

# GAMMA ZINE



A Fanzine supporting early post-apocalyptic, science-fantasy RPGs—  
specifically, First Edition *Gamma World* (by TSR).

## Reaching Farther—A Note from the Fanzine Creator

I had hoped to get the second issue of this fanzine out by the end of 2019 but it just didn't happen, mainly due to the completion of two other series of books. Then, when I heard that the Zine Quest initiative was returning for a second year, I decided that this issue would be my contribution to that 2020 project.

The great part about having a loose timetable for release is that it allowed me to work on the material sporadically, even complete large portions of it long before the book's launch. That's what ended up happening—most of the material was completed in mid- to late-2019. Only this introduction was written in 2020.

So, what's new in this issue? Besides having an extensive interview with none other than Luke Gyax, I've decided to add science-fantasy and science-fiction themes that fell outside the first issue's heavy post-apocalyptic setting. In this issue, you'll find a science-fiction short story and an adventure that is suitable for any generic sci-fi RPG system.

The same great categories of content have continued in the second issue: new artifacts, weird monsters, mini-adventures, solution flowcharts, and short stories are all once again found in these pages.

—Thom Wilson

### — Issue #2 Details —

Fanzine Sections	
Content	Page
Fanzine Creator Letter	1
Interview with Luke Gyax	2-4
Horrors of the Wasteland	5-6
Class Option	7
Artifacts of the Ancients	8-9
The Millionaire's Vault (Adv #1)	10-14
The Hunted, Chapter 2	14-16
Paradise Island (Adv #2)	16-22
Journey of a Lifetime, Prologue	23-26
Solution Flowcharts	27-28
Rescue! (Adv #3)	29-35
Information / Comic	36

## GAMMA ZINE

Issue #2 — February, 2020

v2n1

Completed: January 30th, 2020

Created by: Thom Wilson

Content by: Thom Wilson

Font Cover Illustration: Je Shields

Back Cover Illustration: Je Shields

Logo: Thom Wilson

Comic: Travis Hanson

Interior Art: Je Shields, Joey Docil, Forge

Studios, Dean Spencer, Luigi Castellani,

Skortched Ur! Studios

Cartography: Dyson Logos (pg. 10, 17),

IronSpine (pg. 30)

Editor: Joshua Newey

Upcoming Issues:

#3 — late 2020



1st printing — PoD edition

## An Interview with Luke Gyga

We are fortunate to have Luke Gyga, co-creator of *Legion of Gold*, as our interviewee for the second issue of *Gamma Zine*! Imagine my excitement and pleasure when he agreed to an interview! I hope you find it as fascinating as I did.

*Gamma Zine*—How did you get involved with the iconic *Gamma World* adventure, the *Legion of Gold*? What part did you play in the development of *Legion of Gold*? Did you write particular sections or design areas of the adventure?

*Luke Gyga*—I was about 9 or maybe 10 years old at the time. I watched an episode of *Super Friends* that had some villains that glowed a bright yellow/gold color and smashed through walls in the episode. So, I went to my dad and told him that there should be some tough bad guys in glowing armor for the adventure he was working on. That started a conversation wherein we fleshed out some ideas that made it into the main adventure in *Legion of Gold*. *GW* was fairly new and I think he was trying to set up a basic intro adventure with a home base for people to operate out of, much like a T1 or B2 (probably more so the latter). The characters in the game are based on real people. For example, Jemmas the Warder is Jim Ward and Ydal Eilffik is based on Kiffie Scott of *TSR*. So, as he does with much of his work, Dad was drawing on the things in his everyday life and morphing it to a

fantastical story. I remember looking over the map of SE Wisconsin with him as he plotted out the adventure area. The Barony of Horn was meant to be a post-apocalyptic Elkhorn, Wisconsin, which is where Jemmas—I mean Jim—lived. He even based the maps and landmarks of that area on the places around where he lived and worked. This is made pretty apparent by hints like Great Mitchigoom (Lake Michigan), Rocky Ford (Rockford), and Deerld (Deerfield).

As I stated, I was about 10 years old. I didn't write any of the text for this module. I discussed the ideas and, in conjunction with my dad, created the overarching story. I only have a "with credit" for the module since I was too young to write the encounters and such. It was a fun and wonderful learning experience for a young man, and I appreciate my father doing that for me.

*GZ*—How was it working with your father on the adventure?

*LG*—I spent much of my free time hanging out with my dad. He was my best friend and I greatly enjoyed talking to him about games and gaming. I would typically get back from school about 4PM, then I'd sit in his study in a big comfy leather chair while he sat at his desk typing on an old typewriter. I would look at *D&D* manuals or read through the stuff he was writing. For the project my dad simply talked to me and got my opinions and feedback before capturing the ideas in writing.

GZ—Your father was known for his *D&D* and *AD&D* work. How is it that he came to develop a *Gamma World* adventure? Do you remember what his thoughts were on the system?

LG—James M. Ward was one of the early players in Dad's games, and when he asked my dad about a science-fiction version of *D&D*, my dad said, "I don't have time Jim, why don't you write it." And so, Jim wrote *Metamorphosis Alpha* (*MA*), the first SF RPG, in 1976. That is one of my favorite games of all time, especially when GMed by Mr. Ward. My dad had the *D&D* group find a portal that took them to the Starship *Warden* and handed off the GM chair to Jim while they played. They did so well that they formed a group called the Vigilists that became quite powerful in the starship. So my dad and the rest of the gang were all familiar with and enjoyed SF RPGs. In 1978, TSR wanted a game based on a post apocalyptic Earth, something like *Hiero's Journey* by Sterling Lannier. And so Jim developed *Gamma World* (*GW*), which drew significant inspiration from *MA*. My dad wanted to make *GW* another strong product line and so he put some effort into developing the beginning of a setting for people to base their *GW* adventures with *GW1*. Of course, *D&D* was by far the highest grossing product, and he wasn't able to make multiple *GW* modules and accessories. The business was growing at a furious pace and his role as President and/or CEO was, at vari-



*Legion of Gold cover, art by Bill Willingham*

ous points, taking more and more of his time.

GZ—Did you have any part in picking the cover art for the book?

LG—Yes! I told my dad that the bad guys had powered armor that glowed yellow and they could crash through the walls! And that's what we have on the cover. I didn't do any art production or anything like that.

GZ—Does *Gamma World* have any presence at Gary Con? Are there any games of *Gamma World* played there each year?

LG—We play all kinds of games at Gary Con, from the newest editions of games such as *D&D 5e* and *Pathfinder 2e* to a whole series of games called *The Legends of Wargaming* that includes *OD&D* and miniatures war game scenarios from the '60s and '70s. Certainly, *Gamma World* is often played at Gary Con, as well as *MA*,

sometimes run by James M. Ward himself. I have always enjoyed both systems and welcome them wholeheartedly.

GZ—Anything you'd like to share about the upcoming Gary Con?

LG—Gary Con is growing by leaps and bounds each year. I am very proud to be able to continue my father's legacy and be the public face of the Gygax family at Gary Con. We are so fortunate to have the support of so many great guests, from the founders of the industry like Tim Kask, Jim Ward, Jeff Perren, Dave Wesely and Dave Megarry to current designers such as Jason Bulmahn, Mike Mearls, Stephen Chenault, just to name a few. As I said above we have anything from *Braunstein* or *Chainmail* miniatures to *D&D 5e* and everything in between. We have expanded our vendor hall for 2020 and increased the gaming space as well. We will have Adventurer's League, Pathfinder Society, You Too Can Cthulhu, Legends of Wargaming, Historical Miniatures Gaming Society and a new live action event called the Role Play Experience. Gary Con XII will be held March 26-29, 2020 at the Grand Geneva Resort and Spa in Lake Geneva, WI. If you want to find out more go to GaryCon.com.

GZ—Are you working on anything exciting these days?

LG—The explosion in popularity that *D&D* has seen over the past couple years has been amazing, and has created a lot of opportunities for

people. My primary job is as a member of the California Army National Guard full-time. So, operating Gary Con takes up most of my spare time. However, I started a streaming event called *Founders & Legends* where I get together with friends and play *D&D* and talk about the history and impact of the game. You can find some episodes on my YouTube channel. I also recently finished a Kickstarter for *The Lost City of Gaxmoor*, a sandbox adventure that I co-authored with my brother, Ernie, back in 2001. My dad play tested that with us and gave us some tips on the overall design. Anyways, that closed about mid-September 2019, but you may be able to order a copy through backerkit by looking for *The Lost City of Gaxmoor 5e*. I plan on following up with a release of my *Blighted Lands* modules that I wrote for the Gary Con Open Tournament a few years ago. I think those will be very exciting for people to read and play.

*Thank you for your time and your work on Legion of Gold, Luke Gygax!*

GARY CON  
XII  
March 26-29, 2020  
Lake Geneva, Wisconsin

## New Horrors from the Wasteland

Although there are plenty of horrific and dangerous creatures found in post-apocalyptic guidebooks and materials, a GM can always use a few more. Enjoy this issue's new horrors!

### Chog

Not all species of canines have succumbed to the wasteland's challenging environments. Many have adapted and mutated to thrive within its harsh climates. The Chog is one of those creatures—a dog that can be found within mostly uninhabitable radioactive zones. They have little to no hair and exhibit black and red burns across their pale skin.

They are highly resistant to radiation (unaffected by levels under 18), yet their bite carries the same radioactive poison they are often immune to. The level of radiation in the Chog's

bite is dependent on the severity of their habitat. If a Chog lives in and around a radiated area with an intensity level of 12, their bite shares that intensity. Additionally, each bite from a Chog deals 1d6 damage to their target.

Due to their high resistance to radiation, Chogs are often found in heavily radiated areas and have few predators within those zones.

#### Chog

**No. Appearing:** 1-4

**Armor Class:** 7

**Movement:** 16

**Hit Dice:** 2

**DEX:** 16

*+1 initiative*



Joey Docil

## Dizard

Mutations and cross-breeding between species is not unusual within post-apocalyptic wastelands or on uninhabited planets. Many species survive only if they inherit the strengths of other creatures. The Dizard, with its endurance of harsh climates and diminishing sustenance, is one such creature.

The Dizard has the head of a lizard on the body of a hairless dog. Each foot has razor-sharp claws and its tail has limited prehensile capabilities. The skin of the creature is reptilian and provides great resistance to sun and heat. Fire damage is reduced by half and regular damage is reduced by one point.

They rarely grow past 40 pounds, with the average Dizard about half that weight.

### Dizard

**No. Appearing:** 2–8

**Armor Class:** 5

**Movement:** 18

**Hit Dice:** 1

**DEX:** 17

*+2 initiative*

Although small and somewhat fragile, the Dizard can deal tremendous damage to unwary victims. The Dizard may attack three times per combat round, dealing 1d4 damage with each of its two front claws and 1d6 damage with a ferocious bite.

If all three attacks by a Dizard are successful in the same combat round against a singular target, it wraps its prehensile tail around the legs of the victim to prevent it from fleeing. A captured victim must succeed on a competing 1d20 to break free (e.g. the GM and player both roll a 1d20—if the GM wins the roll, the Dizard maintains its lock on its prey for another combat round).

The skin of the Dizard is highly prized and makes for sturdy clothing or tenting. When clothing made from a Dizard skin is worn, the wearer gains limited fire resistance (GM decision).



*Je Shields*

## Class Option—The Wasteland Blacksmith

Not every post-apocalyptic RPG system utilizes classes—even *First Edition Gamma World* skips the concept of classes altogether. However, some players like the idea of a class or having class benefits to go along with their level progressions. In this issue, we introduce another class for your consideration: the **Wasteland Blacksmith**.

Able to craft items from junk and scraps, the wasteland blacksmith has an eye for value and a talent for innovation. While the Artificer (from the previous issue) focuses primarily on lost and hidden technology, the wasteland blacksmith envisions creations from common materials. Rusted steel, scrap leather, copper wire, plastic poles, and other items all have value to the class. The character can create basic weapons, ammunition, and armor from pieces and parts that most scavengers may skip.

After several years of apprenticeship under another blacksmith, the character becomes proficient in crafting and repairing basic weapons and armor. With each level gained, the wasteland blacksmith becomes more proficient in their abilities (see the chart in the next column).

The wasteland blacksmith gains half experience from combat but gains 50 XP \* skill level for each item created/ repaired. For example, repairing a WC3 sword is  $50 * 2 = 100$  XP (the skill is gained at level 2). Repairing a WC11 item would give 500 XP (a skill gained at level 10).



Je Shields

Note that “levels” can be the number of times a bonus was awarded on the experience bonus matrix or by some other incremental advancement method determined by the GM.

Level	Proficiency
1	Repair fur/skin armors
2	Create/repair WC 1, 2, 3 weapons
3	Create fur/skin armor, repair hide armor
4	Create hide armor
5	Create/repair WC 8 or 9 weapons
6	Repair plastic or plate armor
7	Create WC 10 ammunition
8	Create plate armor
9	Repair alloy armor
10	Repair any other WC weapon

Proficiency chart