

STRONGHOLD ^{THE} GAZETTE

Vol. 3 No. 1 May 15, 147

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Founded Oz CXLV

THIRD ANNIVERSARY EDITION

OZMA RETURNS TO EMERALD CITY

by Jana T Wordsmythe

EMERALD CITY - The early morning chill lingered as the first rays of morning light set the gems of the city to shining. The gates to Ozma's private garden opened and we the summoned were ushered inside. The sweet scent of the fairy lilies, unseen since Ozma's disappearance, hung in the air. There she stood, smiling beatifically, with red flowers twined in her dark hair, a white diaphanous gown draping her slender form. "Fear not, faithful friends. I have returned to you, and all that has been wrong shall be set right."

That was the scene two months ago when Princess Ozma announced her return from seclusion to once again lead the people of Oz. She gave no explanation for her absence these past years, but has offered assurance that pressing matters called her away. Celebrations began immediately as word was spread on the wings of fairies, carrying Ozma's lilies to towns and homes throughout the land.

Ozma has taken several immediate steps to restore stability to all the Lands of Oz, as well as within the Emerald City itself. She has fully funded the Scarecrow's Army—as it has recently come to light that the Army had been without funds for months now, likely prompting their withdrawal from field operations. Scarecrow's Army soldiers are overjoyed to receive the back pay they have been

Join Horizon's Stronghold Saturday 3pm Carnival

For



Games/Activities

Ring Toss

Milk Bottles

Donut on a String

Firing Range



Contests

Egg Balance Relay

Bubble Blowing

Jelly Bean Jar

waiting on. When asked if this action meant she was taking direct control of the Army, she demurred, saying she had full faith in the Scarecrow and his magnificent brain, and was merely putting her personal treasury.

Ozma has also said she is very concerned with the recent rise in reports of dark magic being practiced. As Ozma herself was once imprisoned by a dark witch, she knows full well the fear and suffering her people must endure at their hands. To counter the threat, she has reconstituted the Royal Society of Witch Hunters and tasked them with eradicating the problem and restoring safety to the land.

Witches Mobbed and Killed By Thuun

It started with rumors and ended in death. When word first spread of Ozma's return, the people were overjoyed. But then word quickly spread of her declarations of how magic and witches would be handled, with Dark magic quickly outlawed, and Light magic allowed by only a select few people. The Emerald City was hit worst. Madness spread like wildfire as mobs of people turned violent. Rumors were abound that Dark witches were to be hunted and killed. All witches began being rounded up and were soon classified as "Dark" before being brutally killed. All over Oz, witches began taking refuge where they could, hiding from the persecution of the ignorant masses who believed they were doing the will of Ozma and her agents.

On March 22nd news arrived that although Ozma has returned, the rumors of her strict use of magic were greatly exaggerated. The witch hunts were unsanctioned* and we can only hope those who spilled innocent blood are quickly and lawfully punished.

*From Civil Authority "The murders were conducted by unsanctioned groups of witch hunters. However, it should be clarified that sanctioned witch hunting groups have been instituted."

From the Mayor Snickerdoodle's Desk

Good people of Horizon's Stronghold, please pardon my absence these last few weeks and the brevity of my article for this edition of the Gazette. My travels to the Emerald and Sapphire Cities have kept me overlong, and I'd hoped to have returned to you with a more robust report by this point on the official standings of magic and the magical at our town meeting. I trust that our esteemed Judge and Sheriff have and will continue to have official matters well in hand until my return, which should be shortly.

In the meantime, please remember that the occasional magical creatures and witchfolk that have crossed through Horizon's Stronghold may have attracted witch hunters and other people looking for magical trouble. We are mostly simple farming folk, and while our ability to overcome great and unusual obstacles may seem magical, we have done much thanks to good old-fashioned ingenuity at the hands of our Deputy of Invention Ms. Glass, our previous Mayor Mr. Invento, and our many fine craftspeople and alchemists. Should armed persons come to town looking for trouble, they'll surely find none so long as we treat them with the politeness with which we'd expect to be treated and they do the same for us.

Hearty congratulations are due for the upcoming nuptials of Ms. Glass and Mr. Silver. I wish them warmth and happiness in this time of festivities, and far beyond. Should you wish to partake of some festivities yourself, be sure to take in the carnival games, hat parade, and market, all held this very weekend.

Have a Magical (but not actually magical) Festival

THE CIVIL AUTHORITY: WORKING FOR YOU!

Agents of the Civil Authority are working hard across all the Provinces of Oz, in towns big and small, to improve life for You the Citizen!

They have implemented systems for improved Food Distribution.

They provide Oversight for Immigrants and Changelings.

They partner with local peacekeepers, whoever they may be, to keep those with ill intentions from harming the good Citizens of Oz.

So the next time you meet an agent of the Civil Authority, give them a hearty handshake and a heartfelt THANK YOU.

Civil Authority

No articles, advertising, or opinions shall be presented promoting a violent, subversive agenda or actively encouraging and contributing to civil unrest.

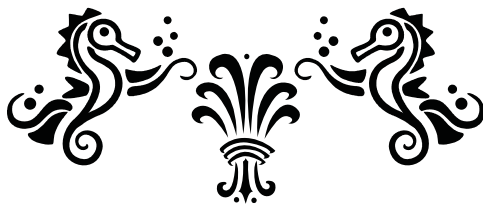
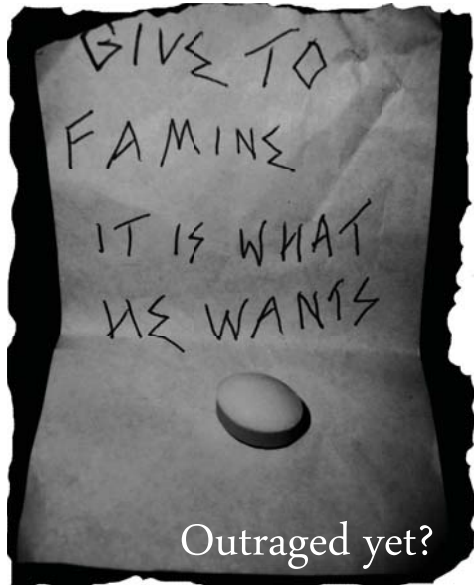
STRONGHOLD THE GAZETTE

The False Seed

By George Aleister Wright

Imagine if you will, your son or daughter dying a horrible death at the hands of Famine. Would that be unbearable? Imagine your father or mother, your husband or wife, your best friend. Would that be terrible? Would you sacrifice your own life so that your loved ones may live?

Now imagine this horrible death being deliberately orchestrated by someone. Your loved ones dead, because of the games played by others. Your own death, decided for you because you are inferior and don't understand. Would you be outraged?



Citizens Attacked!

By Thuun

Vicious criminals are on the rise. During the time that rumors of Ozmas anti-witch laws were in circulation, a gang of bloodthirsty thugs kicked down the door of Wrigglies brothel and casino demanding all witches surrender themselves to be executed. When no witches came forward, shots were fired upon the innocent citizens resulting in a shootout that took the life of Stabbin Andy, the gangs leader.

"Witches can conjure fire with their stupid brains" said Clyde in an attempt to justify his attempted murder, who also later attempted to impersonate an officer of Scarecrows army. Several more criminals later nearly killed a handful of townfolk before the mayor valiantly stepped forward to put down the threat. When the criminals were apprehended and questioned they claimed that an agent of Ozma named Awesom-A the mighty approached them and many poor families offering them 2 emeralds for every witch head they delivered. This woman is reported to wear a yellow dress with polka dots, and smells like Marigolds. Any information about this woman should be reported to the Horizon Strongholds authorities.

DARK WITCH HUNTERS ON THE LOOKOUT

by Thran Ganelon

EMERALD CITY – The Royal Society of Witch Hunters, under the auspices of Princess Ozma, has been patrolling the streets, markets, and homes of Emerald City. Their mandate is to find any and all practitioners of dark magic and arrest them—a mandate they have been executing with alacrity.

"I cannot comment at this time on specific names or number of arrests," said Witch Hunter Lieutenant Olliollo, spokesman for the society. "But I will say that we have been quite successful in ferretting out these dangerous individuals and removing them from civil society."

Lieutenant Olliollo declined to state what is being done with the arrested witches, saying, "They are being taken to a secure facility and will no longer trouble the good people of Oz."

Reactions have been mixed to the new initiative. The majority of citizens favor stricter protection against dark magic, which has of course been illegal in Oz for many years, but has proliferated particularly since the wall fell. However, some individuals, particularly members of the Mephitics Guild, worry that the arrests may target innocents unfairly.

"Potions are my job. I keep everything on the up and up. No poison here, despite what some people might whisper," said a member of the Guild who asked to remain anonymous. "If you have low energy or, y'know, love troubles, I'm the guy you want to see. Dark magic's never been a part of it, but with these new patrols, and folks getting stirred up—I'm afraid someone'll get the wrong idea and come after me."

When initial operations in Emerald City have been completed, the Witch Hunters plan on extending their searches to the other cities and provinces of Oz, ultimately making a clean sweep of the nation.

Changeling Sanctuary to open in Horizon

By Thuun

In an effort to help needy Changelings become educated and aid them to successfully integrate into society, an effort has begun to raise awareness and funds for a Changeling Sanctuary. These individuals can greatly benefit from some proper guidance to better themselves, and protection from those who don't have their best interests at heart. For contributions and further information, inquire with Ms. Izzy, Preena Glass, and Gors.

Letters to the Editor

There are those in Horizon's Stronghold who would trample the rights and liberties of others. There are those who would step on the necks of their fellows to advance their own causes and fill their own pockets with emeralds. People who would harness and enslave their fellow Ozians and grind them under the heel of despotism. This must not be allowed.

To the Witches of Horizon's Stronghold, brothers and sisters of the Dark and of the Light, you are under a grave threat. You have heard of witches being attacked, and even killed, in other cities throughout the land and may think that you are safe here in this place. Make no mistake, our tiny town has not been left out of the fray. Witches here have already been assaulted by those who fear magic. No matter who may be orchestrating these attacks, magic must be protected for without magic, Oz and its peoples cannot exist. You may be tempted to run and hide, but remember that there is no place to hide. They will find you. Instead, prepare yourself. Set aside the differences between the Light and the Dark, and stand with your fellow magic users. Alone we will fall, together we will save ourselves. There will be a call to war and when it comes, how will you answer?

Dear Sirs,

I just read in the Lairabee Daily that the Scarecrow's Army has been bankrupt for months. Why are we only learning this now? I expect better reportage from my local news sources! How can I respond with appropriate outrage if I am unaware of the travesties that require said outrage?

To that end, I offer the following abbreviated outburst: What do we pay taxes for if we can't even keep the Army funded? No wonder bandit attacks have been on the rise! And don't even get me started on the zombies. As a citizen of Oz, I demand that the Army execute its duties and that the powers-that-be provide the necessary funds to support those brave men and women and everthing-elses!

Cantankerously,
Barnabas Grump
Old Coots Guild



For Liberty, Equality and Fraternity!
The Swamp Fox

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Toll Road Trouble?

by *Q. Stubbers*

DAYLIGHT-The town of Lairabee has built a toll booth along the Lairabee Road Pass, and has been collecting a toll of 1 emerald per person and 1 emerald per cart for all those using the road to enter or leave the county. This has caused consternation among many locals, merchants, and travelers of all stripes.

"Travel everywhere's been rough recently," Winn the Wanderer, a regional expert, said. "I can understand the county's difficulties maintaining the roads, especially with all the materials for reconstruction being exported. But the toll is just too high-folks'll find other ways around, and someone's gonna wind up hurt."

The Lairabee road is currently the only road connecting the towns on the peninsula to the Yellow Brick Road. The steep mountains of the neck make other passage out to the rest of Oz quite difficult.

"I'll pay the toll while I can," said Winn, "but I'm not likely to return to Lairabee anytime soon."

More Equal

By *George Aleister Wright*

I grew up hearing my mama say that we are all the same in the eyes of the Almighty, and that one day all men would learn that truth. Mama said that I was no different from my identical twin brothers George Bernard, George Carlos, George Jamal, George Kicking Bird, etc. or from my identical twin sisters, Georgia Annette, Georgia Chao-xing, Georgia Fadwa, Georgia Mishka, etc. Mama said that with a whole lot of patience and a heap of hard work, I may one day proclaim with my brothers and sisters that we are all created equal.

Since my arrival to the land of Oz, I've learned that there are more than just man. I've fought alongside Mr. Bucksworth, a man made of straw. I've broken bread with Miss Nightshade, an immortal with gossamer wings. And I sorely miss Ewenice, the Humblest Sheep, may she rest in peace.

In a land that is so full of diversity, it would seem that equal would be easy. That equal would be the norm for everyone to function together. And yet, it is so painfully obvious in the tones that certain people take...we are not equal. It is so outrageous that people turn a blind eye to those that are more equal than others.

With a whole lot of patience and a heap of hard work, one day everyone in Horizon's Stronghold will be treated equally under the law. One day, Elder Changeling Clawdette will declare that all changelings are ready to be equal citizens as you and me.

One day, will you stand with me?

Clawdette's Corner

By *Clawdette*

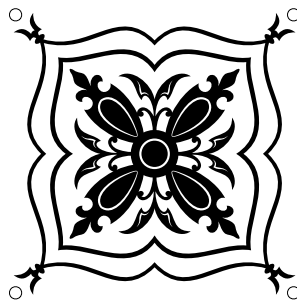
I been hearin' a lot of arguin' lately! I know it can be tough leavin' behind the life you been comf'terble with to live with a buncha folks you don't really understand. I did it, too! I wanna tell y'all a story.

I used t' live out in the swamp, happy as can be swimmin' around with my family and sleepin' in our secret burrow. Then the great spell fell, and everythin' changed. I felt real lost an' confused and just set to wanderin' for a long while. By and by I came to the back door of what I'd learn is the Red Poppy and Cookie gave me some food. Well by golly it didn't take much after that t' convince me to come in and learn my way around the kitchen! I felt like I'd found my new place and before I knew it, it really felt like home. Part o' my job is I can't be picky about who's orderin' what as long as they're bein' nice or polite or what have ya, an' I've met all kinda interestin' folks an' tried to learn a little about what makes 'em happy.

Maybe I got it wrong, but it seems like a lot o' stormriders have kinda the same thing happen to 'em when they get here. Kinda lost an' confused for a while, then eventually find a place an' make a home. I think maybe it's harder because a lot of folk they meet don't look too much or at all different from themselves so it's easier to forget who or what yer talkin' to here in Oz. Miss Preena, Cookie, an' Luke made this real easy for me to understand, and I want y'all to know it's okay to ask for help in tryin' to understand somebody instead o' gettin' angry at 'em for not doin' what you expect 'em to.

Everybody's got secrets. I just wanna ask y'all to keep keepin' it civil - been doin' a good job so far! (and please bring your dishes to the tiny window!)

<:3o~~



Looking for general labor, and paying well.

Contact Roman Blake or Leroy Devereaux **Page 3**

Horizon's Habiliments

By *Geogianna Dawson*

&

Prista Glass

As the number of Stormriders has increased over the years, it has become apparent that Earth especially The United States, has simpler fashion standards than Oz. Now that you are here in Oz, we encourage you to break free from your sepia tones, your black pants, and instead to embrace the following:

Color! You are over the rainbow darling, let go of the black! Every Ozian knows that color is important. While it can be traditional to wear color of your land of origin, no one sticks to just one color; pops of color can help provide contrast and interest to your outfit. Whether it's brown with pinks and purple, or gold with blue; let your creativity be your guide.

Texture: Besides color, a great way to add variety to your outfit is through different fabric textures. Shiny satin, fuzzy wool, sheer chiffon and lace all add new looks and feeling to your ensemble. And it never hurts to play with how these different fabrics are layered or draped.

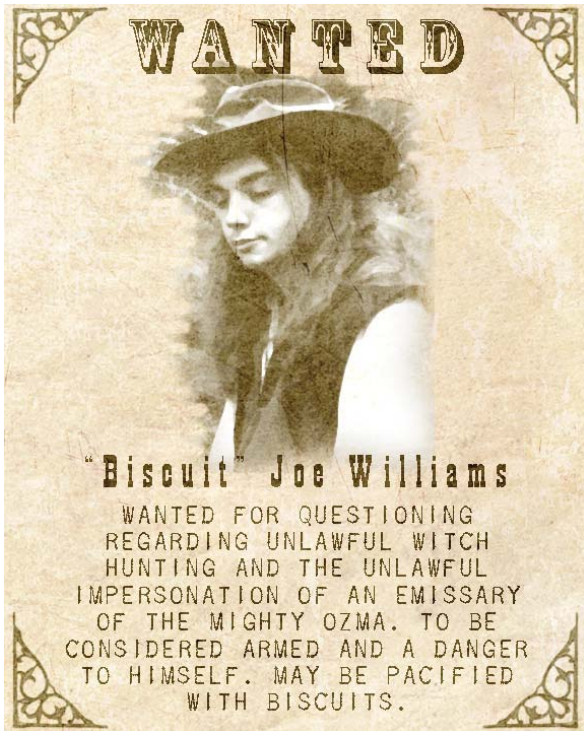
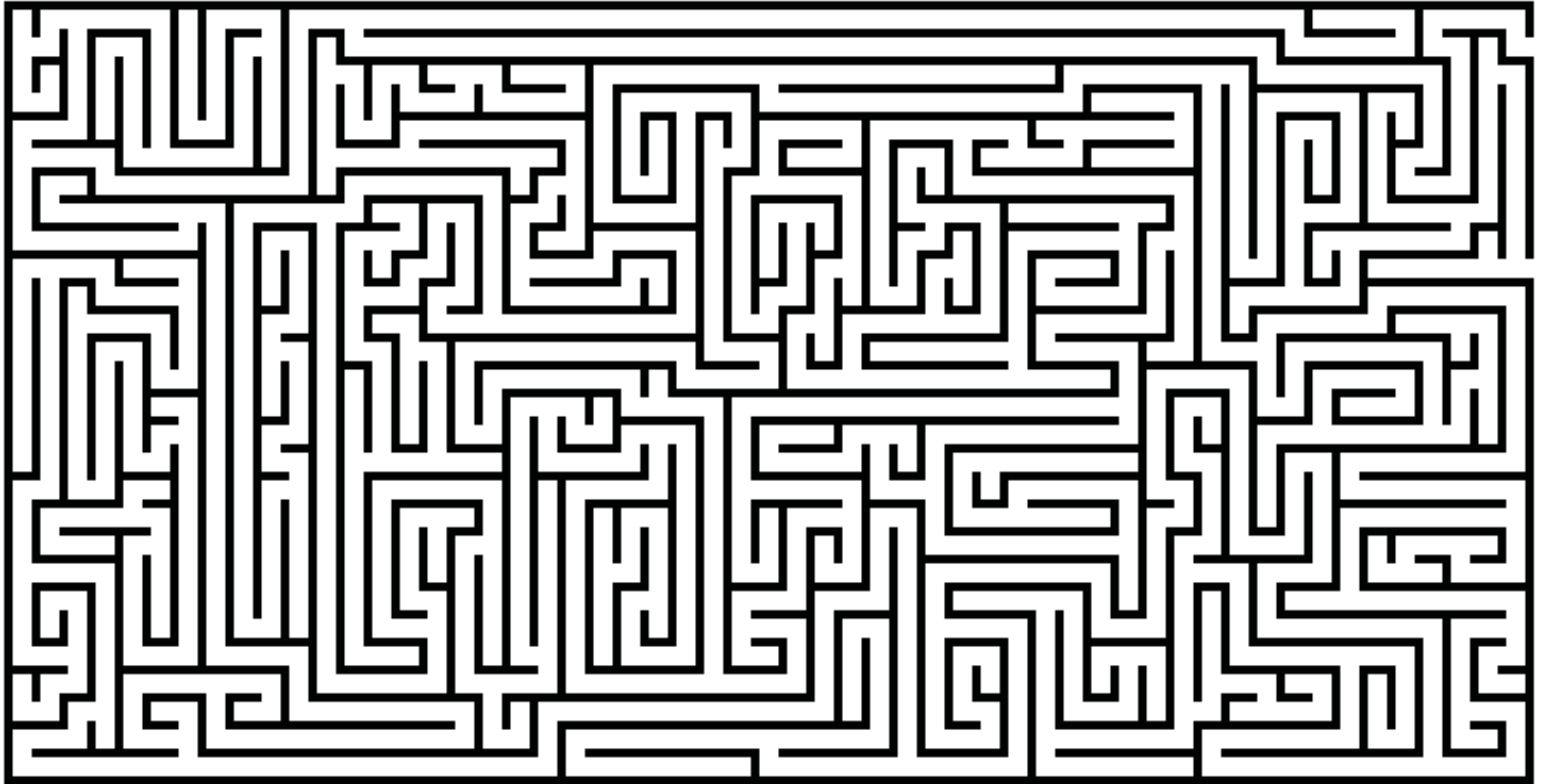
Accessories: Complete your look with some fine jewelry like a necklace or tie pin, or a fantastic hat complete with sparkles or feathers (or both!). The right embellishments will not detract from your outfit and instead can draw attention to your best features. Even your weapons could benefit from some elegance and class. A complete look is vital. Outerwear, such as hats or coats, can add layers and more opportunities to use color and texture. A feathered cap, a fine ascot, or a snappy coat can add quite a bit of panache.

Shoes! One's footwear need not be only functional. Shoes complete your ensemble in addition to keeping the ever present mud out of your hopefully color coordinated socks.

In short dears, please remember that in Oz, what you wear says a lot about you, and we do want to present the best possible face. Lets make Horizon Stronghold a veritable rainbow of fabric! And those of you among us that are Stormriders, use this as an opportunity to show us Ozians what you can do! You can always get advice and input from either lovely authoress of this friendly advice column.

STRONGHOLD THE GAZETTE

Which Witch's Path



**WRIGHT
 PUBLISHING**
 IS LOOKING FOR A FEW GOOD OZIANs
 TO JOIN THE NEWSPAPER
 FREELANCE AND STAFF JOB AVAILABLE

STRONGHOLD THE GAZETTE

Hush Now to Blush Now

Sex & Relationship Advice Column from the experts

My wife has started asking if I can "dress like a Mangaboo" in the bedroom. I'm not sure what to make of this. I love my wife, but a Mangaboo? And why dress up at all, aren't we going to be getting undressed anyway?

-Man G. Boo



Dear Man,
Every child knows the fun that can come from pretending to be someone else, there is no reason to not bring that fun to the bedroom. Dressing up can provide the feeling of being with someone new, but the comfort of being with your partner. I can't tell you why your wife is asking for Mangaboo in particular, but what harm can come from trying? Get into the act, have some fun and you just might like it. If you truly don't enjoy it, talk to her about it, but in the mean time, give it a try and see what happens. As for why dress up at all? My dear we all know the fun of unwrapping the present, and you get to be the gift that keeps on giving. Kiss, kiss Lady Fingers

I wrote in a while back. My interest in rope and knots and specifically tying folks up has made my line of work that much more exciting. I'm looking for a place, other than on the job, that I can share my love of rope with the world. Where can I go to be with others who share my interests?

-Hope on a Rope



Dear Hope,
Most towns of decent size have people that would share your interest, however because most people who share these interests are scared to be open about it, they can be hard to find. Perhaps when Ginger returns from her trip she can run a class for interested parties, and you could meet people there. In the mean time perhaps you could craft some rope jewelry and see who notices and appreciates it. Hope that helps, Kiss kiss, Lady Fingers

I think I'm in love with a changeling but no one must ever know! What do I do???

-Flustered by Fur



Dear Flustered,
Let's start with the obvious question, does the furry object of your affection return your feelings? In the end that is really the only question that matters. If you truly love them, then be with them, and deal with the consequences, or deny your feelings and live the regret as long as it lasts. Either they are worth it, or they aren't. Kiss, kiss Lady Fingers

WIGGLIES

Casino and Brothel

Located inside Hilde Hall.

Amenities include full bar, snacks, private rooms, music.

Casino Hours:

Fri: Closed Private Party

Sat: 11:00 PM -Close

Sun: Closed for cleaning



Brothel Hours:

Always Open for Business

Are you In Need of Companionship?

Love? Lust?

Romance?

Passion?

Leave it to the professionals darling.

Satisfaction guaranteed! Be serviced with a smile!

Wiggles takes pride in the variety and skill of our capable and experienced courtesans to suit your needs and fill your every desire.

We host and cater full service Bachelor and Bachelorette parties!

Walk-ins welcome! Schedule yours today!

Horizon Town meeting

By Thuun

With the recent incidents surrounding the events in the emerald city regarding the hunting and murder of witches, the citizens arrived at the town meeting eager to hear what Mayor Pfeffernusse had to say. Minds were put at ease when the announcement was made that any attacks against townfolk will be resisted and dealt with as per the law. With that matter settled, the meeting turned to the reoccurring issues involving immortals. The danger of Famine has passed, and a moment of silence was observed for Forever Burning Blaze of the Black Mountain of Billowing Smoke, who sacrificed himself to save the town from a bloody war with Famine and its servants. The town of Horizon Stronghold is currently undergoing changes to tax laws and claims on property. All taxes will be reduced by 1 bit, and taxes on buildings will follow the following formula.

Taxes in bits = The number of doors, privy's, and kitchens.



THE STONE MARKET
OPEN NOON TO TWO,
SATURDAY
SPACE AVAILABLE.

Contact Roman Blake
or Leroy Devereaux

TOWN MEETING: SATURDAY, 2:00 PM

Tax Collection after town meeting



Who Will Speak?

First they came for the Witches, and I did not speak

out—
Because I was not a Witch.

Then they came for the Constructs, and I did not
speak out—

Because I was not a Construct.

Then they came for the Changelings, and I did not
speak out—

Because I was not a Changeling.

Then they came for me—and there was no one left
to speak for me.

By Wendel Adel Gustoffsen



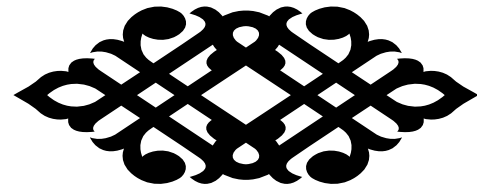
Georgianna
"Dead Eye"
Dawson

May be noted that Georgie, hereafter to be known ad Georgianna "Dead Eye" Dawson, was one of the brave souls who helped arrest a wild band of dangers Criminals

New County-wide Tax

LAIRABEE-At the start of the spring season, the County Board of Lairabee voted unanimously to institute a 10% tax on all townships and unincorporated settlements exceeding 30 residents. This tax is to be calculated on the bimonthly tax rolls for each township, with a special assessor sent to those qualifying settlements which do not currently maintain local tax rolls.

Arguments given in favor of implementing the tax are that it will allow for improved patrols to reduce the alarming level of bandit activity, increase communication relays to the Emerald City, and fund much-needed road maintenance.



Attention Ozians!

Have a construct in need of improvement? Need a new construct? Want to sell a used construct? Good news! The ZeGrate Family Construct Dealers are traveling to a town near you! The premier buyers, sellers, and improvers of constructs known throughout the Emerald City have decided to share their services with the greater land of Oz. Be sure to catch their deals before they pass you by!



		The Red Poppy	Wiggles	The Stone Lodge
Friday	6:00 PM			
	7:00 PM			
	8:00 PM			
	9:00 PM			
	10:00 PM	Dinner		
	11:00 PM			
	midnight	Thomas' Bachelor Party	Preena's Bachelorette Party	
	1:00 AM			
	2:00 AM			
	3:00 AM			
Saturday	4:00 AM			
	8:00 AM	Breakfast		
	9:00 AM			
	10:00 AM			
	11:00 AM			
	noon			Market
	1:00 PM			
	2:00 PM	Town Meeting		
	3:00 PM			
	4:00 PM	Carnival		
	5:00 PM			
	6:00 PM			
7:00 PM				
8:00 PM				
9:00 PM	Fancy Hat Potluck Dinner			
10:00 PM				
11:00 PM			Wiggles Casino Open	
midnight				
1:00 AM				
2:00 AM				

THE WRIGHT INVENTION
FOR YOUR APPARATUS & FUEL NEEDS