



The Whispering Runes

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Dallas President's Column for September 2009

Since my last letter, we've had a great experience at Animefest where way more people than expected showed up at the basic larp fighting class and due to superior scheduling flexibility and dedicated volunteers, we managed to run 48 people through "Midnight Shuffle", finishing around 4am. Olan Knight took the lead, recruited volunteers and made it happen. Then, on Sept 26, Tina Cox produced David Spence's anime-themed game, "Samurai of Death", with about half of the 21 PCs having been recruited from Animefest. General feedback in email, in person, and at the after-game party from both events was that people had a really good time. Be sure to thank Olan, David, and Tina for providing the leadership which is helping the chapter grow. Of course, everyone who volunteered at these events also deserves a round of applause.

Since we were focused on making these big events be a success, the calendar is a little thin for October and November. Our next event will be a Board meeting and mini-game on Oct 24. We'll see there whether we can organize a major game before the holidays. In addition, we are planning on a sword making training session to assist our newer members in getting their equipment organized.

It's nearly election time and I haven't heard from people volunteering to serve on the Board next year. Time to speak up. The primary requirement for serving on the Board is a willingness to show up regularly at the Board meetings. And as a bonus, Board members earn extra CAP, which can be applied to improve your characters.

See you at the next game,
- Patrick McGehearty

Equipment Advice for Characters at Levels 1-4

When looking over the available choices at some magic shops, the range of choices can be daunting. This note is intended to provide some guidance at lower levels. Higher level characters will have different and broader choices to make. I will discuss the basics of Healing, Armor, and Weapons first, and then make some comments about selecting other types of equipment.

Healing

Common wisdom among experienced PCs is “you can never have enough healing”. That may be an exaggeration, but in practice, having some extra healing gives you margin to make up for combat mistakes or some kinds of traps. Running out of healing and having a disabled limb that you can't heal in the middle of game means you will be crippled and frustrated for the rest of the game. Having some healing is absolutely critical for Mages and Thief characters since they have no healing of their own. It is also important for low level Fighters because their low level healing is too slow to be used in the middle of a combat. And healing items can be used to fix an arm are good for Clerics and Druids who can't cast to heal themselves if they don't have two working arms.

One shot healing is cheap, but once you use it, it's gone. The other common choice is once/day healing, which you can use every game. I prefer a mix of the two, with the goal of having enough once/day healing so that I don't need to use my one shot healing for most games. Even then, having a nice reserve of one shot healing gives me margin for when the game is harder than expected or when I just have made more mistakes. Early in a character's career, getting a few 4 point one use healing crystals and some 2 to 8 point healing/day items is something to keep near the top of your shopping list.

Armor and Protection

Each extra point of armor or protection saves you healing for most times you are hit in a game. The exceptions are when the hit is only doing the minimum of 1 point or when the hit is on a limb and does a lot more than the minimum to take out the limb. In addition to saving healing, having extra armor also can mean your limbs are more durable. With 3 or 4 points limbs, the difference between taking 1 vs 2 points of damage per hit is huge and offers tactical advantages far beyond the saved cost of healing.

For discussion of armor, we'll omit the Monk and Mage who can't wear armor and the Knight who gets chain and later Plate from their Knightly order. Also, the Thief and Druid are limited to leather armor which they have when they start their character. That leaves the Cleric, Ranger, and Fighter. All of these should get Chainmail (400gp) as soon as they can. It's the absolute best buy for armor or protection in the whole system. The Fighter should start saving for Plate (1500gp) with the goal of buying it soon after reaching 4th level. Few are expected to have Plate before 4th level.

Items of protection are useful for all character classes. The primary type of protection come in power levels of +1 for 1500gp, +2 for 4500gp, and +3 for 9000gp. These items of category “special” stack with all protection spells and with the basic types of armor. Sometimes they are combined with armor, for example to create +1 Plate. A +1 Ring of Protection would not add to +1 Plate, since they both are providing the same “special” +1 protection. Characters at levels 1-4 should be on the lookout for items of protection+1. Sometime after they reach 4th level, they can consider whether to focus on having great armor by spending 4500gp on a +2 item. Most characters should wait to buy a +3 item until they have lots of gold to spare and nothing more interesting to buy. +3 items are seldom seen below 6th level and some characters never get them.

Weapons

The special categories of +1 (1200gp), +2 (3600gp), and +3 (7200gp) weapons can be stacked with normal damage enhancements such as Blade Sharp or Strong Arm.

EQUIPMENT Cont'd

If a character is going to focus on being a melee power (like most Fighters and many from other classes like Rangers and Monks), getting a +1 blade early and replacing it with a +2 blade can be a good investment. Doing extra damage means you will take your opponent's limb with fewer hits and generally defeat them quicker, taking less damage yourself. Rangers may want to get a magic bow to maximize their arrow damage. Again, +3 items are seldom seen in characters below 6th level.

Interesting magic

Healing, armor, and weapons enhance your character's basic melee abilities, so they are important to building your basic combat power. On the other hand, not every game will push a team to the limits of their combat power. Having other kinds of magic lets you expand your opportunities according to your inclinations. Teams often are missing some character classes, so picking up selected cross class abilities can be useful. A thief might want a 1" lock pick to make opening some locks easier, or the ability to savvy occasionally for when their team mage isn't immediately available to deal with a magic trap. A Monk with a roleplaying emphasis on protecting nature might want some Druid or Ranger abilities, like the ability to Speak with Animals. These sorts of ideas can be generated endlessly.

My recommendation is to pick a theme for your character and build on that. If you want to be a great warrior, then think about some extra combat abilities, such as avenging blow 1/day or gale 1/day for the knockdown. Or if combat is not your focus, you might go for informational abilities such as speak easy, savvy, legend lore. Or healing. Or defense (spell protection, missile protection). Or whatever. The idea would be to plan on accumulating enough of your target type of magic so your character will have an impact by the time they are 4th or 5th level. I seldom have a specific theme in mind for my magic when I start a character. Instead, I let treasure division guide me in my first few games. Then I see what I've accumulated and consider whether I can build a theme out of that.

Others will have other ideas, especially for characters in the 4th through 6th levels, as that's where you'll have been playing long enough for your accumulated magic to really have an impact. That's great, because our games would be boring if we all thought a like. I welcome other articles by other authors about how they think people should select their magic.

Patrick McGehearty

SOCIETY ELECTIONS

It is that time of year again when we need to Elections!! This year we have three positions open on a seven-position board. Winners of this election will join Spencer Corbin-Lawson, Camille Graves, Ray Appling and Brett Paul for a two-year term. We need nominees to fill these positions!!

To be a nominee for the Society Board, a candidate must be at least 18 years of age and be an active member in good standing (aka paid member) of the IFGS as of December 10th, 2009. Now, if you'd like to run for office, but your membership has expired or will expire soon, please contact Janice Gott clerk@ifgs.org at to arrange for renewing your membership.

I'd like to encourage all nominees, as well, to develop and submit a position statement for inclusion in the ballot. Remember that not everyone may know you by your legal name, or know what good ideas you have. Please also remember that position statements are limited to 200 words.

Your minimum duties of being on Society Board is to participate in a monthly meeting and be willing to discuss policies, issues and the future of the IFGS. This is an excellent opportunity to influence society and future decisions!! Please send me your submission of intent to run and your position statement NO LATER THEN OCTOBER 14th, 2009.

My email is: C19lizards@gmail.com Thank you!! Camille Graves - AKA 2009 Elections Chair

IFGS At AnimeFest 2009

Like last year, our chapter had a strong presence at Animefest 2009!

Nathan Tryon and I showed up 11:45 am (After missing the bloody turn and nearly getting lost. Again.) with all of the paper we needed to sign up people for the mini-game "Midnight Shuffle", and were ready to set up when we learned that the good folks at ConOps forgot to give us a table! So we went back and forth a bit, and eventually we grabbed one of the tables across from the food vendor and set up our station.

Andrew Saunders was there around noon, then Justin and Ashley showed up. Ashley had broken her toe and volunteered to man the table the entire time, from noon until we finished signing up people for the mini-game - or 6:00 pm, whichever came first. THAT was a big help and freed up everyone else for other activities. David Wood and Jon Shugars then showed up. Nathan and David roamed through the crowds, busking for the IFGS, and BY GOLLY they had most of our slots filled in by two o'clock! We had people signed up all the way through 5:00 pm!!!! AWESOME work by those two!

I was holding my class "Basic LARP Swordfighting" from 2:00 pm until 4:00pm, and the pre-registration had 17 people. I expected about 20-30 people total. Imagine then, if you will, my shock, surprise, and very great pleasure (I must admit) when I showed up and we had over 80 people in the room!! Erk! I ended up splitting the class into two sections and ran the first 40 people through the class in an hour, then ran the remaining people from 3:00 pm to 4:00 pm. Michael and Sandra Whaley showed up to help, along with David Wood, Rich Adkisson, Danny Fuchs, Nathan Tryon, and Adam Wilson! Let me repeat my EXTREME THANKS to all of them for showing up and helping with the class. It TRULY made the condensed class possible and worthwhile to the students with the amount of personalized attention we were able to provide.

After that, I was hungry and suggested that we go get fueled up. Justin was not hungry so he volunteered to stay with the table. By this time only a couple of "reserved" slots in the Midnight Shuffle schedule had yet to be completed; all of the others slots had been filled in.

So a group of us headed out to find the Chinese place Ashley thought she had seen on the way to the hotel. On the way out of the hotel, we saw the longest, biggest limo I've EVER seen! It was enormous! We stopped and chatted with the driver, who was there on spec - hoping to pick up a fare - and found out that he charged \$5 per head for a drop-off. I said, "What the heck, I'll pay for that", and we all clambered into this hulking monster. Three of us had been in a limo before, but NONE of us had ever been in one that bloody big! It was a hoot: dark mirrored ceiling, dark mirrored bar, black, plush and VERY comfy leather seats. Wicked cool. We had the drive, Ray, take us to a local store to pick up some soft drinks and snacks for later, then we went hunting for the Chinese Restaurant.

To no avail. Apparently Ashley mistook a BBQ place for what she thought was a Chinese place (and it did kind of look like it during the first drive-by), but alas...no such establishment was found close to the hotel. We drove around - Ray was GREAT - and we DID find a Chinese place, but it was 15 blocks from the hotel and I sure did not want to walk that far back with 10 hours of gaming ahead of us! By the way, Ray handled that ocean liner like it was a compact car!

One more thing: there are almost NO restaurants open in downtown Dallas on a Saturday afternoon. We finally ended up at Sonny Bryan's (by the West End) and had dinner there. Yum! We walked the five blocks back to the hotel after dinner.

Now, originally we had been promised the big Pegasus Ballroom from 6:00 pm until whenever, but it turns out that we were actually able to use the room only from 8:00 pm until whenever.



We got to the Pegasus ballroom at 7:00 because we did have access to HALF of the ballroom by then, and we set up for the mini-game. Lo and behold....we were ready to start on time. OK, 10 minutes after "on time", but still! :) The teams came in, were treated to the zany antics of Alistair The Slightly Befuddled, the honor of The Baron, the brutality of the Orcs, the wit and great Cockney accent of the Captured Monk, and the final fun with Alister and Janus! Everyone who played said that they thoroughly enjoyed it!

As you might expect, not everyone who signed up actually SHOWED up, but we had a LOT of walk-ups, and we were able to put them on a team and in most cases they did not have to wait over an hour! Another kicker is that almost every team had 7 or more PCs on it! David Wood and John Shugar took over the outer desk and kept everything organized and had the novices all prepped prior to their showtime - so when team A left the course, we were able to put team B on course in just a few minutes! FANTASTIC WORK by David and Jon!!!!

The last team went on course at 3:30 am, and we had the entire course cleaned up by 05:00 am. THANK GOD we had the suite. At least eight people ended up crashing there rather than being silly and trying to drive home totally exhausted! All in all, a grand time was had by all. Even the dealer's room was WAY better than last year. The suite gave everyone a place to put their personal belongings, take a nap, or just get away from the madness for a while. Oh...and a place to sleep!

Pat McGehearty figures we ran 47 people through the mini-game, and we are hoping that we'll get 5-10 new players from this. Pat and Ashley will be contacting the newbies to see if they want to PC in "Samurai Of Death". All of us are hoping that they'll come out and play!

BLESSING UPON ALL WHO HELPED!!!! We could NOT have done it without each of you! THANK YOU AGAIN!!!

Being completely insane, we'll be there again - at AnimeFest 2010!
Olan Knight

Notice – Danger or More “I Only Want to Touch It” Aftermath

Two dangerous wraiths have escaped from the Graveyard of the Betrayers near The Lady's Keep. (see Lore from “I Only Want to Touch It” by Tom Paul Grissom) They have the power to drain permanent life points with the consent of the target. Who would give up permanent life points? Perhaps those who can't overcome the 10 points of armor, 10 points no defense blows the wrath's touch causes, or the 10 points life drain that heals the wraths fully. Thus, some may see no alternative to providing permanent life points in order to gain a temporary end to hostilities. The wraiths seem chaotic in nature and may not attack until they feel threatened or attacked. While holy water has some effect on them, small amounts only annoy them. They may have other weaknesses or strengths outside the Graveyard, as they have only been observed in combat within the Graveyard of the Betrayers.

Due to the extreme power of these wraiths, those who encounter them are encouraged to use caution and avoid combat if possible. Should combat begin, all-out attack by masses of highly skilled opponents, including high power spells is likely to be required if survival is to be expected. Finishing one wrath off should take priority. Damage must be delivered more quickly than the wraiths can drain others and restore themselves, probably greater than 50 points within 10 seconds. The longer the combat lasts, the more it will cost.

Sandor of Whitebridge
(aka Patrick McGehearty)

PS. Thanks to the wraths for scaring the bejeezus out of us. I spent days thinking about how we could have beaten you and concluded we couldn't at that time and place with what we had.

Character Reference

To whom it may concern:

Kais (aka Jim Mason) is a reliable companion and may be trusted to not leave one in the lurch, even in the face to deadly danger.

Sandor of Whitebridge

SAMURAI OF DEATH THANK YOU

Samurai of Death went off perfectly on Sept 26. We couldn't have asked for a more perfect day or more perfect NPCs and staff.

We want to thank our absolutely wonderful NPCs. Every one of you were outstanding in your fighting and your role-playing. What's makes this game work so well and be so much fun is the quality of the NPCs and this was an amazing group. In all the games that we've ever run, this has to be the best group of NPCs in their roles we've ever seen!

Rich Adkisson as Shang-Yu, the Spirit Monk & Andrew Saunders as Cie-Ya, the monk of movement apprentice - The two of you made a wonderful village, being randomly possessed or quoting bad anime really added to the adventure. Your role-playing was great.

Pat McGhearty as Chung Kuel, the Hermit - You made a wonderful master monk. Being able to keep your meditation through some of the things yelled at you and the bad puns was awesome.

Taryn Cox as Wan-Pooh & Sara Cox as Pooh-Wan, the Leopard Sisters - We will never be able to watch Lady and the Tramp again without thinking of you two. Your rendition of "We are Siamese" was Purrrrfect.

John Jones as Nec-Ti, the Battle Master & Seth Bush & Matthew Morgan as the Stone Warriors - You guys were scary! It never ceases to amaze me how somebody that detected as evil as you did, John, could convince the team to drink. Seth and Matthew, you were excellent warriors and you did a great job with our novices. Thank you. Matthew, you did a fantastic job in your first time NPCing!

Matt Kline as Fung-I, the Plant Brother - Your version of Fung-I was nowhere near what I had envisioned. It was much better. I will definitely rethink this part from now on.

Greyson Cox as Wan Hung Lo, the Staff Master - As usual everyone came off course talking about your acrobatics and fighting skill. You really seemed like one of the children of the gods when you fought.

David Spence as the Samurai of Death & Taryn Cox as the Samurai's voice. - As always you were great, David. I do love to watch you fight! Taryn, fabulous job with the bad dubbing.

Minions: Everyone who played the Ninja Warriors in the final encounter thank you for all the anime references and actually playing TMNT when needed. You were hilarious.

Thank you David Spence, Greg Cox, Joe Dimatteo & Michael Whaley for being my wonderful GMs who are essential to making this game fun. Thank you John for banking and Garrett Wright for jumping in to help at bank even though you were a PC, Sara who was ready to jump in anywhere to help out and banked and Michael for being bank also.

We also have to say a huge thank you to John who always brings us the props we ask for and then carts them back and puts them up so we can get on our long drive home. We don't know what we would do without you. Thank you Rich for Being Watch Dog and Safety as well as NPCing. Thank you Matt and Michael for driving from Oklahoma to NPC. Matt and Greyson, outstanding job on vines. The changing vines effect was amazing. Thank you Pat for all the time and work getting NPCs and PCs to the game and for reassuring me this would all work.

A big thank you to everyone that helped tear down and clean up after the game.

*Tina Cox & David Spence
Game Producer—Game Writer*

David

You are a fabulous game writer. Thanks again for trusting me with your creations. I think everyone knows but just in case they don't, you work every bit as hard as I do on these games and sacrifice the precious little time you have home to make them happen. You are the one that introduced me to this crazy fantasy obsession we have called IFGS, and I whole-heartily thank you for it.

Once again I have to thank my wonderful family, Greg, David, Greyson & Taryn who spent a lot of time in production in the making of props and setting up the game and NPC'ed. These games would not be possible without your help and support. Thank you for giving up sleep and birthdays and proms and outings with friends and sometimes even putting your jobs in danger. Greyson & Taryn, I know you were both sick (not the first time you NPC'd while sick), but you never even thought about staying home. My dearest family, thank you for all your sacrifices to make these games be the success that they are. I don't say how much I appreciate it enough, but I do know you guys are really what make these games "I" produce happen.

Tina

Dallas Chapter IFGS - Board Meeting Minutes**12-SEP-2009**

Meeting started at 1:00 pm 1. Approval of the minutes from the August meeting is deferred pending their publication in the August newsletter.

Committee Reports:

Treasury: - Olan made the deposit into our account for "I Only Want To Touch It".

Registry: - NPC points are up to date. Registry is 5 games back on getting PC data entered. Registry chair is still working on a way to distribute the workload of data entry.

Safety: - No accidents or injuries occurred at either IOWTTI or Midnight Shuffle.

Quartermaster: - Many thanks to Pat McGehearty and Olan Knight who showed up to help clean the shed. The shed is now in good shape and ready for "Samurai Of Death".

Newsletter: - Paul Coley is collecting articles for publication of the August newsletter.

Sanctioning: - Justin Murphey has agreed to write and produce a mini-game for the October Board Meeting. Rumor has it that this will be an "arena" game. The Game Sanctioning Committee consists of Brandan McGranor and Ashley Murphey.

- The first pass on Xindhi has been completed. Once Nathan makes the changes we'll submit the game to the full GSC for review. The PC levels for the game will be 4-6.

- Danny Fuchs has provided a full submission of his game Shipwreck to his GSC.

- John Jones will have his indoor mini-game "Mistletoe Wedding" ready for the December Board Meeting.

Society Liaison: - The new Blubook is pending.

History: - Olan Knight reports that the website now contains the known history of the Dallas Chapter, including the most recent map. John Jones reports that the World Committee will be updating the map and filling in the blanks on the text history when its members get a break from school and work.

WebMaster: - The revised website is up and contains both the old and new Bluebooks, the Quick Play rules, every Dallas members set of personal reports, and for a while it also contained the v7.0 Rules .

(13-SEP-2009 Update: The v7.0 rules were removed as per Michael Magness's request. Apparently the old Society Board did not want the full ruleset posted. I think's that short-sighted and not in the best interest of the Chapter and Michael has started an online discussion about this to try to get the ruling reversed at the next Society Board Meeting.)

Old Business:

The Board voted to approve the AnimeFest expenses submitted by Olan Knight in the amount of \$215.28.

New Business:

The only game we currently have scheduled in October is the mini-game that Justin Murphey will write and produce. Anyone who wants to produce a game for November is asked to contact Pat McGehearty.

Olan Knight was asked to modify the website and add an obvious link at the top of the home page that will provide information on how to get involved with IFGS. (14-SEP-2009 Update: This has been done.)

John made warm soft, delicious chocolate chip cookies and they were **DIVINE!!!!** MANY thanks, much praise, and High Blessings were deservedly and repeatedly bestowed upon John!

The next Board meeting will be on 24-OCT-2009. Justin Murphey will run his mini-game and John Jones will open the Magic Shops of Norlake for all you shoppers out there. The meeting was adjourned at 1:50 PM.

Olan Knight - Temp Secretary

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Dallas Sanctioning Committee Game Status

<u>Game /Event Name</u>	<u>Writer/Producer</u>	<u>Status</u>	<u>Run Date</u>
November Board Meeting Meeting, magic shop, mini-game	David Spence	In Process	November, 2009 John Jones's house , 11 am, noon
October Board Meeting Meeting, magic shop, mini-game Trials of the Dark Goddess	Justin Murphrey	In Process	October 24, 2009 Winter Park, Garland, TX , 11 am, noon

IFGS Websites

Newsletter Information

Editor: Paul Coley

Submission Addresses:

Email: paulcoley@comcast.net

Submission Deadline:

5 Days prior to last day of the month.

Dallas Chapter

<http://www.dallasifgs.org/>

National

<http://www.ifgs.org/>

Chainmail (National Newsletter)

<http://www.ifgs.org/chainmail.asp>

Note from the editor:

My goal is to have the newsletter out by the last day of the month. I will gladly accept future submissions up to 5 days prior to that last day. I will be using OpenOffice 2.4 that will accept ** **MOST** ** Microsoft formats. As always, Artwork, Pictures and personal articles are welcome.

Editor
Paul Coley