

# The Phargol-Horn

Volume 23

Hello, my dears! Wodema, herbalist and healer, here. I hope that this edition of our regular newsletter finds all friends of Krystonia bright of eye, clear of skin and (where appropriate) glossy of coat and cold of nose.

The Krystonian season of harvest is drawing to a close. The days are shortening fast and darkness falls quickly. This morning, as I set out with my collecting basket, the lawns around The Obelisk were whitened with frost – the first of the year – and I was glad of an extra shawl about my shoulders. Yet, before long the sun was bright and warm, the sky clear and the morning perfect for a leisurely walk along the fringe of Keldorran looking for late-season berries to add to my herbal chest. And the perfect morning for thinking about a subject for this newsletter...

You will, perhaps, recollect my earlier writings concerning remedies for common ailments? Such was the popularity of this brief review, Kephren has suggested I write a more comprehensive version for use as a practical home reference book of use to dragon, trolle, spellcaster and settlement dweller alike. A good idea but, I think, a project best suited to the long dark hours of winter. So, without wishing to repeat myself, I thought it best to write here about another dimension of my art, which personally, I find fascinating – the plants themselves.

Should you ever choose a tour of the coastal settlements of Krystonia for a Reawakening vacation, you may notice that the local inhabitants – though varying in their general attire according to their specific trades – all carry about their persons a length of dry stick. It is too light and brittle to serve as a walking stick (although some carry it in a manner which would suggest otherwise) and too drab to be taken as a fashion accessory, being altogether bereft of color beyond that of dry sand and similar in its wrinkled, parchment – like texture to old skin. Should you be fortunate enough to enjoy fair weather throughout your vacation you might return home none the wiser. However, should you happen to be walking down a busy street, or examining the produce in a bustling marketplace when a “Sea Sneeze” breaks overhead, then, my dears, you would find yourself less startled by the sudden downpour of salty rain than you would the incredible reaction attending the first warm droplets!

The seeds of the umberdinger plant are uncommon in their dislike of moisture. They need the heat of a Reawakening sun upon the shallow sandy soils of the coast in order to germinate successfully, and seemingly aware of this, the nondescript parent plants from which they fall have evolved a method of ensuring that their offspring remain untroubled by rain. Let a single drop of rain fall against their desiccated skin, and “whump,” in less time than it takes to blink a wide protective parasol appears, shielding the ground beneath from the downpour.

I leave it to your imagination to picture the effect when a “Sea Sneeze” falls upon a busy street where every person (apart from the uninformed tourist) carries a length of umberdinger plant, and the opportunities for mischief it presents on dry days to young boys with water bombs!

The weather bush – probably, I suspect, a close relative of the umberdinger plant – has a less spectacular, though certainly more refined, method of protecting its seeds from the elements.

*(continued on page 2)*

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The developing seed pods of the weather bush are suspended from long tendrills that appear from the center of its drooping bell-shaped flowers, and given settled weather, these are gradually extended downwards until they touch the ground beneath. If the day is to be one of sunshine, the tendrills will visibly extend, inch by inch, lowering the precious seed pods earthwards. If the day will bring rain (regardless of the full sun and cloudless sky promising differently) the tendrills will halt their growth until more favorable conditions are sensed by the plant. Many times I have heard (though, admittedly, never seen for myself) of a weather bush that actually rewound its tendrills and pulled its seed pods back inside the protective whorl of flower petals just before a hurricane or unseasonable hailstorms struck. No surprise that they are commonly planted in window boxes by the wives of harvestmen.

Wonderful as both the above examples may seem, to my mind neither compares to the extraordinary behavior of the weeping springjack tree which grows thick upon the sheer banked sections the River Cauld, and in my experience, nowhere else.

The weeping springjack gives an outward appearance that would instantly suggest an unremarkable tree contributing nothing more in its being than a feature breaking the shift of sky above and the run of the water below. Still and silent save for the touch and song of the wind in its spreading crown, it grows thick of trunk, spreading of branch, green of leaf, but to the experienced traveler of Keldorran's forest, yields little by way of shelter or good firewood. Yet to those who live close upon the riverbank and rely upon the smooth, dark waters of the Cauld for their survival, the weeping springjack is an object of deep reverence in recognition of the bounty it periodically provides.

The tree will not survive without its roots more soaked in water than surrounded by soil and vast intertwined rafts of purple-pink rootlets can be easily seen rising and falling in the current just beneath the river's surface, providing a safe haven for small fish well away from the hungry mouths of their larger cannibalistic cousins, which lurk midstream. Throughout all seasons the little fish remain safe amongst the dense weave of roots, until each Reawakening. The new growth of the weeping springjack arches over and creeps down beneath the river's surface until, branch now coiling about root, the tree grips its own toes and waits...

At the end of harvest the weeping springjack blooms. Small, elongated white pods form upon the very tips of the branches twined about the roots which take movement from the flowing water and appear to the fish (now grown by a full season and ready to journey beyond their root sanctuary) as fat insect larvae. The fish attack this apparent feast and find themselves caught upon a curving pair of spines which lie at the head of every pod, unable to escape. Now, with its seeds safely held in the mouths of countless small fish, the weeping springback suddenly breaks off the union between branch and root, and in a manner descriptive of its name, springs its new branches violently skyward, throwing a shower of small fish along the banks for some considerable distance. I suspect the plant's intention is for the decay of the small fish to provide nutrients for the seed. What I do know is that as a result of the springjack's strange habit many free fish suppers are gratefully enjoyed by those who dwell close to the Cauld's banks!

Well, my dear's, I must press on with my search if I'm to have enough stock to treat the sniffles and coughs which winter invariably brings. I do hope you enjoyed my newsletter. Who knows, perhaps next time I'll tell you of the equally fascinating mothercare vine, the firecracker tree and the flute reed...

May all your spots be little ones,

*Wodema* ✱



## TEN YEARS YOUNG:

Some of the fondest memories of our first ten years involve our collectors. Meeting them, receiving their letters and hearing about their enjoyment of Krystonia has been great fun. They are doctors, accountants, chefs, policemen and women, housewives and just about anything else you can think of. We get a special kick out of the children. We have learned that Krystonia is a collectible for people of all ages and interests. Being our anniversary this is a good opportunity to

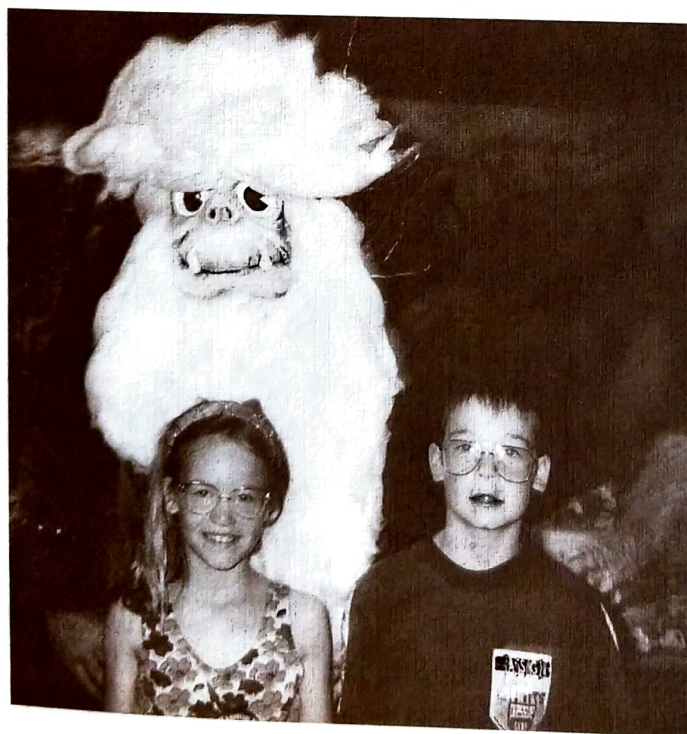
review some of those years in pictures. Look carefully, you might see someone you know – maybe even yourself.



*Collectors galore.*



*I met this collector when her father was coming back from Desert Storm and she was a newborn.*

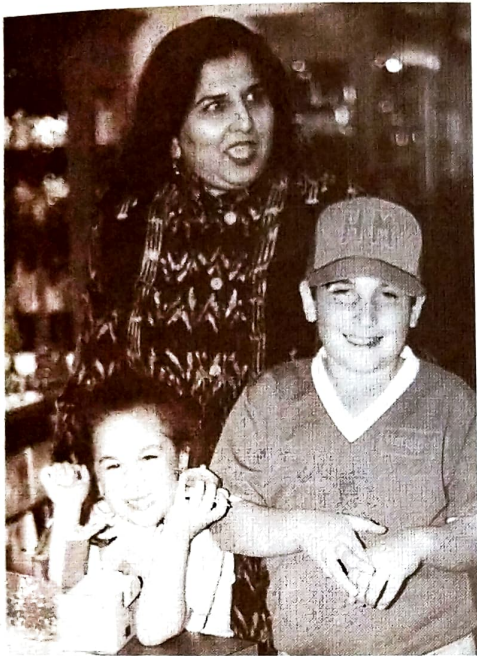


*Don't look behind you!*



*One magical wedding cake.*





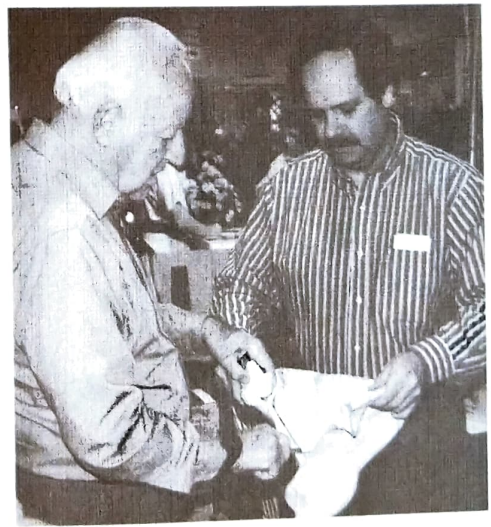
*Hey, who are these guys?*



*It's hard to say which is brighter – her eyes or the crystals on her collection.*



*A couple of lucky winners.*



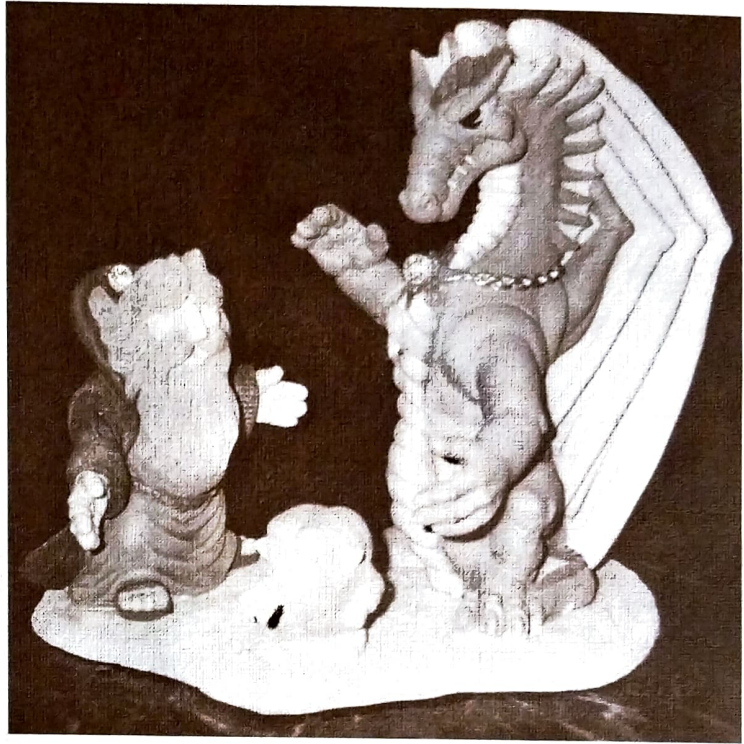
*Carl Sharpe and Dave Woodard cut a mold at Long Beach Collector's Expo.*



## ENOUGH IS EVIDENTLY ENOUGH

Enough is Enough is the largest classic moment we have ever produced. It portrays a game of kick the pook. The factory has advised us that they will no longer be able to produce this figurine. This will limit us to the small amount of stock that is already in the U.S. We had planned on producing 2,999 pcs. of this figurine but now it will fall well short of that number. Collectors desiring this figurine should contact their dealer immediately, the availability of this item will be limited.

Whenever we run into these problems we have England check to see if anyone suspicious has been hanging around the factory. After days of detective work only one clue was turned up, a new fettler who only worked two days. No one noticed anything unusual about him except for the way he dressed. He always wore a brown cloak and hat. One other strange thing someone reported was his fettling tools seemed to work without him touching them. The day he left you could hear a sinister laugh as he seemed to vanish into thin air.



## SPEAKING UP FOR THE LAST TIME...

We are the pieces that are to be retired in the fall of 1996. I have been chosen to say a few words about each of us. This is not something I am very comfortable with, I would rather be sailing the seas, which my retirement will give me more time to do.

N'Tormet is another situation altogether. I cannot imagine a more, useless individual. If not for N'Borg I don't think he could find his head. Once he did I'm not sure it would do him any good except to use it for that silly hat. I guess you sense that I never had a great affection for him. The word moron keeps coming to mind.

As for Gorph & Gorphylia they are the most harmless of creatures. Seeking shelter under Rueggans



cloak was usually their way of showing they didn't understand that their actions were misdirected. Someday Gorph may even get unstuck from his bucket.

For a man of not many words I have said enough. Anyway I hear the roar of the sea and it seems to be calling me home.



## SERENITY IS THE NEW FAIR MAIDEN

As in all Fair Maiden figurines you can see that her safety is never in doubt. A sharp eye is being kept to ensure her well being. Serenity is limited to 1,000 pcs. The certificate reads: The silence is deafening. Even the sound of a leaf can be heard. A sharp eye is kept by her protector as this maiden settles into a peaceful slumber. Nestled into his side her mind drifts off into a state of relaxation that few ever know.

Please also be aware that Safe Passage the second Fair Maiden is very close to selling out. Contact your dealer to see about the availability of this piece.



## PLAQUE SPECIAL...

You collectors sure know how to take advantage of a great deal. Your response to the plaque special has been tremendous. This special is available only in the U.S. and Canadian markets.

The special is as follows: Save your Krystonia receipts from **July 1st** through **November 31, 1996**. For each \$75 in receipts you may purchase one Krystonia plaque for \$9 U.S. or \$14 Canadian. You may choose up to 4 plaques per member.

All four styles are still available. They are:

#8001 - Poffles

#8002 - Triumph

# 8004 - Owhey

#8006 - Graffyn on Grunch

Please make sure you let us know which plaque(s) you wish to receive when you send in your receipts. All plaques will be signed by a Krystonia Artist. Checks should be made out to the **Krystonia Collector's Club** and mailed to, **110 E. Ellsworth Rd., Ann Arbor, MI 48108**. This is another benefit of being a member of one of the top collector's clubs in the world!