THE GEEK GAZETTE

GEN CONS AND PROS

Well another Gen Con has come and gone. This year was the 40th anniversary of the premiere gaming convention and to be honest I was a bit disappointed.

I truly expected a few more big releases and amazing announcements. What about 4e you ask? Well I'll be getting to that later, but it was pretty much the only big announcement made this year.

Don't get me wrong the con was great as usual, but it was mostly the same as every other year. Some new games were released, the Dragonlance movie premiered and D&D 4e was announced. Things of that nature happen every year, and I'm honestly not terribly excited about 4e. But like I said before I'll get to all that later. For now I want to go over some of what I did and didn't like about this years con.

First video games had a much bigger presence than in years past. Sony and other gaming companies took up a large part of the exhibitors hall. Don't get me wrong, I like my video games, but the hall felt smaller and I did not like that. There seemed to be fewer actual exhibitors, which meant fewer places to buy stuff. While this may have saved me some money in the long run, it also made me feel cheated. Others have argued that there weren't fewer booths, the hall was just organized differently, maybe, but it sure felt like less to me.

I welcome the video game community to our little con, but the convention center is a big place. Couldn't they have put them somewhere else? There are plenty of rooms large enough to house the video games. They didn't seem to be selling anything anyway; mostly they were just demoing games. Now if they were selling games for the PC and the various systems they would definitely belong in the hall. I just personally don't like using the space for promotion only exhibits. Maybe they could use one of the other rooms for that.

While I do collect a lot of Heroclix, I don't actually play, but I was still eager to see the new Haloclix. They looked good and the gigantic Scarab mini was pretty awesome. If you are a fan of Halo and/or Wizkids clix games you will love these minis.

In the RPG world Battlestar Galactica, Monte Cook's World of Darkness, and Aces & Eights all sparked a some interest and deservedly so. They are great games and many fans have been waiting for them for a while, especially BSG. There were also a quite a few games that didn't get the attention they deserved. Legend of the 5 Rings 3e, Rifts, Hero 5e, Castles & Crusades, True 20, and Mutants & Masterminds are all good solid games, but the booths weren't as packed as I would have expected. All of them had great, new things to offer. I can only assume that WotC and BSG had too much buzz going on and stole the spotlight.

I'm not a CCG person, but there were some great deals and new releases to be found. I got some World of Warcraft starter decks that I am eager to try out as well as some Legend of the 5 Rings decks. Yu gi oh still seemed to draw a lot of attention and to be honest I didn't know anyone still played it. Magic 10th edition didn't seem to be drawing the attention I

Cons & Pros

would have expected, but I'm sure there was enough of everything there to keep the CCG gamers happy.

There were tons of Anime and Asian film booths for fans. I was surprised to find they even sold Hentai. This was something I didn't expect to see at a con that is trying to draw in the younger crowd. I'm not really into Anime, though I do like my DBZ, and I know they have had a presence at Gen Con for a while, I just noticed it more this year. There were also a few more people dressed as Naruto and other anime characters than I've seen before.

Speaking of costumes there just didn't seem to be as many overall this year. There were some great ones to be sure, most of which I have seen in past years. Perhaps I hit the wrong areas at the wrong time of day, but there did seem to be a few less people in costume this year.

Let's not forget the celebrities. While there didn't seem to be as many mainstream stars, there

were plenty that us geeks would recognize. The celebrity highlight for my family was Feedback, Major Victory and Fat Momma from Who wants to be a superhero and Clair from Heroes.

I also want to give kudos for the Gen Con crew for the family day pass. $25 for a family of four to get in on Sunday was a brilliant idea. Before I left on Sunday afternoon I say oodles of families taking advantage of this. Next year my family is planning to go because of this. Granted Sunday is the shortest day, but kids have small attention spans and there is still enough time to get through the Exhibit Hall.

In this issue of the Gazette I will naturally be covering the Dungeons and Dragons 4th edition. There aren't a lot of concrete details yet, but I am sharing what I have found thus far and will keep you posted as things develop.

I also have a short summary of my 4 days at Gen Con, quick reviews of the products I picked up and a few other tidbits you might find of interest. Also this issue I would like to welcome Carpe GM to the Podcast Page.

D&D 4th Edition

It's old news to D&D fans that Wizards of the Coast announced 4e at Gen Con this year. The internet has been abuzz about if for over a year. I, like many others, wanted to discount the rumors and still don't see why they would put a new edition out at this time, yet the fact remains they are doing it.

In the seminars at Gen Con WotC staff seemed rather unenthusiastic about this new edition. There was no real excitement, something they desperately needed given the jaded and sometimes hostile crowd they were speaking to. While the presentation sucked, which is an understatement, I have to say 4e does-

n't sound that bad.

The game mechanics **seem** to be improved when compared to 3e. Many things that gamers have been wanting for years are being added and overall I can't really say anything bad about the game itself. Mostly because all we really know is what WotC revealed and fan speculation. However, I do have my complaints.

First WotC lied to us. When everyone started screaming about 4e they didn't just politely say "no comment", they outright lied to us and said there was no 4e. I think one WotC staffer even commented that we wouldn't see a 4e until after 2010. Yet, in the seminars they openly admitted they have been working on it for at least 2 years! We're not talking about WMDs here, there was no need to be deceitful. This really ticked off more than a few gamers, myself included.

Secondly, 4e will not be compatible with 3e. So for those
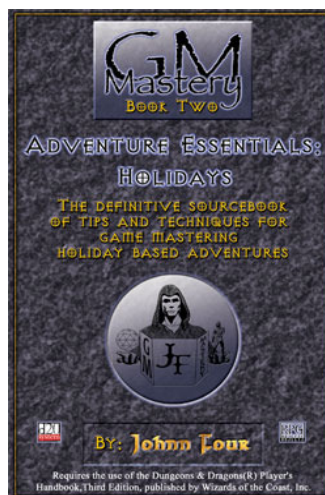
4e continued

of us that spent a fortune on 3e books, well we are just out of luck. Sure we can still use our 3e books in home games, but if we want to join a new group or play at a con we will almost definitely need 4e books. Bad move WotC. Even Sony, Microsoft and Nintendo know to make their systems backwards compatible.

Third, the marketing for this edition is terrible. The promo videos, liked the one shown at Gen Con, make you want to tear your ears off. Sure 4e will be introducing cool features like the online tabletop, but that should have been released first, then once we got use to it they should have announced 4e.

Their actions over the past year or so, recalling licenses and then canceling two beloved magazine, just left fans feeling cheated. You can't drop new edition bombshells on people like this. Especially when you are dealing with a group of people that take this hobby so seriously. This isn't like coming out with a new edition of Life or Monopoly. Everything has changed and if you change too much at once, you tend to upset the very people that support you.

As for what is seemingly good about the upcoming edition, there is quite a bit. The core races will be expanded. They didn't confirm anything, but Tieflings are almost a sure bet as they appear on the new PHB. There were also hints/rumors that Changelings and other favorite non-standard races may be added to the mix. How many has yet to be revealed but there will be more races than in previous editions.

Skills will be streamlined. The example given was Hide and Move Quietly. They will be combined into one skill with the rationale that if you took one, you would likely take the other.

Not a lot of detail was given in regards to combat, except that the environment will play a bigger part. The example the WotC guys gave is if you are fighting on a rope bridge, the movement of the bridge will have to be considered. To me this doesn't seem streamlined. Instead this seems to complicate combat. Could this be grapple all over again?

Character creation was a topic that the panel danced around somewhat. When asked if it would be faster and easier, they wouldn't give a straight answer. Their response to this question was that character creation would be "simpler on average". To me it seemed that either they didn't really know, or it was in fact more involved than before. Details are still kind of sketchy but alignments will be revised as well. I think it will resemble more on an Eberron feel.

Good news for spell casters; Wizards and Sorcerers will be better defined and completely separate classes. No longer will Sorcerers be just a Wizard knock-off. Details were sketchy but they did say the class would have a very specific role. As a whole all classes will be designed to fulfill specific roles in the game.

The classes are also supposed to be more evenly matched in power at all levels. Fighters will no longer be meat shields and support for magic users, but a bona fide force to be reckoned with.

ECL and CR are gone. Monsters will have levels just like PCs. Do you need to figure out what creatures to use in an encounter? Easy pick the level monster(s) to correspond with the level(s) of the PCs.

There will be 3 tiers or "power" levels supported in the game from the get go. From basic Heroic characters at levels 1-10 up to Epic 21-30 level PCs. The revelation that the core books would support 1-30 level characters definitely made more than a few people in

The Podcast Page

Just a few of the Podcast that I recommend and try to listen to regularly. All podcasts featured anywhere in the Gazette should be available for download on the shows website or from iTunes; unless noted otherwise.

www.harpingmonkey.com

http://decoderringtheatre.com

www.nuketown.com

www.wizards.com/default.asp?x=dnd/pod/20061

www.yog-sothoth.com

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and Call of Cthulhu
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http://thenutgallery.com

www.noirchickenstudios.com/Dice_Make_Bonk

http://carpegm.libsyn.com/   http://dragonpage.com

www.somniturne.com/gtp/

www.fistfullofcomics.com

www.pulpgamer.com   www.theartofroleplaying.com

4E continued

the room happy.

It was hinted that there would be no default setting for the game. WotC reps claimed they wanted a more "organic" & "scarier" world for the PCs. It is rumored that homebrew games will be encouraged and published settings will be less defined. Apparently this is an effort to give DMs and players more control over the game. This way people won't feel tied to continuity, but instead will be encouraged to make each world their own.

Campaign Settings will still be released, but the WotC reps made it seem that they will be more of a truly optional element. Forgotten Realms will be the first CS released,

I think sometime in late 08. Eberron is rumored to be released in early 09. Nothing was mentioned in regard to Greyhawk, Ravenloft or Dragonlance. Though they did say that the RPGA's Living Campaigns would still be supported, just not which world(s) they would occupy.

It will still be the OGL d20 system, and other publishers will be producing products for the game. No specifics were given, though I am sure announcements will be made in the coming months.

This version of D&D will also be the first to embrace the internet. If you subscribe to D&D insider you will not only have access to article in Dungeon and Dragon magazines, but also a

virtual tabletop for gaming. This is probably the only part of the announcement that I was actually interested in hearing about. Though I have to admit I'm not one that likes being tied to my computer for long periods of time. Especially for gaming, which is why I don't play online games.

A few of the D&D insider features that were revealed include:

*The Virtual Tabletop" This will allow you to have games with friends or find new groups to game with over the internet. Voice and text chat are said to be supported. From the demo it looked really good. This is not an online game per say,
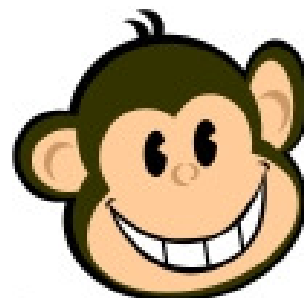
4e continued

but a table top game that has been moved onto the internet. The DM and players will still have control.

*Access to Dragon and Dungeon magazines. Articles will be posted every few days with a compilation issue being available at the end of the month. I personally have made my peace with the demise of these two zines and could not care less about this feature.

*Digital copies of the books you buy. When you buy a 4e book there will be a code, or something of that nature, in the book. Take that code to D&D insider and you will have access to a Digital copy of the books you purchase. A possible additional fee was mentioned to get your digital version, but that seemed to still be up in the air.

*Online character creation. This feature seemed pretty cool. You can generate a PC online that you can print out for use at home or use in your online game.

You will have the ability to decide what your PC will look

like, ala The Sims, and create a digital mini to use in your online game. No more searching the racks for a mini that looks close enough. Make your character look how you want.

No prices were given for any of these features. They didn't even say whether they would be a package deal or if you could pick and chose the features you want. It was mentioned that it would cost about what a years subscription to Dungeon and/or Dragon magazine cost. However, they didn't say what that price entailed. Do you have to pay that much for each online mag and then extra for the gaming or is it an all for one price? They weren't clear enough on this and left many scratching their heads, trying to decide if it was a good deal or not.

I for one an not terribly excited about 4e. Will I buy it? Yeah probably. Will I invest as much time and money into this edition as 3e? I seriously doubt it.

I will buy the 3 core rule books when they are released next

year. (They will be released one book at a time from May 08-July 08 beginning with the PHB.) Unless I am truly impressed with the game, I doubt I will go much further than that. I still don't understand why the core books will not be released together. For that matter I don't see why WotC hasn't just followed other publishers' lead and make a single core book. I'm sure that reducing the number of initial books would soften the blow and entice more people to convert. I know I would be less resistant to the idea if they did so. At this point I think WotC would be wise to keep on gamers' good side.

I can't really fault WotC for putting out a new edition of the game and trying to make more money. Ever since 3e was released people have been complaining that it was a broken system. Though I find a great deal of fault in regard to how they handled it. WotC claims they have listened to what we have said and created the new edition in response. Still this won't stop the nay sayers

who have already popped up, just like when 3e was released.

As for D&D minis players , well they get to look forward to a new edition of the rules as well. 4e will be capable of integrating the minis game much easier than the 3e. I don't play the minis game but if I understand it correctly all the minis you own now will be useless in the new edition of the rules. The character cards will be completely revised to complement the new RPG edition. So its not just the RPG players that will be affected but all D&D fans.

I say we give them a chance to prove to us that the product is as good as they claim. Wait until the SRD is released, read it and then decide if you will buy 4e. If it is crap don't buy it. Continue playing 3e or switch to one of the other great systems out there. If you don't like it, speak with your wallets and let WotC know that they need us more than we need them.

Rumors & News

- Thank Goodness I was wrong...at least I hope I was wrong. Margaret Weiss Productions has reportedly announced 3 more Serenity RPG products to be released over the next year. These new products include adventures and sourcebooks.
- Speaking of Serenity the Collectors Edition DVD is suppose to be out in late August. You know you're going to buy it.
- Nichelle Nichols, Uhura from the original Star Trek, will be joining former cast mate George Takei, Sulu from Star Trek, as a recurring character on NBC's Heroes. I hear she will play someone's mom. Hmmm. who's mom could she be....
- Reports vary but turnstile attendance at this years Gen Con Indy has been estimated at over 75,000. That's a lot of gamers.
- Web enhancements are reported to be a big part of the D&D 4e experience. When you buy 4e books you will be able to unlock digital versions of your books on D&D insider. When revisions are made they will be added directly to your digital versions so you don't have to go out and buy a new book. That's what I heard anyway.
- Just when things couldn't get worse for 4e, I have heard that there will be new versions of the core books released each year. Any revision made will be included in the newer editions. Unless you have the digital versions you will fall behind. Seems kind of crazy to be planning revisions for a system that is suppose to fix all the problems with the old system and hasn't even been released yet.
- WotC claims they are still committed to the print format, yet canceled the print zines? Makes about as much sense as a 4th edition.

The Boards of Shame:
Gamers giving gaming a bad name.

For the first time in my life I have felt ashamed to be a gamer. Anyone who has read the Gazette knows I like to frequent the message boards to find out about the current buzz in the geek community. So naturally when I got back from Gen Con I found myself hitting various boards that I don't normally frequent and was confronted by some of the worst behavior I have ever seen on any gaming message board.

I understand that the 4e announcement has emotions running high, but still that is no excuse for the outright hostility toward other gamers I saw on the boards. Granted not everyone that posted was participating in the hostility, but far too many were.

Some posters were happy about 4e and some people were engaged in some very intelligent and interesting debates/discussions; others not so much. Being unhappy does not anyone free reign to be crappy toward fellow gamers. Regardless of how you feel about a product you should still be tactful and courteous.

Whether I'm on the forums for The Nut Gallery, Dragons Landing, Kenzer Co., Mutants & Masterminds, or L5R people often disagree. However they don't normally attack their peer's. We all have the right to what we think and as member of various boards we all have the right to post those opinions. We don't have the right to tell some one that what they think is wrong, stupid, or express our dislike in any other hostile, derogatory way.

I hate to imagine what a new gamer or someone who is just becoming interested in gaming would think if they decided to visit the wrong message boards. The gaming community is just beginning to gain some small amount of respectability/acceptance by the mainstream and yet we allow this kind of behavior? It's not just shameful, it's embarrassing.

Maybe I've just been lucky to not have come into a direct confrontation with any of these hostile posters on the boards I frequent, but the environments on my normal boards just don't seem condu-

Do you have questions or comments you would like to share? Any stories or topics you would like to see covered or added to the Gazette? Want to contribute a story to the Gazette? Then feel free to let us know.

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4 DAYS AT GEN CON SUMMARY

This year I got to go to Gen Con for all 4 days for the first time. Usually I only manage to go on Saturday, and trust me one day does not do the con justice.

When I arrived Thursday the first thing I did was hit the Exhibitor 's Hall. There were several newly and pre-released games I was eager to pick up and as usual it took a large chunk of my day.

The first thing I noticed when I entered the hall was that it was completely rearranged. WotC was moved from center stage to the far back corner. The Wizards booth seemed severely under stocked. There just wasn't a lot of product to buy. Perhaps they anticipated a backlash from the 4e announcement and didn't plan on selling much. Either way I was not impressed.

As I mentioned before video games had a much stronger presence than in years past. Due to the increased video game presence the hall seemed smaller. I have been told that there were just as many vendors on the floor, but I don't see how. I stopped by several of the video game booths and was disappointed to find they were more about demos than they were about selling. I go to the hall to get free swag and of course buy stuff. In future years I hope the video game companies sell more or else move to another part of the convention center.

Other than that the hall was just as great as I remember. There is just so much to see and do that you hardly know where to start.

I did hit the GM Lightning seminar on Thurs. It was kind of a town hall forum for GMs to share ideas and stories. Definitely something I recommend and will try to attend again next year.

Friday was my casual day. I wandered around, taking in a lot of the things I normally have to rush by. I hit some seminars, including the 4e seminars, and sat in on a couple of movies. I have been wanting to play the Legends of the Five Rings RPG for a while so I found some of the Heroes of Rokugan gang and set up a game for Sunday.

Saturday I took my brother in law, who is not a gamer in any way, shape, or form. I showed him around the convention center so that he could get the lay of the land before hitting the Exhibit Hall. Later I asked him what he thought and all he could say about the hall is that it was overwhelming. Later he mentioned that he was amazed at how friendly and courteous everyone was. Cramming that many people in to one area, he expected a lot more conflict. Luckily everyone made him feel welcome.

Sunday I actually got into my first con game. I played a module of L5R ran by the Heroes of Rokugan (think RPGA for L5R) and had a blast. As a gamer I knew the safest character to play in a game you are unfamiliar with is a fighter. So I picked one that I liked and sat down. Unfortunately, I didn't know the module I was playing

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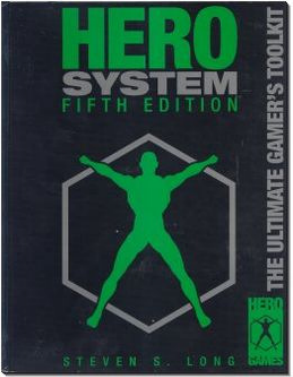
www.herogames.com

Green Ring Ethos Podcast

http://www.greenringethos.com/

http://accidentalsurvivors.libsyn.com/

Fantasy Clip Ink: Warriors Set 1
This month's image courtesy William McAusland and the gang over at Outland Arts
www.outlandarts.com

4 days @ Gen Con continued

was a social/investigation session with no combat. Not only did I pick a fighter, something I never play, but one that had the antisocial and brash characteristics. I was all but useless to the group.

The one time I actually had the opportunity to start a fight the group talked me out of it. So basically I followed everyone around, tried, unsuccessfully, to rough up a few NPCs and still ended up having a great time.

I was at a disadvantage on several levels with this game. First I haven't played a PC more than a couple of time in quite a few years so I was a bit rusty. Ok I was a lot rusty. Second, I was playing a game I was not familiar with and finally I was playing with a group I did not know. Still I had a blast and I am now definitely an L5R fan.

What about the costumes? Well as usual there were plenty of great costumes. There didn't seem to be as many as last year, but then again I didn't keep count. I've posted a few pics on line. So if you didn't make the con feel free to check them out. I will be posting more later.

www.flickr.com/photos/88659256@N00/?saved=1

Over all this was a great Gen Con as usual. However this was not just a usual Gen Con. It was the 40th anniversary, but it didn't feel any different. This is the only thing that truly disappointed me. Sure 4e was announced, definitely not the high point of the con for some. Battlestar Galactica RPG was pre-released (officially scheduled for release in Sept.) and the Haloclix had a pre-release. That's pretty much it.

There were some great products at the show but nothing I felt was big enough for the 40th anniversary of the premier gaming convention. Perhaps I am a victim of hype and set my expectations a little high, but I'm not the only person who has expressed disappointment. Honestly I think that the release of Dungeons and Dragons 4e, will make next years Gen Con more memorable. It's still too early to determine whether it will be in a good or bad way, but it will have an impact.

I don't know if it was the 4e announcement that collectively brought the mood down, or if nothing big was actually planned for this year. There was definitely not a feeling that his was a monumental occasion or that it was anything more than an ordinary Gen Con. Not that there is anything bad about an ordinary Gen Con, I'll take a less than stellar con over no con at all any day of the week..

Quick Reviews

Battlestar Galactica RPG:
Fans have waited a year for this product based off of the popular TV series and it does not disappoint. The mechanics are the same as those used in the fan fave Serenity RPG so people familiar with that system should have no problem switching over to the BSG setting. Speaking of the Serenity RPG, this time Margaret Weiss Productions actually learned from past mistakes. There is plenty of information for ships and characters from the show and most of all there are **character sheets** to copy in the book. I was a little disappointed that they didn't at least give a nod to the old BSG, but I am sure they don't want any association between the two shows. There are plenty of stats for characters from the show, some that I honestly forgot about. There is also an appendix for ranks and lingo used in the show. If you love the show and/or the cortex system used in Serenity you should definitely pick this game up.

Monte Cook's World of Darkness:
I have never been a fan of White Wolf's World of Darkness games (Vampire, Werewolf, etc.), but I was definitely looking forward to this book. It is not only a beautiful book, but a dang fine read. (Yes I said dang) Even if you never play the game the book is a great resource for ideas. Much of the book is written as

a narrative by "people" from the World of Darkness Earth.

Basically it is Rifts meets The World of Darkness meets d20. There is a semi apocalypse caused by a "rift" that unleashes magic, demons, vamps and other creepy crawlies into our world. The magic system is more fluid than in the core d20 rules and I like it. Magic isn't necessarily something that is taught, but something that is felt. Mages don't have to remember spells and as long as they have what is necessary to cast a spell, they can. Though it is stated the classes from this game can be used in other d20 games, they are set at higher power levels. The great thing about this book is that it is d20 and compatible with the 3.5 rules. What else would you expect from Monte Cook? I haven't managed to play it yet but strictly from reading I know this is a good d20 horror setting; something I've been trying to find for quite a while. Should you buy it? If you like horror themed games and the d20 system, then yes. If you are already a fan of the standard White Wolf version, maybe not.

Legends of the Five Rings (3rd Edition):

I was first introduced to the Legends of the Five Rings CCG back when it came out (I think it was somewhere around 1994-95) and my group wasn't exactly impressed. Magic was the big game at the time so L5R was tossed to the side and forgotten.

I like the idea of samurai and over the years wanted to pick up the L5R RPG, but no group I have ever played with shared my interest. So I never bothered buying any oriental themed games or supplements.

At Gen Con this year I stopped by the AEG booth and saw that a new edition of L5R had been released. No longer would I need to buy multiple books to play but just one core rule book. After looking through the new edition and some really good salesmanship from the guy at the booth I gave and bought it. I was directed toward the Heroes of Rokugan and sat in on a game with the group.

The game is a lot of fun. I've never been a big fan of storytelling systems but this game
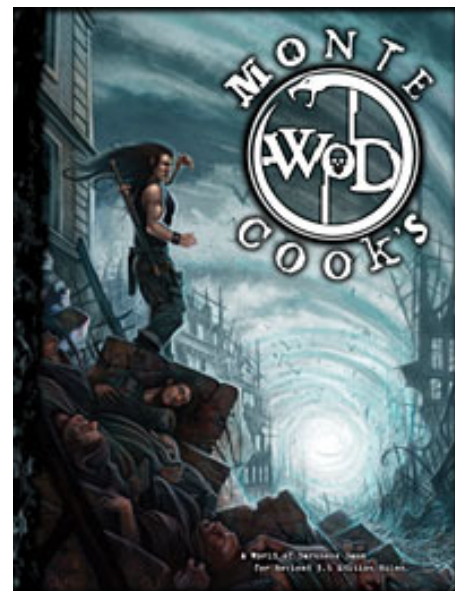
http://decoderringtheatre.com

The Red Panda Adventures is one of my personal favorite podcasts and I highly recommend you check it out.

www.heroes-of-rokugan.com

www.l5r.com/rpg/

Hey Kids..... Comics!

Every one loves free comics, which evident by the success of Free Comic Book Day. Unfortunately this event only happens once per year. However, I have recently found a way to have Free Comic Book Day every day. WOWIO (www.wowio.com) offers free digital comic books (all in pdf) to anyone that wants them. There are hundreds of comics you can search through and download at absolutely no cost, but (there's always a but) there is a catch. Actually there are a few of minor "catches".

First, to get your free comics you will need a "real" email address. Internet based email accounts like Yahoo, Gmail, or Hotmail are not accepted. They say you may get some email solicitations in return for your free books, but I have yet to get one. Secondly, you are only allowed five downloads per day. This is kind of a bummer but it gives you a little time to read what you've downloaded. Finally, you won't find any DC, Marvel, Devil's Due, Dynamite or Image comics on this site. That's about the extent of the down side of this site.

Now on the plus side there are tons of books to choose from. All of the comics are from smaller companies like Heroic Publishing, but there is still a wide variety of titles from a wide range of genre. So far I have downloaded most of the available Champions books from the site and have barely touched on all the available book titles. There are naturally plenty of superhero books, but fans of sci fi, fantasy and horror are well represented as well. Some of the titles you can expect to find are X-files, 10th Muse, Dead Sonja, and Oz: the manga. While many of the available titles are from the 80's and 90, there are plenty of titles published in the past 10 years available as well, with new books being added from time to time.

Now for those of you that like a little more to read than just comic books you are in luck. With your free account you have access to fiction novels, biographies, and whole slew of other types of books. Pretty much anyone who likes to read can find something on this site that will interest them. Download some comics for yourself and a cookbook, or mystery novel for a friend.

This site is definitely worth checking out. You may not have access to as many titles as you would at your local comic shop or Barnes and Nobles, but there is enough here to keep you busy for quite some time.

Wowio isn't the only place you can find free or even very cheap comics. RPGNow offers free or reduced comics. Some of the titles, such as Oz, are also on Wowio, but they have enough diversity to make it worth checking out.

While you're at RPGNow gamers should also check out the gaming freebie section. There are a slew of gaming goodies there to download. From NPC and Zombie cut outs to use in your game, quickstart rules for games you want to try and even a few full campaign settings.

All Games Considered

Podcast for a show about tabletop gaming

http://allgamesconsidered.blogspot.com/

www.devilsdue.net
Devils Due Press

definitely changed my mind. For someone who likes their games simple, L5R is probably not for them. The game is kind of a living game. The world of Rokugan is constantly evolving, and the story is constantly being updated. Players of the CCG will understand this, but the depth and history of this game may be a bit much for the average RPG player.

Now before I scare any potential players away, it is not required that you follow the living world of Rokugan. Like any RPG setting your home games can be and do whatever you like. The system is not difficult to learn and though it uses only d10, it should be no problem for most gamers.

If you are a d20 fan and you want to introduce your group to L5R you can still find the L5R d20 books on the internet or maybe even your local FLGS. The d20 version is a bit more than just D&D Oriental adventures. It has a feel much closer to the true L5R game, but can be dropped into your D&D campaign.

Both the core L5R book and the d20 version are something I highly recommend.

L5R: Emerald Empire:

Emerald Empire is a sourcebook for the L5R 3rd edition and just like the core book it is a beautifully done book. Though not required to play, it does provide a lot more detail and history for those that like the depth of the L5R game.

It expands upon everything about life in Rokugan that is presented in the core rules. Customs, everyday life, politics, law and order as well as more details regarding the clans of Rokugan.

Definitely worth picking up if you enjoy playing L5R and like more depth and detail in your game.

Buffy the Vampire Slayer: Revised Core Rulebooks:

As a fan of the Buffy television show I am kind of amazed that I never picked this game up before. I suppose the fact that licensed properties generally suck is what kept me from do so before now. To be honest if I hadn't found this book at the buy 1 get 3 free booth at Gen Con I probably still wouldn't have bought it.

Overall this book is not bad, but it's not great either. This is the revised core rule book and you can play the game with just this book., but to get the most out of it you will need to get more books. This is one of the things that generally turns me away from most games. I don't mind buying extra books that I want, I just don't like feel-

cive to that kind of behavior. At Gen Con I have always found that everyone is friendly and courteous. Nothing like some of the people I encountered on some of the new boards I came upon. Maybe those people don't attend cons or they're mad they didn't get to go and if this is how they act, let's hope they never do.

ing I need other books. This was my main gripe with Rifts and one of the things that aggravates me about D&D.

Overall the system this game uses, the Unisystem, is fairly easy and should prove no problem for experienced gamer. Fans of the Buffyverse will find the feel of the show is well represented in the game. There are many quotes and references to the show throughout the book. There is even a guide to Buffyspeak in the back of the book.

Unfortunately, Eden Studios no longer has the license for the game and will no longer be producing products for the game. The good news is they still support the products they have produced so far.

While I have to say I like the book and will teach it to my nine year old who also loves Buffy, I can't recommend it to non-fans. In my opinion, the game is just too focused on a specific group to appeal to a wider audience.

2007 Convention Calendar

August

- Archon
Aug 2-5 2007 Collinsville IL
www.archonstl.org/
- Wizard World Chicago
Aug 9th – 12th 2007
www.wizarduniverse.com/conventions/chicago.cfm
- Gen Con Indy
Aug 16-19 2007
www.gencon.com/
- Conglomeration 2007
Aug 10-12 Louisville Ky
www.conglomeration.org/
- Dragon Con 2007
Aug 31-sept 3   Atlanta GA
www.dragoncon.org/
- Gateway 2007
August 31– Sep 3
www.strategicon.net/

September
???

October
???

November

- Wizard World Texas
Nov. 16th – 18th 2007
www.wizarduniverse.com/conventions/texas.cfm
- AmberCon 2007
Nov 1-4   Portland OR
www.amberconnw.org/
- Chi-Tag
Nov 16-18   Chicago, IL
www.chitag.com

December
???

** Ok guys and gals, the convention season is almost over and the list just keeps getting smaller. So send me those conventions listings! If you know of a convention in your area that you would like to promote, please email me the web address and I will be happy to add it to the list **

Email: geekgazette@thegeekgazette.com

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Gen Con Edition

Gen Con is over and it will be another year before we all get to experience one of the greatest gaming cons around. But don't despair there are still local cons and before you know it August will be here again.

In this Gen Con Edition of the Geek Gazette I have done my best to bring a little taste of the con to those that couldn't make it. I'm sure you were all there in spirit and hope you can attend in person next year.

Until next time,

Michael

Feedback from the Sci-fi channels Who wants to be a Superhero. Gen Con 07

Last minute News

As I was finishing this issue of the Gazette I found out that Dragons Landing is back from hiatus. The rumors of their demise were greatly exaggerated. Yeah!!! Fans have been chomping at the bit for the return of Chuck and Lonnie and as of Sept. 1 the wait ended.

So Welcome back guys.

Fantasy Clip Ink: Spell Casters Set 1
This month's bonus image courtesy William McAusland and the gang over at Outland Arts
www.outlandarts.com