

SAVAGE INSIDER

BUILDING THE SAVAGE WORLDS COMMUNITY

ISSUE 1

JULY 2011



FOR ALL THINGS SAVAGE

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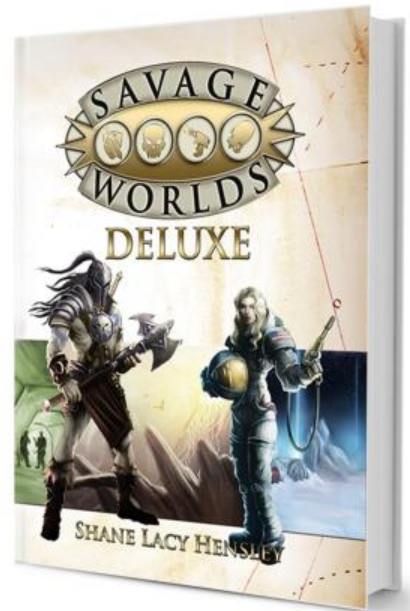
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Mystical Throne Entertainment
Green Ronin
Savage Mojo
Triple Ace Games
Reality Blurs
Atomic Overmind
Applied Vectors
Adamant
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Arc Dream Publishing
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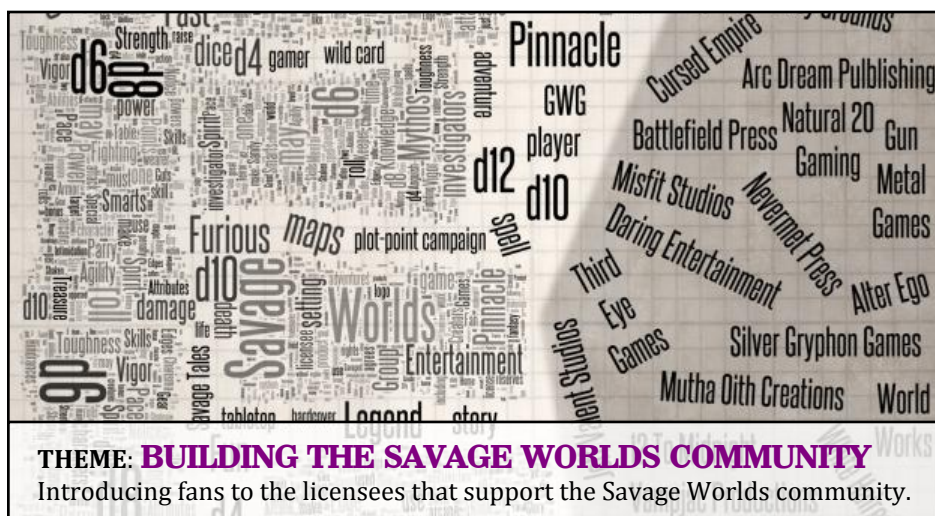
THEME - SAVAGE WORLDS LICENSEE ROUND ROBIN QUESTION & ANSWER
REGULARS - ROAD LESS TRAVELED | TALLOR GRAYSON | TEMPORAL PROBABILITY AGENCY
Derek Tyler (order #9232471)

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Savage Insider Issue #1 Revised 1st Edition
June 2016



REGULARS



FROM THE EDITOR

The inaugural issue of the new Savage Worlds magazine.

Welcome everyone to the inaugural issue of *Savage Insider*, the Savage Worlds electronic magazine designed to support the entire Savage Worlds community. This first issue is dedicated to the community theme by asking several of the Savage Worlds licensees to introduce themselves and tell the fans a little more about them. But you're probably wondering, "Why do I need another eZine?"

As Editor-in-Chief of *Roleplayers Chronicle*, a tabletop role-playing news outlet, I see the myriad electronic magazines currently available. Some of them are produced by publishers creating new material for their own products or marketing their upcoming and currently available products. Others create magazines that support a certain genre or theme while others create magazines that support a particular system or maybe a few particular systems. But through all this, I did not see a Savage Worlds magazine.

Being a big fan of Savage Worlds and its licensed products (and becoming a licensee myself), I set out to search the Internet to find out if I was missing something. Pinnacle's Links page makes mention to a fan-created magazine called *Sharkbytes*. So I decided to follow the link, but to my dismay *Sharkbytes* no longer existed. That got me thinking. With all these wonderful magazines available and none of them supporting Savage Worlds, why not create one myself? So I began my brainstorming!

I started by sending a notification to many of the Savage Worlds licensees looking for those interested in participating in a Savage Worlds electronic magazine. I got a very enthusiastic response from Vickey A. Beaver at Savage Mojo with interest in becoming not only a supporter but a "staff member" (although we're technically all volunteers). I was thrilled at this opportunity. In addition, Neal Hyde signed on to be a lead contributing author. Things were moving along nicely.

We kicked around some ideas including a name for the magazine and the idea of

"Should this be fan-based or a licensed product?" It was decided that to keep the magazine community-driven and supported by the Savage Worlds licensees, they would need some assurance for the protection of their submitted content. So the decision was made to make *Savage Insider* a licensed product.

I was not a Savage Worlds licensee at the time but was in-process of creating my own Savage Worlds setting. Vickey got me in-touch with the kind folks at Pinnacle and we kicked off the approval process. Being that you are reading this, the approval has been successful and *Savage Insider* has come to life! But of course, before this wonderful product could be published, it needed a theme and content.

As Editor-in-Chief, I feel that every issue should have a theme and that the majority of the published content should support that theme. This could range from fantasy to horror to space opera and everything in-between. But for issue number one, I took the reins and decided upon the theme of *Community*. To support this theme I thought it would be fun to do a round-robin in question and answer with as many Savage Worlds licensees that had the time available. And that's where things started.

I sent out many inquiries for participation and got a large amount of responses, all positive of course. When the Q&A responses started coming in I realized that I too am learning a lot more about the various licensees and found it quite fascinating to get an inside look into their world. Being the Editor-in-Chief of *Roleplayers Chronicle* has allowed me to understand the products these licensees produce, but not an understanding of them like this Q&A does. The end result is a great collection of responses from the designers and developers that bring wonderful Savage Worlds products to your fingertips.

I only hope you enjoy it as much as I did and that you welcome this new (and free) Savage Worlds electronic magazine into your collection. We strive for a high-quality

ty publication and invite you to join *Savage Insider* in bringing fantastic content to the community. So become a contributor or at least a supporter and we'll keep this quarterly magazine going for ages.

Aaron T. Huss
Editor-in-Chief

Savage Insider has a quarterly release schedule, within the first week of the month, as follows:

- January
- April
- July
- October

Initial circulation will be available through DriveThruRPG and *RPGNow* under **Mystical Throne Entertainment** with future outlets to be added.

WHAT'S OLD IS NEW AGAIN

Well, not really, but it sure sounds good! *Savage Insider* issue #1 was released five years ago; yep, five years! While for some that might not sound like a long time, for a licensee it sure does. In fact, it was the first Savage Worlds product I released as a licensee. Thus, it has a special spot in my catalog. Of course, when I look at my catalog of product, everything has a spot; some of them just look better than others.

Starting in 2013, I launched an initiative to redo my product catalog, starting with Mercenary Breed. Three years later, after a large chunk of that effort was completed, I thought about sorting through the issues of *Savage Insider* published by Mystical Throne Entertainment. What I found was an interesting collection of learning and progress in terms of capability. Obviously I was much happier with the looks of the last issues compared to the first ones, but ultimately I wasn't really pleased with any of them (and let me say there were multiple formats to be found).

That was when I made the decision to breathe some new life into *Savage Insider*. With over 6,000 people downloading issue #1, it was time to provide them with a magazine that upheld a much higher standard in quality and look. Thus, this new (and final, hopefully) format was born. As part of my catalog "refresh", this issue, and

all issues published by Mystical Throne Entertainment, will be revised with a new layout and sometimes updated advertisements. Beware though, many of the advertisements had coupons pertaining to when the issue was originally released. Those coupons likely no longer work and will not be updated. The purpose is not to update the advertisements, its to make the content more presentable so that if someone prints it out, I can be proud of what they hold in their hand.

This issue, however, presents itself with a bit of a unique twist. The focus was on the Round Robin Question & Answer session with a group of licensees from the then-available pool of licensees (which has grown immensely in the past five years). Unfortunately, two of those licensees have "disappeared" from the publishing scene - Apathy Games and White Haired Man. While their responses still appear in the Q&A article, because they're interesting to read, their advertisements have been removed. Neither company has a working website anymore, making the advertisements somewhat unnecessary. Adding to this is the fact that White Haired Man has pulled all their products and are no longer available. Apathy Games still has Temporal Probability Agency available, but their free download is not and that spoken about Act 2 never saw fruition.

To say this is common in this industry is an understatement. While Tier 1 and 2 publishers stick to their schedules like glue, independent publishers often don't have that luxury. Real life can get in the way, and funding can become an issue. Sometimes people just lose interest and walk away. If you don't believe me, do some research about how many tabletop RPG companies close their doors within the first 12 (sometimes 24) months. Mystical Throne Entertainment, however, has hit the five year mark and is still going!

So I present to you a refreshed *Savage Insider* issue #1. I hope you enjoy the new look and the cleaner layout. I also hope you enjoy the splash of color thrown in. And don't forget to pick-up those issues of *Savage Insider* published by Obatron Productions! The magazine hasn't died yet!!

GREAT ADVENTURES

THE ROAD LESS TRAVELED

This Great Adventure references the Hellfrost epic fantasy setting available from Triple Ace Games at

www.tripleacegames.com.

Hellfrost is a copyright of Triple Ace Games. All rights reserved. Used with permission.

By Vickey A. Beaver

THE PLEA FOR HELP

The heroes are either an adventuring party or a group of Roadwardens who have responded to a plea for help. The three Travel Towers between one of the less travelled roads and the trade route intersecting at the Borderlands have been unvisited by any of the Roadwardens in some time. Word has spread that a pair of distressed travelers came upon the Borderlands with tale that each tower they visited had footwear and scraps for rations, clearly having not been stocked in quite a while. The scant townspeople between one tower and another have revealed a Roadwarden had gone missing, and with concern for a fellow Roadwarden, others had gone after him.

None have returned yet, and the people fear now that all whom they love or need will be beset upon by the frost creatures that venture nearer with each passing day. Rumor has it that there is a reward being offered to whichever party finds the missing Roadwardens and ensures their replacement.



MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE

The heroes make their way to a post in the Borderlands along the trade route. Shield Knight Horacius ap-Schell has collated as much information as he had time to spare to do so.

It's been four weeks since anyone last tried to find the Roadwardens. The first responder went alone, and, like the Roadwardens he sought, failed to return. In each of the following two weeks, the next two groups returned claiming they'd seen flying creatures in the dark of the night sky. They could not track them, nor did they find those who have gone missing.

WHERE TO START

ap-Schell can tell the heroes that the original Roadwarden that went missing was from the tower that is 40 hours away at a marching pace. Subsequently, each Roadwarden from the other towers got set upon by citizens on the periphery, prompting each to search for the first who went missing. They did not know of each other's search. The first to disappear was Aaron Frostpicked, an Anari-looking Frostborn. The other two were a Finnar named Esko Valnari and a Hearth Elf named Pathkeeper. Valnari looked after the closest tower, while Pathkeeper watched over the farthest.

TOWER BY TOWER

If the heroes are Roadwardens, they'll want to pick up supplies with which to stock the towers. If anyone has Attractive, Very Attractive, or Charismatic Edges, those they approach will discount or even freely give requested items to the party, once they know why the heroes need the

items. When the heroes get to the first tower, 20 hours march away, successful Notice or Investigation rolls will lead them to Valnari's journal, which is hidden away in a concealed panel in the wall by the stairs upward. It will contain entries referring to seeing strange shadows overhead on some of the darker nights over a couple of weeks. The last entry was seven weeks ago and told of a traveler who claimed the last tower before his was abandoned. Otherwise, they find no rations, a slightly tattered grey-furred cloak, and a pair of black boots, worn, but not yet ragged.

When they get to the next tower, another 20 hours marching later, using the same checks, they will find a similar journal in the same place. Aaron Frostpicked penned a few entries about travelers he encountered and their wary thanks seemingly in reaction to his race and position. The second to last entry was from eight weeks ago and detailed a strange screeching sound he heard in the woods. He went west toward the sound, about ½ mile away from the tower, before it stopped. Needing to get back to his normal duties, he returned. He didn't hear it anymore, so he retired for the night. The next day, after coming back from patrolling the area, he heard it again. He noted it sounded a bit closer, but still in the same direction. He set off to seek it out. There are no rations or other provisions in this tower.

The heroes should have enough information to go from here, but if they choose to march on, they get to Pathkeeper's tower to discover she had a similar journal in the same location. Hers does not mention any flying creatures or shadows, but does show that seven weeks ago she was told by a traveler that the last tower before hers was pretty well bare. She assured them hers had provisions, came back to pen the entry, and carried on to see what that strange Frostpicked had gotten himself into. There are three pairs of shoes in varying sizes by the hearth.

A HALF MILE WEST

At this point, the party heads to Frostpicked's tower and try to locate his path. Successful Tracking rolls will yield a few markers that set them on their way. De-

spite it being weeks since, the road is very less travelled, so there isn't a lot of off-road activity. They find what seems to be a piece of a cloak or britches about 1/4 mile in. Shortly after that someone might hear a strange screech. They go another 1/4 mile before they see the shadowy figures above the trees. They won't be able to get a good look at them, catching only glimpses. As the heroes close in on their location, the creatures seem to disappear.

EW, WHAT'S THAT?

No longer having visual or auditory aids from the sky, the heroes look around for clues. They'll find droppings of an unusual nature. Those who are so gifted might realize that it looks like giant bat guano. Otherwise, the heroes can use their talents to notice a cave concealed a few hundred feet away. Anyone picking up on the bat angle will have a +2 to spotting the cave.

FEELING BATTY

The heroes are at -2 to see inside the cave having transitioned from daylight to near pitch black. If they have a light source, they'll see enough remains to include all those who have been reported missing, as well as a few extra. Otherwise, they'll stumble into them. About then, they'll also find the culprits: enormous flying bats (with a 4ft wingspan), which are hanging upside down between the cave entrance and the bodies. There will be one to two bats for each hero.

THAT'S A WRAP

When the last bat is dispatched, the heroes find Frostpicked in some sort of weird stasis, possibly because of his resistance to cold. They will return to the Borderlands to get the reward and report their findings. The heroes will need to recruit replacements now that they've removed the threat and rescued Frostpicked. They also send word through the network of Roadwardens to warn of this new threat. Of course, any injuries will be seen to, while they're at it. There just happens to be a few Sisters of Mercy in the area.

Vickey A. Beaver is assistant editor of Savage Insider.

FROST BATS

Attr: Agility d12, Smarts d6, Spirit d8, Strength d6, Vigor d6
Pace: 6; **Parry:** 5; **Toughness:** 5
Skills: Climbing d12, Fighting d6, Notice d8, Stealth d10, Survival d8, Tracking d6

Special Abilities

- **Bite:** Str+d4
- **Frost Damage:** Anyone Wounded by a frost bat's bite must make a Vigor roll or the Wound becomes frostbitten. The victim suffers a level of Fatigue, which is recovered with a successful Healing roll or after 24 hours. Cumulative frostbites can cause a victim to be Incapacitated and can lead to Death.
- **Immunity (Cold):** Frost bats are immune to cold and take half damage from coldfire weapons.
- **Sonar:** Frost bats have no penalties for bad lighting when attacking targets and a +1 to target then in enclosed spaces.

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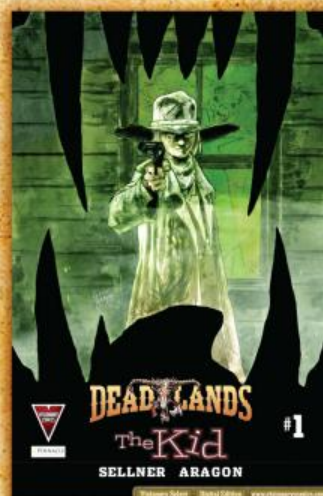
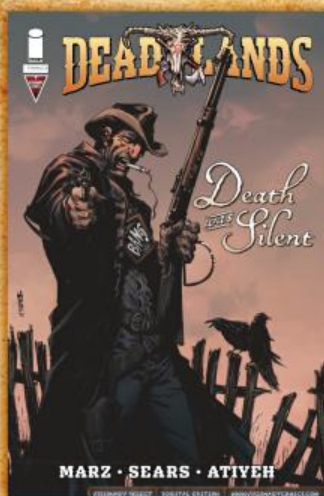


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DEADLANDS

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CHARACTER GALLERY

TALLOR GRAYSON

LORE

The following can be learned about Tallor Grayson with a successful Knowledge check using the given roll modifiers and the standard TN of 4. A successful check reveals all information gained from a lesser result.

- 0: This is Tallor Grayson, a well-known adventurer and barbarian. He has conquered many dungeons and ruins and is frequently hired by local merchants for protection. His acquisitions of treasure have made many in the village quite wealthy.
- -1: Tallor Grayson has a violent temper and conflicts often become physical.
- -2: Tallor Grayson has killed numerous adventuring party members to eliminate competition. It has been said that he hires warriors to aid him and then kills them once the quest is complete.

By Aaron T. Huss

A beast in humanoid form, Tallor Grayson is a well-known barbaric warrior wandering the land. His quests and adventures are the stuff of legend but his rage and anger tend to become the center of discussions. Tallor is a true barbarian with a thirst for blood and treasure and cares little for anyone that gets in the way.

Background: Nomadic tribes are common across the open plains. They wander during the change of seasons seeking food and a place to survive. Their primary concern is the well-being of the entire tribe and the protection of its people.

Tallor was raised within one of these many nomadic tribes, learning early how to hunt. His siblings and friends saw a natural ability for hunting and tracking and placed Tallor at the front of the hunting packs. His tribe thrived for many years with a bountiful supply of food due to his skill.

As Tallor grew older, he grew tired of tracking and stalking animals and began exploring more sinister hunting methods. Tallor would hide within the forest, waiting for travelers to come nearby. Upon seeing a small group, he would launch a brutal attack and slaughter his prey.

After striking down the last victim, Tallor would pillage their carcasses. He would take any animals they had (such as a horse or donkey) and any carts they were hauling. He would return to the tribe and secret away his new findings. He claimed the animals were found wandering and the carts were abandoned. No one knew the truth.

One day, Tallor's siblings became quite curious about his constant findings and

decided to follow him. They watched in the shadows as Tallor attacked a group of travelers and took all their possessions. Outraged with the act, they immediately returned to the tribe and informed the elders. His friends and family shunned him and the elders expelled him from the tribe.. Though the rage built up inside, Tallor could not betray his family and left peacefully.

Tallor took residence in a nearby village and left his nomadic days behind. Local treasure hunters, nobles seeking protection and merchants needing muscle greatly desired his skills. But while his adventures, quests and various duties were generally lawful, his employers often looked down on his methods.

Nowadays, Tallor spends much of his time plundering dungeons and ruins while attacking adventurers getting in his way. Many of the local merchants have become worried that Tallor is taking all the treasures and keeping them for himself, leaving little for the merchants to trade.

Local inns and taverns fear Tallor's presence as he has a habit of attacking travelers and other adventurers. This has caused a reduction in the number of visitors to the village.

Personality: Tallor is a fairly crass individual. He shows very little concern for anyone around him and doesn't care about their feelings or morals. When in the village, he spends much of his time drunk at the tavern. He frequents the local brothel and is often violent when getting into verbal confrontations.

Mannerisms: Tallor rarely looks people in the eye and typically shies away from personal interaction. He would never back-down from a fight, but basic speaking

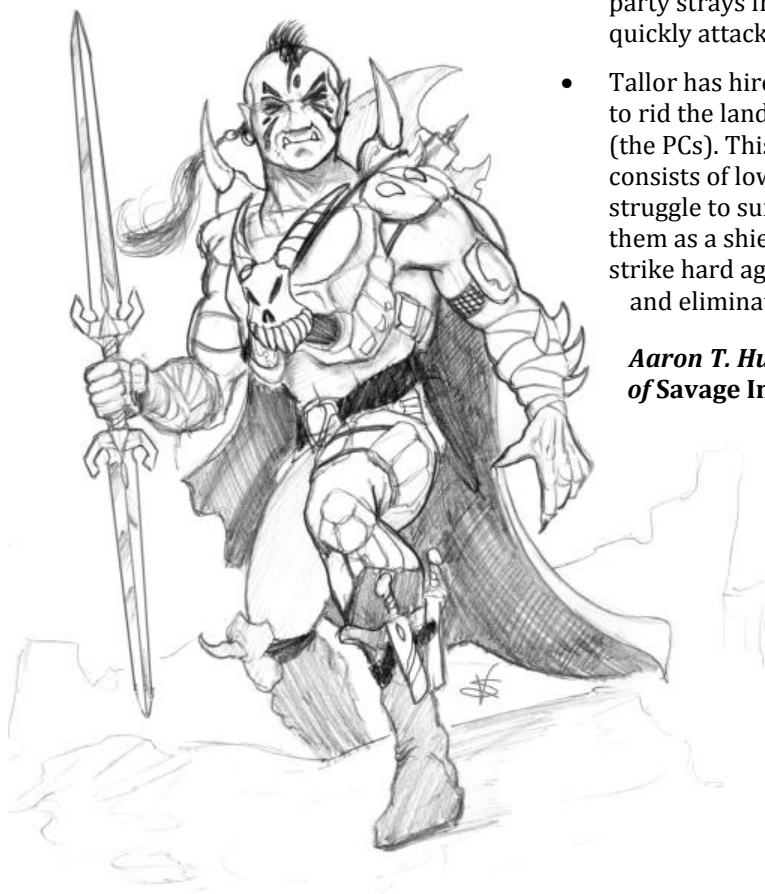
is not his forte. He is completely unable to read.

Distinguishing Features: Tallor has several tattoos with the most visible ones being on his face. He refers to them as his barbarian signature. He gets a new tattoo to signify each major conquest.

Environment: Tallor prefers to remain near wooded areas and within small villages. He detests larger towns. Excepting plains of very tall grass, he struggles when out in the open. He is accustomed to temperate climates and rarely ventures toward colder climates once snow begins to fall.

ADVENTURE SEEDS

Tallor maintains one residence in a village at any one time. When not out stalking women in another location or on one of his quests, he is most often found within a tavern or brothel. His nomadic blood sometimes drives him to venture out to nearby villages for weeks at a time.



- He works alone but has been known to borrow a compatriot for particularly difficult quests and kill them when the quest is complete. Tallor may call upon the adventurers for an extremely difficult quest and betray them upon completion.
- Rival adventuring parties have fallen victim to Tallor's hatred and lost several of their own. They meet with the adventuring party, hearing of their conquests, and ask the PCs to seek their revenge upon Tallor. They suggest approaching Tallor as merchants looking to hire him and set an ambush at the site.
- Tallor has been hunting the PCs for quite some time. He hides within the woods watching as the PCs journey toward their next destination. He prefers the use of stealth tactics and will attempt to surprise the PCs when possible. He will wait until a member of the party strays from the others and quickly attack.
- Tallor has hired a group of warriors to rid the land of his current rivals (the PCs). This group of warriors consists of low-skilled extras that struggle to survive. Tallor uses them as a shield so that he can strike hard against the adventurers and eliminate his competition.

Aaron T. Huss is Editor-in-Chief of Savage Insider.

TALLOR GRAYSON [NOVICE]

Male human, nomadic barbarian

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6,

Spirit d4, Strength d8, Vigor d6

Charisma: -2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6;

Toughness: 6 (1)

Skills: Climbing d6, Fighting d8, Intimidation d4, Notice d4, Stealth d6, Survival d6, Tracking d6

Edges: Alertness, Berserk, Brawny

Hindrances: Arrogant, Illiterate, Mean

Armor: Leather (all 1)

Weapons: Double-sided long sword (Str+d8; Parry +1 when used 2-handed, no bonus when using it 1-handed), battle axe (Str+d8), [2] dagger (Str+d4)

TALLOR GRAYSON [SEASONED]

Male human, nomadic barbarian

Attributes: Agility d6, Smarts d6,

Spirit d6, Strength d8, Vigor d6

Charisma: -2; **Pace:** 6; **Parry:** 6;

Toughness: 6 (1)

Skills: Climbing d6, Fighting d8, Intimidation d4, Notice d4(+2), Stealth d6, Survival d8, Tracking d8

Edges: Alertness, Berserk, Brawny, Woodsman

Hindrances: Arrogant, Illiterate, Mean

Armor: Leather (all 1)

Weapons: Double-sided long sword (Str+d8; Parry +1 when used 2-handed, no bonus when using it 1-handed), battle axe (Str+d8), [2] dagger (Str+d4)

GREAT STORIES

CRYPT OF THE CRYSTAL LICH

By Kevin A. Ranson

BATTLE AXE OF KEHLAR

Kehlar, a great warrior of legend, bargained with a runesmith to inscribe his most trusted battle axe. As the smith carved the last symbol, they projected a mystical glow and the wondrous weapon gleamed with new power. Kehlar took the axe adventuring across the entire world striking down foes small and large. Alas, Kehlar and his axe were not strong enough to strike down a black dragon. His axe lay silent upon the ground next to its master.

BATTLE AXE OF KEHLAR

Damage: Str+d8+2

Weight: 12

Value: 1400

Notes: AP 2, the runic inscription enhancing Kehlar's battle axe makes it a magical weapon.



BIRDS OF A FEATHER

"That's not natural."

George Talbot's hand dropped instinctively to his sidearm. There was nothing to shoot, nor anything attacking him, but the fact he was able to put hand to steel reassured him at least something was still in his control.

Standing at the hill's crest, George looked down into the moonlit valley. Beside him was Longfeather, standing defiantly cross-armed as though his mere presence was a challenge to all the forces of darkness. Longfellow was as silent as he ever was, but even George could see his powerful companion sensed the wrongness below.

"We've got until dawn," Abigail Morrison stated. Stepping forward out of the darkness between George and Longfellow, she was the only one of them smiling.

"Been this way dozens of times, begging your pardon, ma'am," George added. "Never been a bone yard here before. Certainly not one that looks like a dozen different peoples dropped their dead into it. Think something down there already knows we're here."

Abigail sighed. "I do the thinking, Mr. Talbot. You're being paid to shoot and whatever else I tell you. Let's go." She adjusted her hat, straightened her coat, and started down the hill ahead of her companions.

George glared at his employer. When she was just out of earshot, he commented, "I got a dozen reasons to leave her here right now, all alone, payday or no payday. What you think, Red?"

Longfeather grunted indignantly. "I think you use the word 'dozen' entirely too often." A ceremonial knife suddenly appeared in his hand with the sharpened end pressed lightly against George's forehead. "I believe I also have warned you about calling me that. There won't be another."

George swallowed hard, snorted in defiance, and then finally nodded his surrender before Longfeather moved the blade away.

Abigail had already reached the edge of the cemetery when they caught up with her. George's description had been accurate if inarticulate. Native burial mounds were strewn about in no reasonable pattern around stone altars and small temples. Carvings of both skeletal and demonic creatures decorated many of the structures, while the most recent additions included plain graves marked with heaped earth and lashed crosses. It made no sense to Abigail, but what else could you say about a cemetery that can only be found by the light of a full moon?

A noticeable boundary separated the cemetery itself from the surrounding land. The moonlight seemed tangible at the edge, as if Abigail could reach out and cup a handful for herself. Ahead of her was a clear path to a series of spires peeking out over the other stone structures and mounds.

Holding her breath, Abigail closed her eyes and took a step in. The temperature inside the boundary was cooler, like a desert on a clear night. While the chill excited her, the lack of any creatures stirring about touched her baser instincts, making her reconsider her venture for at least a moment.

The three adventurers moved cautiously through the cemetery, each alert for whatever might be unseen. The silence filled their ears until their own footsteps seemed as loud as a shout.

When George could tolerate it no longer, he drew his weapon and discharged the firearm at a nearby statue. The projectile ricocheted into the night, prompting Abigail to turn on her charge angrily.

"Thank you for giving us away, Mr. Talbot," Abigail whispered loudly. "Would you be so kind as to take the lead so the rest of us can see what happens to your corpse first?"

George sneered, but a warning glance from Longfeather motivated him to move ahead of Abigail and into the shadows.

After less than half an hour, the three reached the base of a temple with four stone spires. It was the tallest structure in the cemetery and on one side was a dark chasm carved to look like the mouth of a monstrous creature. Just inside the mouth was the top of what appeared to be a stairway.

"Too easy," George whispered fearfully. "It knows we're here."

"What knows, Mr. Talbot?" Abigail asked.

In the eerie silence, a sudden flapping of wings sounded. A moment later came another, and then several at once. Then the silence returned.

"Whatever's making them birds flap around, for one," George answered.

Abigail felt something jab her shoulder. When she turned to look, a black bird pecked sharply toward her eyes, prompting Abigail to flinch backward and flail her arms. As if in response, an entire flock of the same creatures suddenly burst from the shadows to swarm Abigail.

George brought his weapon to bear on the attacking birds, but Longfeather tipped the barrel upward before he could pull the trigger and accidentally shoot his employer. The sound of the shot caused the birds to scatter for a moment, and then regroup in the moonlight to swarm toward the two of them.

"Scattershot!" Longfeather commanded.

"Huh?" George said with a dumbfounded expression. A moment later, the command registered, and George holstered his sidearm in favor of the double-barrel shotgun

on his back. Cocking both hammers, he took aim into the black swarm and squeezed one of the triggers. Blood and feathers exploded in the air a moment before George was engulfed.

Longfeather used the distraction to reach Abigail and help her into the mouth of the temple. Her arms were covered with tiny scratches and lacerations where she had shielded her face.

"Stay," he commanded.

Abigail had no desire to disobey.

Stepping back out of the entryway, Longfeather unslung a barbed weight on the end of a rope and began to swing it in a circle over his head. The rotating weapon proved effective in bashing a few birds out of the air and deterring the rest from swarming him as he made his way back toward George.

After getting off a second shot, George had begun to flail and protect his face as Abigail had done. Longfeather was impressed the irritating, younger man hadn't cried out even though he bled from his face. Grabbing George's arm, Longfeather dragged him back toward Abigail.

No sooner than the two of them crossed into the temple mouth, the black birds appeared to vanish again into the shadows. Had they been bested, or was their work done?

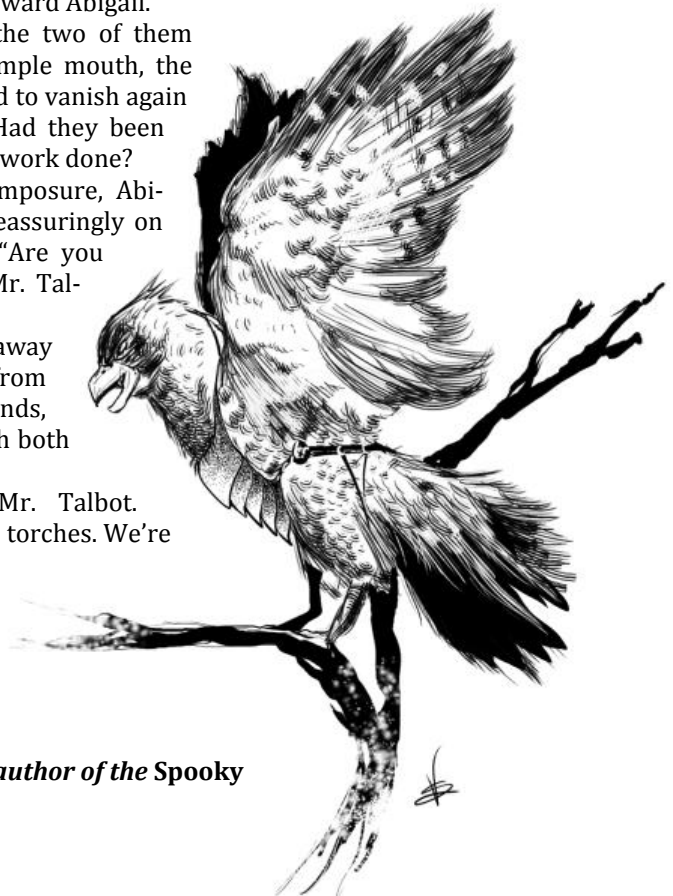
Regaining her composure, Abigail put her hand reassuringly on George's shoulder. "Are you still useful to me, Mr. Talbot?" she asked.

Once he wiped away much of the blood from the superficial wounds, he glared at her with both eyes intact.

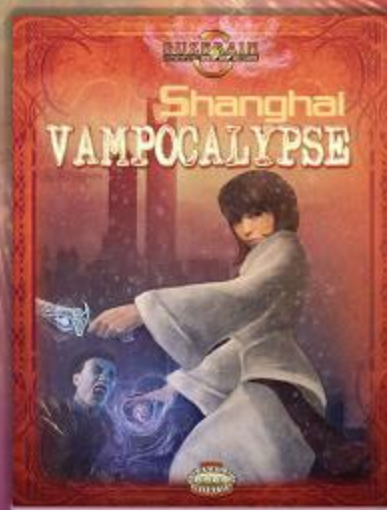
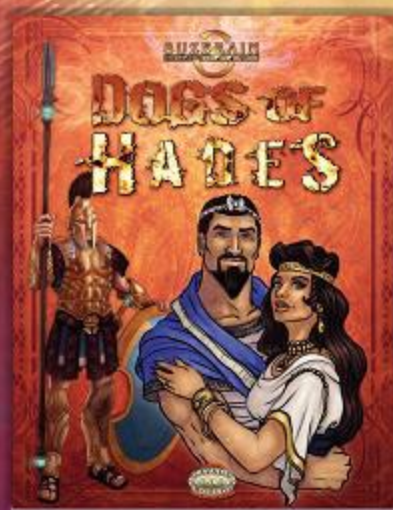
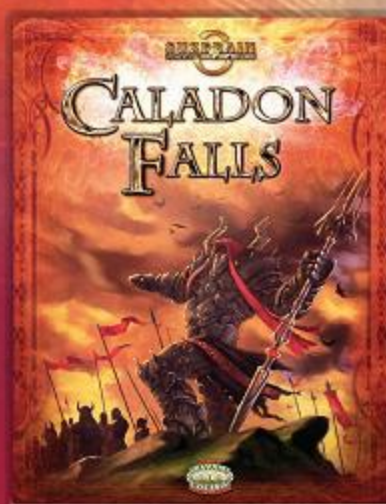
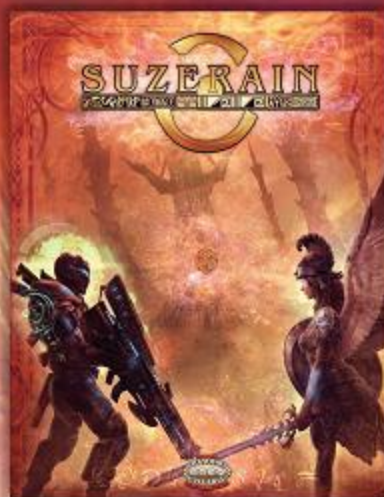
"That will do, Mr. Talbot. Please break out the torches. We're going under the ground."

George winced. "Did you have to say it that way, ma'am?"

Kevin A. Ranson is author of the Spooky Chronicles.



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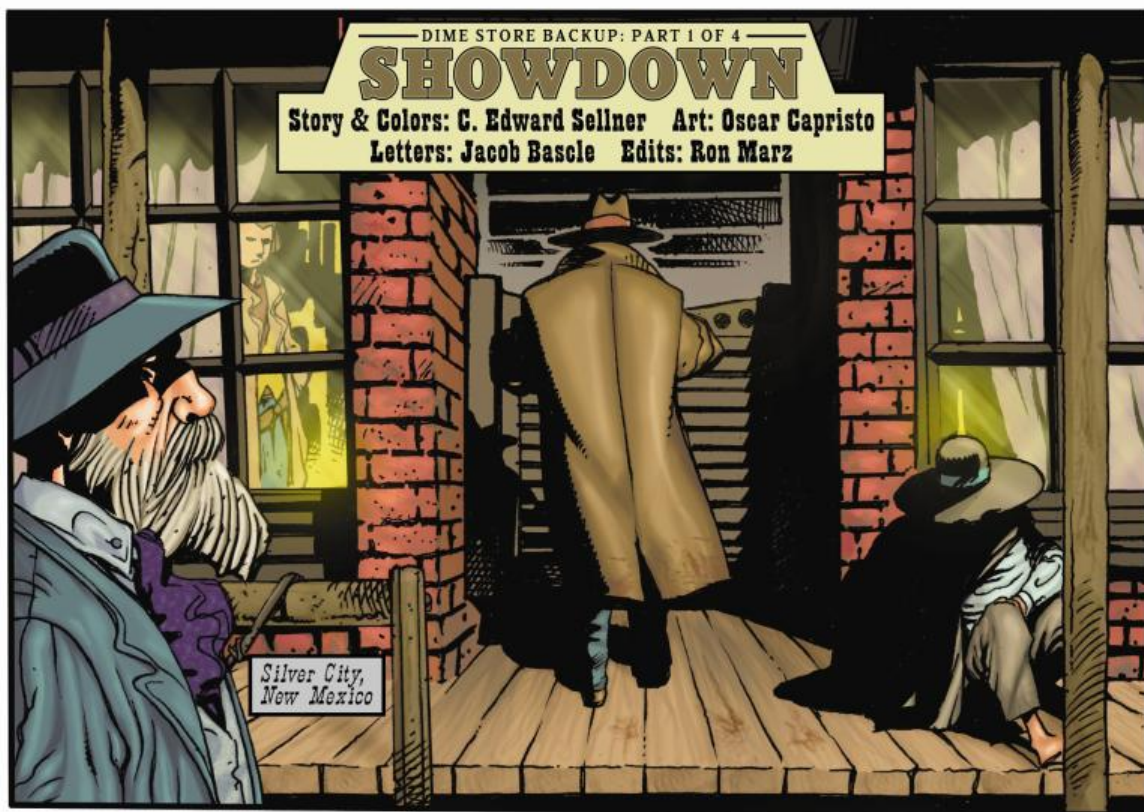
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YOU DON'T
WANT TO
DO THAT,
LITTLE MAN.



Both are wanted by the law for rustling.
Not that I care much about the law.

DO WHAT,
GRINGO?



But I do intend to
make a name for myself.

BREATHE
IN MY
GENERAL
DIRECTION.



I figure with my
particular talents, there's
only one way to do that.



See, I'm fast with
a gun. *Very* fast.

And I have a gift
for smelling trouble.



But the Rangers won't have
me, on account of what I am.

Which means I'm pretty
much on my own, and
that's just fine by me.





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GENERAL INTEREST

LICENSEE ROUND ROBIN Q&A



To commemorate our first issue and build upon the community theme, we asked various Savage Worlds licensees and developers to participate in a round-robin question and answer session. These answers are designed to introduce the Savage Worlds community and fans to the various licensed developers.

APATHY GAMES

<http://www.apathygames.com/>

1. TELL US ABOUT YOURSELF

I'm Tyson J. Hayes, and I am the Director of Social Media for Apathy Games, which is a fancy way of saying I'm a blogger. I am proud to help run Apathy Games with the help of my close friends Jeff Carlsen, Hillary Crenshaw, and Paul von Meerscheidt.

Apathy Games is one of the newest licensees for Savage Worlds, having recently released *To Predict and Serve*, an adventure for *Temporal Probability Agency*, in April 2011. We are dedicated to a "Print. Pour. Play." philosophy, which simply means you can print the adventure, pour some drinks, and begin play. Simply put it means you should print our game, pour some drinks, and play the game with your friends. We focus on a zero prep strategy with loads of player handouts.

TPA features a computer that can predict the future. Players have been selected to become agents and carry out the computer's plan. Each adventure has a laundry list of tasks like "Stop the Highjackers" or "Spill Pete's Beer." The objectives may be vague, but they become clear at the appropriate time, so while the adventures may "run on rails", part of the charm is figuring out and completing the objectives.

Flight 101, a free adventure, can be found at

www.apathygames.com/tpa.

TPA was developed by all of us at Apathy Games, with myself responsible for writing and cartography; Jeff Carlsen for writing, cartography, and the fantastic layout; Hillary Crenshaw undertaking the awesome art you'll see, and Paul von Meerscheidt writing and using his now dry red pen to edit the book.

We also maintain a blog, with a weekly run down of Savage Worlds news every Monday, at apathygames.com. So stop by to get some advice for your games and your weekly Savage news fix.

2. WHY DID YOU CHOOSE TO BECOME A SAVAGE WORLDS LICENSEE?

Personally, I blame Jeff. He found the *Savage Worlds: Explorer's Edition* and fell in love with it. Jeff is a bit of a rules nut and loves some good crunch. He ran a game of Slipstream for the rest of us and we fell in love too. Savage Worlds has a great rule set that doesn't get in the way of play. We wanted a system that new players could pick up easy, and we could easily teach to new GMs. While some companies seem to be focused on wooing the MMO crowd, we want to appeal to veterans of roleplaying as well as newcomers. Savage Worlds made it easy to make that happen.

3. HOW DO YOU THINK SAVAGE WORLDS COMPARES TO OTHER GENERIC UNIVERSAL SYSTEMS?

Unfortunately I haven't played too many other generic universal rules systems. My understanding of them is that they tend to be overly complicated. Savage Worlds is easy to understand and adapt to almost any game. As a developer of a "modern"

setting, it made far more sense to use SW then it did, say, the d20 Modern system.

4. WHAT SAVAGE WORLDS PRODUCT, OF YOUR OWN, INSPIRES YOU THE MOST?

At this time we only have the one product out, so I'd have to say TPA. I have enough adventure ideas in my head to fill another two books after we're done with the three acts that will make up *To Predict and Serve*. We're all creative people and have our own ideas for settings and adventures we want to tell. Right now we work on one project at a time to allow us to polish the game nicely and get it up to our standards. We love the system and love telling stories. We're planning on releasing a number of games as we continue as a company.

5. WHAT SAVAGE WORLDS PRODUCT, OTHER THAN YOUR OWN, ARE YOU MOST INTERESTED IN?

Slipstream remains one of the few that I've played, and it really sold me on the system. I love the feel it had of the Saturday morning cartoons I used to watch.

When we played the game, we ended up playing it more like a group of actors who were staring in a show based on these adventures. It's extremely silly and tongue-in-cheek, but it really sold me on the setting and the rules.

Reality Blurs also put out a setting called *Ravaged Earth* that I had an opportunity to review before we were a licensee. I've never read a game that felt more like Indiana Jones and never wanted to play a game more. I immediately turned around and contacted Kristian Serrano, who gave me the review copy and spent the better part of an hour geeking out with him about the game. Some of the ideas definitely made their way into my fantasy games.

I still want to check out *Wonderland No More* by Triple Ace Games. The thought of a Savage *Alice in Wonderland* really tickles my fancy. I just need to convince the wife to let me get it.

6. WHAT SAVAGE WORLDS PRODUCT(S) ARE YOU CURRENTLY WORKING ON?

We're currently busy with Act 2 of *To Predict and Serve*. The next set of adventures will see the characters continuing their roles as TPA Agents, but having fin-

ished their probationary period. The adventures are escalating, and they'll be effecting events on a bigger scale this time around. We don't have a set release date yet, but things are shaping up pretty nicely. The guys at White Haired Man keep trying to convince me of the awesomeness of Fantasy Grounds and are including me in the next play test of their game. If I'm really sold on it as a way to play our games, we may incorporate that into Act 2, but I tend to be tough to impress.

7. HAVE YOU WORKED ON ANY SETTINGS FOR OTHER COMPANIES?

I have not. *To Predict and Serve* was the first adventure any of us have ever released, and so far it's been pretty well received! People seem to really enjoy *Flight 101*, which I had just as much fun writing.

We work as a group on all of our adventures, so while one of us will take point on writing something, we all contribute to tone, flow, and feel of it. It was a huge team effort.

8. WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE SAVAGE WORLDS SETTING TO DEVELOP IN?

Our own of course! Seriously though, I'm most interested in *playing Ravaged Earth* and *Wonderland No More*, which to me is like developing. Craft a tale, play with some players and write it all down.

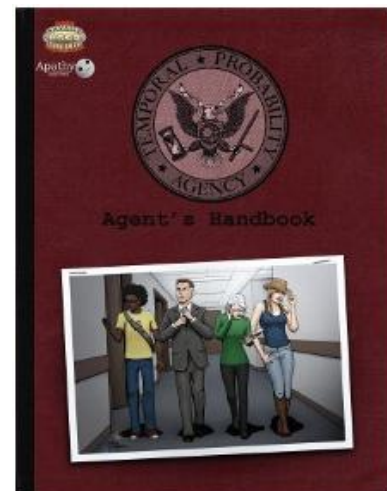
So while I haven't developed for another setting I think those settings would be fun to write adventures for.

9. HOW OFTEN DO YOU PUBLISH PRODUCTS?

So far, we've only put out the one and that will be three months ago by the time this publishes. We have an internal schedule for when we want to get the next product out, but we try not to set an expectation. We're working on it though!

10. WHAT GENRE DO YOU PREFER TO DEVELOP IN?

Any genre I can tell stories in. Right now I'm finding myself fascinated with *Doctor Who* stories. The current Moffat/Smith stories have me excited to have my kids meet the Doctor. I love the Doctor, he's a fascinating character; a madman in a blue box on those grand adventures. I always want to run away with him, along with my wife, see the giant universe around us, and have these mad cap adventures. I love



those stories; they are bedtime stories (children's stories) where your imagination runs wild with possibilities and the wonder of it all.

So I love stories over genre, the meat of any good story can be dropped into any genre, Shakespeare taught us that. Even with a little tweaking TPA could become a fantasy genre adventure. Daisy would become an omnipresent being guiding her followers to her undisclosed goals. Give her nefarious goals, a sprinkling of crazy and it could sit on the shelf next to *Call of Cthulhu*. So while we have chosen to tell a modern tale recently I will develop in the genre that fits the adventure I wish to play.

11. WHAT IS THE MOST DIFFICULT PART OF DEVELOPMENT?

Anything in the middle of development. Coming up with the idea is easy. In the beginning, you're fresh, full of energy, and your mind is ablaze with words. Toward the middle, things begin to drag. Art is getting done, words are harder to come up with, and production just seems to grind to a halt. Then somehow, magically, you can see the end in sight, and it's a downhill race to the finish line. Act 1 of *To Predict and Serve* took a while to develop, and a lot of willpower was expended to keep it going. We all had to keep encouraging each other to keep going and at points it was a bit of a slog. We're proud of what we came up with and are happy everyone likes it so far.

12. WHAT HAVE YOU LEARNED IN THE TIME YOU'VE DEVELOPED PRODUCTS?

That it's both easier and harder than it looks. Putting out a product is easy; putting out a great product is a challenge. In this day and age, anyone can put some words together and put out a product. RPGNow is full of products and ideas that people have. Getting on the hot sellers list, though, is way harder than it looks.

When we released TPA, we had a good feeling of how many copies we'd sell. We're a small company with a small fan base. We don't have much money for marketing and rely mostly on favors and word of mouth. We're happy with the amount we've sold so far and look forward to continuing to release products. My advice to others is: release your game, because you

can't keep it to yourself. You love it so much that you can't help but set it free. Don't set out to get rich, or you'll likely be disappointed.

13. DO YOU PREFER PRINT OR ELECTRONIC?

Now that I have a laptop, I lean towards electronic. Having a book is awesome, but I don't have much shelf-space, and my wife wants to reduce the amount that we have.

So for me, anything I can keep backed up and access as needed is a plus. I also plan my campaigns best in OneNote. I can clip art what I like into it and keep all my NPCs and adventure ideas well organized. As I take it with me to work, I can easily work on stuff when I feel inspired to do so. PDFs are just a natural extension of it.

14. IF YOU COULD SHARE ONE THING ABOUT YOUR COMPANY THAT MOST SAVAGES DO NOT KNOW, WHAT WOULD IT BE?

Everyone at Apathy Games has actually known each other since college and has been gaming together since then. At one point, we all lived under the same roof. It made for many interesting roleplaying sessions and made it easy to take out aggression on the roommate that didn't do the dishes. It's made designing our games and running our company a joy to do because we all know each other so well.

15. IF SOMEONE WANTED TO BECOME A FREELANCER FOR YOU, WHAT SHOULD THEY KNOW?

Unfortunately we don't accept freelance work at this time. We may at some point in the future, but it's unlikely it'll be any time soon.

16. DO YOU HAVE ANY NEW PRODUCT LINES COMING UP THAT YOU HAVEN'T ANNOUNCED YET?

As I mentioned earlier, we're pretty much a single project minded company at this point, and we announced *To Predict and Serve* Act 2 would be coming at the end of Act 1. Keep an eye on our website, apathygames.com, for the announcement.

DARING ENTERTAINMENT

<http://www.daringentertain.com/>

1. TELL US ABOUT YOURSELF

Hi! My name is Lee F. Szczepanik, Jr., and I'm one of the owners and the Creative

Director for Daring Entertainment. I'm 38 years old, with 4 great kids aged 18, 13, 11, and 1 year old. I've been a professional writer for roughly 20 years, and an avid gamer for just about 25 years (and we still game weekly). Before I jumped into RPG design and writing in 2005, I was a professional novel editor, owned and operated a professional wrestling organization, and worked as a script editor for television.

Outside of work, I love to read, spend time with the kids, log-in to an MMO, and play some friendly football.

2. WHY DID YOU CHOOSE TO BECOME A SAVAGE WORLDS LICENSEE?

I was a bit of a johnny-come-lately to the Savage Worlds community. I'd known about it for a couple of years, but my gaming group was well-rooted into a few other systems at the time, so I'd never actually purchased the game. Considering I was a fan of Pinnacle since way back in the original Deadlands days, that's saying something.

Anyway, I was attending Origins 2007 as a publisher under the Studio-2 Publishing umbrella, and just happened to meet Shane Hensley when he'd stopped by the booth. We got to talking, and he had made mention of the Savage Worlds license (at the time we were M&M Superlink licensees). This was back when there was still a fee-to-use and per-product approval process for Savage Worlds.

To be honest, I filed it away as a possibility to look into, but didn't think too much on it at the time.

Then the following month we attended GenCon 2007 the same way-- under Studio-2 Publishing. The SWEX had just released, and I speed-read the book at the booth while doing some signings.

I was hooked!

I purchased it and the Rippers campaign setting right away. That night, I read the rulebook again in the hotel room, speed-read Rippers, and was glad I'd made the purchases. The way the system was put together from the speed of combat, the elegance in easy-to-use target numbers, the Mass Battle rules, and the way Allies are handled was like a breath of fresh air. For the first time, I'd found the perfect match for my GM'ing style. I love using

NPC allies in my games, and also being able to run massive battles without taking several sessions to do so was great.

I talked to Shane the next day and got the ball rolling on becoming a licensee. I pitched a couple of setting ideas I was sitting on, but at the time still wasn't sure exactly what we would be doing. I just knew I wanted to create something for that game!

3. HOW DO YOU THINK SAVAGE WORLDS COMPARES TO OTHER GENERIC UNIVERSAL SYSTEMS?

I think Savage Worlds is unique amongst them. While the game has a very strong core system, the aspect of "Setting Rules" is what truly makes the game shine-- and it's a feature even Pinnacle uses, whether it's the different benny rules in *Deadlands: Reloaded*, or the different magic rules in the *Savage Worlds of Solomon Kane*.

I would even go as far as to classify Savage Worlds as a "toolkit system", as opposed to a "generic universal system". In my personal cosmology, a generic universal system is a system designed to be a jack-of-all-trades out of the box, or it has a ton of "add-on" rule books to make it work. Savage Worlds, instead, has a central system, and then small tweaks as needed within the various settings. Tweaks that don't necessarily "add-on" to the rules, but alter them slightly to invoke the tone, theme, or genre the setting is attempting to emulate. In that sense, it's more toolkit in that we get a solid foundation, and yet plenty of room to easily modify.

For me, that puts Savage Worlds above your normal "generic universal system".

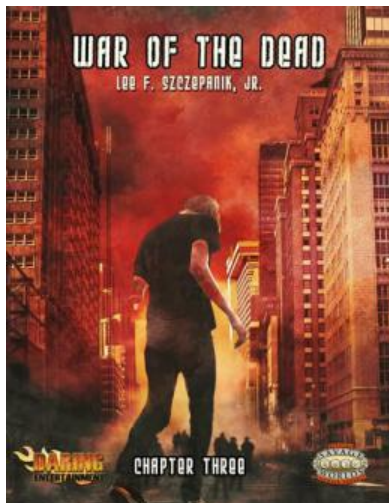
4. WHAT SAVAGE WORLDS PRODUCT, OF YOUR OWN, INSPIRES YOU THE MOST?

While most fans would probably expect me to answer with the very popular War of the Dead series, it's actually a product most fans would not think of as an "inspiration" to me.

Dawn of Legends.

See, *Dawn of Legends* was our first foray into Savage Worlds, and happened right on the heels of us departing the M&M Superlink license. While we attempted to try "something new" with the Savage Worlds system, to be honest we dropped the ball across the board. I can chalk it up to a lot





of things ranging from not enough play-testing, to not understanding our audience and what drives us all to play Savage Worlds, to not understanding the system nearly as well (at the time) as we should have.

Bottom line: it is the one product we have done that I look back on as a mistake. I've even taken it off the market.

Don't get me wrong, the product sold extremely well. Unfortunately, fan response was anything but overwhelming. Unless the definition of overwhelming is: "to want to string-up and commit bodily harm against".

Dawn of Legends really opened my eyes to a lot of things, from production standards, to the reasons people play Savage Worlds (thanks to some friendly talks with a lot of Savages), to nuances of the system (thanks to Wiggy and Piotr). It's my inspiration to never repeat those mistakes, and to make sure we are creating games that the Savage Worlds community will not only want to play, but that we are proud to one day look back upon.

5. WHAT SAVAGE WORLDS PRODUCT, OTHER THAN YOUR OWN, ARE YOU MOST INTERESTED IN?

Pretty much anything produced by Triple Ace Games. I especially love both *Hellfrost* and *Sundered Skies*. They're just really fun settings to play in, and the support they release for them is staggering.

6. WHAT SAVAGE WORLDS PRODUCT(S) ARE YOU CURRENTLY WORKING ON?

War of the Dead: Chapter Three just released, and production on Chapter Four (the campaign's finale) is well underway.

We currently have people working diligently on *Hellspawn*, which is a super-hero plot-point setting with a new form of zombies. That particular setting draws inspiration from novels such as *Ex-Heroes*, and comic books such as the Blackest Night storyline from DC Comics. It will use the *Super Powers Companion* from Pinnacle Entertainment, in addition to the Savage Worlds rule book.

World of the Dead is a plot-point setting that serves as a sequel to *War of the Dead*, and takes place roughly 7 years later. The best analogy I can give for that is *Mad Max* meets *Romero*. Certain story points re-

vealed in the final chapter of *War of the Dead* will play a key role in the upcoming plot-point setting.

We're also in pre-production for *GET Into Action: Season One*. Whereas previously we released a small adventure with some background material, this book is a full-on plot-point setting that gives a lot more detail on STORM and Global Elite Tactical, contains characters and vehicles in the old style of the G.I. Joe: Order of Battle from Marvel Comics in the 1980's, and deals with a STORM plot that reaches all the way to the White House.

Finally, we're also in pre-production on *War of the Dead: Sanctuary*. This book is a plot-point setting that contains a ton of detail on the city called "Sanctuary" that first appeared in *War of the Dead: Chapter Two*. It offers another point of view on the first days of the Outbreak, and takes the group all the way to the fall of the city as already seen in the campaign. What this story offers, however, is more on the various politics of the city, how UniMed assumed control and at what cost to others within the city (like the playercharacters), the details behind the Ragers and Edward Russo, and many other things to expand the setting. There's a lot more in Sanctuary than what was shown in the few weeks of Chapter Two— a lot more. The plot-point campaign will take the group through all of that, as they shape factions within the city that were not revealed in the current *War of the Dead* storyline.

7. HAVE YOU WORKED ON ANY SETTINGS FOR OTHER COMPANIES?

I am currently editing some new material for Triple Ace Games. While I can't say what setting it is for, what it is, or any of that . . . I suppose that would qualify.

I've also been approached by a few companies to write setting material for them. I haven't declined or accepted yet, as I'm still taking a hard look at my schedule and what I can take on while still maintaining some semblance of sanity.

8. WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE SAVAGE WORLDS SETTING TO DEVELOP IN?

War of the Dead is a lot of fun, but right now I would have to say *Hellspawn* is quickly becoming my favorite.

9. HOW OFTEN DO YOU PUBLISH PRODUCTS?

War of the Dead releases weekly. Beyond that, we try to have something out, even if it is just a free one-sheet, every month.

Do we always achieve that goal? No. No we don't.

10. WHAT GENRE DO YOU PREFER TO DEVELOP IN?

Honestly, I love developing for the super-hero genre the most. For me it isn't about the flashy powers and city-block-deestroying fights, but the people underneath the costumes. Why did they choose to fight for truth and justice instead of using their powers for their own benefit? Why do they typically sacrifice having a real family to do what they do? How do they handle the pressure of having the world on their shoulders, or the authorities always hunting for them?

There are just endless, timeless stories to be told with super-heroes. Knocking the big-bad-villain through a building is just icing on the cake.

Zombies (naturally) are another favorite of mine. I've been a Romero fan since I was a kid, and the recent additions like Max Brooks, Z.A. Recht, Robert Kirkman, James Knapp, and others, have really expanded the genre. For me, the zombie-apocalypse is really about the people. How far will someone go to survive? How trustworthy will your fellow humans really be when all the chips are down and the world as we know it is ending?

As a matter of fact, any apocalypse type of setting is a favorite of mine to work in.

11. WHAT IS THE MOST DIFFICULT PART OF DEVELOPMENT?

For me, Graphic Design. I vehemently hate "white space" on a page, so when a section needs words cut, or words added, in the layout process, it can be hair-pulling sometimes.

12. WHAT HAVE YOU LEARNED IN THE TIME YOU'VE DEVELOPED PRODUCTS?

We've learned several important things over the years.

First is: playtest, playtest, playtest. Don't skimp out on that little production step. When you think you've playtested enough— do it for another 3-4 weeks.

Another is to take your time. Don't give yourself unrealistic release schedules. We have a ton of things in production for Savage Worlds, other systems, and our own in-house game. The in-house game has been in production for almost 2 years now, especially in the playtest department. I hope to get it out toward the end of 2011, but if it has to wait until 2012, so be it.

Even *War of the Dead* sees a few months pause in release between chapters. That pause is so we can fine-tune it and get it right. I'd rather have that pause than release it half-baked.

13. DO YOU PREFER PRINT OR ELECTRONIC?

From a business standpoint, I prefer electronic products. There is just more of a return per unit sold, and the money is more immediate; whereas for print there is a vast delay in payment and way too many hands in the pie.

From a gaming standpoint, I can go either way. For truly massive books, like *Savage Worlds of Solomon Kane*, I want it in print. For the typical 160-180 page Savage setting, though, I can get it in print or buy the PDF. It just depends on whether I want the book "now", or can wait for a special order since game shops in my area don't usually carry Savage Worlds books.

14. IF YOU COULD SHARE ONE THING ABOUT YOUR COMPANY THAT MOST SAVAGES DO NOT KNOW, WHAT WOULD IT BE?

Over the past 18 months we have been approached by a deluge of other companies for various deals, something that has really accelerated since *War of the Dead* gained popularity. Some companies have wanted to partner with us to produce products for other systems. We've had to decline a few, and are in negotiations with a few. Some of those offers are to translate existing material from us into those other systems, some of it is to work on new material with them.

Others have wanted to license our material from us for other systems.

And, ironically, a couple have made offers to buy our Intellectual Properties, or even the entire company. While we appreciate the interest, none of it is for sale.



15. IF SOMEONE WANTED TO BECOME A FREELANCER FOR YOU, WHAT SHOULD THEY KNOW?

For Writers: We'll skip the normal need for a writer to be able to "write" and meet a deadline, and go into what else we look for. Now, although strict knowledge of a system's mechanics is not required (as we handle a lot of that in-house, anyway), knowledge of the game's community is a must. In other words, if a freelancer wants to write for us on a Savage Worlds product, understand the Savage Worlds fans and what they expect from a product. If you don't post on Pinnacle's forums, at least read them when you can and see what the fans are talking about, questions they have, things they want, and their likes and dislikes. RPGs are a social industry, know your audience and communicate with them if you can!

For Artists: Look at what we are producing, and what we've announced. If you see us doing super-heroes or gritty zombie-apocalypse, then submitting artwork that would better fit on the cover of a science fiction novel, or in an H.P. Lovecraft book, isn't really going to sell us on you. We don't have a need for that style, and it isn't showing us that you can draw effectively in the genres we are producing. I've worked in comic books in the past, and not every artist can draw every style. So, it is extremely important that you submit for the genres we are producing.

Besides that, the normal submission procedure is outlined at our website.

16. DO YOU HAVE ANY NEW PRODUCT LINES COMING UP THAT YOU HAVEN'T ANNOUNCED YET?

For Savage Worlds, after the products already mentioned are released, we're moving on to other apocalypse-style settings. There's a lot of stories to thrust the players into out there, from a vampire apocalypse that draws inspiration from things like the movie *Daybreakers* (amongst other sources), to robot-apocalypses that draw inspiration from things like *Terminator*, *The Matrix*, and other sources.

Each apocalypse setting is different, though, and the tone and feel of them should be different. Just as *Hellspawn* is

not *War of the Dead*, each of the upcoming settings will also be unique. I should note, however, that despite its popularity, there aren't any plans right now to repeat the *War of the Dead* model of 52-adventures.

We also have a fantasy setting that will use the plot-point campaign model on the plate. It's a little different in tone, and involves some really cool aspects that I can't talk about yet. That one, though, probably won't start official production until 2012. The only other thing I can say about it is that while *War of the Dead* did things a little differently with the 52-adventure model, the fantasy setting has a twist on its release and support as well. We're hoping it's something GMs and Players will really dig.

MYSTICAL THRONE ENTERTAINMENT

<http://mysticalthrone-ent.com/>

1. TELL US ABOUT YOURSELF

Hi, I'm Aaron T. Huss, the president of Mystical Throne Entertainment. I started Mystical Throne Entertainment fairly recently as a creative outlet for my own products and ideas. This first issue of *Savage Insider* is my first official product and is a collaboration of many. However, for the products I'm developing outside of *Savage Insider*, I'm on my own, so far at least.

2. WHY DID YOU CHOOSE TO BECOME A SAVAGE WORLDS LICENSEE?

If you are reading this, then my licensee application has been finalized and I'm an official licensee. My reasons for developing for Savage Worlds are twofold. The first is because Savage Worlds is a very modular system where you can add and remove pieces without unbalancing or even breaking the system. This allows me to give the GMs and players plenty of options that aren't required. This modularity also creates a very flexible system that can be used for any genre.

The second reason is because Savage Worlds has one of my favorite mechanics: unchanging base target numbers (except Parry) which means that as my characters improve their stats, they actually have an

easier time meeting or exceeding that target number.

3. HOW DO YOU THINK SAVAGE WORLDS COMPARES TO OTHER GENERIC UNIVERSAL SYSTEMS?

I find Savage Worlds to be much less bloated than some generic universal systems while allowing for the flexibility to add things as desired.

4. WHAT SAVAGE WORLDS PRODUCT, OF YOUR OWN, INSPIRES YOU THE MOST?

The core setting guide I am writing for *Faith & Demons: The Rising* is such an awesome experience that it has really inspired new settings to be brainstormed.

5. WHAT SAVAGE WORLDS PRODUCT, OTHER THAN YOUR OWN, ARE YOU MOST INTERESTED IN?

There's a lot of them. *RunePunk*, *Sundered Skies*, and *Wonderland No More* just to name a few. Oh, and I picked up the *Realms of Cthulhu* book last year at GenCon and got it signed!

6. WHAT SAVAGE WORLDS PRODUCT(S) ARE YOU CURRENTLY WORKING ON?

Right now is my upcoming *Faith & Demons: The Rising* core setting guide placing players in an alternate history of the Dark Ages, ravaged by demons and undead.

7. HAVE YOU WORKED ON ANY SETTINGS FOR OTHER COMPANIES?

I do regular editing for Raging Swan Press.

8. WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE SAVAGE WORLDS SETTING TO DEVELOP IN?

I would actually love to develop within multiple settings, but I'll start with whatever I'm working on at the moment.

9. HOW OFTEN DO YOU PUBLISH PRODUCTS?

Savage Insider is a quarterly magazine and I'm going to make the effort to release quarterly for *Faith & Demons: The Rising* as well. I still have a full-time job to work and don't want to overwhelm myself.

10. WHAT GENRE DO YOU PREFER TO DEVELOP IN?

I am an equal opportunity gamer and actually love all genres. However, my favorite genres are mash-up ones that combine elements of multiple genres. Especially if they're gritty like gothic sci-fi,

dark fantasy, and modern horror. I also enjoy alternate history settings that mix aspects of fantasy and horror or sci-fi and fantasy.

11. WHAT IS THE MOST DIFFICULT PART OF DEVELOPMENT?

Getting illustrations that match what you envision. I am no artist and can picture what I want in my head, but putting that to words doesn't always translate properly.

12. WHAT HAVE YOU LEARNED IN THE TIME YOU'VE DEVELOPED PRODUCTS?

I'm just getting started and have a lot to learn. But so far I've learned that marketing is just as important as development and without fan interest, your product will not go far.

13. DO YOU PREFER PRINT OR ELECTRONIC?

I'm a print kind of guy, although I think electronic has its place and purpose. I love being able to hold a book in my hands and read through it. However, for smaller publications, print is kind of silly and costly. I don't need a bunch of 25-page books on my shelf and would prefer those in electronic form. But a full 110-page setting guide looks great on my RPG shelf.

14. IF YOU COULD SHARE ONE THING ABOUT YOUR COMPANY THAT MOST SAVAGES DO NOT KNOW, WHAT WOULD IT BE?

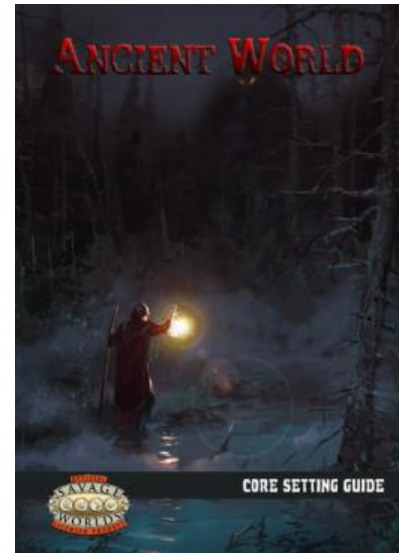
Mystical Throne Entertainment is the parent company of the tabletop role-playing news website Roleplayers Chronicle at roleplayerschronicle.com.

15. IF SOMEONE WANTED TO BECOME A FREELANCER FOR YOU, WHAT SHOULD THEY KNOW?

I will need affordable artists who can do gothic fantasy or dark fantasy.

16. DO YOU HAVE ANY NEW PRODUCT LINES COMING UP THAT YOU HAVEN'T ANNOUNCED YET?

I have a lot of settings that are being brainstormed but I need to concentrate on my first setting before moving on to the next one.



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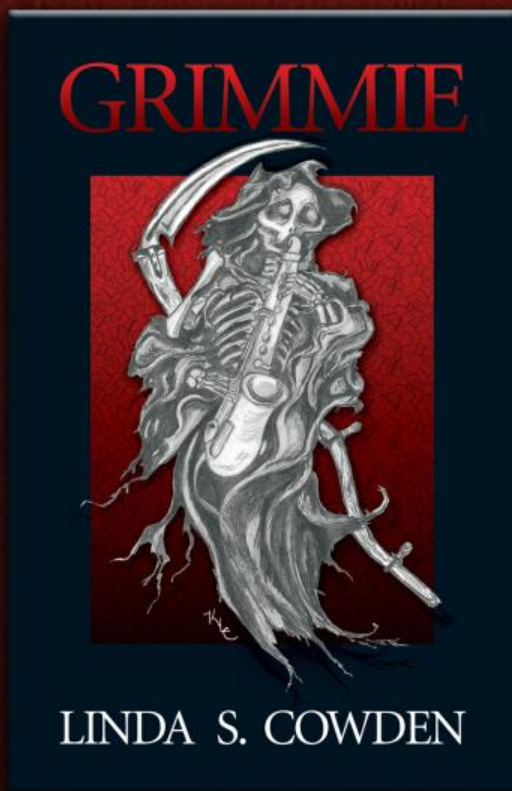


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continuing to grow up.
He goes to school,
likes taking pictures
in cemeteries,
and doesn't breathe.
Accidentally starting
the zombie apocalypse
is his biggest fear,
but it's not his
biggest problem.



Created & Written by
Kevin A. Ranson

SpookyChronicles.com



GRIMMIE

The Reaper has a new face.

Bound by the laws of the hourglass and the scythe,
Death grows restless as the world beckons.

Then the deperation of one drew his awareness from the
multitudes and the scythe decended - not to take one whose
time had come, but to propel anther into damnation.

The shining lure of emotion and sensation teaches him to
explore and experiment as a being created without will
learns what it means to have a choice.

The Reaper has a new name: Corwin Grimm.

LINDA S. COWDEN

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PINNACLE ENTERTAINMENT GROUP

<http://www.peginc.com/>

1. TELL US ABOUT YOURSELF

[Clint Black] I am the Savage Worlds Core Rules Brand Manager for Pinnacle Entertainment, the creators of Savage Worlds. That long title basically means I work on anything related to or supporting the core rules such as the Companion books and of course, the new *Savage Worlds Deluxe*. Occasionally, I also help out with some setting-specific books especially when coordinating new rules for the system. I also serve as Pinnacle's forum administrator for the minor day-to-day stuff and act as the Rules Answer Guy as well. I'm also known for one of my earlier works for Pinnacle as a freelancer, *Necessary Evil*, the Savage setting where you get to play supervillains.

2. HAVE YOU RELEASED ANYTHING AS A SAVAGE WORLDS LICENSEE?

Not myself, no, but I worked with a few licensees as a freelancer before I joined Pinnacle. Since then, I've worked pretty closely with the licensees, even serving as the licensee liaison for a while. Not many people know I actually helped write the current license Pinnacle uses.

3. HOW DO YOU THINK SAVAGE WORLDS COMPARES TO OTHER GENERIC UNIVERSAL SYSTEMS?

I wouldn't compare it to universal systems because I don't think of Savage Worlds as a "universal" system. To me, it's a *core* system instead. The difference being that a universal system wants to provide every possible rule for every game, leaving the gamemaster to cut out the rules he won't use for a particular game. With Savage Worlds, the goal is to provide most of the rules that would be needed for any game, and then add in the additional Setting Rules to cover what a specific game might use. Those Setting Rules may only be a small percentage of the mechanics, but they can add a lot of flavor to the game. The idea being that Savage Worlds can provide an underlying core mechanic from game to game while also providing a "system matters" feel to each game being

played through the use of the Setting Rules. So Crime City has a different feel from *Deadlands* which has a different feel from *50 Fathoms* even though they all use the same core mechanics as their foundation. That's the hope at least.

4. WHAT SAVAGE WORLDS PRODUCT, OF YOUR OWN, INSPIRES YOU THE MOST?

That's a hard call, so I'll break it down to one that inspires me a great deal, and I wish it inspired others in the same way; the Super Powers Companion. Its potential use for so much more than "superheroes" is easy to miss, but there are a lot of genres that really are superpowered that just don't wear spandex. They may slay vampires or be in a galaxy far, far away, but scratch the surface, and you find super powers.

5. WHAT SAVAGE WORLDS PRODUCT, OTHER THAN YOUR OWN, ARE YOU MOST INTERESTED IN?

Way too many to pick just one.

6. WHAT SAVAGE WORLDS PRODUCT(S) ARE YOU CURRENTLY WORKING ON?

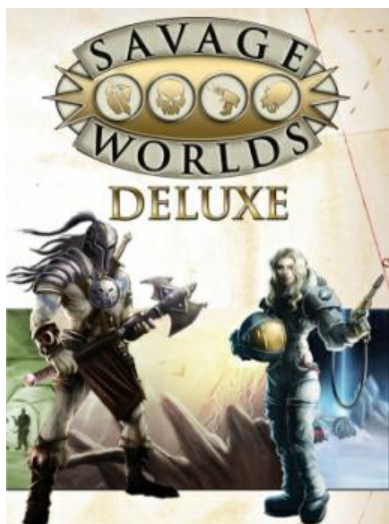
At this time, I've just finished up on *Savage Worlds Deluxe*, I've got some work to do on *Weird Wars: Rome*, and then we'll see what is next.

7. HAVE YOU WORKED ON ANY SETTINGS FOR OTHER COMPANIES?

Before I was full time with Pinnacle, I did some work with a few licensees on products such as *RunePunk* from Reality Blurs. After joining Pinnacle, I was the licensee liaison and provided advice and assistance on a variety of products such as *Day After Ragnarok* and many others. There is also one unique licensee book I worked on, but the story is a little complicated, so ask me about it at a con if you want to know.

8. WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE SAVAGE WORLDS SETTING TO DEVELOP IN?

The one that doesn't exist yet. I love creating or converting my own settings. Barring a few exceptions, I think most of the other settings are done except for sitting at the table and rolling the dice, so I like to develop new settings. That and settings with dinosaurs. I *love* dinosaurs.



9. HOW OFTEN DO YOU PUBLISH PRODUCTS?

Whenever they are done. Can't wait for perfect because it's not possible, so when you have done all you can do, it's "done," and that's when it gets published.

10. WHAT GENRE DO YOU PREFER TO DEVELOP IN?

Did I mention dinosaurs? I think that's a genre. Seriously, I don't have a particular genre I prefer. In fact, I would say I prefer switching up genres in development, since my focus is on the core system which is rooted in how it can be used for different genres based on how it is run and application of Setting Rules.

11. WHAT IS THE MOST DIFFICULT PART OF DEVELOPMENT?

Plot Points. Creating a linked story that is also flexible, that's a challenge.

12. WHAT HAVE YOU LEARNED IN THE TIME YOU'VE DEVELOPED PRODUCTS?

If you aren't having fun, you're doing it wrong.

13. DO YOU PREFER PRINT OR ELECTRONIC?

Depends on my needs at the time. Each does certain things better than the other. I can find a reference easier in an electronic copy, but I'd rather have a print copy by my bedside.

14. IF YOU COULD SHARE ONE THING ABOUT YOUR COMPANY THAT MOST SAVAGES DO NOT KNOW, WHAT WOULD IT BE?

Shane loves sharks like I love dinosaurs, so his name for the people working with Pinnacle is the PEGalodons. Dinosaur shark for the win!

15. IF SOMEONE WANTED TO BECOME A FREELANCER FOR YOU, WHAT SHOULD THEY KNOW?

The best place to start is with a One Sheet. It's a freebie, but it lets us know what you can do with the system, our settings, and certain limits (like word count).

16. DO YOU HAVE ANY NEW PRODUCT LINES COMING UP THAT YOU HAVEN'T ANNOUNCED YET?

Yep... and we still aren't announcing them yet. Go to wait to see what is coming, but it will be good!

REALITY BLURS

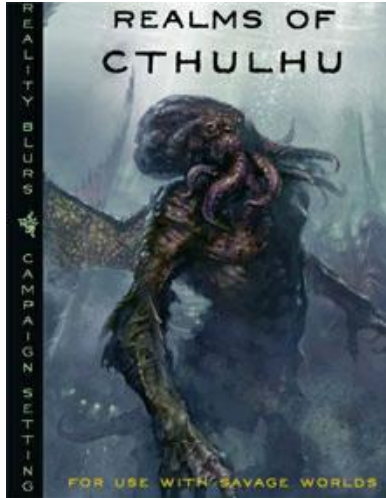
<http://realityblurs.com/>

REALITY BLURS**1. TELL US ABOUT YOURSELF**

I'm Sean Preston, the president of Reality Blurs, a game design studio based in Memphis, Tennessee. As a publisher, I'm involved in all aspects of project design and development from writing, management oversight, and on to graphic design and layout. I've been gaming for well over thirty years, having grown up around role-playing since its inception. I hold a degree in English Literature from The Citadel and now apply my experience and insight to crafting worlds for others to play in. Shortly, the Blur will celebrate seven years in the industry. It doesn't seem that long, but time flies when you're having fun, doesn't it? I'm fortunate enough to have friends, family, and very supportive fans that make it all worthwhile. Most of the properties in development spring from my fertile imagination, but I'm happy to be working with some great talent — Eric Avedissian, Sean Patrick Fannon, Darrell Hardy, Ed Wetterman, Dave Olson, Norm Hensley, and Lyn Harm. I'd also be remiss in not mentioning the new Blurry Ones, Brad Bell and Tom Cadorette, who round out the team nicely. We push each other to excel each and every day.

2. WHY DID YOU CHOOSE TO BECOME A SAVAGE WORLDS LICENSEE?

I didn't consciously set out to become a licensee. As the story goes, I was looking for a game that would better engage my players and after getting up to speed on what was out there, I examined *Savage Worlds* closely, checked out the forums, downloaded the test drive rules, and realized this system really spoke to me. It eliminated some of the constraints that had bothered me with other systems over the years, and the focus on story is inspired. I drafted up a pitch about RunePunk, sent it off to Shane, and the rest is history. Of course, there is more to it than that, but I always like to leave the reader wanting at least a little more.



3. HOW DO YOU THINK SAVAGE WORLDS COMPARES TO OTHER GENERIC UNIVERSAL SYSTEMS?

I shy away from compare/contrast questions as they tend to speak to the base or alienate people who may like certain other systems. Obviously, if I'm devoting my time and resources to *Savage Worlds*, I must care about it deeply. Right?

4. WHAT SAVAGE WORLDS PRODUCT, OF YOUR OWN, INSPIRES YOU THE MOST?

The answer varies on any given day, depending upon what I'm working on. I wrapped up some work on *RunePunk* today, and it holds a very special place in my heart. It was my freshman project when I was utterly wet behind the ears. It was pretty much just me at that point, so it took a long time to do.

Design is an evolutionary process, and we always strive to improve. *Realms of Cthulhu* was utterly satisfying from an execution standpoint — we really nailed it despite what some folks conjectured while it was still in development, and I'm glad I went with my gut on the four play styles inherent in it. *Iron Dynasty* carved our unique stamp and took the longest to create. It's the first one in which our present team really came together and gelled, and I think the rules shine particularly well, as they are the most complex we've developed. Now, *Agents of Oblivion* should, again, take our trademark sandbox style to another level.

5. WHAT SAVAGE WORLDS PRODUCT, OTHER THAN YOUR OWN, ARE YOU MOST INTERESTED IN?

There are others out there? Seriously, I'm so busy I barely get to keep up with what my guys are writing, but I'll have to say I'm excited about *Savage Worlds Deluxe*! Even if there weren't any tweaks or refinements made to the system, I'm happy to see a hardcover version come out. It's been a while.

6. WHAT SAVAGE WORLDS PRODUCT(S) ARE YOU CURRENTLY WORKING ON?

Of the things we've discussed publicly, I'm working on primary or supplementary materials for all our lines: *Agents of Oblivion*, *Ravaged Earth*, *RunePunk*, *Echo of Dead Leaves* (*Realms of Cthulhu*), *Iron Dynasty*,

Life After Death, *Shaintar*, *Old School Fantasy*, and, yes, more *Realms of Cthulhu*! We always have something brewing in the Mad Labs at any given time. My hands are in everything we do to some degree or another.

7. HAVE YOU WORKED ON ANY SETTINGS FOR OTHER COMPANIES?

I've done some writing for the upcoming ETU setting and wrote one adventure for Pinebox some years ago for my friends at *12 to Midnight*. With my schedule, I've been entirely too busy — what we've got in-house keeps my hands full as it is.

8. WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE SAVAGE WORLDS SETTING TO DEVELOP IN?

Depends on my mood — all of our settings have elements of things I love. *Iron Dynasty* comes the most easily, followed closely by *Agents of Oblivion*. *Echo of Dead Leaves*, the 1920's Charleston Sourcebook/Plot Point Book for *Realms of Cthulhu*, is the most daunting as I know the expectation level is particularly high on it. Couple that with the attention to detail and the complexity of my approach and it makes for some hard, draining work. While *RunePunk* is a load of fun, I must admit I sometimes get overwhelmed by the sheer vastness of it.

9. HOW OFTEN DO YOU PUBLISH PRODUCTS?

At present, we're releasing at least one product a week. We'll be evaluating this moving forward, as we just began implementing this workflow the first of April.

10. WHAT GENRE DO YOU PREFER TO DEVELOP IN?

I'm comfortable with the written word and the rules set, so I can cobble anything needed. With our variety of settings, I nimbly move among them through the course of any given day. It's part and parcel of my role.

To put it another way, I like mangy mutts that don't know what they want to be. Some mad blending of elements, whether it is steampunk and samurai in *Iron Dynasty* or the horror and espionage found in *Agents of Oblivion*, works best for me. The x/y axis ensures you can customize the gameplay elements for your group without abandoning the setting. In *Agents* for example, you can have your group take

down a mundane assassin or fight Pandorans for the sanctity of a child's soul aboard an alien spacecraft.

This flexibility is evident to a large degree in most of our product lines, which tends to extend our development time on core setting materials, as someone will invariably ask the dangerous question of "Wouldn't it be cool, if...?"

11. WHAT IS THE MOST DIFFICULT PART OF DEVELOPMENT?

That depends upon whether I'm doing the writing myself or trying to run herd on any of the other folks, but I'm going to phrase my answer with regard to the creative aspects of the question. What part(s) do I, personally, find difficult?

I love writing. I love doing research. I love working with rules and massaging them until they turn out just right. I enjoy my job. I like writing adventures. I enjoy crafting plot points. I take great pleasure in creating worlds and populating them with people and places and factions and all sorts of madness. The difficulty resides in the outliers, the beginning and the end. I'll address them each in turn.

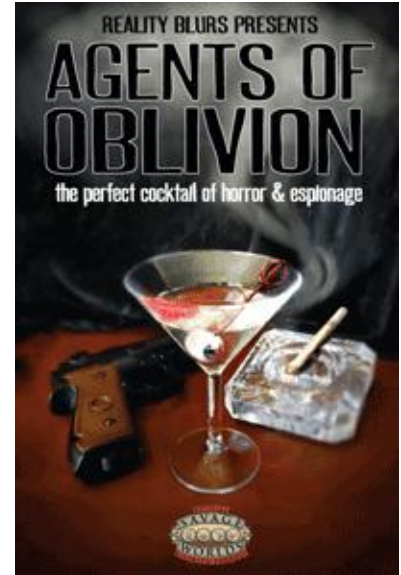
While the rules can present their own challenges, they have a definite structure. A writer must sit down and hash out the details of an adventure, a plot point, or some engaging introductory narrative on his own. Yes, there is structure. Yes, there is form. We're not abandoning either in search of a questing beast comprised of haiku and stream of consciousness. Certainly, a writer can use sounding boards, if he has them, but someone, somewhere, has to sit down and put the words on paper. I bounce ideas off the crew, but not before I've done some solitary noodling over how to kick things off. Getting disparate player characters together can be tricky. How do you work a hobo and a dilettante together? Okay, you've done it once. Now do it again, but make it different, but still put your spin on things. No pressure. Characters can be a broad range of people if you create a broad rules set. For example, while working on *Echo of Dead Leaves*, I faced the dilemma of "I know where the story goes after they get together, but how can I get them together that isn't too terribly contrived." I'm sure all

the *Realms of Cthulhu* fans are thinking, "Please, don't bring us together for the reading of a will." Rest assured, I didn't, but it sure crossed my mind once or twice. This issue arises in both adventures and plot points, but it's like dealing with a weekly series versus a feature film. Audiences have different expectations and can be a little more forgiving with a tried and true approach to an adventure than with a campaign kickoff. You have a GM who has gathered his gang together to play something his crew may have never heard of and you have to give him the tools to fully engage and entertain them, plus you have to make certain it makes sense. The making sense part particularly resonates with me. Logical underpinnings are important to any storyline, even if they don't make sense to the players at the beginning, but I'm definitely veering off point.

Letting go can be rough. Here, I'm referring to the work writ large. In the final stages, there is the push and pull. If you've been exceedingly thorough, you may well be sick of your work. You may never want to hear the mention of runes or ninja or agents or HPL again. This passes. On the other hand, you may want to give it one more read through. You may want to have the High Council of Grammar sanctify the worth of your words. You may want Lloyd's of London to insure there are no typos before it heads off to the printer. As with many things in life, letting go can be a painful and difficult process. You may feel the need to write another dozen pages on the importance of tapas to the Floridian economy or expound upon the various permutations of magic among the *Slope Rats of East Ratlandia*. Your mind is trying to trick you. You have to let go. The first time is the most difficult, but it's never truly easy to release one's work into the wild. At least, not for me.

12. WHAT HAVE YOU LEARNED IN THE TIME YOU'VE DEVELOPED PRODUCTS?

It's not simply ideas, but execution, that is paramount. A designer should have a comfort level with the rules set coupled with a degree of passion about the genre/subject matter. You can give a great designer a bad (tired) idea and he can reinvent it into something wonderful through





his execution and attention to detail. Inversely, give a bad designer a great idea (beyond his capacity and/or scope) and it will collapse like a delicate soufflé.

13. DO YOU PREFER PRINT OR ELECTRONIC?

A year ago, I would've said print, but the landscape is changing rapidly with the rise of tablets. I love the printed word, but the convenience of having my library at my fingertips is impossible to ignore. From a designer and developer's perspective, I've long preferred electronic, and my personal gaming habits have begun to trend that way as well. Still, there is something mystical about opening the first book just in from the printer and soaking in the sheer physicality of it all.

14. IF YOU COULD SHARE ONE THING ABOUT YOUR COMPANY THAT MOST SAVAGES DO NOT KNOW, WHAT WOULD IT BE?

We are the longest running, Savage Worlds licensee, and the only one of the original three licensees remaining in their current incarnations.

15. IF SOMEONE WANTED TO BECOME A FREELANCER FOR YOU, WHAT SHOULD THEY KNOW?

We're currently not soliciting for any outside talent, but people wanting to grab our attention are free to submit One Sheets for any of our settings. We generally look through these first when we're considering additional writers.

16. DO YOU HAVE ANY NEW PRODUCT LINES COMING UP THAT YOU HAVEN'T ANNOUNCED YET?

Yes. People who want to keep up with what's going on with the Blur should follow my daily ramblings on Twitter and Facebook and check in regularly on our forums and website.

SAVAGE MOJO

<http://www.savagemojo.com/>

1. TELL US ABOUT YOURSELF

MMK: My name's Miles M Kantir and I'm the lead developer for Suzerain here at Savage Mojo. As a company we've been around for a bunch of years, first providing art support to other publishers (we won an Origins Award for *Deadlands Reloaded* for instance), then becoming a publisher in

our own right. That was back in 2007, and we decided early on we wanted a gaming universe to call our own, an overarching setting that could host all sorts of great gaming goodness.

VAB: <sneaks in virtual side door> Hello! I'm Vickey A. Beaver. I do a bunch of stuff at Savage Mojo, but I'm speaking up from the writer's side. I helped create *Caladon Falls*.

MMK: And that's what Suzerain is. I explain it like this: imagine our world, but where the energy of the human soul definitely 100% exists. Call it Ki or Chi or The Force or whatever you want, but we take the assumption that all the weird supernatural goings-on in our history are linked to this energy, from haunted mansions to ESP, biblical miracles to Zeus appearing in ancient Greece and seducing women while he's in the shape of a bull. Yeah, I reckon he had issues, but I daren't say it too loudly. I mean, what if he's out there in the god realms, and happens to hear me? I don't think I'd look good with a lightning bolt up my... say, is this a family friendly publication? Just checking.

And that's the deal. All the deities of every mythological pantheon that's ever been are still out there in Suzerain. They live in a place that's outside of mortal time, so there's no reason Zeus shouldn't be poking his nose into 21st century affairs (or having a few himself, even). Can you imagine the carnage? Well, to keep things from going too crazy, all these gods and great spirits have a pact - they won't go to the mortal realms (our past, present and future basically) in person and instead they recruit mortals to become their Heroes. That's where the roleplay is, and it's up to me to deliver the best roleplay, time and again. I love my job!

How did I get into this? Well, I used to be a journalist reviewing computer games. That was many years ago. And before that (many years before that) I discovered roleplaying when my brother brought home the blue D&D box set and I slew my first giant rat. It's always been in my blood. Then, in the final days of the last millennium I set up a team and we developed the first edition of Suzerain. Haven't stopped since. Don't plan to stop any time soon. If there's an afterlife, in fact, I can't imagine a

better paradise than having eternity to make gaming books and giving people (me included!) a fantastic time at our gaming sessions.

The passion we bring to our craft is one of the things that makes Savage Mojo special. We're a collective of creative people - writers, illustrators, graphic designers, etc - and it's nothing like the usual corporate atmosphere. Things like mutual respect mean a lot to us, and we go for the quality over the quantity every time. Then we make sure we're available to talk to our fans. They're just gaming buddies we haven't got to know so well yet, and that's the way we look at it. Got a question about one of our books? We won't answer it because 'that's good customer service'. We'll answer it because we want you to have an awesome game.

Alright, enough. Anyone wants to find out more about any of that, you can email me directly on MMK [at sign] savagemojocom or catch me on our website (www.savagemojocom).

2. WHY DID YOU CHOOSE TO BECOME A SAVAGE WORLDS LICENSEE?

MMK: Because Savage Worlds is the best? Seriously, it is. Now, before I go any further let me clarify that point. To my mind SW is the best at delivering its style of gaming, and it's a popular style for a reason... it's fun! In fact it's exactly what Pinnacle pegged it as (pardon the pun) - fast, furious fun.

If you want a high octane gaming experience that fits into any genre without straining, why would you look elsewhere? And it just got better with the new edition (yeah, I got to see the new edition so we can prep our books for it - don't be toooooo jealous). Suzerain is a universe that encompasses all of time and space, even the future where almost anything is possible, so we want to have the best rules system for that kind of flexibility.

Oh, and it's one of the friendliest role-play communities in the world. That really mattered to me, and was a major factor in choosing the Savage Worlds rules system for Suzerain.

3. HOW DO YOU THINK SAVAGE WORLDS COMPARES TO OTHER GENERIC UNIVERSAL SYSTEMS?

MMK: I touched on this above, but the purpose of Savage Worlds is to provide a fun, quick-paced, action-based system with lots of brawls and shootouts and car chases. It excels at that. If you want to simulate human psychology and dissect courtly politics in medieval France, there are rules systems out there covering that better, but they'd make poor systems for universal play. SW is genuinely agnostic about the setting - just witness the wondrous variety of campaigns you can play off-the-shelf, from being super villains saving humanity to being sentient slime in a twist on post-apocalyptic gaming. There's high fantasy, low fantasy, Victorian horror, swashbuckling, science fiction... the list goes on.

Of the other generic systems, each has its place. GURPs, RIFTS, and our own Mojo Rules! (yes, we publish Suzerain for our own generic system too) each satisfy their player base. Mojo Rules! for instance is developed specifically to provide a more in-depth, more realistic style of gaming that balances physical action (infiltrating an enemy base), social interaction (politics and negotiations), mental encounters (investigating the murder of Professor Googlesoft) and combat (killing Professor Googlesoft when he comes back from the grave). But Savage Worlds is by far the best for merging fast fun and action.

VAB: <grinning>Hey, you mentioned my line (Suzerain Mojo)! I'd agree with Miles on that. I love our system, Mojo Rules!, and I've played GURPS and (briefly) RIFTS, as well as Savage Worlds. They all do things a bit differently to scratch different itches. Savage Worlds is one of the quickest to explain the general idea, how dice rolls work, a few cool points (I love bennies and exploding dice!), and get started.

4. WHAT SAVAGE WORLDS PRODUCT, OF YOUR OWN, INSPIRES YOU THE MOST?

Gah! Choices, choices. Which of your children do you love best? Wow, tough call.

The main *Savage Suzerain* rulebook because of its amazingly audacious scope while remaining friendly and immensely playable. No wait, *Caladon Falls* because





the team did such a fantastic take and proved there's nothing like 'traditional' fantasy. No, *Noir Knights* - man, that whole Art Nouveau 1930s X-Files thing with the... Oh wait. Just stop there. Yeah.

VAB: Or *Dogs of Hades*, because face it: reimagining the Greek culture on distant planets is just plain fun!

MMK: *Shanghai Vampocalypse*.

Because if one vampire is a monster, eight million are an apocalypse. Cyberpunk meets zombie apocalypse but throwing out those shuffling, boring zombies and replacing them with feral, hungry vampires. The team just knocked this one out the park - some of the most jaw-dropping art I've seen, the crispest setting, evocative character options, some cool technology, and the best campaign it's been my pleasure to work on. It's our first setting for the Demigod rank that Suzerain adds to Savage Worlds (yep, there's now a place to go for games beyond Legendary), and it truly is a story worthy of demigods.

I've never really known anything quite like it. If your gaming group doesn't come up with a bucket-load of "Remember the time when..." moments out of *Shanghai Vampocalypse*, they just weren't trying. Heck, even then I defy a gaming group not to have a blast. It's a no-effort thrill ride from start to finish (and your characters might just be gods at the end of it all).

5. WHAT SAVAGE WORLDS PRODUCT, OTHER THAN YOUR OWN, ARE YOU MOST INTERESTED IN?

MMK: Gah! Choices, choices. Seriously, there's so much good stuff out there and we Savages are spoilt for choice. If I had to pick one, though, I'd tip my hat to the new core rulebook. *Savage Worlds Deluxe* is a masterful update by Shane and the crew. Congrats to them, and we get to reap the benefits by having an even slicker roleplay experience around our gaming tables. I can't talk about specifics (Shane's threatened to do all sorts of nasty things with a blunt garden implement if I breathe a word about <muffled words>), but it's a treat.

VAB: <eyes light up> *Hellfrost*! My healer dwarf is now known as Sylvis Ogerslayer. Sure, she's got a lame leg and limp arm now, but she put down two, wait, three

ogres and rallied the humans to action when they overheard her addressing her fellow dwarves. And now that my Savage Mojo playtesting is done for the moment, my Sunday group's got one more campaign to go through and we can get back to it.

6. WHAT SAVAGE WORLDS PRODUCT(S) ARE YOU CURRENTLY WORKING ON?

MMK: I have a bunch of good stuff on my plate right now.

Clockwork Dreams is a book set in the fey realm of Mechadia, spawned by dreams of Victorian inventors. It's steampunk meets faerie magic with a campaign that'll be a really fun way to get from Novice to Heroic rank.

Covert Ops is a supernatural espionage book set around the Millennium. On the one side there's all the super high tech spy gear and advanced training of the best agents on the planet. On the other... werewolves, ghosts, liches, and a supernatural conspiracy that's plugged into every layer of society.

Set Rising is our second book for Demigod rank characters. Ra and his techno-Egyptian cohort have to deal with an uprising from rebel gods devoted to the old ways of doing things (you know, slavery, sacrifice and brutal tyranny). The demigods get thrown into the middle of it all and have to chase the bad guys through alternate realities before the final showdown... and I'm not telling you any more about that so keep an eye out for it about Christmas time to find out the rest.

But that's not all we're doing for Savage Suzerain. We're also developing a sequel to *Caladon Falls*, the second part of a trilogy in fact, plus we're well into development on a science fiction setting, *Bifrost*. Then there's the second part of our Spartans in space Garden of Athena trilogy... It's busy times.

7. HAVE YOU WORKED ON ANY SETTINGS FOR OTHER COMPANIES?

MMK: Have you just been reading what I said? Do I look like a man who has time for anything else? Almost half a million words passed my desk last year, plus hundreds of illustrations. By the time I stopped gawking like a fanboy at all the cool ideas and

pretty pictures, I'd run out of hours to start anything else.

That's not quite true. I am heavily involved in another development that soaks up a massive amount of my energy. I just can't help myself though: I have two little girls, one just turned three and the other's about to be one year old. That's right, I bred my own gaming group of the future!

VAB: He's not exaggerating. We've got tons of stuff going on behind the scenes. He's one busy man. Responsive, but busy.

8. WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE SAVAGE WORLDS SETTING TO DEVELOP IN?

MMK: Savage Suzerain does it for me. I love the variety of realms and it never grows old to play-test our work.

9. HOW OFTEN DO YOU PUBLISH PRODUCTS?

MMK: We try to get a product out each week. It doesn't always work out, but that's our goal. Some might be for Savage Worlds, others are universally useful gaming accessories like our beautiful line of Gamescapes map tile sets. I'm not the developer on those, so it's always a neat surprise to see the latest one appear on our store. And we're rebooting the Mojo Rules! line this year, which will be great too, so that'll add a few releases to the 2011 lineup.

10. WHAT GENRE DO YOU PREFER TO DEVELOP IN?

MMK: Another tough choice. You like to ask the difficult questions, don't you?

Hmmmm... fantasy is embedded deep in my heart from my childhood days, but there's a buzz about old school science fiction. Cyberpunk may not be in fashion as much as it used to, but I personally love it. And then there are the genres I don't get to play very often but enjoy heaps when I get the chance, from wild west to horror (and the fusion of the two - I worked on a book called *The Best Little Hellhouse In Texas* a couple of years ago and you should check it out on our store - it's one of the best things we've ever done). A good superhero setting can be downright magical. Noir 1930s is great fun. Historical supernatural can be a totally immersive experience (with an honorable mention to both *Ars Magica* and *Vampire: Dark Ages* for

igniting that interest in me many years ago). The list goes on.

Heh, you can see why I like working on something as flexible and broad-reaching as Suzerain now! I can take my gaming group to mythological Japan one session, then see how they apply the new skills they learned there (or the Edges they gained, or the Attributes they increased) in a post-apocalyptic wasteland the next session. And if we like it there, I can set a whole campaign in the one place, or we can shift to swashbuckling pirates with man-eating mermaids after seeing a cool movie which inspires us. There really are no limits, and you never have to ditch your favorite character just because you want to try a different setting, genre or mood.

VAB: Not a tough question for me. Fantasy, through and through. I always want a little reality in my fantasy so it's believable, but it's not like developing for history or science fiction where there's so much basis in reality that you can get beat over the head for getting the 'real' details wrong.

11. WHAT IS THE MOST DIFFICULT PART OF DEVELOPMENT?

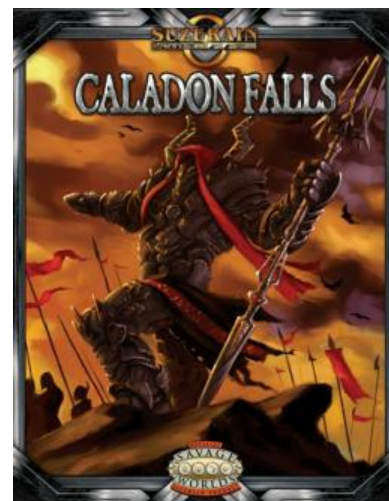
MMK: Herding cats.

That's what I call it when I have to round up a project team full of supremely talented writers, illustrators, rules gurus, editors, graphic designers, and layout people. Just because someone's a phenomenally gifted master with a digital pen doesn't mean they're very organized. That's why they rely on me, and I see it as 90% of my job to support them doing theirs, making their life as easy as possible. But at 2am on a Thursday when you're still doing Skype calls and answering emails and people from six different projects are asking for things that need doing asap... that's the tough part.

VAB: Agreed. I helped develop *Caladon Falls*. That was my first experience trying to do anything quite like RPG development. I learned a lot of us like to be so busy that we don't always realize someone is waiting for us to do something.

12. WHAT HAVE YOU LEARNED IN THE TIME YOU'VE DEVELOPED PRODUCTS?

MMK: You want a masterclass? Come join the team at Savage Mojo and I'll get you shadowing me for a month. It'll be an



eye-opener, I promise <grins>. But if you want just one thing, a nugget of wisdom, it's this: don't be afraid or apologetic to have a vision that's outside of the mainstream. Don't look for everybody to love what you're proposing, and actively seek out the ones who dislike the vision most. Learn to talk with them in such a way that you can find out what they don't like, take it on board, and get a better vision as a result. That doesn't mean you pander to everyone else - sometimes you have to accept you can't please all of the people all of the time - but you'd be surprised how often those discussions will help you frame your message better and make you happier with your own ideas.

13. DO YOU PREFER PRINT OR ELECTRONIC?

MMK: I'm a digital nomad with no single place to call 'home'. The only important physical things I have are my hard drives and my family. As long as I have those with me, I'm set. And one day I'll be able to store my 17 terabytes of data in the cloud, at which point I'll be ditching the hard drives.

My lifestyle is forced on me by an illness, but I think I'd be 50/50 on print versus electronic if I had a stable location to live my life from - that is to say, I'd want both. Ten years ago I was all about the dead tree versions and didn't want electronic. In another ten years, with some of the additional features I'm seeing on the horizon for digital books... even if I was rooted to one place, my library would be electronic.

VAB: For my own use? Print. Electronic is good for previewing, but I'd much rather have a book I can flip through. Of course, for getting products out, electronic is more flexible and quick, so that's nicer than the print in that regard.

14. IF YOU COULD SHARE ONE THING ABOUT YOUR COMPANY THAT MOST SAVAGES DO NOT KNOW, WHAT WOULD IT BE?

MMK: Miles M Kantir is really a virtual avatar of the publisher, Martin M Klimes. But you're sworn to secrecy. Don't tell a soul.

VAB: We're an international collaborative of freelancers. We're all over the world, so many of us have only met virtually.

15. IF SOMEONE WANTED TO BECOME A FREELANCER FOR YOU, WHAT SHOULD THEY KNOW?

MMK: My contact details are up above... drop me an email. My reputation for eating freelancers for breakfast and spitting out their worthless bones on the rug is highly exaggerated. I'm too polite to spit.

And anyway, we don't use freelancers in the traditional sense. It's not that kind of a deal at Savage Mojo. We're a collective, so everyone gets the benefits when the products they work on do well, not some faceless owner or shareholder. And like I mentioned earlier, those in the Savage Mojo family get to work in teams where they love the project, where they have creative input on every aspect, and where there's mutual support. It's pretty far removed from the tradition stereotype of the freelancer knocking out X words or illustrations every day in isolation and delivering them to some ogre of a project manager.

Basically, for the most part I'm not interested in working with freelancers like that. I'm looking for more members of the collective who have a talent to share (or more than one talent, as we often find). If that's you then yes, I'd like to get that email from you.

I also know we're always looking for people who are willing to help spread the word and work with Vickey on that side of things. She's our marketing guru as well as a developer in her own right. People who like what we're up to might do well by emailing me about that, too - we've got some neat incentives and rewards lined up for you.

VAB: Thanks, Mar...er, Miles! Yes, I need help with marketing. We're growing and are committed to staying in touch with our fans and would-be fans, so that's getting harder for me as there is more and more to do. I'm happy to even work with people needing a marketing internship where this is a limited-time gig.

16. DO YOU HAVE ANY NEW PRODUCT LINES COMING UP THAT YOU HAVEN'T ANNOUNCED YET?

MMK: Looking for a sneaky exclusive, eh? Okay, I can do that, but only because you've been so nice as to read this far. Watch out later this year for our new line

of Savage adventures, Quantum Sliders. Each one will give your gaming group a session's worth of hi jinx in a new realm. Use them as Savage Tales, one-offs between plot point scenarios in your campaign. Alternatively, string them together to give Heroic (and later Demigod) characters that Quantum Leap meets Sliders (to riff off two old TV shows) experience. Either way, they're shaping up to be some of the craziest fun you'll have seen in a long time. Does General Rommel have Nazi gorillas driving battle mechs in the sands of North Africa? You betcha! And only the right group of brave heroes can stop them.

SILVER GRYPHON GAMES

<http://www.silvergryphongames.com/>

1. TELL US ABOUT YOURSELF

Kevin Rohan grew up in a small town of 600 people in Northwest Iowa. During middle school, he discovered gaming, 2nd Ed. D&D as it was for most of the gaming groups back then, and he knew it was something he wanted to do. Through High School and college, he was exposed to war gaming, GURPS, Cyberpunk, Shadowrun, World of Darkness, D20, D6, Star Wars, and dozens of other systems, plus other more traditional table top board and card games. Not long after the release of 3rd Edition D&D, Kevin decided that he could write an RPG, especially since he'd been writing and drawing since he could pick up a pencil. Over the course of the next 5 years, Kevin wrote and developed *Æther* from scratch and self-published it through print-on-demand services and through PDF sites like DriveThru RPG. After meeting Ben Overmyer, Kevin decided to roll him into the game development equation, and the two became good friends as well as a good match for business partners in their new endeavor, Silver Gryphon Games. Kevin has a full time job that does not involve gaming, just bought a house and has been working on home improvement projects as well as building furniture and book cases. He is married to an amazing woman who puts up with his gaming habit and company endeavors, and the two of them have a 5 and a half year-old and an almost 4 year-old. Kevin's wife

shares in the gaming spirit, and their children are wanting to play as well.

Ben Overmyer spent most of his youth living in different places all over the United States and, later, New Zealand. Throughout this, though, he maintained a passion for RPGs that started with inheriting his parents' unused copy of D&D Basic (Mentzer version). He spent most of his high school years as a Rifts GM, and that experience of being relied on to balance the game and keep it (relatively) sane informed his GMing style for the rest of his life (so far). From that point forward, he bought, played, tweaked, and otherwise mangled dozens of different systems. From 1999 to 2007, he developed a system that would later become Silver Gryphon Games' Ingenium. With Kevin's help, Ingenium was released in 2010, and it has become Ben's primary system for play. Kevin's interest in Savage Worlds, though, sparked a passion for that game also, and Ben has helped inspire a fair amount of Silver Gryphon's Savage Worlds content. His wife Treasure adds to the fun by being a great D&D 3.5 DM, and recently joined Silver Gryphon Games as the Community Manager.

2. WHY DID YOU CHOOSE TO BECOME A SAVAGE WORLDS LICENSEE?

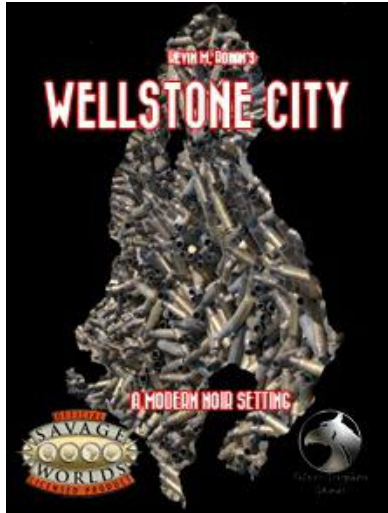
Kevin> Silver Gryphon decided to become a Savage Worlds licensee at a small convention in South Dakota back in February 2010, actually. We were sitting around a table and we were talking about game systems and we couldn't stop talking about Savage Worlds. The *Æther* Core Book had a user-driven setting with it called *Wellstone City*, and over the course of the next month, I "savaged" *Wellstone* and the rest was history.

Ben> Aye, the inclusion of Savage Worlds in our lineup seemed only natural with all the fun we were having with it. I think a big part of what got us into being a licensee was the great community surrounding the game.

3. HOW DO YOU THINK SAVAGE WORLDS COMPARES TO OTHER GENERIC UNIVERSAL SYSTEMS?

Kevin> This is a tricky question for me to answer because I have a generic system of my own that started me down the path of





game publishing. Taking that into consideration, Savage is everything it strives to be: fast, furious, and fun. It holds no punches and it has that pulpy, go-for-the-throat attitude when we use it. Where other generic systems tend to have a handful of things that they do well, Savage does it all well even while focusing on pulp, and has mechanics that keep the game flowing swiftly.

Ben> For me, Savage is less of a generic universal system and more of an action-packed universal system. You could try and run a World of Darkness-style touchy-feely game with Savage, but at the end of the day, Savage is more about punching the arch-villain in the face while in freefall riding a tank down into a canyon than it is about complex character interactions.

4. WHAT SAVAGE WORLDS PRODUCT, OF YOUR OWN, INSPIRES YOU THE MOST?

Kevin> That would have to be the *Wellstone City* setting. It is a giant sandbox of corruption, mystery, and free-flowing cash. Enemies are made easy, friends come hard, and it is so easy to do anything from pulp noire to gritty crime stories. Even with all of that, it doesn't get so lost in itself that it can't be used as a backdrop city for other Savage Products that take place on Earth, any time in the 400 years of history that are balled up into the *Wellstone City* book.

Ben> Definitely *Wellstone*. The old-style noire feel combined with the rough-and-tumble Savage mechanics seems a natural match.

5. WHAT SAVAGE WORLDS PRODUCT, OTHER THAN YOUR OWN, ARE YOU MOST INTERESTED IN?

Ben> Actually, Savage Worlds has turned out to be my favorite system for playing *Star Wars* games with. I like bits and pieces of most of the fan-created sourcebooks out there for that setting.

Kevin> I suppose that "all of them" is kind of a cop-out. While we support whole-heartedly our fellow licensees, we haven't strayed too far from using the Pinnacle products and I've had some of the most fun with *Necessary Evil* and *Weird War II*. I just started getting into *Rippers*,

and we are constantly expanding what we're doing with the books we have, and we are constantly expanding the collection of books we have.

6. WHAT SAVAGE WORLDS PRODUCT(S) ARE YOU CURRENTLY WORKING ON?

Kevin> If I tell you, I'd have to kill you. But there are quite a number in the pipe, most of them centering around zombies, *Wellstone City*, or some combination thereof.

Ben> I'm concentrating too much on *Ingenium* to spend time on Savage right now, unfortunately. I have some ideas sketched out, but they won't see daylight for at least a year.

7. HAVE YOU WORKED ON ANY SETTINGS FOR OTHER COMPANIES?

Kevin> Not counting the old Æther Gaming Systems company that was absorbed into Silver Gryphon, no. I did once take a foray into D20 adventures through an initiative that Atlas Games had back in the early 2000's, but that is the limit to my attention outside my own companies.

Ben> My freelance work has been entirely artistic. I did art for BESM d20 2nd and 3rd editions, a couple books by Hero Games, and a few freebies for others. Nothing Savage, yet.

8. WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE SAVAGE WORLDS SETTING TO DEVELOP IN?

Kevin> *Wellstone City* has got to be my favorite. There's just so many dirty little corners to play with and in a city the size of *Wellstone* with the population packed so densely, there is always room for money to be made and dirty deeds to be done.

Ben> Though it's not uniquely Savage, *Star Wars*. I'm a big fan of that setting.

9. HOW OFTEN DO YOU PUBLISH PRODUCTS?

Kevin> Not as often as we'd like. We end up getting something out every quarter, but we'll have several products come out in successive months and then a long dry spell.

Ben> What Kevin said. We're doing this in our spare time, so it's difficult to churn out a lot of products without sacrificing a lot of quality.

10. WHAT GENRE DO YOU PREFER TO DEVELOP IN?

Ben> Fantasy or old-school space opera. I love playing fast and loose with physics and other “rules,” and those two genres suit that mindset best.

Kevin> Anything that rocks! My mind seems to work best in anything that could have a rock, heavy metal, or operatic soundtrack accompanying it. Modern is fun because it’s familiar, but I’m a historian by education, so anything is fair game.

11. WHAT IS THE MOST DIFFICULT PART OF DEVELOPMENT?

Kevin> I have serious issues focusing on only one project at a time. We’ve jokingly said that I have “project ADHD,” but that has calmed down some as more people have been added to the Silver Gryphon crew. Now everyone has more time for product development. The difficulty comes in different areas for different projects, but by and large, for me it’s the writing of NPC stats. I just doesn’t have fun doing that at all.

Ben> Reconciling all the really cool ideas with a central canon is probably hardest. It’s easy to come up with great concepts, but tying them all together so they make sense can sometimes be a chore.

12. WHAT HAVE YOU LEARNED IN THE TIME YOU’VE DEVELOPED PRODUCTS?

Kevin> I’ve learned to slow down, take my time, and double check EVERYTHING. The more eyes you have on a project at any given stage of production, the fewer mistakes you will make, and the better the product will be.

Ben> No matter how many times you’ve edited, you will always miss a typo, a reference to an obsolete mechanic, or something like that. This is true even of big companies’ products, but it’s particularly true of small press companies that can’t afford a full-time editor.

13. DO YOU PREFER PRINT OR ELECTRONIC?

Kevin> When I’m at the gaming table, I prefer print products. For development though, I prefer electronic copies so I don’t have books piled up all over the place.

Ben> Print. I’m a very sensory-oriented person, and print products have a tactile quality to them that digital copies just don’t have. With that said, though... I’m warming to the idea of the Nook or Kindle. When I briefly had an iPad, I enjoyed “flipping” through books using the touchscreen.

14. IF YOU COULD SHARE ONE THING ABOUT YOUR COMPANY THAT MOST SAVAGES DO NOT KNOW, WHAT WOULD IT BE?

Kevin> There are two things, actually. First, we have never taken out a loan to do what we do; everything has been cash out of pocket or income generated by the products themselves. Second, it’s basically just two guys doing the day-to-day stuff of the business, the product development, and the marketing. Both of us are working around families, other hobbies, and other full-time jobs.

Ben> We do a lot, as in almost all, of our dev work online. We use Google Documents to collaborate on manuscripts, and we have a few online tools we use to share binary files like PDFs, PSDs, InDesign docs, and so on. Silver Gryphon is very dependent on that, since Kevin and I live two hours apart.

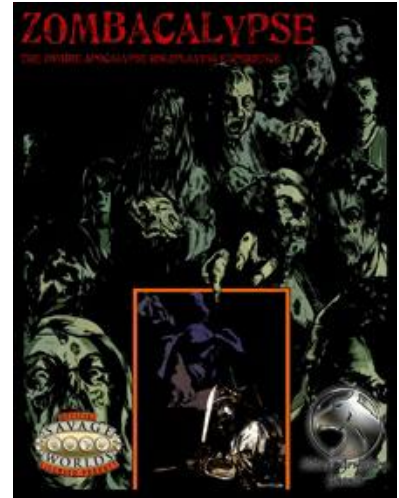
15. IF SOMEONE WANTED TO BECOME A FREELANCER FOR YOU, WHAT SHOULD THEY KNOW?

Kevin> We are a ball to work with and we love working with other people that are excited by gaming.

Ben> Unlike other companies, our products have multiple distinctive styles, and we tend to come up with new products that don’t fit into existing themes. So, even if your art (or writing) style doesn’t fit *Wellstone*, it might match up with *Ingenium*.

16. DO YOU HAVE ANY NEW PRODUCT LINES COMING UP THAT YOU HAVEN’T ANNOUNCED YET?

Kevin> Lines? No, but there are a number of little one-shots and continuations of what were supposed to be one-shots coming out this year, and as always, more stuff for *Wellstone City*! Both Ben and I have more products coming out for our *Æther* and *Ingenium* systems as well.





TRIPLE ACE GAMES

<http://www.tripleacegames.com/>

1. TELL US ABOUT YOURSELF

My name is Wiggy and I'm a partner in Triple Ace Games, along with Robin Elliott. I've been playing RPGs since 1982, writing professionally since 1998, and writing full-time since late 2004. I've freelanced for Atlas Games, Eden Studios, Britannia Games Design, Kenzer & Co., and Green Ronin, and worked for PEG as a staff writer.

Triple Ace Games was founded in 2008. Since then, we've published over 160 print and e-book products. Although we're best known for our *Hellfrost* fantasy setting, we've produced *Daring Tales of Adventure*, *Chivalry*, *Space Lanes*, and *Sprawl* adventure lines, the horror-sci-fi setting *Necropolis 2350*, the dark fantasy setting *Sundered Skies*, and the weird and wonderful *Wonderland no More*.

2. WHY DID YOU CHOOSE TO BECOME A SAVAGE WORLDS LICENSEE?

Before co-founding TAG I'd spent four years as Pinnacle's staff writer. During that time I'd developed several ideas that I wanted to explore further. Like any company, Pinnacle has a finite budget, finite release slots, and its own core projects to support, so in order to work on my ideas I needed to branch out.

3. HOW DO YOU THINK SAVAGE WORLDS COMPARES TO OTHER GENERIC UNIVERSAL SYSTEMS?

I haven't really played any other generic settings—most of the RPGs I play come with the rules built in rather than needing a separate core rulebook. But in general terms of it being an RPG, *Savage Worlds* is extremely simple to learn and yet comes with many hidden depths.

4. WHAT SAVAGE WORLDS PRODUCT, OF YOUR OWN, INSPIRES YOU THE MOST?

I'd have to say *Hellfrost*. It was originally intended to be just three books, but since then it's developed a true life of its own, expanding to five print books and 55+ electronic products, and that's just the material we've released to date. Much of that growth is actually down to fan demand for more material, which is really inspiring.

5. WHAT SAVAGE WORLDS PRODUCT, OTHER THAN YOUR OWN, ARE YOU MOST INTERESTED IN?

There's a lot of interesting material out there, but I'd have to say *Rippers*. Although I wrote the *Rippers Companion* and several adventures, I had nothing much to do with the core book, so it isn't one I lay any claim to. I've been playing it with my wife since it was in draft format, and it's still one of our favorite settings for any RPG.

6. WHAT SAVAGE WORLDS PRODUCT(S) ARE YOU CURRENTLY WORKING ON?

Right now we're in a really good place in terms of products. We have over a dozen print books written in preparation for monthly releases and enough PDF material written and laid out to see us through to next year. So while I'm still working hard on the creative front, it's more tinkering with possible ideas and looking ahead to see what we need for next year's PDF releases.

Robin is busy getting the first *Hellfrost* adventure print compendiums laid out and off to the printers. The first one should be in stores by the time this article is published, and the second will be close behind.

7. HAVE YOU WORKED ON ANY SETTINGS FOR OTHER COMPANIES?

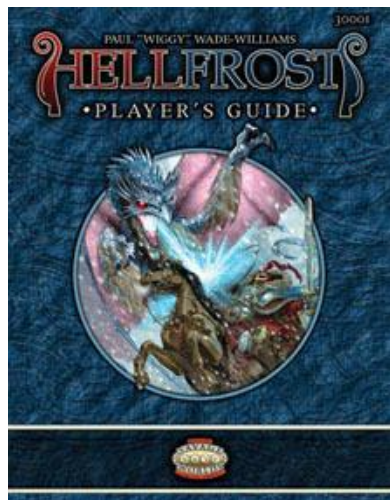
As I noted earlier, I spent several years at PEG, so my name appears on a lot of official settings and generic products. I also wrote the *Savage Freeport Companion* for Green Ronin.

8. WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE SAVAGE WORLDS SETTING TO DEVELOP IN?

That's tricky, as it requires two answers. In terms of settings I *can* develop, then it's definitely *Hellfrost*. Every time I glance through the existing material or look at the map new ideas spring into my mind. In terms of settings I'd *like* to develop, that would be *Rippers*—new ideas for it are never far from my mind.

9. HOW OFTEN DO YOU PUBLISH PRODUCTS?

We began with regular weekly releases, but since branching out of *Savage Worlds* into other systems that has slowed slightly to 1-3 *Savage Worlds* electronic products a month and a print book every month or two. We've just started printing our own books, so there's been a slight gap be-



tween print books the last few months. The regular flow should commence again this month.

10. WHAT GENRE DO YOU PREFER TO DEVELOP IN?

Fantasy first, but pulp now comes a very close second. They're both genres that appeal to my imagination and impose very few limitations. Strangely, until I wrote the Pulp Toolkits I'd never considered gaming in the genre, despite loving movies like *The Rocketeer* and the *Indiana Jones* films.

11. WHAT IS THE MOST DIFFICULT PART OF DEVELOPMENT?

For me, sitting down in front of a blank Word document and wondering how I'm going to fill X pages in Y days. But that usually passes once I start typing. For Rob, that would probably be the sheer amount of paperwork that goes into running a full-time business, especially now we're handling our own printing.

12. WHAT HAVE YOU LEARNED IN THE TIME YOU'VE DEVELOPED PRODUCTS?

That there are much easier ways to make a living, but few are as rewarding as creating strange, new worlds and seeing the enjoyment others get from exploring them. I've gained more understanding of layout over the last year, as well, as I've been laying out the smaller PDF products.

13. DO YOU PREFER PRINT OR ELECTRONIC?

As a gamer, I'm very much old school—paper in my preferred medium. As a publisher, I see the need for both markets to run parallel.

14. IF YOU COULD SHARE ONE THING ABOUT YOUR COMPANY THAT MOST SAVAGES DO NOT KNOW, WHAT WOULD IT BE?

That Rob and I are both English and live in the UK may surprise some *Savage Worlds* fans who haven't known us since we worked for PEG—we're a rarity in an American-dominated industry.

More generically, I guess it might be that despite us hitting the ground with a string of regular releases, we started TAG with \$500 in cash, *Necropolis 2350* ready to print (thanks to Shane's generosity), a few unfinished manuscripts, some crazy ideas, and a lot of good will.

15. IF SOMEONE WANTED TO BECOME A FREELANCER FOR YOU, WHAT SHOULD THEY KNOW?

Although we're always open to new ideas, we're keen to promote our existing lines, so product knowledge really is essential. Being a published freelancer isn't important, so long as you're keen, realize that writing is hard work, and are prepared to learn. After all, we all started out without any publishing credits to our names.

16. DO YOU HAVE ANY NEW PRODUCT LINES COMING UP THAT YOU HAVEN'T ANNOUNCED YET?

Lots can go wrong between announcing a project and actually publishing it, so we don't talk about new lines until they're virtually finished. We know fans always like to hear about new stuff coming out, but there's no point in getting them hyped up over something that may be a year or more away (or later get cancelled for some reason). I can say that we're looking at a few new adventure lines, but nothing's been confirmed yet. Hopefully we'll have ideas firmed up by Gen Con, so we'll be able to talk to the fans there.

WHITE HAIRED MAN

<http://www.whitehairedman.com/>

1. TELL US ABOUT YOURSELF

What Is White Haired Man?

We offer small-scale settings that can be easily introduced into a campaign and reduce the gamemaster's preparation time. Our settings do not force the gamemaster to rework an existing campaign setting. Our work also reflects the roleplaying styles we enjoy: a low level of magic, high drama, intense roleplaying opportunities, and realistic consequences for character actions.

The settings themselves are available for free on the White Haired Man web site in a rules agnostic format. That is, the free settings contain no rules that tie them to a particular game system. Each setting includes a number of adventures that can follow one another in a series or stand alone.

The adventures comprise our core products, and contain the game mechanics nec-





White Haired Man

essary to run them with Savage Worlds rules. The adventures are available in two formats. First, each adventure can be purchased as a PDF. Second, we also bundle the PDF with a software module for the Fantasy Grounds virtual tabletop software. In the future we hope to offer eBook versions of our adventures.

We are now completing the final adventure for the Kith'takharos setting. We currently offer four full-length Kith'takharos adventures and three short adventures we call Simple Scenarios. Once the current adventure is finished, there will be five full-length adventures.

Who Is White Haired Man?

Andugus – Graphic Design & Artist

"White Haired Man is the stuff of dreams. How many times have you met those who talked about their passions? How many of those people pursued one? One day I awoke and knew I had to pursue mine. That or live my life knowing my dreams would remain unfulfilled. That day I decided to stop talking about it and toss caution to the wind. In my heart I knew that passion would lead me to success though I couldn't define how.

"I enrolled in college at age 40 to pursue a Bachelors Degree of Science in Graphic Design. Not because I needed a degree, I needed artistic skills to unlock ideas into visual information. A month later White Haired Man became the culmination of a two year conversation between Viz and me. Now, White Haired Man is the vessel of my passion and gained knowledge. Through thought, ideation, and plain hard work I contribute to the creative force that is White Haired Man. Without fear of failure or need of financial success, I am living the dream. It is my hope that our work will enrich your role-playing game experience; creating intense role playing opportunities. Leaving you with memories shared with friends that create bonds; bonds that you'll enjoy for many years to come.

"Today I have a new dream. I dream White Haired Man products will be as successful at your game table as they have been at mine."

Viz – Writing and Electronic Design

"I could probably list at least half dozen reasons why I joined Andugus to form White Haired Man. For our collaboration,

the most important thing is that we have been friends for many years and have developed a good working relationship. We can be honest with one another with no reservations, and we are.

"I'm not going to list all the other reasons, because most of them are ancillary. The real reason is that I love to write and I love roleplaying. What could be better than to meld these into the collaboration that is White Haired Man?

"Writing is a magical process. Even though I might know what I want to write about, I never know ahead of time what words will result or how they will be arranged. Somewhere within me these words are produced, and I am the vessel through which they emerge into the world. When they turn out well, I am as amazed as anyone else. All I know for sure is that practice is essential.

"In addition to the writing, I also create the Fantasy Grounds modules. This is an art of a different kind, working out the best organization of the material so that the gamemaster has convenient access to the most important information.

"I could say many more things, and most would resemble the old clichés about doing what one loves, working hard, persevering, etc. But I have learned that those sayings are clichés because they're true. Creating settings and adventures is deeply satisfying."

2. WHY DID YOU CHOOSE TO BECOME A SAVAGE WORLDS LICENSEE?

We began by producing OGL products, because we did not need any additional permission and only had to comply with the Open Game License. But we had been playing Savage Worlds for about two years and really liked the system. After a year we had two OGL adventures, and felt we now had a track record of quality work that would give us a better chance of becoming a Savage Worlds licensee. We approached Pinnacle, and were finally able to become a licensee.

3. HOW DO YOU THINK SAVAGE WORLDS COMPARES TO OTHER GENERIC UNIVERSAL SYSTEMS?

The only other such system we've used is GURPS. We like Savage Worlds better because of the elegance and simplicity of

the rules. The rules are also fun to play. These features allow us to more easily create without the rules getting in the way.

4. WHAT SAVAGE WORLDS PRODUCT, OF YOUR OWN, INSPIRES YOU THE MOST?

Right now, the adventures planned for our next small-scale setting: the Eastern Frontier. We will begin work on that in July. Savage Worlds is not complicated, but experience does help in taking advantage of its possibilities. Even though our current line of adventures set in Kith'takharos have turned out very well, the next series of adventures will leverage all we have learned and will be even better.

5. WHAT SAVAGE WORLDS PRODUCT, OTHER THAN YOUR OWN, ARE YOU MOST INTERESTED IN?

The upcoming *Savage Worlds Deluxe*. We are especially interested in reading the design notes.

6. WHAT SAVAGE WORLDS PRODUCT(S) ARE YOU CURRENTLY WORKING ON?

We have just completed the Savage Worlds version of our fourth full length Kith'takharos adventure, *The Dreamers Awaken*. Our final Kith'takharos adventure, *Seal the Rift!*, should be available in July. Then we will begin the Eastern Frontier setting and the adventures that will accompany it.

7. HAVE YOU WORKED ON ANY SETTINGS FOR OTHER COMPANIES?

No. There are only two of us. It would be difficult to find time for projects not directly related to White Haired Man.

8. WHAT IS YOUR FAVORITE SAVAGE WORLDS SETTING TO DEVELOP IN?

Our favorite settings are our own settings. All of our products are developed for our own settings.

9. HOW OFTEN DO YOU PUBLISH PRODUCTS?

Up to now, we have averaged between two and three products per year. However, we have become better at optimizing our workflow, and in the future may be able to release an additional product each year.

10. WHAT GENRE DO YOU PREFER TO DEVELOP IN?

All of our work fits into the fantasy genre. As mentioned in the first question, our work reflects the roleplaying styles we enjoy: a low level of magic, high drama, intense roleplaying opportunities, and realistic consequences for character actions.

11. WHAT IS THE MOST DIFFICULT PART OF DEVELOPMENT?

Often, the first parts of a project are completed rather rapidly. The most difficult parts are last bits of polish that make a product truly professional.

12. WHAT HAVE YOU LEARNED IN THE TIME YOU'VE DEVELOPED PRODUCTS?

While working on our last two adventures we learned one of our most important lessons: avoiding scope creep. That is, we allowed the adventures to encompass areas outside the original plan and they grew out of control. Time frames expanded, and sometimes it seemed like we would never finish. But we did finish, learned our lesson, and our next adventure is already profiting from this experience.

13. DO YOU PREFER PRINT OR ELECTRONIC?

We prefer electronic. Print is too expensive and risky for such a small company with limited resources.

14. IF YOU COULD SHARE ONE THING ABOUT YOUR COMPANY THAT MOST SAVAGES DO NOT KNOW, WHAT WOULD IT BE?

We suspect that most Savages don't even know we exist!

15. IF SOMEONE WANTED TO BECOME A FREELANCER FOR YOU, WHAT SHOULD THEY KNOW?

Our greatest need is illustration, so a freelancer should have this skill.

16. DO YOU HAVE ANY NEW PRODUCT LINES COMING UP THAT YOU HAVEN'T ANNOUNCED YET?

After we release the last *Kith'takharos* adventure in July, we will move on to our next setting: the Eastern Frontier. Information about the Eastern Frontier should begin appearing on our web site by August.



CHAINMAIL SHIRT

The chainmail shirt is a standard item for many adventurers. It allows for better mobility than a full chain hauberk and weighs much less. It can be made much quicker than a full-length coat. Chainmail shirts are also easier to wear over cotton shirts or underneath full-length jackets.

CHAINMAIL SHIRT

Armor: +2

Weight: 15

Cost: 100

Notes: Covers torso



WRAP-UP

To the Savage Worlds licensees, *Savage Insider* extends our thanks for your participation in this Round Table Question and Answer session.

We hope readers learned a little more about their favorite licensees and found some new ones who you plan to give a try.

All of the developers and creative minds within this Round Table help to support the Savage Worlds community through continuing product releases, convention appearances, free downloads, and excellent blogging information.

There are more licensees than would fit into one issue, so this is just the beginning. By scanning the cover of this issue, you will find the names of all the licensees that

support the Savage Worlds system and community today. We at *Savage Insider* encourage you to check-out all the fantastic publishers and expand your gaming horizons.

These publishers all volunteered time out of their own schedule to contribute to this Round Table. Stop by the licensee websites and let them know you read about them here.

You can help *Savage Insider* grow by spreading the word about our content, asking questions you'd like answered, and inviting your Savage friends to join you in liking our Facebook page. If you're feeling particularly generous, you can even sponsor our production at our website.

DARK FANTASY



SCIENCE FICTION



URBAN FANTASY



MYTHOLOGY



PICK YOUR WORLD

MYSTICALTHRONE-ENT.COM

TOMORROWLAND

The background of the entire page is a complex, layered artwork. In the foreground, a person's legs and hands are visible, rendered in a realistic but slightly desaturated style. The hands are positioned near the knees. In the background, there is a glowing, ethereal face with large, expressive eyes, surrounded by vibrant, swirling colors of purple, blue, and pink. The overall texture is grainy and painterly, with a dark, moody atmosphere.

"Aaron's art is like a shotgun blast in the middle of the night. Something wakes you up and makes you wonder where the hell it came from."

~John Wick, Author of *Legend of the Five Rings*, *Houses of the Blooded*, and *Shotgun Diaries*.

THE ART OF
AARON ACEVEDO

Available in print and PDF via www.sigil.info, drivethrurpg.com, and rpgnow.com

CONVENTION CALENDAR JULY - OCTOBER

Welcome to Convention Connection! In order to ensure readers have a chance to plan their convention trips, each quarter's issue will show conventions occurring in each of the three months of that quarter, plus the first month in the next quarter. It wouldn't do much good for you to get October's issue and only then find out that you have 10 days or so to get to a convention in October. That does mean there will be some overlap, but we felt the benefit was worth some small duplication.

JULY-OCTOBER AT-A-GLANCE

Convention	Website	Dates	Location (United States)
FandomFest	www.fandomfest.com	7/22-24/2011	KY
KantCon	kantcon.com/v2/	7/8-10/2011	KS
LibertyCon	www.libertycon.org/	7/15-17/2011	TN
Chicago Comic Con	www.wizardworld.com/home-ch.html	8/11-14/2011	IL
Gen Con	www.gencon.com	8/4-7/2011	IN
DragonCon	www.dragoncon.org	9/2-5/2011	GA
Geek.Kon	geekkon.net	9/9-11/2011	WI
Grand Masquerade	www.thegrandmasquerade.com	9/15-18/2011	LA
MAGE Con	www.mage-page.com	9/2-5/2011	NE
Nuke Con	www.nuke-con.com	9/30-10/2/2011	NE
New York Comic Con	www.newyorkcomiccon.com	10/13-16/2011	NY
Con on the Cob	www.cononthecob.com	10/13-16/2011	OH
Necronomicon	www.stonehill.org/necmain.htm	10/21-23/2011	FL

Although we did our best to compile an extensive list, this list is not exhaustive. All dates and websites are accurate as of this printing. If you know of conventions occurring between July and October that are not listed here, please let us know. We will add them to our list.

A special thanks to the many people and companies who pitched in with their own lists (directly and indirectly) including Sean McConkey, Silver Gryphon Games, Dave McAlister, Ian Hayward, Scott Alan Woodard, Dave Mattingly, Pinnacle Entertainment Group, and DriveThruRPG. Through direct responses and lists on various websites, we got a lot of good information.

SAVAGE PRESENCE AT GEN CON

These are the companies who sell Savage Worlds products that we know will be at Gen Con. Booth numbers are subject to change. Some companies may partner with others and not be listed by their own name in the Gen Con book.

- Adamant Entertainment (Cubicle 7 side of booth) – 711
- Arc Dream Publishing – 711
- Green Ronin – 965
- Savage Mojo – 1741
- Triple Ace Games – 1523

Booth 605 holds a whole bunch of Savage goodness.

You'll find:

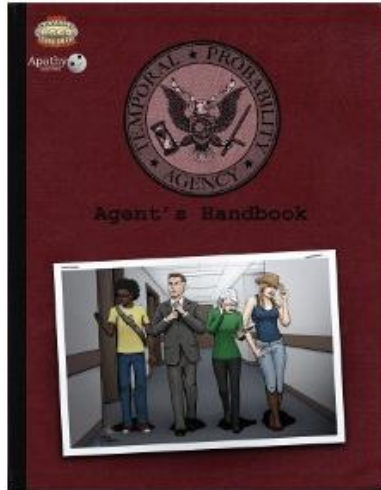
- Pinnacle Entertainment Group
- Reality Blurs
- Studio 2
- Super Genius Games
- Third Eye Games
- Visionary Comics

Several companies and Savage personalities are running ticketed games and may be available for pick-up games or in-booth demos.

Sean Patrick Fannon of Shaintar note, Reality Blurs, and Savage Mojo all piped up to say they're running ticketed Savage Worlds games. (If you stop by the DriveThruRPG or Studio 2 booth, you might run into Sean.)

Pinnacle is hosting Savage Saturday Night (SSN), which is sold out. Interested Savages can still go to a table just with generic tickets in case a spot opens up. See the Gen Con events listing for game details.

DESIGNER'S DIARY - TEMPORAL PROBABILITY AGENCY



STATS

Publisher: Apathy Games

Author: Jeff Carlsen, Hillary Crenshaw,
Tyson J. Hayes, Paul von Meerscheidt

Artists: Hillary Crenshaw, Marie
Carlsen

Growing up sucks. I've spent most of my adult life paying rent, working on my career, and being responsible. This December I'll welcome my first child into the world, solidifying me into the world of adults, only able to visit the world of pretend on the occasions I can get my friends around a table to play a game. The problem is, like most adults, I'm busy. Apathy Games was founded on the idea that while we, as roleplayers, have grown up, we haven't stopped playing games. Our time is more precious to us, and we don't want to waste time book-keeping or learning new rules. All Apathy Games adventures are created with the same mantra in mind: Print. Pour. Play. Print the game, pour a drink, and begin play. I barely have time to fit work into my day, so why should I spend any more time on tedious prep work?

Our first game, *Temporal Probability Agency*, was created with these ideas in mind. No prep required, just add drinks and friends. Players will assume the roles of agents of the TPA. Since the year 2000, the TPA (with the aid of the future predicting computer, Daisy) has been protecting humanity. They've prevented 9/11, wars around the world, and the global financial crisis. As an agent, you've been selected, not recruited, to perform your mission. Sometimes you will need to do something small: a spilled beer at the right moment. Sometimes it will be something huge: a gunfight with the Italian Mafia inside a burning factory.

The GM will find numerous handouts, maps, and notes on where to find more information on rules. All this is designed around our strategy of Print. Pour. Play.

I've spent much of this diary so far talking about design of our game, but it's all integral to a good game. I've picked up books that were huge blocks of text, black and white tables for stats, and little art, and put them right back where I found them. Any game should start with a good design, each piece chosen to represent the game. We chose a mixed media look for our game. Laundry lists look taped, stapled, and stuck on. Stat blocks were designed with a couple of simple colors, meant to highlight special abilities and weapons. Loads of handouts were developed for the game to give to the players. Handouts are invaluable to us as players. We love being able to hold things. While our imaginations are rich, being able to hold a laundry list in hand makes us feel like we really are donning the TPA uniform to go save the day.

For me, TPA is unlike most any other game I've played. I've heard it nicely described as a "role reversal" in which "the game plays on rails. It's the player's job to keep the game on track while the GM is trying to throw a wrench in the whole plan." Players are told up front what their objectives are in the form of a "Laundry List," a small handout containing straight forward statements, like "Go to the Fashion Crevasse," to vague actions, such as, "Bring the girl home." Each objective serves as a clue on how to move the adventure forward. Going to a

specified location, for example, yields more clues to your upcoming tasks. "Bringing the girl home" makes sense when the opportunity presents itself.

We found the results of the players keeping the game on track to be the most rewarding design element.

Allowing the players to keep the game on track does have two advantages, it allows them to railroad themselves to where we need them to go and it allows the GM to provide the tools they may need along the way. The TPA has the power to predict agent's needs; this allows the GM to react to any situation with equipment, directions, or an ally and make it all look like part of the plan.

I've played many adventures where most of the player's time is spent trying to figure out the objective. Time is spent wandering around asking vague questions to townspeople only to have the GM beat them over the head with the path forward out of weariness. The TPA doesn't run into that problem, the players know where they need to go, and only may need a hint or two to be on their way. More fun for the players and less prep work for the GM.

Growing up still sucks, and we all still have to pay the bills, but at least with our help you have more time to play games. With our games you can just invite your friends over, print our adventures, pour some drinks, and play.

Tyson J. Hayes is the Director of Social Media for Apathy Games, which is just his fancy way of saying he's a blogger. You can find his advice on games, and the weekly news column Savage Mondays for all things Savage Worlds at apathygames.com. Act 1 of Temporal Probability Agency: To Predict and Serve is out now. You can find it by searching rpgnow.com, or by visiting our website, apathygames.com/tpa