed their heartfelt thanks to Mr. Carrington and his staff.

Another healer commented that a tavern is not the ideal environment for performing surgery, particularly when people are trying to eat. Other members agreed and expressed their apologies to townsfolk who had their dinners ruined by spurting blood.

## PROMINENT XINGSOL ARCHITECT DISAPPEARS

Xiao Mi Shen, renowned Xingsol architect and scholar, has vanished from his home in Liria City. A visiting professor at the Lirian Academy of Mechanics and Natural Philosophie, Mr. Xiao failed to show up for his regularly hosted Lecture Series, "On Form, Function, and the Sculpting of Perception." The following day local authorities were dispatched to investigate his absence and found evidence at his home that suggests foul play. A reward is being offered to anyone with information on the whereabouts of Mr. Xiao. Contact the branch office of your local newspaper for details.

## KATHARO HERITAGE SITE CLOSES

After a series of financial missteps, the Katharo Heritage Site has been forced to close its doors. An outcry from the local populace and attempts at raising funds to help the failing institution were not enough to save

the historical landmark, the site of the first settlement in the province. Personnel from the Lirian Academy of History and Warfare will be moving the remaining items of cultural importance to the National History Museum in Liria City. No future plans for the location have been released to the public.

## DOOMSDAY CLOCK ERECTED IN KRIEG

A collective of artists, craftsman, and engineers in the hamlet of West Harbow have created a monument to what they claim will be the End of the World. The Doomsday Clock is a towering structure twenty feet in height, constructed of gear work, metal and wood, and festooned with traditional Kriegan hexes. The clock is counting down the hours to the end times, currently set precisely at midnight, mid-year, 2794. Reports of pilgrimages to the site from the whole of Lira are unconfirmed.

There is not enough space to list all of the people we have lost since my arrival. Many died violently. Some few have been taken by The Mine for its nefarious purposes. Many have simply given up and left for safer pastures. We will never learn the fate of those that simply disappeared.

Miss Kaniik's loss will, I think, be the hardest felt for two reasons. She was a vital and irreplaceable part of this community and the threats facing Iron City are more dire now than ever.

I was not a close friend of Miss Kaniik. We never sat down to tea together. We never shared a bottle of wine at the Cog & Sprocket. Too late, I regret not taking the time to get to know her more personally. She was a woman of indomitable will, unflinching courage, and remarkable accomplishments. She put the town's wellbeing before her own. She, and her leadership, will be

war. The Organist still hunts our ladies. Even the bastion of hope and peace that is the Kinship of Blood Magic is threatened with destruction.

Now is a time that all residents of Iron City must pull together and stand together. If this settlement is to survive, every person must set aside their personal ambitions and follow Miss Kaniik's example. We must pool our talents and resources like we have never before.

When adversity has faced us in the past, this town has always pulled together and overcome it in a way that makes me proud to be a member of this community. Once again, we must stand vigilant and not despair. Hard times are ahead my friends, but we will prevail. Do not lose faith. When you feel you may falter or it seems there is no hope; remember Sanura Kaniik, her dedication to Iron City, and the sacrifice she made for us all. Emulate her strength and you will persevere.

## BLOOD LODGE TO HOST HARVEST FESTIVAL! By DR. JAMES M. MCCOYNE, GREATER INITIATE OF BLEEDING

The Iron City Blood Lodge will be hosting its first annual Harvest Festival and Cultural Exchange at the Great Elk Hall in Silvertown on November 12th. All residents of Iron City and the surrounding area are invited to attend, excepting Luen, Alchemicals, and Sentinals.

Planned activities include a pot luck supper, card tables, presentations on the harvest customs of various cultures, and a merchant's bazaar. Highlights of the night are expected to be the Lirian Benevolent Association's Charity Revue to benefit the Iron City Hospital and the Intercultural Gift Exchange.

Admittance is free, but attendees are asked to bring a contribution to the pot luck supper. Those wishing to take part in the gift exchange should bring a small, wrapped gift that is in some way representative of their homeland.

Residents interested in participating in the Charity Revue should contact Mr. Edmund Brandworth Addington, Esq. c/o Iron City Ministry of External Affairs.

Mr. Jack Diamond and Mr. James Malice will be overseeing several games of chance, rumored to include Blackjack and Poker.

The goal of the festival is to break down the remnants of cultural isolationism that still exist within Iron City's diverse populace. The Blood Lodge's Community Liaison told Lodge Master Kangee "With the recent political upheaval, cultural tensions in the city are high. If left to fester, there could be more violence." He then went on to speculate, at great length, on what might happen and what could be done to ease tensions.

Join the ranks of the greatest scientific minds in Talus:

### Become an alchemist!

*"But I don't know what an alchemist does? Don't they just blow things up?"*

No my silly little friend. In fact, half of what alchemists do is almost entirely not blowing things up! It's true! Alchemists also create the fuels that power the machines of industry, the oils that protect our bodies from caustic acids, extreme heat, biting cold and electrical shock, the metal alloys engineers need, and much more.

*"I heard that alchemy is dangerous."*

You bet it is! Every day there's a danger of some new discovery, some new formulation which could bring to you the riches and wonders experienced by the great alchemists before you!

*"Aren't the materials hard to find?"*

Only if you're lazy! Look around you! Coal is so common we're burning it for heat, Orpiment is used as a comment pest poison, and Hartshorn, well, we're just pissing it away! The building blocks for your future are all around you!

*"Alright, you've convinced me, where do I sign up?"*

Find your local Alchemy Collective and sign up for their meeting of course! In your local town of Iron City they hold meetings every Saturday at the Artisan's Workshop.

We hope to see you soon among the ranks of the wealthy and successful alchemists of Talus! Good luck!

## OUR LOSS AND OUR FUTURE By JAMES M. MCCOYNE

In the several years I've lived in Iron City, we've lost a lot of good people to the abomination we simply call 'The Mine' and the monstrosities it spawns. One would think such a nefarious thing would have a more impressive name. I'm sure the demons who built it had a suitably ominous moniker for it.

As you undoubtedly know, The Mine's latest victim was Councilwoman Miss Sanura Kaniik, a prominent citizen of Iron City. Her abduction and subsequent conversion into a servant of The Mine is a great blow to Iron City. The incident brings to mind when another prominent citizen, Sherriff Blair Shizzar, was dragged off to the mine to a similar fate. That was also a great blow to the town.

missed.

I know Miss Kaniik mostly through her actions. When the town was threatened, she was at the front, organizing the defense. When the town needed leadership, she stepped up; not because she wanted to be in charge, but because she was the best woman for the job. Whenever the town needed something done, Miss Kaniik was there making sure it got done or simply doing it herself.

Her loss could not come at a worse time. Iron City has recently "changed hands", so to speak. There will undoubtedly be repercussions from the interruption of the execution. The Mine has had its equilibrium upset, which always causes more destruction from it. The Cornwall menace still looms. It seems inevitable now that the FNK is drawn into the Lirian-Jhandihari

## EDITORIALS AND LITERATURE

*The opinions of the authors presented herein do not necessarily represent the attitudes and opinions of the Iron City Post-Intelligencer or its staff.*

### MUSINGS & OBSERVATIONS BY MADAM PAPHILLON

Justice is blind, my dear Readers, and feeling cheeky! Those in the know in Iron City remember to steer clear of the barrels of notorious Sheriff Bonnie. One would be stretched to find a more concentrated supply of gunpowder and metal upon such a small frame. But just whose guns has the good Sheriff been polishing these days aside from her own? A vigilant eye can easily see that our Sheriff spends much of her time perusing the workshop of none other than Iron City's foremost gunsmith—and notorious rake—Artemus Von Liechtenstein. And what arsenal-toting gun patron could blame her? Yet many of us wonder if sparks of a very different nature have been flying in Artemus' shop.

And while our Sheriff seems distracted by the lengthy Acrian rifles, our "noble" Justice of the Peace, former pirate/swan trainer, Melch, has taken the code of laws and run like Srg. Saunders from a fight. When it was learned that a commissioned home inspector from Liria City was rightfully carrying out his duties in the presence of the public, he put the poor man before an official hearing. Then, after a trial shorter than Miss Elizabeth Merriweather's skirts, our so called "Justice" beheaded the good inspector and threatened the same fate upon anyone who failed to tip the bar less than three queens for common drinking water. Perhaps his title should be changed to Justice of the Pieces given his tendency to sever men's heads from their bodies. Things have become a little befuddled since our Jhandihari neighbours took over, but that is no reason to start losing our heads, or forcing others to lose theirs.

crisp, but not freezing evenings. During September, October and November, the once green leaves of spring and summer alter their appearance, displaying such colors as brilliant yellow, glowing orange, fiery red, and rich brown. Each species of tree and shrub has its own unique hues which can vary from year to year. So why do the leaves go through this transformation? I believe it is a way for nature to show us its beauty. It is a sign to us to stop and enjoy the beauty of the world around us.

So take a moment of your day and watch your surroundings and you may learn a thing or two about life.

### A MODEST PROPOSAL BY JACK DIAMOND

My Fellow Iron Citizens,

We have a problem. Several, in fact. We are surrounded by those who want to kill us; infected by that which means us no good; inundated with those who claim they want to help, but whose real motives and loyalties are far from certain.

I am speaking, of course, about the ever-present horde of Luen; the implacable, powerful Mine; and the constant influx of assorted New Citizens, who may or may not be simply saboteurs, thieves, brigands in disguise.

It is my postulation that these problems have not thus far been solved not due to the insolubility of the three problems individually, but rather because each issue poses enough of a distraction that solving another would leave us too vulnerable. That is, if we were to explore a final solution to the Luen issue, we would be left vulnerable to the ravages of the Mine, and vice versa.

The Luen problem is particularly troublesome, as the Luen themselves are impossible to deal with diplomatically. Though I have been fortunate enough to see only a small handful of relatively minor Luen attacks, the potential devastation they could wreak is considerable, if not complete; and our ability to foresee such an attack, or to turn it aside, is limited by our force of arms. If enough Luen approach all at once, and we cannot fight them back, Iron City simply ceases to be.

That said, the simplicity of the Luen's collective aims -- death, murder, mayhem -- render them eminently malleable to our purposes, should we desire to use them. All we need is some good bait, and a good place to direct their fury.

The latter -- a target -- should be quite simple. The Mine, that implacable opponent, at once an instrument of great profit and, as we

saw all too clearly barely a month past, an insidious instrument of destruction. It should generally be content to mind its own, so long as we do not anger it. But our angering it is inevitable, as we wish to eventually be free of its influence, and it will fight back against such a goal.

An astute reader will note I have remaining one problem needing resolution, and one task needing completion: New Citizens of Iron City, and bait, respectively. This is not accidental.

The myriad new people who flock to our fair town claim to be friends. They wish to be allies, even citizens. And many take them at face value. I do realize it was less than a month past that I, your humble writer, arrived here. But questions about my intent and my loyalty would have been perfectly valid then, had anyone raised them. (I do hope that by now I am well-proven.)

So I say, let these New Citizens prove their loyalty, and their value. Let us use them as bait, to draw the Luen in, not to the town itself, but to the Mine. Let us direct the fury of one foe against the power of the other; and let us find the loyalty of our prospective allies in the bargain.

What good could come of this, you ask? Potentially, the end of both the Luen threat and the nefarious presence of the Mine, along with some new friends. And, I retort, what bad could come of this? Hordes of rampaging Luen in town? This is inevitable if we do not do something. The anger of the mine? Its fury was shown, in full force, very recently. It will be angered again.

We cannot stop the inevitable battles. We can, I propose humbly, force the issue, on our terms, using our enemies against each other, that they not bring their full force against us.

And however it turns out, it should be great fun.

### THE CONTINUING TRAVELS OF ALEX P SWAIN IN THE OGWEHOWEH CONFEDERACY

Having found the now not so recent developments in the Ogwehoweh Confederacy altering my travel plans, I decided to stay in Copper Brook a while longer. It was during this extended stay that I was able to witness a game of what could best be described as bocce, if it had been invented by the Koheczi. As my readers are likely aware, the popularity of sport of Balihu cricket has spurred an interest in the civilized parts of the Ogwehoweh Confederacy in other exotic sports. As the Koheczi refer to this sport as simply "the ball game," I will refer to it as Koheczi bocce.

The game is played by two teams, typically of five players to a side. Traditionally, I am told, it is played

in a specially constructed arena, with walls surrounding the playing field, and a line painted across the center bisecting the court into two camps. In the exhibition game here in Copper Brook, in lieu of an enclosed court it was played in the town green, with cords serving to mark the boundaries of play. Across the center line are placed five balls of solid rubber, and the teams form a line upon opposite Walls or the arena. From the stands, the guest of honor throws a weighted flag into the arena, which signals the start of play.

Mere words cannot describe the tumult that occurs once that piece of cloth struck ground, but I will endeavor to do it justice! The ten players rushed headlong towards the rubber orbs, skidding to a halt just before they reached the center line -- as near as I can discern, crossing this boundary is the only action not permitted in a match of Koheczi bocce -- in order to seize the spheres that are elemental to this game. It is now where the competition begins in earnest, as the contestants seek to eliminate the other team by striking them with the balls. The skirmish may last for several minutes before one side is fully eliminated, and quite impressive feats of acrobatics were



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### BLACKHAND BRAIN BUSTER

Can you connect all of the Hubs? The digit on a Hub denotes the number of Conduits that connect to it. Conduits never cross and every Hub must be part of the complete system. Give it a try!

1	2	3	3
2	2	5	3
2	1	7	2
3	3	2	1

### THE WORLD AROUND US KYNON BARRA

Every year, the will of nature puts on a spectacular show across Iron City and the surrounding areas. Autumn colors can be seen in many areas throughout Talus., and the world for that matter. However, it is certain areas of Talus, including Iron City, and the more milder climate regions that produces the most striking and vibrant colors. This is attributed to mild autumn days coupled with cool,

displayed as players sought to avoid the barrage of attacks that can occur when one side wields all the ammunition.

With the aid of a translator, I had the fortune of speaking with one of the players after the match, who informed me that this game is often played on festival days, with the hearts of the losing team traditionally eaten by their priests.

It is here that I must depart, gentle readers, as I feel I should depart lest the locals begin to insist I take up residence in Copper Brook -- though I shall remember this town quite fondly. With the frontier with Liria closed, I find that I now have the time to venture further from the beaten trail, and explore some of the more remote, yet picturesque towns and settlements of the Ogwehoweh Confederacy.

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