

## “DRAGON” SIGHTING EXPLAINED



Artists impression of what a Dragon may have looked like if in fact there was a Dragon which of course there was not.

Local dragon hunters were left confused and embarrassed when a suspected dragon they brought to ground in the town square turned out to be an expensive flying machine being tested by the Pyromancer’s University.

“We had been informed of a winged terror wreathed in smoke flying above the town,” said Sir Percival “Chops” Murphy, leader of mercenary warband the Dandy Drakebreakers.

“We’ve been looking for work for weeks, so naturally we finished our drinks as quickly as we could and went out to slay the beast. How were we to know it was just some magical contraption?”

The university offered a formal statement on the event. “We have been working on prototypes for mechanical flying machines for some time now and have finally launched some successful test flights,” announced Dean Cindy Bustion. “We held these tests late at night so as not to disturb our fellow townsfolk. We apologise if our activities alarmed anyone.” When asked about the matter, Mayor Munmf offered a practical perspective. “The skies above Tinderbox are as important as its roads. Henceforth any dragons or university experiments wishing to fly above Tinderbox must pay a hefty tax for maintenance of said skies. One fifth of their treasure hoard or yearly earnings should do the trick!”

## LOCAL LEADERS LOOK TO HIRE FIRE WARDENS

Claiming dissatisfaction with the services offered by the Tinderbox Fire Brigade, guild merchants have combined their resources to fund a private firefighting group.

“Far too many of our shops, stalls, and warehouses have burnt down recently,” roared Gustav Bellows, spokesman for the Mercantile Guild. “If we continue to rely on the incompetence of the Tinderbox Fire Brigade our town will be reduced to ashes within a month.”

The opportunity for employment has been met with great enthusiasm by local adventurers, freeblades, and fortune hunters, many of whom have had difficulty finding prosperous work.

“I came to Tinderbox hoping to claim the bounties on goblin nests in the borderlands nearby,” explained Glint Dampshot. “I only found out too late that the bounty was lifted when the goblins started trading mushrooms with the outlying villages. This firefighting gig is the best job I’ve been offered for a while, and I don’t even have to wash blood out of my beard for it!”



Local Bounty-Hunter-Turned-Fire-Warden Glint Dampshot



### HEARTWOOD GOLD - PREMIUM PIPEWEED

*“Your Interdimensional Portal to Smoking Pleasure”*

## BACHELOR CONTEST SCANDAL

The 23rd Annual Most Eligible Bachelor Contest (sponsored by the Tinderbox Times) encountered a startling new twist as it was alleged that one of the competitors was seen dating a woman at a local restaurant.

Fire Chief Blaze Bernhardt has been highly tipped to take out the coveted award, but these recent allegations could result in him being disqualified from the contest.

When asked about the mystery paramour, Bernhardt became defensive. “I was simply meeting with the dean from the university to discuss the recent spate of fires,” he said. “There’s nothing more to it. I really don’t have the time to date anyone at the moment, what with all the recent troubles.”

Bernhardt’s possible removal from the contest would be a boon for the only other competitor, Stinky Harry Smudge the Sewer Druid, who was entered after it was discovered that he is technically human.

## QUARRY OWNER OFFERS DEAL

Flint businessman Hamlet Hogg has arrived in Tinderbox offering trade in stone to repair local buildings damaged by fire.

“Stone bricks from Hogg Industries are sturdy and non-flammable,” he said. “A town like Tinderbox, which has built itself out of sticks, is hardly the kind of place where one can feel secure about their future. It’s only marginally better than building a town out of straw, and we all remember very well what happened to the town of Haystack, don’t we? Whoosh!”

But the Tinderbox Historical Society has protested Mr Hogg’s visit, with Society president Amelia Hedgewood claiming that Hogg is taking advantage of a delicate situation.

“My great-grandfather, along with his fellow residents, built Tinderbox as a lumber town, and a lumber town it shall stay,” she declared at a recent meeting. “Certainly we have suffered some structural damage recently, but to replace our buildings with Hogg’s cold and artless stone would be an insult to our heritage, not to mention a blow to the local logging industry.”

Hogg has offered no discount on his prices, and his shipping fees have doubled.

## PERSONALS

Forty-something lycanthrope seeks understanding partner for midnight howls, moonlit strolls, and stick-fetching games. Must have GSOH. Can you tame my savage beast?

Lost goat. White with brown ears. Particularly enjoys eating clothing and money. If found please do not return under any circumstances.

Former pirate crew seeks gainful employment. Experienced at plundering, pilfering, and pillaging. Skulduggery a specialty. Enquire at Landlubbers Lane.



## THE WEEKLY FATES

Today’s soothsayer is Madame Zibella, who says, “The mists of time part before my all-seeing crystal ball! Tinderbox’s troubles are at an end. These mysterious fires shall cease and happen no more. Expect to come into some money soon. You will experience good luck if you show generosity to an old woman who lives in a wagon.”

## EDITORIAL

The recent news of the Mercantile Guild deciding to employ their own fire service is no surprise to the Tinderbox Times. Residents have been let down time and again by the overstretched resources of the Fire Brigade, and we are only shocked that it hasn’t happened sooner.

Several other groups are said to be considering similar action, with a group of nobles expected to announce their own initiative sometime this afternoon.

The Tinderbox Times applauds the forward-thinking nature exhibited by our fellow townsfolk, and offer a free subscription of our newspaper to any new groups that start up, hoping that our kindness will be remembered in case our own premises catch aflame.

**Fashion Emergency**

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