Wizards of the Coast's Retailer Newsletter - ISSUE 8 @ SEPTEMBER'95

Price Changes, Transitions, and You

Yes indeed, price change time is upon us! We realize that many retailers are concerned about what the price change means for them, their stores, and their customers. First, here's a little information regarding the reasons we decided to implement the price change:

Paper prices. Since the introduction of Magic[™] in August of 1993, the price of the game has stayed the same. But during that time, the price of paper has gone up because the global supply of paper has gone down; we are now in the midst of a worldwide paper shortage.

Printing costs. Our printing costs have substantially increased since August of 1993. Inflation, shipping costs, and the value of the dollar versus the Belgian franc are just a few of the factors that have caused our costs to increase.

Wizards of the Coast must stay in business as a company, and the only way we can continue to supply distributors, retailers, and players of Magic is to increase the price by approximately 12%. It is not a large increase in the price of Magic; it's barely more than the rate of inflation-enough to cover the increased costs of producing, printing, and delivering the product to you, yet small enough that no one should spontaneously combust.

There's an additional complication: the price change is slated for September 1st, yet some of the product shipped after September 1st will bear the old price. There's a simple explanation, too: any time-sensitive change in packaging would have delayed production further. With product supply still lagging dramatically behind the demand, it seems preferable to make available any product regardless of the printed price.

We hope that you agree that we've chosen the best available option.

Copies of back issues of Retailer Direct are available! To obtain copies, just ask for Mark Ellis Walker at 1-800-821-8028 and specify which issues to send.

Tales of "Tim"

Who is that guy on the Prodigal Sorcerer card, anyway? Why is he dressed like that? What made him choose to leave the Institute of Arcane Study?

In The Prodigal Sorcerer, the sixth novel in the Magic: The Gathering™ series, author Mark Sumner explores these and other questions about the mysterious character most players call "Tim."

Set in the remote valley of Tamingazin, The Prodigal Sorcerer follows the adventures of Tagard Tarngold, a human leader determined to bring about peace among the three races of the valley. To aid in his effort, Tagard

enlists the aid of a sorcerer from the Institute of Arcane study, Aligarius Timni. Aligarius plays a key role in helping to

forge the peace, but soon discovers the perils of

—oops! We'd better not give that part away.

The Prodigal Sorcerer does not include an offer for a free promotional card as earlier novels did. There are many reasons for this, but as Kathy Ice-editor of our Magic anthology Tapestries—explains, "what it boils down to is that we think the newest Magic books are pretty darned neat all by themselves and would like to see them sell on their own merit." Look for all of the books in 1995 (and probably in 1996 as well) to be "cardless."

What The Prodigal Sorcerer does offer is a dazzling cover by Dennis Nolan, a color map by

Magic artist Tom Wänerstrand, and of course a thoroughly enjoyable adventure story, set amidst the conflict and intrigue of the warring peoples of Tamingazin. We're very happy with The

Prodigal Sorcerer, and we know you and your customers will be, too. Also, this summer's releases are still available for your shelves. If you haven't read Tapestries, our wonderful anthology, then you're missing out on some of the best fantasy stories of the year. Be sure you've got enough copies on hand, because your Magic players will love it! And speaking of good fantasy stories, The Cursed Land, our summer novel, tells a moving

and enchanting tale that is very different from anything we've done before. Give Tapestries and The Cursed Land a try-and be sure to tell your

customers how much you liked them!



"Who Are Those People, Anyway?"

"Ch-ch-ch changes...." Those of you who have been regular callers to the MCS line have realized that there are a whole bunch of new voices on the other end of the phone. Who are they? Who is the representative for your region of the country? Will they call you back? (Yes, they will! Honest.)

Here they are, the fall/winter line-up for Merchant Customer Service:

Jillian Sutter (ext. 1669) is the rep for the West Coast and Australia. After eight years of mass-market retail experience, she is very happy to work for a company that doesn't mind that she is the office Perkygoth, looks just like Death from the *Sandman* comics, or has a stuffed, fanged bunny on her desk. Having played role-playing games and collected comics for years, she has a strong understanding of the hobby/game industry.

Wendy Wallace (ext. 1240) is our

Wendy Wallace (ext. 1240) is our most recently hired MCS representative, but her eight years of experience at most levels of retail in the comic/gaming industry make her the veteran of the team. She is both a member (and former Retailer Division Secretary) of GAMA (the Game Manufacturers Association) and a Japanese anime junkie. Having escaped from the midwest and its summers, she is now providing support from the far side of the country for the Midwest and Mountain regions—from Louisiana to Idaho. Tap into her sympathetic background!

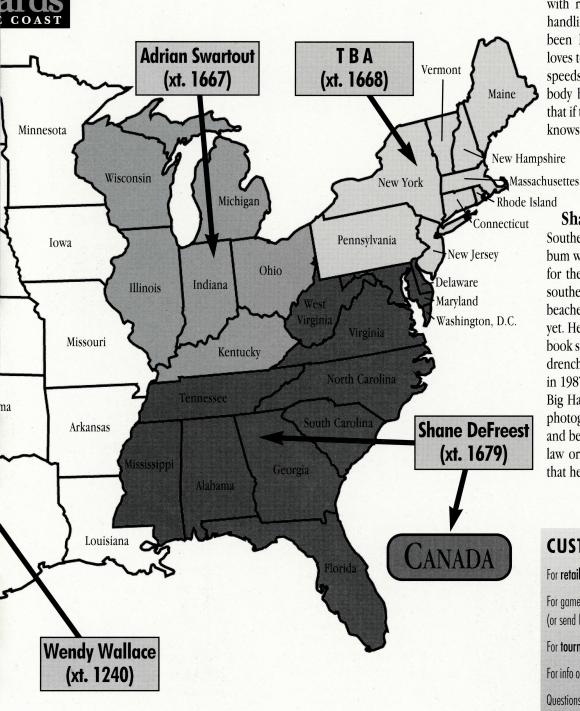
Issues of Retailer Direct can be viewed online at

http://www.wizards.com/

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Adrian Swartout (ext. 1667) is the MCS rep for the Great Lakes region. Her previous experience as a manager and buyer for a retail chain gives her a solid background for dealing with retailer concerns. She stresses integrity in her dealings with retailers, and she prides herself on handling difficult situations. Adrian has been known to hustle volleyball games, loves to assault mountain bike trails at high speeds, and will soon be competing in body building competitions. Rest assured that if there's something to be done, Adrian knows how to take charge. Go, girl!

Shane DeFreest (ext. 1679): The Southeast MCS rep is a notorious beach bum who wanted the southeast specifically for the reason that any convention in the southeast most likely would be close to beaches. He hasn't been to a con in the sun yet. He spent three years managing a comic book shop which did little good for his sundrenched psyche. He still mentally "lives" in 1987 and is avidly awaiting the return of Big Hair and Glam Rock. He refuses to be photographed without his sunglasses on and believes himself to be a self styled outlaw or "bandit" here at WotC. We believe that he's read too many comic books.

CUSTOMER SERVICE

For retail questions, call 1-800-821-8028

For gameplay **rules questions**, call 1-206-624-0933 (or send by **e-mail** to questions@wizards.com)

For tournament sanctioning, call 1-206-226-6500

For info on Wizards' Co-Op program, call 1-800-821-8028

Questions can also be **faxed** to us at 1-206-226-3182 (or sent by **e-mail** to custserv@wizards.cam)

For info on **Caravan Tours**, call 1-206-226-6500, xt. 1917

For information about our presence at **conventions**, contact our Andon Unlimited Team at 206-204-5815, or send mail to PO Box 1740, Renton, WA 98057-1740, or fax to 206-204-5820, or email Andon@aol.com

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Some Dalmutis Are Greater Than Others

Our Marketing Team has been cooking up a number of contests and promotions in the past few months to help you promote our games with your player customers. The first contest was a retailer sweepstakes, won by luck of the draw by Jim's House of Hobbies in Pahrump, Nevada.

Vampire: The Eternal Struggle™ was the focus of our second contest—and we are pleased to announce that the winner is Mr. Dave Smith of Terre Haute, Indiana, who entered the contest through The Game Closet. Dave will be painted by Mark Tedin for a future Vampire card. Throughout the year's end, expect to see more product-specific contests such as the Vampire contest. By building "brand awareness" while involving you and your players, we hope to help promote your overall sales.

The current contest, "The Coolest Contest Ever," involves building innovative or striking *Ice Age* $^{\text{TM}}$ displays. Given the scarcity of *Ice Age* at

the moment, we're extending the contest deadline to October 20 so that you have a chance to obtain the product you're displaying!

In October, there will be a contest focusing on **The Great Dalmuti**[™]. The challenge (for your customers and you) is to create a **Dalmuti** social-rank theme and costume it appropriately.

As in the basic game, this requires a minimum of five participants. But while the game itself is based on a feudal society, you might want to build your theme on Greek gods, a management team at a company, or even the Conehead family! A promotional packet which contains the entry form will be shipped to you around the first of October; this packet will also include a new promotional poster, a point-of-purchase display, and flyers for your customers. The **Dalmuti** contest

runs from October 16 to November 10.

Just give us a call (or fax to 206-204-5822) if you'd like to know more about our contests!

FIVE MORE PRODUCTS YOU WON'T SEE WIZARDS OF THE COAST ENDORSE

- 1. Collectors' Set of **Magic™** Rulebooks
- 2. **SLA Industries™** Christmas Ornaments
- 3. Mana Symbol Hubcaps
- 4. "Thallid Shooter" Token Dispenser
- 5. "Manamaniacs" Expansion Set

(to be continued next month)



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