

SAN ANGELO

CITY OF HEROES™

1.5

A CITY SOURCEBOOK FOR SUPERHERO RPGS!

"The very model of the superhero city book"
-Ken Hite, Out of the Box

MSM
SUPERLINK

ACTION!
SYSTEM

"Grade A"
-Comic Life

"It's an intricate, involving, well-realized gaming world..."
-Kurt Busiek, Astro City



PATRICK SWEENEY & MARK ARSENAULT

SAN ANGELO

CITY OF HEROES™

VERSION 1.5

A CITY SOURCEBOOK FOR M&M SUPERLINK™ AND ACTION! SYSTEM™

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INTRODUCTION



Illustration by Louis Frank

San Angelo: The City of Heroes

Jerry Abbot, *Clarion Staff Columnist*

San Angelo is truly the City of Heroes.

Some of them soar through the sky or shoot fireballs from their fingertips. Picking up a car means no more to them than hoisting a barbell does to you or me. Incredible inventions, weird creatures and travels to bizarre places are everyday occurrences in their world.

Clad in their colorful costumes, these heroes awe, amaze and inspire the rest of us.

But other heroes in San Angelo wear costumes of a different kind. They pin on badges or pull on heavy fire gear before going to work. A pilot's helmet, a reporter's notebook, a first aid kit or a teacher's chalk—these are the tools of the Golden City's everyday heroes.

And still others do nothing more extraordinary than go to work every day, just to put food on the table and a roof over their kids' heads.

They build the houses, make the factories go, grow the food and keep the streets clean. They make the city work, and ensure that it keeps on working for their children after them.

Heroes, every one.

Heroes, in a City of Heroes.

This book presents four-color superhero gaming in three dimensions—a vibrant world of superhuman powers, gadgets, hero teams, dastardly enemies and all the other hallmarks of the comic books, carefully packaged in a cohesive setting with a nod toward realism.

No superhero RPG campaign can promise total realism—and such a campaign wouldn't be much fun anyway. Part of the joy of superhero gaming is the utter unreality of it all. To fly, punch down brick walls, bounce bullets off your chest... who wouldn't want to be a superhero?

But continuity and cohesiveness aren't beyond the reach of superhero RPGs. Nor are cities that are more than mere scenery for titanic slugfests, or well-rounded characters, superpowered or not, with real-life desires, fears and aspirations.

Moreover, a fresh breeze is stirring in the comics industry. After years of grim storylines and gritty anti-heroes, the four-color protectors of truth, justice and liberty are making a dynamic comeback. Hope, joy and a sense of optimism are returning to the comics, tempered by insights gained from deconstructing the superhero genre.

As a result, every aspect of the comics and superhero RPG campaigns, from high-tech corporations to the very origin of superpowers, has been re-evaluated for this book to foster a refreshed, revitalized approach to the age-old world of superheroes.

Inside these pages, you'll explore the bustling streets of a living city with a rich history, visit interesting landmarks, meet hundreds of fascinating people, uncover villainous plots and, perhaps, spot a hero or two soaring in the sky far overhead.

Best of all, you'll get to step inside this world and walk around for awhile. Find out what it's like to fly, or shoot energy blasts, or toss tanks around. Join a team. Fight crime. Save the world.

Be a hero.

Welcome to *San Angelo: City of Heroes*.

Did you see the big fight on TV last night? No, not Tyson—Photon took on the Justice Foundation over in downtown. Boy, what a battle. Too bad he got away.

This is such an amazing time to be alive. All these people with superhuman powers. Imagine that—being able to fly, or control the weather, or... well, anything you can think of.

And it's not just the supers. It's the scientists building incredible inventions, the martial arts masters, the ordinary people who put on masks and fight crime. I've even heard rumors about wizards who fight supernatural threats we never even know about!

Kind of hard to believe it's all happening right here in San Angelo. You know, I'm starting a scrapbook for my kids, so they can look back and see what went on here.

After all, these heroes and all—they might not be around forever. You just never know what's going to happen these days....

—Mike Tucker, 36, lab assistant

HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

San Angelo: City of Heroes presents a coherent, dynamic city setting for four-color superhero RPG campaigns.

In keeping with the traditions of the comics, San Angelo is a fictional city whose exact location has deliberately been left vague but is presumed to be somewhere on the West Coast—a locale often ignored by comics and superhero RPG campaigns alike.

In addition, San Angelo is set in a new campaign world, totally independent from any specific superhero RPG worlds published by other companies. This campaign world features new heroes, new enemies and new organizations of all kinds.

Full details on the lively, engrossing metropolis of San Angelo are included, covering everything from city government to popular nightspots.

The book also contains information on the resident heroes, villains and normals of San Angelo, along with game statistics for many of the characters and gadgets presented.

A timeline outlines San Angelo's past, and possibilities for its future are offered. In addition, the book provides an explanation of the origin of superpowers, notes on legal matters for super-crimefighters and information on living in a superpowered world.

Finally, *San Angelo: City of Heroes* is jam-packed with tips and suggestions on how to use all these details to create memorable characters, adventures and campaigns.

San Angelo: City of Heroes contains a tremendous amount of information. Don't despair if you don't get all the way through it right away, or can't remember every last detail. Familiarize yourself with the basics of the city, then refer back to the book as needed.

IN A NEW CAMPAIGN

Obviously, *San Angelo: City of Heroes* is eminently usable as the basis for a new superhero RPG campaign. Just skim through the book, create some PCs and start playing!

Novice players and GMs may want to use the Justice Foundation hero team, covered in complete detail starting on page _____. Once you are familiar with the superhero RPG rules being used in your game, you can start creating your own superheroes to protect San Angelo.

Experienced GMs may want to customize their San Angelo campaign. The book has been designed for this, with numerous open slots in listings for player or GM creations. Open spots have been left on the City Council and other important institutions as well.

Players are especially encouraged to take advantage of the fully detailed city to create links between their PCs and the world around them. Pick a university for your PC to attend, or decide which corporation employs her. Need a DNPC, or just wondering who your hero's parents are? *San Angelo: City of Heroes* is filled with NPCs ripe for inclusion in a PC's background.

IN EXISTING CAMPAIGNS

San Angelo can easily be incorporated into an existing superhero RPG campaign, including one set in another published setting, or revised to embody favorite elements of past campaigns.

GMs with existing campaigns not already set in any particular city, or set in a sparsely detailed one, can just designate San Angelo as the campaign setting.

As noted above, open slots have been left in many aspects of San Angelo for GMs and players to fill. More radical modifications can also be made—if a GM has already written up the mayor, for example, then a substitution can be made.

GMs with campaigns set in other cities, whether real or fictional, can arrange for PCs to visit San Angelo. Perhaps an enemy they are pursuing flees to the West Coast, or maybe the villainous agency they are investigating has a secret base or laboratory near the city.

Packing the PCs off to a strange city for an adventure or two is an excellent way of injecting some new life into a long-running campaign. In fact, some GMs and players may want to make the move permanent.

Or GMs can use the people, institutions and places of San Angelo to spruce up their own campaign cities.

San Angelo: City of Heroes contains more than 200 NPCs from all walks of life, along with scores of neighborhoods, shops, corporations, charities, entertainment venues and other interesting details. Any or all of them can be transplanted to another city, if the GM desires.

IN OTHER GENRES

Although San Angelo has been designed for use with four-color superhero RPG, it can be adapted for use in most other campaign genres with a little extra work. Future Gold Rush Games products may flesh out San Angelo for use in some of these genres.

DARK HEROES & VIGILANTES

Because four-color superhero RPG characters often focus on national, global or even galactic threats, there's plenty of room for street-level adventuring in San Angelo.

We protect people from super-criminals, natural disasters, street scum and industrial accidents, but we can't protect them from themselves."

—Savant, 48, Justice Foundation hero

Introduction



Illustration by Storm Cook

A number of the neighborhoods detailed in **A Description of San Angelo** are troubled by drugs, gangs and other problems—fertile ground for dark, gritty, street-level crimefighting. Also, the **San Angelo Underworld** provides information on street gangs and organized crime in the city.

GMs in search of an even grittier overall setting can give San Angelo a darker outlook by twisting the interpretations of key NPCs, places and institutions.

For example, Mayor Alex Martinez, presented as a dedicated public servant, might be recast as a cynical vote-grabber more interested in his next step up the political ladder than in the welfare of his constituents.

Or Police Chief Jack O’Shea can be transformed into an out-of-touch idealist blind to the corruption riddling his department, instead of a strong, moral leader for the clean and efficient SAPD.

In a few cases, no changes at all are needed. Eclipse Industries, a greedy, unethical corporation in the midst of a ruthless top-level power struggle, works equally well in both four-color and darker settings, for example.

The San Angelo setting works best in dark hero or vigilante-style campaigns in which superpowers exist. GMs interested in a “no powers” dark campaign, however, can simply assume that the supers are busy pursuing their own agendas and rarely mix with ordinary society. Supers can be seen as mysterious figures involved in cosmic affairs beyond the comprehension of most people, who can only gaze upward in awe as they engage in inexplicable confrontations and conflicts.

Since San Angelo has been designed specifically as a city populated by superpowered individuals, removing those influences entirely in order to create a pure “no-powers” setting will be a bit harder, but by no means impossible. Much of the government, public safety, business and lifestyle information does not hinge on the inclusion of superpowered individuals, although some revisions to the city’s recent history will be necessary.

The extensive information on the police and sheriff’s departments in **Public Safety** will be especially helpful to GMs and

players of street-level hero games. Also, ideas for plots involving corruption of public officials can be gleaned from the **Government** chapter.

GOLDEN AGE HEROES

The Golden Age of heroes ran from 1936 to about 1950 in San Angelo, a time when the lines between heroism and villainy were more clearly drawn.

A handful of solo heroes and at least one hero team faced off with vile arch-criminals, Nazi saboteurs and other enemies in the streets of a younger, more innocent San Angelo.

GMs and players interested in a Golden Age campaign should examine the timeline in **Welcome to San Angelo**. Some of the neighborhoods in **A Description of San Angelo** date back to the 1930s, as do some corporations covered in **Life in San Angelo**.

Finally, some of the quotes from city residents, found in the margins of *San Angelo: City of Heroes*, contain clues about the people, places and happenings of the Golden Age.

WESTERN

The city of San Angelo began in the rough-and-tumble days of the Gold Rush, a perfect opportunity for some Western genre adventuring.

GMs interested in reconstructing Old San Angelo are advised to examine the timeline in **Welcome to San Angelo**. Some neighborhood descriptions in **A Description of San Angelo** also contain references to the early days of the city.

SCIENCE FICTION

The 1990s city of San Angelo could be extrapolated into a futuristic city usable in either of these science-fiction genres. For example, the San Angelo International Airport could become the San Angelo Starport. And the Hunter-Price Arms factory could produce beam weaponry, not handguns and rifles.

The changes wrought by scientific advances will have to be taken into consideration, however. After all, if flying cars are common, will there still be a road and highway network?

Changes in construction materials and techniques will almost certainly result in a downtown rising much higher than that of modern-day San Angelo. Perhaps the change has opened up room for spacious parks and gardens—or, in a grimmer cyberpunk setting, has merely allowed the overburdened city to barely keep up with rampant overpopulation.

The community descriptions in **A Description of San Angelo** and corporations in **Life in San Angelo** are good places for prospective sci-fi setting GMs to start.

Everyone talks about the Golden Age, but no one ever mentions Velocidad...you’d call him Velocity, I guess. He was a hero to us Chicano kids. You should have seen him run! He fought crime, chased out the drug dealers. But you never saw his name in the papers, ‘cause he helped his people, in el barrio, instead of going off all over the world. Now no one even remembers his name. Damn shame. But we remember him. We’ll always remember him.

— Esteban Vega, 61, welder

HORROR

A “de-powered” city of San Angelo can provide a relatively mundane backdrop to spine-tingling adventures in a horror campaign.

After all, foul creatures of the night, minions of forgotten gods and other terrors are bound to be all the more surprising, and hence, frightening, when they are found in a typical American city instead of some haunted moor or ancient castle.

The contrast between the ghastly night-time world of the PCs and the sunlit, everyday San Angelo around them also fits well with the horror genre.

For a really different campaign, elements of horror and four-color superheroes could be blended in a San Angelo where paranormal powers are rare and unacknowledged. Supers conceal their bizarre powers in a dark, paranoid world laced with government conspiracies, corporate schemes, mad scientists and freakish occurrences.

The PCs might be supers themselves, or normals who are somehow drawn into this twilight world of superpowers and secrets.

PULP ADVENTURE

The two-fisted, high-adventure world of pulp-era heroes also occupies a place in San Angelo’s history.

The 1930s exploits of the Argonaut Society, an organization of explorers, air aces, archeologists and other adventurers, are described in *Life in San Angelo*.

As with Western genre campaigns, GMs interested in a pulp adventure campaign are advised to examine the timeline in *Welcome to San Angelo*. Some neighborhood descriptions in *A Description of San Angelo* also contain references to the early days of the city, and several corporations outlined in *Life in San Angelo* got their start in this time period.

FANTASY

This may be the least appropriate genre for San Angelo. As a modern metropolis, San Angelo has little in common with the rustic towns and villages found in most fantasy worlds.

However, the city could be used as the setting for a modern fantasy genre campaign, in which magic is real and the dimensional boundaries twixt Earth and Faerie have been breached. Magicians, witches and other spell-casters could exist, but keep their powers hidden. Likewise, dragons, shapeshifters and assorted magical creatures might move unseen through the world.

As described under *Horror*, the contrast between the mystic world of the heroes and the everyday goings-on around them is a hallmark of such campaigns.

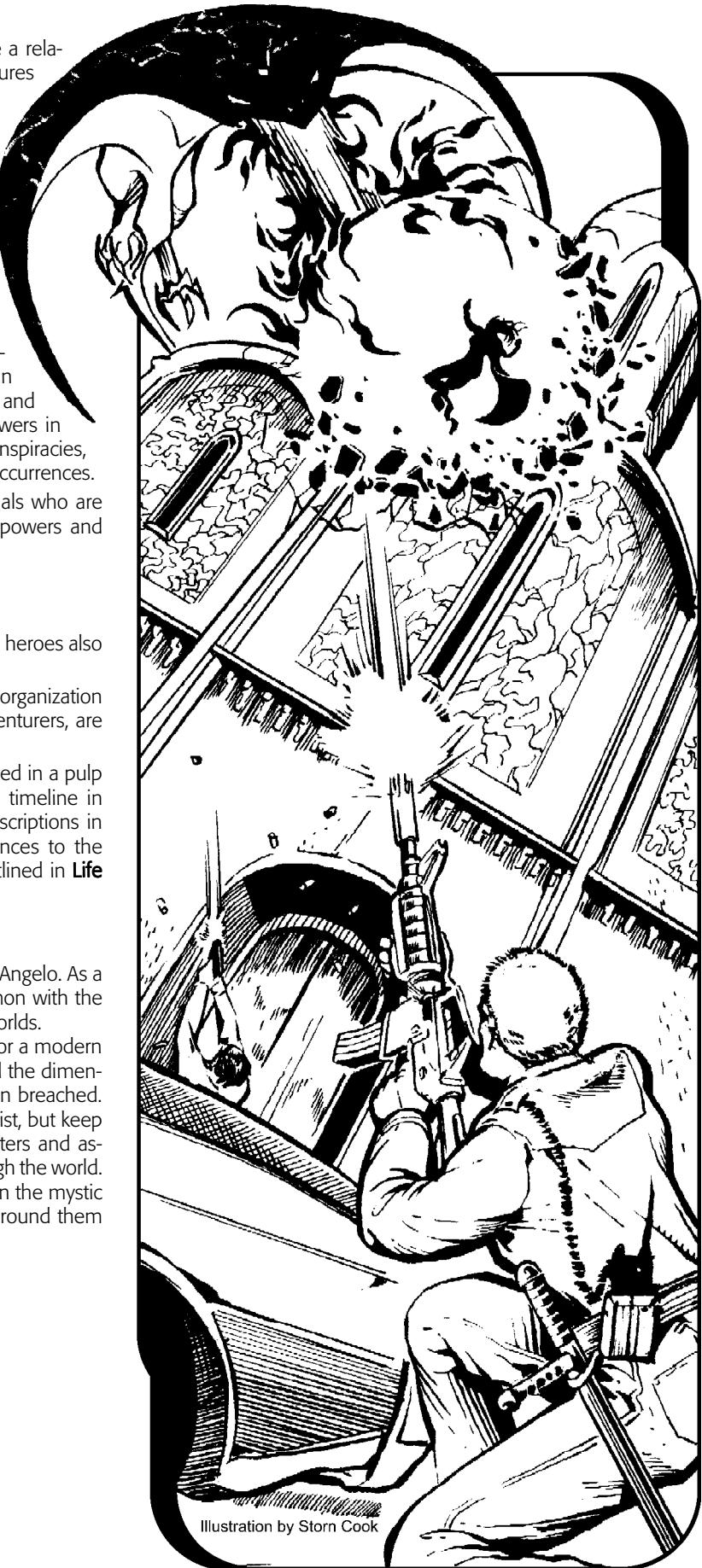
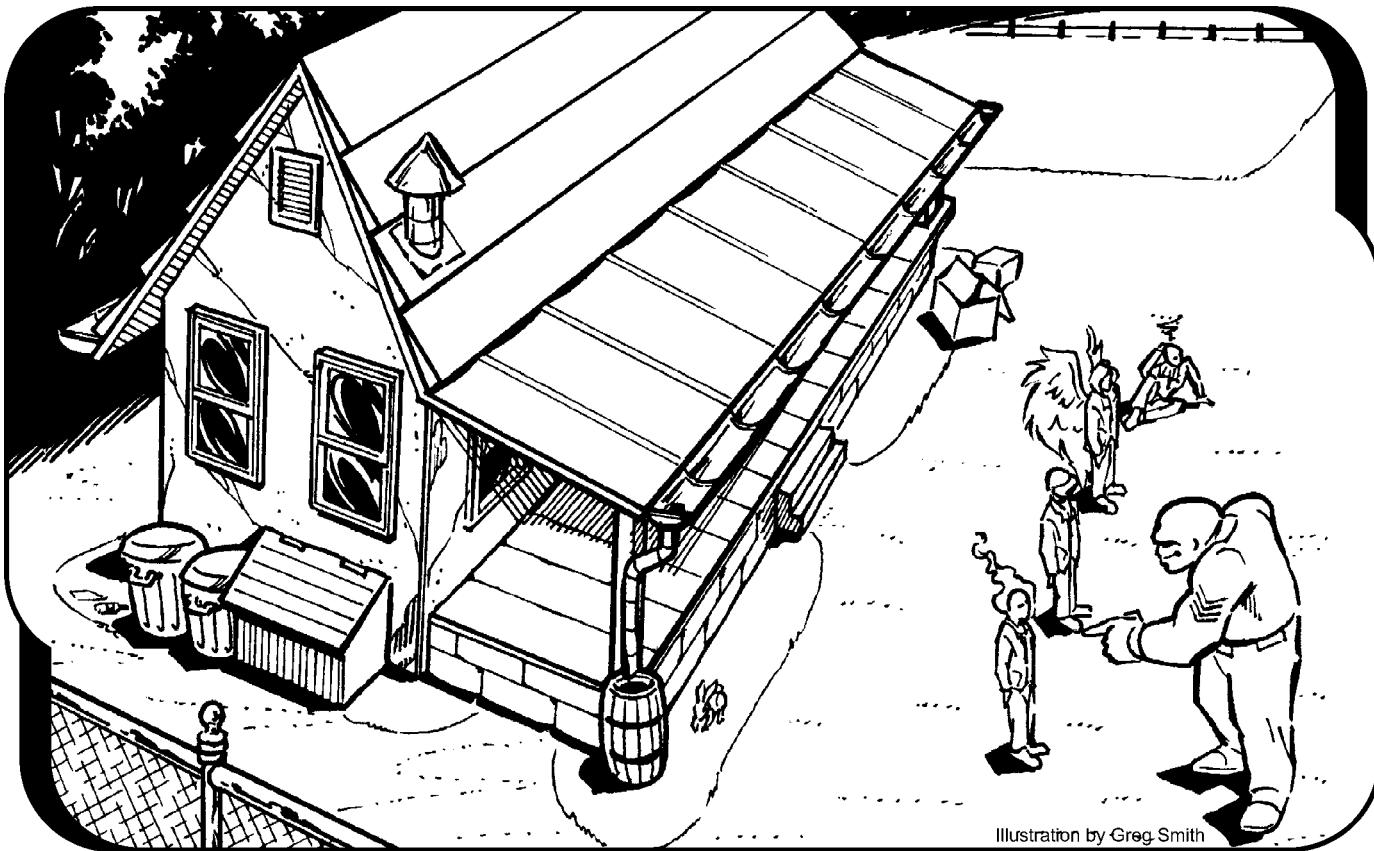


Illustration by Storn Cook

Introduction



ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Not all the information in *San Angelo: City of Heroes* is presented in the main body of text. Look for these layout features for additional details on the city or how to use it:

BREAKOUT/LIST BOX

These highlight extra details, such as organization charts, game statistics for equipment and Top 10 lists for San Angelo. This information has been set apart from the main text to make it easier to find.

Many of the Top 10 lists contain open slots for players or GMs to fill in. This allows you to easily add elements of your existing campaign or to customize a new campaign.

GM'S OPTION

These boxes offer suggestions on customizing your campaign to suit your preferences and gaming style.

CAMPAIGN TIPS

These boxes contain hints on how to use the information presented in this book to create better characters or adventures.

Quotes from San Angelo residents are scattered in the page margins throughout the book. Some describe momentous events of the past, while others pass on interesting rumors.

Mostly, however, these quotes offer insights into how ordinary citizens view San Angelo and its resident supers.

Action! System Stats

All character stat blocks for *Action! System* characters will appear in these boxes. All text appearing in this style of box (except this particular box) is declared Open Content. The character or item name (at the beginning of the stat block) are Product Identity.

M&M Superlink Stats: All character stat blocks for *M&M Superlink* characters will appear in these boxes. All text appearing in this style of box (except this particular box) is declared Open Content. The character or item name (at the beginning of the stat block) are Product Identity.

WELCOME TO SAN ANGELO

San Angelo is an attractive, lively city of nearly 3 million souls that traces its history to the Spanish missions of the 1700s and the Gold Rush of the 1800s.

First a rough-and-tumble mining camp, then a railroad town and agricultural center, San Angelo has today grown into a major urban center with a diverse economy. High-tech industries, along with banking, insurance and public sector jobs, fuel a robust local economy.

The towering skyscrapers of City Center, where million-dollar deals are brokered every day, are a key stop for visitors, and tours of the bustling Peregrine Aircraft plant and other top industries are offered regularly.

But modern San Angelo hasn't forgotten its heritage. The beautifully restored Mission San Angeles, historic Old San Angelo and Brackett House Museum are just a few must-see stops for history-minded visitors.

Built at the confluence of two rivers near lovely Lake Oro, the city offers tourists a vast array of recreation, sports and entertainment options. Bicycling, jogging and walking along the lush Del Oro River Parkway are popular pastimes. Water sports on the two rivers and lake are equally popular, and San Angelo boasts two professional sports teams for your enjoyment.

An agreeable climate of warm summers and mild winters makes outdoor activities especially enticing.

But San Angelo also has a spirited nightlife, with many nightclubs, live music venues and fine dining spots catering to almost any taste. Fine arts connoisseurs will find the Center for the Performing Arts and Historic San Angelo Opera House entrancing. Numerous theaters, art galleries and museums also call the city home.

And no description of San Angelo could possibly be complete without a mention of the colorful, awe-inspiring superheroes who dwell there...

— *San Angelo Visitor's Guide*,
San Angelo Chamber of Commerce

GM'S OPTION

San Angelo can easily be relocated to another part of the country. Other Western states, particularly those with a mining heritage, will work best, but GMs willing to do a little extra work can adapt the city to an East Coast, Midwest or even Southern setting.

For example, a GM who wishes to use San Angelo in Texas will find many aspects of the city, such as the Mission San Angeles, carry over seamlessly. A few minutes spent changing the gold-mining references to denote oil-drilling, such as renaming Prospector Bank to Wildcatter Bank, will yield a city well-suited to a Texas locale.

Or, as described in the Introduction, if converting the city seems like too much work, GMs can just incorporate the appropriate elements of San Angelo into an original creation or a real-life city.

San Angelo is a fictional metropolis blending elements of Los Angeles, San Francisco, Sacramento and other West Coast cities to provide a vivid, detailed background for superhero campaigns.

Government, law enforcement and other aspects of city life are modeled after real-world examples and carefully integrated with fictional elements inspired by the four-color comics.

The city is presumed to be somewhere in the Central Valley of Northern California, but its exact location has been left vague in the tradition of the comics.

THE REAL SAN ANGELO

There really is a San Angelo—San Angelo, Texas. Located in central west Texas about 260 miles southwest of Dallas, the real city of San Angelo was founded in the 1870s and has a population estimated at 84,000.

Aside from sharing the same name, the fictional San Angelo and real San Angelo have no connection.

BASIC PREMISES

This book is based on certain suppositions about the world of San Angelo.

The first, of course, is that superpowers are real. But the origin and frequency of superpowered individuals, state of technology, existence of aliens and role of supers in society are also vital considerations.

San Angelo: City of Heroes takes a slightly conservative approach to these questions.

Frankly, the world posited by many comic books and superhero RPG campaigns just doesn't make sense. For example, heroes travel by starships and teleport devices as a matter of routine, but ordinary citizens still drive to work each day in polluting, unreliable automobiles.

To take another example, aliens are almost everywhere, but there are no interstellar embassies or trade accords. In fact, the governments of Earth seem to have no formal contacts with extra-terrestrial life at all—aside from the occasional invasion, of course.

A restrained view of these genre elements paves the way for a diverse and colorful world that still bears some resemblance to our own. This needn't be a restriction on the imagination or creativity of gamers, however.

Even if the existence of aliens is not commonly known, GMs and players can still create alien characters who hide their otherworldly origins from the public. Likewise, the rarity of high technology doesn't preclude the existence of a hero in powered armor or a villainous mad inventor.

In fact, using these genre elements with restraint can make such characters more, not less, interesting and fun to play. And fun, not strict realism, is the goal.

San Angelo 1500 →
Welcome to San Angelo

Welcome to San Angelo

GM'S OPTION

If you or your players disagree with some of these premises, change them! You and you alone are in charge of your superhero RPG campaign. Make it one that will offer the most enjoyment to you and your players.

San Angelo: City of Heroes is a resource, not a strait-jacket. Use the portions you find useful, and disregard the parts you don't.

GMs should be aware, however, that future Gold Rush Games products set in San Angelo will be based on these premises in the interest of product continuity and cohesiveness.

My first visit to San Angelo? Well, I was just a kid—couldn't have been more than 10 years old. I came out on vacation with my family.

We saw all the sights you read about in the guidebooks: Liberty Square, the Twilight Tower, Minuteman Circle ... I even dragged my parents to see the places in Sky Ranger's memoirs, like Baron Frost's old hideout. Except they'd torn it all down years ago to make room for an office building. But how was I to know?

No, the Twister's restaurant hadn't even opened yet. Twister had just started out as a hero, back then. You know, he was the first super I ever saw. Our last day in San Angelo, we were coming out of the Metropolitan Museum and I saw him fly overhead, that big cape billowing behind him ...

I moved out here as soon as I graduated from high school. I mean, how could I stay on the farm after seeing something like that?

—Kenny Anderson, 22, laborer

ORIGINS

The first part of any good superhero story is the origin—just how did she get those amazing powers, anyway? The origin and frequency of superpowered individuals are crucial considerations in defining the world of San Angelo.

ORIGIN OF SUPERPOWERS

The existence of all superpowers in the world of San Angelo can be traced to the creation of two singularities, one in 1936 and the second in 1982.

A singularity is a point in space-time at which the laws of physics do not apply. In short, anything can happen in a singularity.

In nature, singularities can be created when a star collapses so completely that it gains infinite density and gravity, while occupying a point in space so insignificant as to be infinitely small. Black holes, for example, are a form of singularity with a gravity so intense that even light cannot escape.

But physicists think other singularities may be so small as to allow the occasional emission of particles. Such singularities are thought to be inherently unstable.

The two singularities created in San Angelo were of the second type.

Both singularities emitted bursts of a bizarre energy known as "flux radiation." Invisible and undetectable, the flux has an odd effect on the world of San Angelo, bringing the improbable and impossible to life. A catalyst rather than a cause, flux energies seem to bend reality in some inconceivable way.

The most visible change wrought by the flux is the creation of superhumans, individuals suddenly endowed with astonishing powers and abilities formerly seen exclusively in the world of comic books.

The other-dimensional energies of the flux do not directly create superpowers, but rather allow them to exist where they would otherwise be considered unthinkable.

No one can tell who will be affected and who will not, or exactly what brings about these changes. Some individuals gain their powers following bizarre accidents, while others attribute them to mutations, experiments gone awry, cosmic energies, magic or divine influence.

The handful of children born to superhumans to date has proven that, at least in some cases, superpowers can be passed on from generation to generation.

SINGULARITIES

Singularities are a real-life phenomena still being studied by scientists. Of course, singularities have never given anyone on our Earth superpowers—at least, as far as we know!

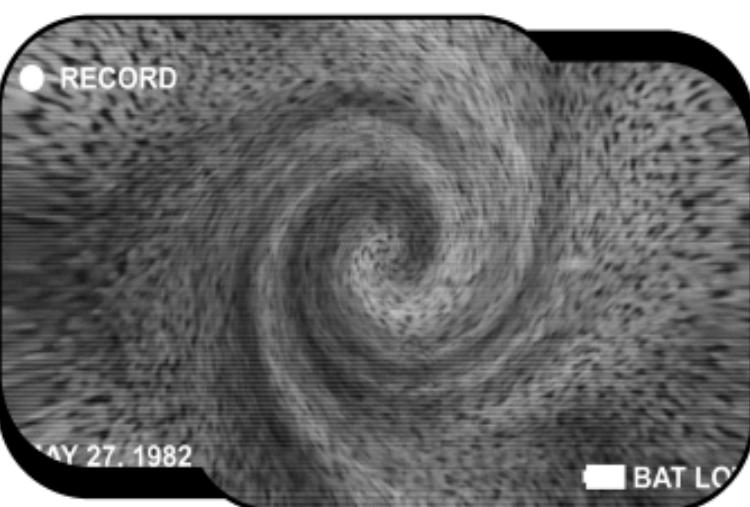
For more information on real-life singularities, check out some of the books listed in the Reference section of the **Bibliography** at the end of *San Angelo: City of Heroes*.

The nature of the changes sparked by the flux varies greatly. Some people exhibit only latent or minor powers, while others are capable of destroying entire cities—or worse.

In some cases, the change alters the appearance, physiology and even personality of the person. A body of living steel or a nightmarish insectoid form are just two possibilities.

The link between the singularities, flux energies and superpowers is not commonly known, however. Even supers do not recognize the connection.

While a few researchers are investigating the possibility of a tie between supers and the flux, the bizarre nature of singularities complicates their task.



For example, singularities do not deal with time in a linear fashion, as do humans. A singularity's effects could well extend into what we see as the future, or even the past. In fact, supers could have been created by the flux before the "creation" of the first singularity!

This might account for the mystic powers or enhanced abilities attributed to many heroes of ancient myths and legends, as well as numerous supernatural creatures.

FREQUENCY OF SUPERPOWERS

The first singularity, created by accident in a government lab in San Angelo in 1936, was unstable and collapsed almost immediately.

The resultant brief burst of flux energies had a slight reality-altering effect on the world, inducing creation of only a handful of relatively low-powered paranormals concentrated on San Angelo.

The second singularity, created by scientist Hal Revette in 1982, remains active, though the destruction of Revette's containment system prompted the infinitely dense singularity to sink into the Earth. It settled into an elliptical orbit around the planet's core.

None of these newfangled heroes can hold a candle to the Minuteman. He was the first, I tell you, and he didn't need any fancy superpowers to get the job done, neither.

— Ervin Baumgartner, 83, retired

flux energies, the San Angelo area experienced the highest concentration of unexplainable phenomena, including the creation of superhumans.

Since the singularity continues to emit flux energies, new superhumans are still being created around the globe—particularly when the singularity's irregular orbit takes it close to the surface.

The Earth's crust seems to deflect or dilute the energies emanating from the singularity, however, slowing the rate of superhuman manifestations and other impossibilities.

The frequency of modern supers seems to be about 1 in 250,000. This means there are approximately 1,000 supers in the United States at any given time.

This represents only a statistical average, however. Some regions have fewer supers, while others, especially major cities, are home to higher concentrations of paranormals.

With a population of about 3 million, San Angelo would have about 12 resident supers. Since the actual number of active supers in the city is far higher, it's clear that strict statistical averages are not always accurate.

In the case of San Angelo, its status as a key population center and a well-known focus of superhuman activity has attracted paranormals from all over the globe—boosting the ratio of supers to normals far beyond the statistical average.

Finally, not every paranormal develops full-fledged superpowers. A high percentage have perhaps one or two minor powers, which may even be latent or uncontrollable. These individuals are known as low-powered metahumans, or LPMs.

Most LPMs choose not to become heroes or criminals. Some keep their powers hidden, or are unaware that they even exist, while others try to take advantage of their special abilities in their work. For example, San Angelo house painter Jeremiah Trent uses his stretching powers to work without a ladder, scaffolding or other

special equipment, but he's not interested in becoming a costumed crimefighter.

THE WORLD

Superpowers aside, the world of San Angelo features a few other classic elements of the comics and superhero RPG campaigns worth noting.

ALIENS

The existence of extra-terrestrial life remains an open question for most citizens of San Angelo. Some people argue passionately that aliens exist, while others contend just as ardently that humankind is alone in the universe.

Reported encounters with UFOs or aliens are routinely dismissed by skeptics and the government as outright lies, misunderstandings of natural phenomena, encounters with supers or other mistakes.

If aliens do walk among the people of San Angelo, they have hidden their existence well—no doubt aided by the profusion of supers, many of whom sport bizarre appearances, powers and personalities.

MAGIC

Magic, hitherto consigned to rumor and supposition, has burst into reality courtesy of the inexplicable flux energies flooding the Earth.

The blurring of the line between possible and impossible puts wizards, witches and other mystic masters on equal footing with their superhuman counterparts. Whether powered by ley lines, elemental forces or even vile necromantic rituals, their spells are fully as effective and powerful as those of legendary spell-casters.

Indeed, the time-defying nature of the singularities responsible for the flux could account for tales of magicians and sorcerers down through the ages.

Like, I go, 'Hey, you're that Azteca guy,' and he goes, 'Guess I am,' and I go, 'So, hey, do you ever go on dates?' And he's like, 'Sometimes,' and I'm all, 'Well, I'm 16 next month,' and he's like, 'Gotta go.' Like, I guess he was on a mission or something, you know?

— Tiffany Ambrose, 15, student

Unlike most superheroes, however, mystic masters tend to stay out of the limelight—perhaps due to the oft-stated belief that ordinary folk could never truly understand the unseen arcane forces at work in the world.

SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY

The world of San Angelo parallels 1990s Earth in technology and science for the most part. This applies to supers as well as normals. A few San Angelo companies are extremely high-tech by our standards, but these are based primarily on extrapolations of existing technology.

For example, Helix Technologies has produced a human clone. While this might seem far-fetched, researchers on our Earth have already succeeded in cloning frogs, mice and sheep.

Hyper-advanced technology, representing huge leaps in scientific or technical concepts, also exists in San Angelo, but gener-

Welcome to San Angelo

I was working for Professor Rabinowitz up in the observatory in the hills above Lake Oro—lousy pay, but I got course credit at CSUSA. Anyway, I was alone up there one night when I saw it. A bright, glowing object passing through Ursa Major.

At first I thought I'd discovered a comet. Then it changed course. And this wasn't any plane—at the end, it split into five smaller lights that shot off in all directions. Plus, some of the instruments at the lab picked it up, so I knew I wasn't just seeing things.

"The Prof got really excited and had me check with the local airports for radar records, but no luck. So a few days later, this Air Force investigator shows up, interviews me for two hours and confiscates all our records on the thing.

"The Prof finally got hold of the Air Force report about a year later. They determined—get this—it was 'an unidentified paranormal.' Yeah, sure.

—Curtis Kwan, 26, graduate student

ally represents the fruit of intense labor or isolated cases of individual brilliance.

For example, the powered armor worn by the hero Cavalier is the product of a vast top-secret military project involving billions of dollars and dozens of researchers. The extreme effort and expense involved make creation of a duplicate unlikely, and mass production of such suits nearly inconceivable.

In addition, the presence of at least two time travelers from the 21st century in modern San Angelo has accelerated the development of technology in certain fields.

Finally, the influence of the flux on technology cannot be discounted. Some of the gadgets carried by supers simply should not work. They violate accepted scientific principles, use inexplicable energy sources or represent fantastic advances in manufacturing. Copies of these devices are rarely possible, and working replicas are rarer still.

Many of the inventions of so-called "mad scientists" or rogue geniuses fall into this category.

In any case, examples of hyper-advanced technology are rare and often singular.

Yes, I did say she was the most beautiful woman I ever saw, but, honey, she was controlling my mind at the time!

—Karl Sanchez, 24, construction worker

What are these supers teaching our children? That might makes right, and violence is the only solution to every problem?

—Mary Ann Battaglia, 36, homemaker

THE ROLE OF SUPERS

Just how do these superpowered heroes, mysterious wizards, crackpot inventors and megalomaniacal arch-villains fit into the world around them? Perhaps more importantly, how does the person in the street feel about them?

The emergence of super powers has certainly redefined the world of San Angelo in some subtle and not-so-subtle ways.

While the activities of supers are responsible for introducing some new concepts to the world —costumed crimefighters, for example—in most cases the ramifications of superpowers are dealt with in the context of existing laws, organizations and other aspects of society.

For example, no independent law enforcement agency has yet been formed to battle superhuman crime. But numerous existing agencies, from the FBI to local police departments, have created specialized squads or bureaus to deal with the problem.

Although supers may feel remote from normal society at times, supers and normals live in the same world.

Beast Girl? Why do you want to know about her? Look, I hate Reds. Now I'm not saying you are one, but I hate 'em.

—Nate Rangel, 72, retired

SUPERS AND GOVERNMENT

Every nation has reacted differently to the emergence of supers. In totalitarian states, many supers simply disappear—whether into secret labs, prisons or elite military units is impossible to say. The only public heroes are official government supers.

Less repressive regimes may not force all supers into government service, but still keep a tight rein on the activities of unsanctioned paranormals. And a few nations have so few supers as to make formulating an official policy moot.

In the United States, a high concentration of supers coupled with a tradition of personal freedom have combined to give paranormals wide latitude in their activities, though they are still subject to the same laws, regulations and procedures as any other citizen.

For the most part, matters involving American supers are handled by the appropriate branch or bureau of the local, state and federal governments.

For example, a super involved in drug smuggling might be investigated by the Drug Enforcement Agency, while the FBI or CIA would deal with the case of an international super-spy. Likewise, a super who emits toxic chemicals could draw the attention of the EPA.

On all levels, the U.S. government has been slow to recruit superpowered individuals for jobs or official positions—perhaps out of fear of making a misstep.

Somebody turn on the TV, quick! No, no, Channel 7! KABL has a special bulletin—the Justice Foundation just radioed an alert about a stolen nuclear warhead. Hurry up!

—Jeff Warner, 28, auto mechanic

There are rumors that the American armed forces have organized secret units of paranormals, though such reports are denied by military leaders.

SUPERS AND THE LAW

The existence of superpowers has sparked the creation of some new laws to deal with specific problems, but for the most part the activities of supers are covered by existing statutes.

A person who uses her flame powers to steal a prototype beam-gun is still guilty of armed robbery despite her somewhat flashy M.O., for example. Likewise, using super-strength to thrash

an innocent bystander is battery—potentially battery causing great bodily injury.

Most states have passed laws equating the use of superpowers in a crime with the use of a deadly weapon, providing for enhanced sentences of criminal supers.

The activities of non-sanctioned crimefighters are also largely covered by pre-existing statutes.

In most states, ordinary citizens have nearly as much power and authority to make arrests as peace officers. They are even allowed to use force if necessary, as long as the force used is reasonable to overcome resistance to the arrest.

The legal blame for property damage, injuries to bystanders and other mayhem resulting from a super-battle is normally pinned on the criminal whose resistance caused the ruckus in the first place.

Also, independent heroes are not held to the same standard as peace officers in matters of warrants, searches and so on. Evidence collected by private citizens can still be used in court even though it would be thrown out if it had been gathered by officers using the same methods.

Although independent heroes could be called vigilantes, in practice the word usually refers to individuals who break the law in the name of justice. A super who killed suspected criminals instead of turning them over to police would be a vigilante, for example.

Vigilantes are certainly subject to arrest for their crimes, and particularly violent or bloody vigilantes may be hunted by police almost as much as criminal supers.

While criminal laws may protect independent heroes from being arrested, as long as they act responsibly, they are no protection against civil suits.

Heroes can be sued for causing injuries, property damage, even emotional distress. Not only can innocent bystanders file suit, so can the criminals!

Of course, most attorneys aren't interested in taking cases in which the person being sued has no way of paying a judgment. A destitute hero, or one whose true identity is a secret, isn't a good target for a civil suit.

Even if a suit does come to trial, few juries are likely to enter an award against a hero—especially in a case filed by a criminal—as long as the hero has acted fairly responsibly and reasonably.

SUPERS AND SOCIETY

Supers have a unique role in society. Their incredible powers and amazing adventures accord them a celebrity formerly reserved for the most popular actors and models.

The public is hungry for news of their fantastic doings, devouring endless news stories and magazine articles on high-profile heroes and their enemies. Public battles between supers are likely to attract every news crew in the city, not to mention crowds of gawkers.

Fans seek their autographs, memorabilia and even political opinions. Some supers have cashed in on their celebrity by marketing licensed comic books or other merchandise.

Even those supers who shun the spotlight attract plenty of attention when they reveal their powers in public.

Behind the public adoration, however, lies another face. Envy, prejudice and fear are also part of the equation when it comes to the public's view of paranormals.

The god-like feats of supers can inspire resentment in normals, while the pampered lifestyles of a handful of high-profile heroes

SANCTIONED HEROES

Sanctioned heroes are supers who work directly with police or other law enforcement agencies, either as outright employees or under some kind of formal agreement. As a result, they are bound by the same restrictions and procedures as other peace officers. In return, sanctioned heroes have full police powers within the jurisdiction of the sanctioning agency, not to mention access to personnel, equipment and confidential records.

Most law enforcement agencies require sanctioned heroes to reveal their true identities—at least to the agency—undergo background checks and go through special training.

In San Angelo, the City Council or Board of Supervisors must approve sanctioning agreements with heroes. The Justice Foundation hero team is sanctioned by the city and county.

Non-sanctioned, or independent, heroes may well have informal relationships with law enforcement agencies but essentially operate as private citizens. They have no police powers and are subject to arrest themselves if they break the law. Non-sanctioned heroes normally do not have access to confidential files, though some have been known to obtain such material through "friends on the force."

Most heroes are non-sanctioned, trading the protections and resources of sanctioning for the freedom to operate outside the rules and procedures constraining "official" heroes.

are a source of jealousy. And even those who admire the good deeds of heroes worry about what might happen if those powers were ever turned against normals.

Just how do the supers themselves feel about their powers?

For some people, the granting of superpowers fulfills a lifelong dream, while others find their newfound abilities a curse.

Some choose to use their powers to benefit society, motivated by altruism, a desire for fame, religious faith or just a flair for adventure. Others see their superhuman abilities as a path to riches, power, revenge or even world domination.

But many supers fall somewhere between these two extremes. They may be heroes or criminals, but often take on these roles unwillingly. A desperate financial situation could push a super over the edge just as easily as a normal. Likewise, family pressure could force the son of an illustrious hero into the crimefighting business, regardless of his personal desires.

Other supers are busy pursuing personal goals, and a few just want to be left alone.

On the criminal side of the street, a few organized crime groups have taken advantage of the existence of supers to boost their power. For example, yakuza syndicates and Chinese tongs are known to employ a handful of superpowered members.

The Mafia, on the other hand, tends to be more old-fashioned and shuns the use of supers, who attract all kinds of unwanted attention.

Most supers involved in organized crime activities are simply hired guns, but a few are full-fledged members of the organization. They are a part of the hierarchy, subject to the same orders and discipline as any other soldier.

For example, a Chinese super who joins a tong may be richly rewarded and reserved for special assignments, but he still must obey the commands of his superiors and conform to other tong expectations.

Welcome to San Angelo

For the most part, however, criminal supers operate independently of organized crime.

In the final analysis, superhumans in San Angelo are just like anyone else. Some are good. Some are bad. And most just do the best they can.

TERMS AND CONVENTIONS

In the world of San Angelo, people with superpowers are commonly known as supers. Official titles, such as names of government agencies, tend to use the term paranormals. Supers who use their powers to fight crime, perform rescues and accomplish other good works are sometimes called heroes.

These phrases are used throughout the main text of *San Angelo: City of Heroes*.

The terms "villain" and "supervillain" are not usually used in the world of San Angelo. In a nation where people are considered innocent until proven guilty, labeling someone a villain—not to mention a supervillain—raises all kinds of legal and ethical concerns.

Note that this style only applies to "real-world" information in *San Angelo: City of Heroes*. Game-oriented material, such as the **Campaign Tips** and **GM's Option** boxes, use all of these phrases for convenience and variety.

I run a sidewalk fruit stand outside my market, and one morning I'm out there sweeping up the walk. Old Mr. Brodsky is complaining about the spots on my oranges—I keep telling him, those are the organics, they're supposed to have spots, but does he listen to me?

This other regular customer, I don't know her name, I call her the Squeezer. She comes in every day, squeezes all the fruits and vegetables, bruises them up real good. Well, she's there too, squeezing away. I'm keeping an eye on this young guy hanging around, making sure he's not pocketing anything, when suddenly these hoodlums come tearing up the sidewalk.

There's two of them, real wild-looking, and one yanks the Squeezer's purse right off her arm as they run by. She takes a tumble and starts screaming.

Well, old Mr. Brodsky trips one of them up with his cane. But the second punk, the one with the purse, he's getting away. Then the young guy grabs an apple, winds up and throws it. Bing! Right in the back of the head, and the hood goes down. I talked to the kid later, turns out he's the pitcher on his high school baseball team.

Some people think the only heroes around here are the ones up in the sky. I know better.

— James Frankel, 52, market owner

San Angelo is the Golden City. Whether it's 24 karat or fool's gold depends on who you ask.

— Paul Quigley, 42, newspaper columnist

I just love going to Twister's and seeing all the supers memorabilia. They have his old costume, of course, and the titanium chain that Chain carried, and some of Longbow's arrows. Oh, he's from Seattle—they have stuff from all over at Twister's.

Right now I'm saving up for a ticket to the charity ball for the women's center. I hear the Justice Foundation will be there. I hope I can get Corona's autograph.

— Stacy Chung, 24, secretary

DESIGN CONSIDERATIONS

Along with the basic suppositions about the world, *San Angelo: City of Heroes* is based on certain principles of world-building. Here are a few:

- The PCs are the most important heroes in the campaign.
- Supers are people with powers, not the other way around.
- Normals are just as interesting as supers.
- There are more heroes and villains around than just the ones with superpowers.
- Every PC, NPC and agency should stand out as a unique entity.
- Diverse ethnic, national and religious backgrounds make for memorable, realistic NPCs.
- In any conflict between realism and fun, fun wins.
- The best campaigns tell a story.
- A good campaign book presents all the information necessary to start gaming, yet leaves GMs and players opportunities to exercise their own creativity without having to discard parts of the book.

SAN ANGELO

San Angelo is a thriving modern American metropolis. Millions of people call the city and its surrounding communities home, making San Angelo the sixth-largest city in the U.S.

A hub of business activity, the city has a diverse economic base and an expanding role in the world of high-tech industry. Several top international corporations are based in the area.

San Angelo is also a city of contrasts. Glittering high-society balls take place just a few blocks from gritty soup kitchens and shelters. Mom-and-pop groceries exist side by side with the soaring skyscrapers of multibillion-dollar corporations. Suburbs of winding streets and neatly manicured lawns lie a few miles away from inner-city neighborhoods rife with crime, drugs and violence.

And ordinary people look up from their everyday lives from time to time as the colorful, costumed heroes and criminals who share San Angelo with them pass by overhead.

TOPOGRAPHY AND CLIMATE

Built at the confluence of two rivers in a rich agricultural valley, San Angelo overall has a fairly flat landscape marked by a few rolling hills.

The terrain becomes more hilly to the east, where the foothills of a sizable mountain range begin just beyond the Lakeview area. Hills, gorges, ravines and other rough terrain also mark the Lake Oro region, and steep bluffs rise over the Del Oro River below Oro Dam.

Countless creeks and streams meander throughout urban San Angelo. A few have been channeled into underground culverts or drainage canals, but most remain relatively natural.

The city enjoys a temperate climate, with hot summers and mild winters. Temperatures in the summer average 85 degrees, but periodic heat waves push the mercury to 105 degrees or more. Summer thunderstorms occur occasionally, though skies are generally clear and humidity tends to be low.

In winter, temperatures range from below freezing to the low 60s. Rainstorms with high winds are frequent, and heavy morning fog are encountered almost every day. The sky can be overcast for weeks at a time in winter.

It very rarely snows in San Angelo, and when it does the snow melts within a few hours at most. The foothills and mountains east of the city experience regular heavy snowfalls.

Hail, pounding rainstorms and dangerously high winds are about the extent of severe winter weather in San Angelo. Tornadoes can form when conditions are right, but seldom last more than a few minutes or cause much damage.

Hurricanes and volcanic eruptions are not a threat in San Angelo, though some peaks in mountain ranges north of the metropolis are long-dormant volcanoes.

Floods, however, pose a grave danger to the city. In the early days of San Angelo, flooding from the two rivers nearly destroyed the town several times. Now the flood control system anchored by Oro Dam keeps the problem in check most of the time.

But prolonged heavy rainfall can tax the system to its limit. Levee breaks on the swollen rivers have flooded outlying communities in recent years. Problems in the city proper have so far been limited to a handful of flood-prone neighborhoods along creeks, however.

Earthquakes are a slight concern in San Angelo. The region is considered fairly stable seismically, and no known faults run through the metropolitan area. The closest nearby fault is found near the town of Marshall, which was badly damaged by a 1918 earthquake.

Severe earthquakes along the coast are normally felt in San Angelo, but rarely cause any damage. In fact, the relative seismic safety of the region has been a major selling point in bringing corporate computing centers and high-tech industries to the city.

CAMPAIGN TIP

Supers with weather-control powers are a staple of the comics and superhero RPG campaigns. While they are unlikely to induce long-term climatic changes, these individuals might have a profound short-term effect on San Angelo weather.

GMs can use these NPCs to account for aberrant weather or even unnatural disasters in the city. For example, San Angelo normally has little chance of being struck by a major earthquake—but when Temblor hits town, all bets are off!



TIMELINE

This section provides a timeline of important dates and events in the history of San Angelo. Actual "real-world" events are not listed, unless they somehow involve or affect San Angelo.

1792

August 12: Spanish priests found the Mission San Angeles, or Mission of the Holy Angels, at the confluence of two rivers in Northern California.

1821

September 27: After two revolutionary wars, Mexico wins its independence from Spain and gains possession of California.

1828

April 22: The Mexican government secularizes the Mission San Angeles and grants much of its land to rancher Juan Madera, who establishes the Rancho Madera.

November 30: The Catholic Church closes the now-reduced Mission San Angeles, regarded as something of a failure as it has attracted few converts from nearby California Indian tribes.

1846

June 15: The Bear Flag Rebellion begins in Sonoma and the California Republic is declared. Less than a month later, U.S. Marines land at Monterey and claim California for the United States.

1848

January 24: James Marshall discovers gold at Sutter Mill in Coloma on the American River, starting the California Gold Rush.

February 2: The Treaty of Guadalupe Hidalgo ends the Mexican-American War and cedes California to the United States. The treaty signers are unaware of the discovery of gold a few days earlier.

June 14: The land holdings of rancher Juan Madera are apportioned to an assortment of squatters and other American claimants. Madera returns to Mexico.

1850

March 21: Indiana farmer Samuel Brackett packs up his family and sets out to win his fortune in California. The family joins a wagon train in Independence, Mo., bound for the gold fields.

September 9: The U.S. Congress admits California to the union as a free state.

September 19: The wagon train containing the Brackett family arrives at the river confluence near the

abandoned Mission San Angeles. The settlers found a town, named after the nearby mission, but cartographers mistakenly record it as San Angelo and the altered name sticks.

1852

January 18: Samuel Brackett discovers gold in the Del Oro River after 18 months of fruitless panning. Word of the discovery spreads, and prospectors flock to San Angelo.

April 20: Amos Barnes founds the first general store in San Angelo and strikes it rich selling supplies to the hordes of gold miners.

September 2: The first murder in San Angelo takes place when a quarrel over a claim turns violent. The town soon gains a reputation as a rowdy, violent place of saloons, street brawls, dance halls, squalid mining camps and frequent shoot-outs.

1854

May 12: The First Baptist Church of San Angelo, the first non-Catholic church built in the town, is dedicated in what will later become the neighborhood of Poverty Gulch.

July 4: After a long day of celebrating Independence Day, drunken prospectors form the Miner's Protective Association and hang a suspected claim jumper. The association is the first of several vigilance committees to operate in the San Angelo mining camps.

November 21: A vigilante association kills the town marshal when he tries to prevent them from lynching a prisoner at the San Angelo Jail. Future marshals let the vigilantes operate unchecked.

1856

June 30: Exaggerated tales of the killing of a prospector by a Native American prompt the Indian Springs Massacre. An angry mob attacks an encampment at Indian Springs, killing many Native Americans and burning their possessions. The shameful incident is ignored by local schools and historians for the next 125 years.

1858

October 7: Civic leaders, tired of the crime and violence dominating San Angelo, hire wandering lawman Gabriel Price to clean up the town.

Welcome to San Angelo



Illustration by Steve Bryant

Price names himself town marshal and begins to run troublemakers out of town. He also cracks down on the vigilance committees, which start to fade away.

1860

April 3: A Pony Express stop is established in San Angelo.

1861

October 24: The creation of a transcontinental telegraph line brings about the end of the Pony Express.

November 1: Outlaw Ethan "Sidewinder" Smith begins robbing stages en route to San Angelo. The wily robber manages to evade several posses led by Marshal Gabriel Price.

1862

July 1: Scottish immigrant Angus O'Toole publishes the first edition of the San Angelo Clarion. The weekly paper will go on to become one of the two largest daily papers in San Angelo.

1863

January 10: The Robber's Roost Shootout. Marshal Gabriel Price and a posse track outlaw Ethan "Sidewinder" Smith and his band to Robber's Roost, north of modern-day Lake Oro. "Sidewinder" Smith is killed in the subsequent gunfight. Price is wounded, but recovers.

1865

November 11: Entrepreneur Leland Shaw and banker Jeremiah Bannon found the Valley Pacific Railroad to link San Angelo to the transcontinental rail line under construction across the Sierra Nevada Mountains. The company brings thousands of Chinese laborers to California to help lay tracks. Some of the workers found the Chinatown neighborhood of San Angelo.

1866

January 1: Gabriel Price steps down after 8 years as town marshal. Grateful San Angelo residents and civic leaders present him with an engraved gold watch, and the aging lawman settles into a quiet retirement.

1868

February 24: A heavy rainstorm causes the Del Oro River to rise, resulting in the worst flooding to date in San Angelo. Twelve people are killed.

1873

April 20: The first public library is established in San Angelo.

September 5: The San Angelo Clarion reports on the rise of criminal tongs controlling illegal gambling, prostitution, opium dens and other crime in Chinatown. Efforts to blot out the tongs fail, as do suggestions to eradicate Chinatown itself.

1882

August 30: Fire sweeps through downtown San Angelo, gutting 23 buildings.

1884

September 12: Newly arrived Bishop Cristoforo D'Amico claims a parcel of land outside town for the Catholic Church. He launches preparations to construct an Old World cathedral to replace the sadly dilapidated chapel of the old Mission San Angeles.

October 20: A smallpox epidemic decimates nearby tribes of California Indians.

1886

April 13: Fire again devastates downtown San Angelo, despite the efforts of the volunteer fire brigade. Twelve buildings are destroyed and four people killed.

August 2: Joshua Price, son of famed lawman Gabriel Price, and partner Silas Hunter finish construction of the Hunter-Price Arms factory in Irish Bar.

1892

May 9: Craftsmen finish construction of the Cathedral of St. Mary, a vast Gothic church in a neighborhood that soon becomes known as Cathedral Square. But Bishop Cristoforo D'Amico, still dissatisfied, orders construction of other assorted religious structures surrounding the cathedral.

1897

November 3: Residents vote to incorporate San Angelo as a city, despite a vigorous anti-cityhood campaign by the Valley Pacific Railroad and other railroad interests.

1898

January 1: San Angelo officially becomes the newest incorporated city in California. The elected City Council takes office, with Hiram Washington serving as the first mayor. Pioneer prospector Samuel Brackett, an honored guest at the first council session, dies two days later at the age of 84.

1902

March 31: Vernon Fletcher publishes the first edition of the San Angelo Times, a daily newspaper competing against the now thrice-weekly San Angelo Clarion. The rival Clarion switches to daily editions a year later.

1915

September 1: University of California, San Angelo, founded.

1918

August 3: An earthquake hits the town of Marshall, destroying 12 buildings in the old-fashioned downtown district. The quake also causes moderate damage in San Angelo.

1919

February 14: The conflict in Europe ended, World War I pilot "Ace" Braddock returns home to San Angelo to become a daredevil barnstormer. Based at a South San Angelo airstrip that will later become a municipal airport named in his honor, Braddock performs at air shows throughout the western United States.

1923

December 5: Bishop Cristoforo D'Amico dies, bringing to an end the ceaseless construction at the Cathedral of St. Mary.

1925

September 2: The Order of the Knights Templar, an ultra-secret fraternal society, is established in San Angelo by financier Andreas Hunt. The club claims to trace its history back to a historical order of knighthood active in the Crusades. A nondescript meeting hall is built in Cathedral Square.

1926

June 10: Explorer Tyler North discovers a lost city of the Mayans in the Central American jungle. North and his compatriots fight their way out of an attempt to sacrifice them to the ancient Mayan gods, and make a narrow escape when an erupting volcano destroys the lost city.

July 23: The "Hatchet Wars," a bloody underworld conflict between rival tongs, erupts in Chinatown over control of the profitable opium and gambling trades.

1927

May 30: Following nearly nine months of killings, street fighting and other violence, the "Hatchet Wars" in Chinatown come to a close. The Wing Chao tong emerges as the dominant force in the Chinatown underworld. A mysterious young man known only as T'ien Lung now controls the tong following the assassination of its former head during the conflict.

1928

April 25: Adventurer Tyler North founds the Argonaut Society, an assembly of explorers, flying aces and other daredevils. The society builds a private dining club and museum in Midtown.

November 13: Aircraft designer Arnold Havelind and pilot Gig Norris



Illustration by Steve Bryant

form Norris Air in the back of a San Angelo drug store. Havelind designs racing biplanes for daredevil flier Norris.

1931

February 2: The Whisper, a masked crimefighter, breaks up a liquor smuggling ring on the San Angelo riverfront. An eerie cloaked figure who operates mostly at night, the Whisper strikes fear into the hearts of the city's criminals. He is the first of a handful of mystery men, dark avengers who fight for justice in the back alleys of San Angelo.

1932

December 5: Antonio "Hacksaw" Torricelli establishes a crime family in San Angelo and takes steps to control the illegal liquor trade in the city. Torricelli, whose claims of ties to East Coast mafia families are never proven, comes into immediate conflict with the Whisper.

1934

July 5: Pilot Gig Norris perishes in a mid-air collision at the San Angelo Airshow. His business partner, Arnold Havelind, renames their company Peregrine Aircraft and it goes on to become a top manufacturer of military and commercial airplanes.

1935

September 17: The last known sighting of the Whisper. In a battle

with the Torricelli gang, which took up gun-running following the repeal of Prohibition in 1933, the cloaked vigilante and his nemesis, gang leader Antonio "Hacksaw" Torricelli, are killed when a burning warehouse collapses. The Whisper's body is never found.

1936

August 29: A government lab in San Angelo accidentally creates what is later determined to be a singularity, a breakdown in the laws of space and time. The unstable singularity collapses 6.3 seconds later, but not before flooding the world with a burst of bizarre energy dubbed "flux" radiation by scientists. The strange energy field acts as a catalyst, making the impossible suddenly possible. A handful of people around the world develop superpowers in the wake of the incident, starting the so-called Golden Age of heroes.

1937

August 21: The Minuteman, a star-spangled hero who flies via a prototype jetpack, foils a downtown bank robbery. He turns the captured gunman over to the FBI. The Minuteman exemplifies a new breed of heroes, more colorful and straightforward than their shadowy predecessors, the mystery men.

1938

June 19: Explorer Tyler North departs on an expedition to investigate reports of a lost valley of prehistoric creatures. He never returns, and the Argonaut Society begins to fade away.

July 4: The Liberty Corps forms in San Angelo to battle crime, particularly the threat posed by newly created superhuman criminals. Founding members are Sky Ranger, Commando X, Dr. Oblivion, Nightingale, Colossal Man and Beast Girl. The Minuteman remains independent, but works with the Liberty Corps on occasion.

When one considers the vast cosmic power necessary to bring a singularity into being, the suggestion that a collection of scientists may have accidentally created one in the 1930s is fundamentally absurd.

Dr. Revette and his colleagues of 1936 could no more have created a freak singularity than my 8-year-old daughter could inadvertently build a fusion reactor from her chemistry set.

—excerpt from the *Journal of American Science*

1939

March 13: The Liberty Corps tangles with Clockwork and his gang of thugs during a jewel heist at the San Angelo Metropolitan Museum. Clockwork escapes in the first of

many confrontations with the hero team.

December 1: The U.S. Army Air Corps establishes Forgan Field, named after the first pilot from San Angelo killed in World War I, in Pleasant Grove.

1940

February 20: The Liberty Corps foils a scheme by Baron Frost to induce a new ice age on Earth, but not before the madman freezes half of downtown San Angelo. Fortunately, the corps rescues those trapped in the ice and keeps property damage to a minimum as the city thaws.

1941

December 8: The United States enters World War II. Hundreds of San Angelo residents enlist or report for military duty. An employment boom at Forgan Field brings thousands of out-of-work people to San Angelo from all over the nation, including many African Americans. When landlords refuse to rent to them, some build their own crude shacks out of aircraft parts crates in what will eventually become Pleasant Grove.

December 15: The Liberty Corps volunteers for active military duty. The Department of War declines, citing the damage to home-front morale

Welcome to San Angelo

should any heroes be killed in overseas combat. The heroes instead battle saboteurs, spies and fifth-columnists in the United States during World War II, though there are rumors of covert missions behind enemy lines.

1942

May 7: About 7,500 Japanese and Japanese-American residents of San Angelo, most of whom are farmers, are evacuated to internment camps in Modoc County and Arizona. In all, 110,000 Japanese-Americans from the West Coast are interned in spring.

November 3: The Minuteman foils a plot by the Nazi saboteur Doppelganger to destroy the Allied Chemicals plant in West San Angelo.

1943

September 29: A Japanese-American hero named the Silver Samurai debuts during the Allied invasion of Italy, assisting the 442nd Regimental Combat Team. Stars and Stripes later reports that the Silver Samurai, a first-generation Japanese-American whose parents own a San Angelo fruit orchard, volunteered for duty from the Tule Lake internment camp in Modoc County.

1945

May 14: The Liberty Corps heads to Europe just days after the fall of Germany to help round up fleeing Nazi superhumans. Extensive post-war investigations reveal that many Nazi "übermen" died on the battlefield during the final defense of Germany. Others were captured, but a few remain unaccounted for.

February 19: A new hero dubbed the Atomic Kid appears for the first time in combat on the island of Iwo Jima, helping U.S. Marines fight their way ashore.

September 20: Released from the internment camps, Japanese and Japanese-American families return home to San Angelo. Some find that their neighbors have looked after their homes and farms. Others, however, find their property destroyed or stolen.

October 2: Threats, arson and violence against returning Japanese and Japanese-American residents are reported, some reputedly involving local civic leaders and police.

November 18: The Liberty Corps offers memberships to returned super-veterans Atomic Kid and Silver Samurai. A furious Commando X threatens to quit the team if Silver Samurai, a Japanese-American, is allowed to join, but Nightingale persuades him to stay.

1946

May 29: Tensions between Liberty Corps teammates Commando X and

Silver Samurai ease after a mysterious mission to Japan. The two eventually become close friends.

October 7: Rumors that escaped Nazi leaders and superhumans are forming a "Fourth Reich" in South America begin to circulate.

1947

February 18: The Piper, a malevolent entity from another dimension, uses the arcane power of his magic flute to mind-control the people of San Angelo. The Liberty Corps is outlawed and goes on the run, pursued by local police and military forces under the Piper's sway.

February 21: Relying heavily on the mystic knowledge of Dr. Oblivion, the Liberty Corps battles the Piper and his mind-controlled minions in Cathedral Square.

The Piper is exiled to his home dimension, and the people of San Angelo are freed from his evil spell. Unbeknownst to the heroes, the Piper's magic flute remains behind. A passer-by later finds the instrument and sells it to a pawn shop, where it gathers dust for the next 50 years.

April 30: Nightingale and Sky Ranger of the Liberty Corps are married in a beautiful ceremony at the Cathedral of St. Mary. Nightingale announces her retirement from the hero team.

August 4: Commando X quits the Liberty Corps, though he and Silver Samurai remain friends. He becomes a covert government agent fighting communism in the U.S. and around the world.

1948

January 1: The Liberty Corps formally breaks up, though it has not acted as a team in several months. Beast Girl soon signs to star in movie theater serials for a Hollywood studio, while her colleagues become solo crimefighters, retire or find new careers.

February 5: Forgan Field is officially renamed Forgan Air Force Base, in keeping with the reorganization of the Army Air Corps into the independent U.S. Air Force in 1947.

1949

October 12: The House Committee on Un-American Activities, fresh from its investigations of Hollywood and the U.S. State Department, begins looking into possible communist leanings in the superhero community. HUAC investigators reveal that Beast Girl once belonged to a college debate club later identified as a communist front. No charges are brought, but her career as a movie serial star is destroyed and Beast Girl goes into seclusion.

1950

August 24: Someone steals an artifact reputed to be the mystical Spear of Destiny from a traveling exhibit at the San Angelo Metropolitan Museum. The relic is never recovered.

September 14: The federal government completes construction of Oro Dam, forming Lake Oro. Along with enhancing flood protection, the dam provides power and water for urban San Angelo.

November 29: The Atomic Kid, who had volunteered for military duty again after the dissolution of the Liberty Corps, is reported killed in action in Korea. The retirement of most heroes, and the incarceration, death or disappearance of their superhuman foes, brings the Golden Age to a close.

1954

January 18: Investors found Eclipse Industries in San Angelo. The corporation will eventually become a globe-spanning, multi-billion-dollar conglomerate.

1963

March 3: The Port of San Angelo opens to handle the cargo shipping needs of the region.

1965

April 23: The first passenger flight takes off from the newly constructed San Angelo Metropolitan Airport.

1966

November 4: Marjorie Quarles becomes the first woman elected to the San Angelo City Council.

March 10: Time traveler Averell Pendleton arrives in modern San Angelo after fleeing the violent, decaying Earth of 2061 through a prototype time-gate he had constructed.

1968

April 2: Liberty Square, a memorial to the Golden Age hero team in San Angelo, is dedicated in a ceremony involving most of the surviving members of the team. The inclusion of Beast Girl in a monument statue of the Liberty Corps sparks some controversy over her blacklisting during the post-war "Red Scare." Far-right organizations threaten to picket the dedication, and Beast Girl does not appear at the ceremony.

1970

January 17: Averell Pendleton founds Avalon Enterprises, a company devoted to humanitarian research aimed at solving problems such as world hunger and pollution.

August 5: Marietta Grey establishes the Temple of Atlantis in Midtown. Grey claims its teachings are based

on the spiritual enlightenment passed on to her by spirits of ancient Atlantis.

1972

March 16: Changes in California earthquake safety codes force the closure of the Cathedral of St. Mary and various related buildings. The archdiocesan offices are moved to St. Kieran's Catholic Church in City Center.

1977

September 8: Prominent attorney Davis Mackenzie is convicted of taking bribes in a scandalous trial that has gripped San Angelo all summer. His partner, Michael Bailey, is sentenced to prison after testifying against Mackenzie.

1978

February 9: Franklin Colt founds Orion Labs, a research-oriented company that soon leaps to the forefront of scientific and technological discovery.

1981

July 29: Harry Hogan, once the Golden Age hero known as Sky Ranger, publishes *Wings of Liberty*, his memoir on the adventures of the Liberty Corps. The book is a moderate best-seller.

1982

May 27: Physicist Hal Revette, a junior scientist at the creation of a freak singularity in 1936, succeeds in a 45-year effort to purposely create a singularity. Revette hoped to form a captive singularity as a power source, but an unexpected burst of energy destroys his equipment and university laboratory. Revette is believed dead, and the infinitely dense singularity sinks below the Earth's surface in an irregular orbit around the planet's core.

Like its 1936 predecessor, the singularity emits bizarre "flux" radiation, acting as a catalyst to the development of superhuman powers by some individuals. The greatest concentration of supers are created near San Angelo, the epicenter of the radiation, but paranormals soon appear around the world.

The connection between Revette's failed experiment, "flux" radiation and superpowers remains unknown, however.

1983

September 13: After numerous delays, the renovated Cathedral of St. Mary is reopened to the public on a limited basis. The Catholic Church decides not to refit the various other buildings in Cathedral Square to meet earthquake safety codes, and they

remain closed. Archdiocesan offices remain at St. Kieran's Catholic Church downtown.

1985

March 2: A wind-powered hero known as Twister appears in San Angelo, rescuing construction workers from a collapsing building.

April 23: In a ceremony marking the 20th anniversary of the San Angelo Metropolitan Airport, the rapidly expanding commercial hub is renamed the San Angelo International Airport.

1986

January 21: Kidnappers take the infant son of wealthy San Angelo financier Alastair McDermott. Alloy, a superstrong hero with a metallic body, rescues the child.

September 1: Marietta Grey takes young Kirsten Whitfield, a child with preognitive dreams, in at the New Age Temple of Atlantis. Whitfield grows up to become Dreamweaver.

1988

June 1: Ren Westlake, a fugitive war criminal from 2063, arrives in modern San Angelo after fleeing his pursuers through a prototype time-gate.

November 19: A gunman kills Harvey Chow, editor of the *Chinatown Express* newspaper, as the newsman eats his lunch at a Chinatown restaurant. The killer is never caught, though police link Chow's slaying to his numerous exposés on the tongs. His daughter, Suzy Chow, takes over the *Chinatown Express* and continues to report on organized crime in Chinatown.

1990

February 5: The Horizon Institute, a think tank focusing on the supers phenomenon, is founded.

March 15: Former Soviet geneticist Vladimir Kaminov founds Helix Technologies with his son and daughter-in-law. Secretly funded by time traveler Ren Westlake, the trio begins an intense effort to build hyper-advanced genetic engineering cloning and rapid maturation equipment.

September 22: Alloy dies at University Medical Center of a rare blood disorder related to his living metal body. Thousands of people attend his funeral.

1991

May 17: The Faraday Memorial Clinic, named for the late hero Kip Faraday, or Alloy, opens in midtown. Funded by financier Alastair McDermott, the clinic treats injured supers and normals caught in the crossfire of super-battles.

October 29: The Ferret, a superskilled freelance thief, steals a jewelry collection worth hundreds of thousands of dollars from the home of a wealthy San Angelino in his first appearance.

1992

July 1: The San Angelo Police Department establishes the Paranormal Alert Response Team to handle incidents involving superhuman criminals. The heavily armed, highly trained squad is the first such team to be formed by a local law enforcement agency in the United States.

November 26: The hero, Mind-Master, appears for the first time, foiling a robbery at a high-tech Arroyo Verde laboratory.

1993

January 13: Twister prevents Shrapnel from carrying out a threat to destroy City Hall, but suffers crippling injuries in the battle.

August 9: The thief known as the Ferret defeats an ultra-high-tech security system to steal plans for a prototype fuel cell from Orion Labs for a corporate rival.

November 2: A never-before-seen super, whom the press dubs Amok, goes on a destructive rampage through downtown San Angelo, causing extensive property damage. He disappears among the rubble while police and fire personnel are busy rescuing trapped victims.

1994

January 1: The Justice Foundation think tank forms a hero team of the same name. Founding members are leader Corona, Cavalier, Azteca and Savant.

January 21: Peregrine Aircraft donates a prototype VTOL passenger jet, dubbed the Turbojet, to the Justice Foundation.

February 15: Wealthy heir Robin Fleming injects himself with the experimental paragon drug. The drug accelerates his physical and mental development to an astonishing degree. Fleming quickly reaches the apex of normal human ability, becoming a perfect human. He decides to put his new abilities to work for the good of humanity, and begins an intense training regimen in the martial arts, gymnastics and other skills.

August 4: Cost-cutting on safety precautions causes a toxic spill at Allied Chemicals, an Eclipse Industries subsidiary. Sisters Christina and Maria Spiros are among those injured.

September 19: The first *Twister's* restaurant opens in the fashionable Wharves district. Filled with supers memorabilia, the theme restaurant is owned by retired hero Twister.

October 21: Having returned home to the Midwest with her still-comatose sister, Christina Spiros discovers that the mutagenic properties of the toxics spilled at Allied Chemicals have given her sound-based powers. She begins to train herself in her newfound abilities.

December 12: Dr. Anton Megalo goes underground after authorities discover his cybernetic experiments on patients at San Angelo County General Hospital.

1995

February 28: Helix Technologies succeeds in creating a human clone with peak normal human abilities. Named Cameron, he is rapidly matured in a special nutrient tank developed by the lab.

April 18: Cloning expert Vladimir Kaminov dies in a boating accident on Lake Oro. Two days later, the Helix Technologies lab is destroyed in a fire. Cameron disappears.

May 7: Peter and Judy Kaminov resolve to secretly carry on the work of Helix Technologies and embark on a crash program to recreate the lost cloning equipment.

May 24: Robin Fleming makes his debut as Paragon, the Perfect Human, fighting crime in San Angelo with perfect precision according to a perfectly designed master strategy. The brilliant, handsome Paragon becomes a public figure, making television appearances and authoring articles for prominent magazines.

July 2: Amok goes berserk in the Armory neighborhood downtown, demolishing several stores and smashing countless cars. The Justice Foundation battles him to a standstill, but the crazed Amok pulls a building down around himself and the team barely escapes. Amok disappears.

September 30: Supervisor Rod Weber is killed when his Jeep overturns while he works on his Garret's Landing farm. Weber, who was alone at the time, is found dead several hours later.

October 11: The Paragon Fan Club forms, encouraging young people to keep physically fit, stay in school, resist pressure to use drugs and keep out of gangs.

November 2: Erik Bates, a retired defensive end for the San Angelo Miners football team, wins election to the Board of Supervisors in a special election to replace the late Rod Weber.

1996

January 19: Suffering from amnesia, the clone Cameron begins competing in underground pit-fighting bouts—some to the death—as Bloodsport.

February 20: Marietta Grey, founder of the Temple of Atlantis, dies. Her protege, Dreamweaver, who has the power to enter and influence dreams, takes over as head of the New Age temple.

May 1: The freelance thief known as the Ferret steals materials from an ultra-secure U.S. Army laboratory in the Midwest for an unknown employer.

May 19: After turning the lab materials over to his contractor, the Ferret learns they include test batches of a deadly plague virus developed by the military. The Ferret infiltrates the secret base of his former employer, retrieves the viral samples and returns them to the Army.

August 30: An anti-Paragon backlash swells among San Angelinos fed up with the perfectly annoying perfectness of the hero. Paragon announces he will not be seeking office in 1996.

1997

March 24: Peter Quayle, a young college music student, buys a secondhand flute from a Cathedral Square pawn shop. Quayle discovers that the flute has arcane powers, and takes on the role of the Bard, a mystic protector of Cathedral Square, as he learns more about the flute's power. He does not know the instrument is actually an ancient magical artifact once used by the Piper.

June 3: San Angelo homemaker Mary Anne Battaglia founds STOP, or Supers Trashing Our Peace, which decries violent public battles between paranormals.

July 26: Peregrine Aircraft hires Dynamo, a Georgia superhero who gained fame for being the first superhero to make commercial endorsements, as its new security consultant. Her actual duties primarily involve public relations work. Dynamo moves to San Angelo.

September 18: Photon appears and attempts to free Amok during a hearing at the San Angelo County Courthouse. The Justice Foundation and Paragon battle Photon over downtown San Angelo, narrowly forcing him to flee. Amok disappears in the confusion, but Photon's apparent plan to recruit him for a new band of superhuman criminals fails. Photon vows revenge on the heroes for interfering with him.

October 1: Christina Spiros returns to San Angelo with a list of names of those she holds responsible for the 1994 accident at an Eclipse Industries subsidiary. As the sonic-powered Siren, she intends to make company executives pay for their negligence—with a vengeance.



Illustration by Storn Cook

The moon rises over downtown San Angelo, a pale golden orb against the night sky as I fly my nightly patrol over the darkened streets of the city. First to the Twilight Tower, a slate-gray monolith towering over even its companion skyscrapers in City Center. The frenetic energy of the financial heart of the Golden City has faded with the sun, and I take a two-minute rest.

Then it's off to Midtown. Another fistfight at 13th and Kirby, outside Rocky's Bar and Grill, but two SAPD patrol cars pull up. I hover overhead, listening to the live music pounding its way out of the bar—sounds like Roughhouse. I wish I had time to listen longer, but the officers are separating the combatants and it's time for the Cathedral Square leg of my patrol.

The streets of Cathedral Square are silent and deserted, as always. I don't know why I bother with this part of my route, actually. I think I love the Gothic architecture, especially the Cathedral of St. Mary, too much to drop it. Another two-minute rest stop, among the stone gargoyles on an older building near the cathedral. The bells begin to toll, and a cloud of bats emanates from the belfry, flying about the spiky Old World church towers in consternation.

The radio button in my right ear beeps twice—a message from Justice Foundation HQ. Savant has the monitor duty tonight. He tells me that Anarchy has been sighted down in Arroyo Verde. Probably some kind of burglary scheme at one of the high-tech labs out there.

I tell Savant to warm up the Turbojet—I'm on my way in...

— Private journal of Callie Dalton, a.k.a. Corona

VITAL STATISTICS

Geography: Size: 247 square miles (metropolitan area) (18 miles long by 14 miles wide); **Average Elevation:** 133 feet; **Climate:** Temperate.

Population: County: 3,041,213; City: 1,532,782; Unincorporated county: 1,508,431; **Civilian Workforce:** 1.6 million

Racial Background: White: 52%, Black: 14%, American Indian: .95%, Latino: 22%, Asian/Pacific Islander: 11%, Other: .5%.

Religious Background: Percentage of population attending religious services in past seven days: 41%; **Religious demographic:** Catholic: 43%, Muslim: 2.5%, Buddhist: 2.1%, Protestant: 46%, Jewish: 3.4%, Other: 3%; **Leading Protestant Denominations:** Church of Jesus Christ, Latter-Day Saints, Southern Baptist, Presbyterian Church USA, Assemblies of God.

Economics: **Average household incomes:** \$22,200 in Brenton to \$128,000 in Lakeview; **Households below poverty line:** 12.4%; **Unemployment:** 6.8%; **Median home price:** \$124,000; **Average rent (two-bedroom apartment):** \$440 to \$675/mo.

Politics: **Registered voters:** 62%; **Average election turnout:** 44.6%; **Political Party Affiliation:** Democrat: 48%, Republican: 41%, Independent: 5%, Libertarian: 3%, Green: 2%, Other: 1%; **Government, city:** Mayor Alex Martinez, City Council; **Government, county:** Board of Supervisors.

Tallest Buildings: Twilight Tower, 42 floors (567 feet); Prospector Bank Building, 38 floors (513 feet); San Angelo Corporate Center, 32 floors (432 feet).

AYOUT OF THE REGION

San Angelo County lies at the heart of a broad river valley, nestled against the foothills with the Sierra Nevada mountains to the northeast and east. The wedge-shaped county extends southward along the Del Oro River to the edge of a delta feeding into the Pacific Ocean.

Metropolitan San Angelo covers the northern two-thirds or so of the county. Most of the rest of the region is rural farmland, marked by farmhouses, dairies and an occasional small town.

Oro County lies to the west, just across the Del Oro River from the city. The Port of San Angelo and community of West San Angelo are located in Oro County. The rest of the county is heavily agricultural, consisting mainly of thousands of acres of farmland and a few small towns.

LAKES AND RIVERS

Two rivers and a reservoir are the main waterways of San Angelo County.

The Del Oro River, roughly translated as River of Gold, flows down from the Sierras through the foothills northeast of the metropolis. Most of the prospecting of Gold Rush-era San Angelo took place on this river.

Oro Dam blocks the river just north of San Angelo, forming Lake Oro reservoir. The lake is a key source of drinking water for the city, not to mention a popular recreation attraction. The federal government built the dam in 1950 to provide flood protection and power for the region.

I heard something on the radio about it—someone's threatening to blow up Oro Dam again? No, I'm not worried. The heroes will stop them.

They always do.

-Mindy Rivers, 34, massage therapist

Below the dam, the river flows through the downtown to its confluence with the San Angelo River, then continues on to the delta and the Pacific Ocean.

The Del Oro River is not navigable above the confluence, but it is popular with rafters. Whitewater enthusiasts prefer the much more challenging stretches above Lake Oro, though.

The San Angelo River flows down from the foothills east of town, heading west to the confluence. The river is navigable to the foothills, but most cargo ships now put in at the port, south of the confluence. Wide and placid, the San Angelo River is popular for fishing, boating and water-skiing.

Both the San Angelo and Del Oro rivers can be unexpectedly cold, especially during the spring snowmelt, and have dangerous currents. Several people drown on both rivers every year.

AREAS OF THE REGION

The landscape around metropolitan San Angelo contains some locales of interest in and of themselves.

THE DELTA

The Del Oro River feeds into a delta leading to the Pacific Ocean at the extreme southern tip of San Angelo County.

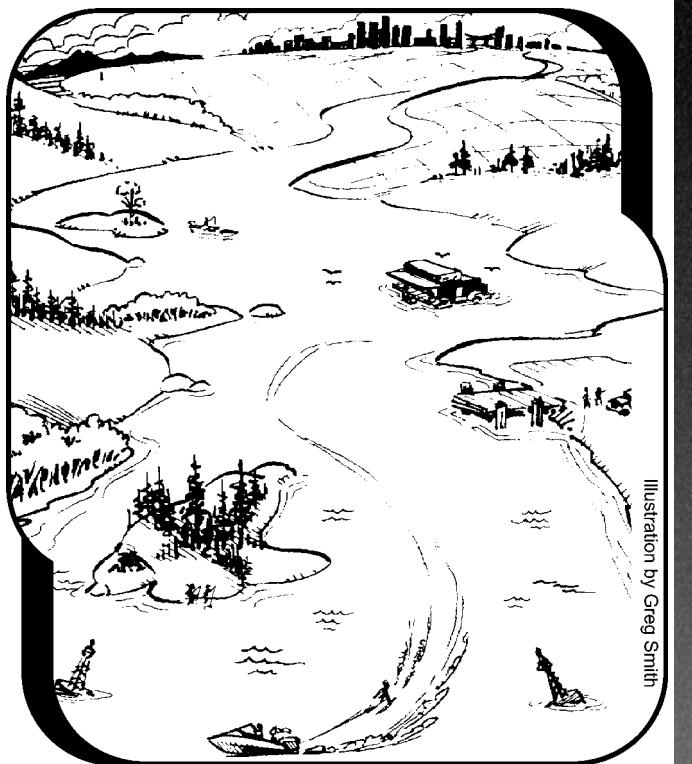


Illustration by Greg Smith

A dreamy land of drawbridges, ferries, wandering waterways and morning mists, the fertile delta region contains 50 or more islands and more than a thousand miles of maze-like channels.

The timeless bayou country has reminded more than one person of the Deep South.

Water-skiers are a common sight on the delta, while the region's striped bass, bluegill, sturgeon and black bass draw countless anglers. Houseboat excursions are also popular.

THE FOOTHILLS

The Gold Country, a forested region of gently rolling foothill country laced by rivers that pour down from the Sierra Nevada, lies to the east of San Angelo.

Covered bridges, mining museums, swimming holes and ghost towns are just some of the sights, intermixed with an occasional town or 19th-century hotel.

Several closed mines are found in the Gold Country, along with a few active mining operations. The foothills are also home to some award-winning wineries.

REGIONAL COMMUNITIES

While the city of San Angelo dominates the region, the county contains several small rural communities, two of which are also incorporated cities.

CANFIELD

A town of 12,000 people located near Lake Oro, Canfield relies on the nearby reservoir and California State Prison, Canfield, to underpin its economy.

Every summer, hundreds of thousands of people on their way to the beaches, marinas and campgrounds surrounding Lake Oro pass through Canfield. Gas stations, swimwear shops, boat rentals and others capitalize on the traffic to snare some business. Restaurants, outdoors supply stores and bait shops also benefit.

A Description of San Angelo

The state prison located just outside town provides a steadier source of employment. Prison jobs have supported some Canfield families for generations, and the town reciprocates with strong support for the institution.

An incorporated city, Canfield is governed by its own five-person City Council. The city contracts with the San Angelo County Sheriff's Department for law enforcement.

GARRETT'S LANDING

A sleepy delta town of 2,000 people, Garrett's Landing lies along the Del Oro River as it makes its way to the ocean amid a series of sloughs and islands. The town gained its name as an early shipping stop frequented by the colorful steamboat captain Quincy Garrett.

Today, bait shops, general stores and filling stations are pretty much the height of the commercial scene in Garrett's Landing. A few bars and restaurants compete to attract tourists returning from a day of water-borne fun on the delta.

Delta Community College is located just outside town, and a small community hospital in town provides basic medical care for delta residents.

Garrett's Landing is an unincorporated community governed by the county.

MARSHALL

A rural community of about 15,000 in southern San Angelo County, Marshall anchors the vanishing farming heritage of San Angelo County.

The small town has an almost Midwestern look, complete with a looming water tower emblazoned with the Wildcat logo of the Marshall High School football team.

Agriculture and ag-related industry provide most of the jobs in Marshall. Tractor dealers, farm insurers, canneries and feed stores are just a few of the key businesses in town. Outside town are numerous dairies, along with some farmland and cattle ranches.

The Marshall Airport, home to several cropdusters, lies on the edge of town, and the San Angelo County Landfill is just a few miles away.

An incorporated city, Marshall has its own City Council and small police department. A volunteer fire department with a core of paid personnel provides fire protection.

POINTS OF INTEREST

Canfield Indian Rancheria: A 20-acre reservation for Native Americans found a few miles outside the town of Canfield. About 30 families from various tribes live on the rancheria in a collection of modest houses and mobile homes.

Unemployment and poverty are serious problems for many rancheria residents.

The state established Canfield Indian Rancheria in 1923 for homeless Native Americans of any California tribe. A united council elected by residents oversees the rancheria.

Residents are discussing opening an Indian casino, featuring card games and bingo, to provide jobs and bring in revenue to upgrade living conditions at the rancheria. The proposal has nearby residents worried about increased traffic.

Clavell Quarry: A closed granite quarry near the town of Marshall. In its heyday, the operation provided granite for the construction of several city landmarks, including California State Prison, Canfield, and the San Angelo County Courthouse.

The quarry shut down in the 1960s, and the deep pit is now filled by rainwater. It is a popular swimming hole for youngsters from nearby Marshall.

Lightning Strike Mine: An abandoned gold mine in the hills around Lake Oro. The Lightning Strike Mining Co. operated the mine for more than 80 years before the gold gave out in 1971.

The mine, a maze-like warren of tunnels and shafts, is closed to the public due to the numerous hazards, including cave-ins, unmarked shafts, pockets of poison gas and flooding.

While the Lightning Strike Mine may be the most extensive, there are numerous old gold mines in the foothills above the reservoir.

OTHER POINTS OF INTEREST

California State Prison, Canfield (p. 111)
 Delta Community College (p. 114)
 Delta Community Hospital
 Marshall Airport (p. 64)
 Marshall Community Hospital
 San Angelo County Landfill (p. 77)

LAYOUT OF THE CITY

The city of San Angelo got its start at the confluence of the San Angelo and Del Oro rivers. Now a sprawling metropolis, the city has outgrown these early boundaries to cover an immense area.

The actual city limits of San Angelo only enclose a portion of the metropolis—about half the residents of urban San Angelo live in unincorporated communities governed by the county.

Like most other West Coast cities, the population density of San Angelo is low compared to East Coast cities. High-rises are really only found downtown, mostly in City Center, and mainly provide office space for businesses.

NEIGHBORHOODS

San Angelo: City of Heroes describes every part of the city, from the downtown to the suburbs. Each community is broken down into numerous neighborhoods, some of which are also described.

But no effort has been made to describe every neighborhood in San Angelo—for one thing, there are hundreds of neighborhoods in the metropolis! More importantly for gamers, leaving parts of some communities open allows GMs to create their own neighborhoods for specific adventures, PC backgrounds or other purposes.

Future Gold Rush Games products set in San Angelo may also provide details on new neighborhoods.

On a slightly different neighborhood-related topic, San Angelo is home to people of almost every ethnic, national and religious background imaginable. A few neighborhoods, such as Chinatown (see *The Dragon's Gate: San Angelo's Chinatown*), have become identified with people of a particular background.

This does not mean that everyone in Chinatown has a Chinese background, however. And it certainly doesn't imply that every Chinese or Chinese American person in San Angelo lives in Chinatown.



Illustration by Storn Cook

Even in the center of town, high-density residential buildings such as apartment houses with hundreds of tenants are fairly rare. Most people prefer to live in a house or small apartment complex.

Outside the city core, single-family homes are the norm. Suburban apartments, condos, offices and stores rarely rise higher than three or four stories. Retail businesses line most major streets, clustered in strip malls or shopping centers intermixed with office parks.

As a result, urban San Angelo sprawls over a huge portion of the county. Cars or mass transit are a virtual necessity, particularly outside the downtown.

THE STREETS

Streets in central San Angelo tend to follow a grid pattern. In the downtown, north-south streets are lettered, while east-west streets are numbered. Some downtown streets are one-way, and narrow alleys between buildings are common on many blocks.

In outlying parts of the city, roads follow the typical suburban model of meandering neighborhood streets feeding into wide boulevards that serve as major traffic corridors. Many streets have Spanish names, while others are named after prominent San Angelinos.

Time, like an ever-rolling stream,
Bears all its sons away;
They fly forgotten, as a dream
Dies at the opening day.
Isaac Watts, Psalm 90

-Inscription at base of Minuteman statue

The metropolis has expanded over the years to engulf several formerly outlying towns, such as Lakeview and Castle Heights. The old-fashioned grid-style downtowns reappear in the older parts of these communities.

TOP 5 BUSIEST DOWNTOWN INTERSECTIONS

1. Mission St. and Center Parkway (F8)
2. Liberty Blvd. and Center Parkway (F5)
3. Curry St. & Wayne St. (C9)
4. Kane St. & Center Parkway (F7)
5. Curry St. & Lee St. (E9)

PROMINENT LANDMARKS

Cathedral of St. Mary: Famous cathedral built at the turn of the century.

Gold Panner Statue: A stone monument sculpture of a grizzled gold panner holding up a nugget. Sculpted in the 1960s, the statue stands outside City Hall.

Liberty Square: Large public park containing monuments to supers, including the Liberty Corps statue.

Minuteman Circle: A traffic circle in Confluence Point Park near City Center. A bronze statue of the Minuteman, a revered San Angelo hero of the Golden Age, stands in the center of the circle, ringed by flowerbeds.

Mission San Angeles: Historic building.

Twilight Tower: Well known building in San Angelo.

A Description of San Angelo

AREAS OF THE CITY

A great profusion of communities comprise the city of San Angelo. Fast-paced center of business, outlying bedroom community or gritty industrial district, every area plays a vital role in the life of the city.

POINTS OF INTEREST

In the interest of space, landmarks that are described in other chapters are not detailed under neighborhood Points of Interest. A box in each Points of Interest listing explains where to find landmarks covered by other chapters.

Pocket parks, small plazas and other local points of interest are described under the appropriate community, unless they are considered landmarks or regional attractions.

The * symbol marks sites particularly suited for hero or villain bases.

TOP 5 BEAUTIFUL NEIGHBORHOODS

1. Poverty Gulch
2. Falcon Bluff
3. Brackett Park
4. Royal Grove
5. Piper Glen

Source: San Angelo Board of Realtors

See that crack in the wall? Chrome did that with her bare fist. She was trying to punch Azteca, but he dodged just then so Chrome missed.

I saw it all from the restaurant where I work, across the street. When it was all over, Azteca asked me out. But that's a whole other story...

-Stephanie Van Dorn, 22, waitress

COMMERCE AND INDUSTRY

San Angelo has a thriving economy based on high-tech industry, though retail and service-oriented enterprises also keep the financial heart of the city pumping. In addition, public employment, including civilian jobs at Forgan Air Force Base, makes up a healthy chunk of the San Angelo job market.

Downtown San Angelo is the heart of the city's business scene. Skyscrapers and office towers house the headquarters of several top corporations, along with every kind of business or professional office imaginable.

Stores and other retail outlets are found throughout San Angelo, of course. Several huge shopping malls are located in the downtown, La Vista and South San Angelo areas.

Heavy industry is concentrated in Northside, Southport and West San Angelo, while high-tech enterprises tend to congregate in Arroyo Verde.

Light industrial operations are scattered throughout the city, often in small complexes of inexpensive warehouse-style buildings.

I remember my dad telling me about Velocidad racing the freight trains back in the '40s as they came into town, heading for the rail yard. He always won, of course.

-Diane Hazleton, 41, homemaker

TOP 15 EMPLOYERS

Employer	Employees
1. San Angelo County	32,727
2. Peregrine Aircraft	23,390
3. San Angelo City Unified School District	17,159
4. City of San Angelo	16,244
5. Univ. of California, San Angelo	12,415
6. Forgan Air Force Base (civilian jobs)	10,300
7. University Medical Center	7,000
8. Kelley Hospitals	6,960
9. FoodBasket Markets	6,855
10. HyperDyne Computers	6,500
11. Anderson Pharmaceuticals	5,620
12. St. Mary's Hospitals	5,210
13. Consolidated Electronics	4,940
14. Taiyo Corp.	4,485
15. California State Univ., San Angelo	2,702

Source: San Angelo Chamber of Commerce

THE PORT OF SAN ANGELO

The Port of San Angelo, actually located opposite the city in Oto County, handles the cargo shipping needs of the region.

Opened in 1963, the 450-acre facility includes countless piers, cranes, rail spurs, grain elevators and warehouses. About 220 people work for the port, which handles up to 1.6 million tons of cargo every year.

A panel named by local cities and counties oversees port operations, which brought in \$14.1 million in 1997 revenues.

The Port of San Angelo has never performed as well as expected, however. Best-suited for shipping bulk commodities, the port opened just as heavy manufacturing plants gave way to light industry and high-technology enterprises.

Agriculture and timber products from surrounding counties remain the primary cargoes passing through the port.

I'm hanging out in this traffic jam on Wayne Street when suddenly-KA-BLAM!-there's this explosion up the street. Everyone jumps out of their cars and we see these supers slugging it out a few blocks up.

Total bummer, man. Non-violence-increase the peace, you know? Anyway, all these freaky psychedelic flashes and explosions are going off, but it's all happening too fast for us to figure out what's going on.

Then this flaming dude comes flying right over us. Sparks are falling everywhere, people are screaming and diving under cars. Real wild scene. So this other flying dude comes barreling along and lays the first guy out with a wicked uppercut.

He lands-KA-RUNCH!-right on the roof of my '69 VW. He's wasted, out cold, but my Bug catches fire anyway. I'm standing there thinking, 'My Grateful Dead tapes!'

My insurance guy totaled it out. I was bummed. I really dug that VW.

-"Starchild" Zane, 44, record shop owner

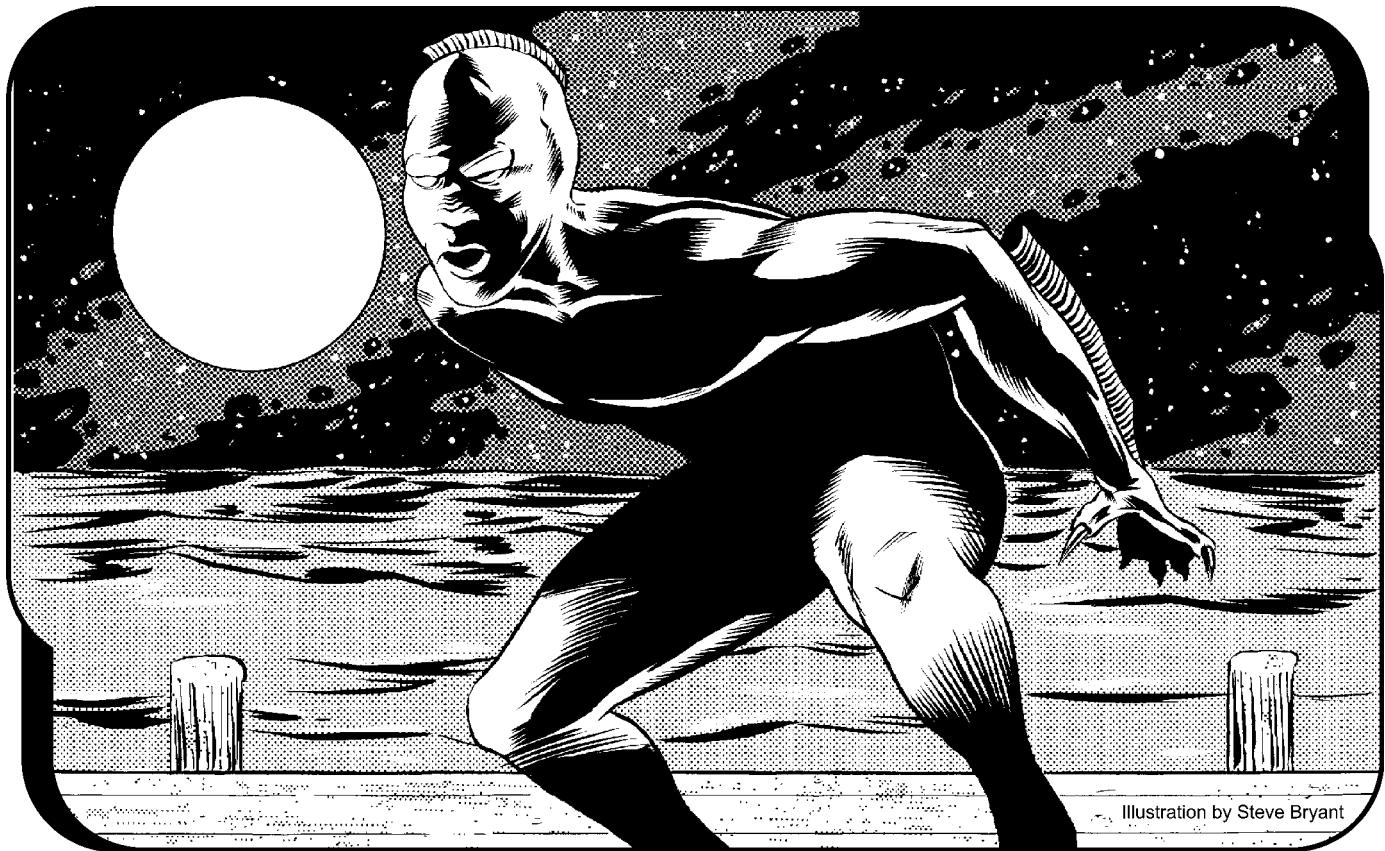


Illustration by Steve Bryant

TOP 5 PORT CARGOES (1997)

1. Rice (401,203 tons)
2. Wood Chips (388, 992 tons)
3. Fertilizer (173,435 tons)
4. Wheat/Corn (95,312 tons)
5. Logs (60,083 tons)

Source: Port of San Angelo

THE RAIL YARD

The 610-acre Valley Pacific Railroad freight yard in Pleasant Grove played a vital role in the early days of San Angelo.

Built at the opening of the transcontinental railroad shortly after the Civil War, the yard helped keep the town going after the Gold Rush dried up. First agriculture, then industry relied on the railroad to carry goods to market.

CAMPAIGN TIP

The Valley Pacific Railroad freight yards are a great setting for a super-battle, with plenty of boxcars and locomotives for bricks to toss around—though the financial aftermath of such a clash might be less enjoyable.

The yards are also a cool place for a running battle between low- or even non-powered enemies. There are plenty of hiding places, not to mention lots of cover and chances for exciting close encounters with speeding locomotives.



In spite of increased competition from the trucking and air freight industries, the railroad continues to play a vital role in the San Angelo economy. And the rail yard is the nerve center of the railroad.

Trains from across the United States are broken up at the yard into individual boxcars, which are then reassembled into new trains bound for various destinations. It's all done to keep the freight carried by rail moving as efficiently and quickly as possible.

The yard sees 12,500 boxcars a week and services 85 locomotives daily. The operation employs 1,560 people and has a \$91 million payroll.

Railroad security officers patrol the 4-mile-long yard on constant lookout for hobos, who illegally hop free rides on freight trains to travel all over the United States. Intruders in the freight yard are arrested for trespassing, but the ceaseless tide of transients foils every attempt to end the practice.

Pollution is also a serious problem at the Valley Pacific Railroad yard, particularly soil and water contamination left over from the careless practices of its early days.

THE WATERFRONT

An extensive levee system lines the rivers in San Angelo, augmenting the flood protection provided by Oro Dam. Built of packed earth, the levees are covered by grass, boulders and sometimes concrete to curb erosion.

Construction on the berms, aside from an occasional road or bicycle path, is prohibited to protect the integrity of the levee system. Even so, the reclamation districts charged with levee upkeep fight a constant battle with gophers, erosion and other problems.

The Del Oro River Parkway, stretching from Lake Oro to the downtown, is a 30-mile-long system of bicycle paths, parks and

A Description of San Angelo

CAMPAIGN TIP

The Waterfront area is an excellent place for characters to encounter any number of homeless people, as the river is a popular place to live for many of them. Characters with a related secret identity or a contact among the transients living along the river may have ties to the Waterfront and/or the Del Oro Parkway.

The river itself may be the home of a character's private boat, docked at one of the public (and private) piers that can be found along the river. A super team that owns a water craft may likewise dock their craft on the river, allowing them quick access to Lake Oro, the Del Oro and San Angelo rivers, and even the ocean (via a trip through the Delta, of course).

 nature areas. A popular, beautiful retreat to the north of the city, the parkway is truly one of the jewels of San Angelo. Crowds of bicyclists, in-line skaters, hikers, joggers and other visitors of all ages can be found on the parkway's paths and trails at all times of year.

A less hospitable extension of the parkway lines the river through downtown San Angelo. Thick underbrush edges much of the narrow, crumbling bicycle paths, which are less well-traveled than the rest of the parkway. San Angelinos consider the downtown parkway a little dangerous.

Elsewhere, the riverfront has not been extensively developed. A collection of riverside restaurants and a few paddlewheelers can be found on the Del Oro River in The Wharves district downtown.

THE CITY CORE

The frenetic, fast-paced downtown and laid-back neighborhoods of Midtown constitute the core of the Golden City.

DOWNTOWN

The heart of San Angelo, downtown encompasses a profusion of diverse neighborhoods. Shining skyscrapers rise from the bustling financial nerve center of City Center to define the San Angelo skyline, while a few blocks away tourists crowd the streets of Chinatown hoping to experience a taste of the Orient.

I was working at the Twilight Tower when that awful Hardcase man attacked. The building just started shaking. The computer slid right off my desk!

We ran for the elevators, but someone told us they weren't safe so we went down the stairs. Twenty-eight stories down! All this noise and debris falling, it was terrible.

We didn't even know what was happening until someone with a transistor radio told us that Hardcase was threatening to tear down the building. The Justice Foundation showed up to stop him. By the time we got down to the lobby, it was all over.

I had to take a week off to calm my nerves. They had to close the office while the building was repaired, anyway.

-Nancy Griffith, 51, secretary

The rivers are more dangerous than many people think. Every summer there are nearly a hundred drownings. Most of those were people that weren't wearing a life jacket.

I can't stress the importance of wearing a life vest. Most people can't breathe underwater. The kids are the worst. They all want to emulate their favorite super. It's not a problem until they decide that their favorite super is Riptide. I've pulled more than one of them out of the river. It's a damn shame.

- Eric Kenson, 29, rescue diver

Five-star hotels, fine dining, theaters, nightclubs and other attractions add to the sparkle of the downtown, as do numerous statues, monuments and plazas celebrating the city's past. And the shadows of the high-rises fall across a few neighborhoods in decay, places of fear and grim despair.

San Angelo got its start in the area now considered downtown, and several of the oldest neighborhoods of the city are found there. In particular, the restored 1800s-era storefronts of Old San Angelo recreate the early days of the city for visitors and schoolchildren.

Now the economic nucleus of San Angelo, the modern downtown is primarily a business district that attracts hundreds of thousands of suburban commuters each day. From the tallest office tower to the humblest old-fashioned grocery, the businesses found downtown play a vital role in the daily commerce of San Angelo.

Residential neighborhoods are also part of downtown, though they tend to be overlooked by outsiders. The housing market consists chiefly of older apartment homes, second-story flats over storefronts and a scattering of houses.

The people of downtown are as diverse as its neighborhoods, ranging from artists in hip Riverfront lofts to pensioners in cheap Armory rooming hotels. The homeless are a sizable, and very visible, component of the downtown population.

The high concentration of people and businesses in downtown San Angelo gives rise to a booming crime rate, though only a few neighborhoods are thought to be really dangerous. City police have a strong presence throughout the area.

THE ARMORY

A gritty neighborhood of rooming hotels, shelters, liquor stores and soup kitchens, the Armory takes its name from the central National Guard Armory.

The last stop for San Angelo's down-and-out, the neighborhood has one of the highest concentrations of homeless people in the city. Despite complaints by Vietnamese and Laotian refugee families who have moved into the Armory, nothing seems likely to change.

Dilapidated brick hotels, some nearly a century old, rise over Armory streets crowded by shelters, dining halls, missions and other charities. A handful of neighborhood stores, offices and cafes occupy age-worn commercial buildings, though many storefronts stand empty.

The National Guard Armory, a blocky, concrete structure, and the San Angelo County General Hospital are the two largest buildings in the neighborhood.

Seedy liquor stores scattered along the main boulevards, intermixed with an occasional greasy spoon diner, thrift store or gloomy bar, constitute the bulk of the Armory commercial scene.

Back streets are home to recyclers, body shops and other light industry.

Enterprising Vietnamese and Laotian newcomers to the neighborhood have opened a few small restaurants featuring Southeast Asian cuisine.

There are few houses in the neighborhood, but some older storefronts have second-story flats. Rooming hotels, aging structures nearly a century old, offer long-term housing for those too poor to scrape up the deposit for an apartment. Most tenants of these dingy, pest-infested hotels are just a short step from homelessness.

Cheap apartment homes near the looming San Angelo County General Hospital house recent waves of Vietnamese and Laotian immigrants, who are unhappy about the ever-declining state of the neighborhood and the large numbers of street people.

Panhandlers are endemic in the Armory, and homeless people of all descriptions shuffle through the neighborhood in daylight hours. At night, many find refuge in doorways or alleys.

A glut of dining halls, shelters and other charitable endeavors are found in the Armory, including the Golden Rule complex and the county-run N Street Shelter.

Residents of nearby neighborhoods claim that the concentration of social services in the Armory serves as a magnet to the homeless, but have so far failed to persuade the City Council to force some of the shelters to relocate.

City police are a regular sight on Armory streets, where they handle endless cases of public intoxication, disturbances, noise complaints and fistfights between derelicts. Reported crimes in the Armory tend to involve property thefts or trespassing, but crimes against the homeless are rarely reported to police. Assaults, robberies, rapes and even murders are not unknown among the down-and-out residents of the Armory.

CHINATOWN

In the shadow of gleaming City Center high-rises, the 50 square blocks of non-stop chaos comprising Chinatown are distinct from any other part of the city. Colorful, noisy and crowded, this neighborhood has the highest population density of any in San Angelo.

Though not quite as renowned as San Francisco's, the San Angelo Chinatown attracts a fair number of visitors each year. Innumerable restaurants, souvenir shops and other attractions can be found here, but the profusion of gloomy alleyways winding off the main streets lead to the true Chinatown of grocery stores, temples, laundries and bakeries.

Founded by Chinese railroad workers in the late 1800s, Chinatown flourished for a time but then stagnated until anti-Chinese immigration laws were lifted in the 1960s. Now no longer solely Chinese, the neighborhood has also become home to Japanese, Vietnamese, Laotian, Cambodian, Thai, Korean and Filipino immigrants.

Chinatown began to stir the interest of visitors in the late 1950s, and business ventures catering to the tourist trade are now nearly everywhere.

A succession of souvenir shops, gaudily decorated with gold-ornamented portals and brightly painted balconies, hawk plastic Buddhas, floppy hats and other tacky merchandise on Canton Street. Intersecting Canton Street, Peking Street is closer to the real thing, with fresh-air markets offering fish, fruit and vegetables, as well as spice stores and bakeries.

But the dark, narrow back alleys threading through Chinatown conceal all manner of treasures, including forgotten curio shops,



Illustration by Steve Bryant

authentic restaurants, quiet temples, various historic sites and a handful of Chinese cultural centers.

Crime in Chinatown is controlled by tongs, originally benevolent associations formed to help the Chinese populace get by in an often hostile new world. The tongs also controlled the vice and opium trades in Chinatown, and over time these activities

I had to get to a meeting with a client, a very important client. We're talking about a deal worth millions of dollars, got that? Millions! And the traffic light was still yellow when I pulled into the intersection. That's a fact.

A station wagon comes flying into the intersection and I, that is, there's a collision. I climb out of my Jag and look around. I'm not hurt, thank God. But the woman in the station wagon is making a horrible racket. Probably already planning her lawsuit—you know, I don't think she even had a job. Probably some kind of welfare queen.

So I get out my cell phone to call my client and let him know I'm going to be late. Oh, some riff-raff loafing around on the sidewalk came over to help the woman. So I'm on the phone, and someone taps me on the shoulder. I brush it off, and this silver metallic hand grabs my cell phone out of my hand and crushes it.

I turn around, and it's Alloy. So I asked him, very politely, to move that stupid cow's car out of my way so I could get to my meeting, and he went berserk on me! Picked up my Jag and threw it into the river! I nearly had a stroke!

I sued him of course, but then he died a while later so it never went to trial. Pity. I would have taken him for everything he owned.

-Kenneth Fisk, 45, financial consultant

A Description of San Angelo

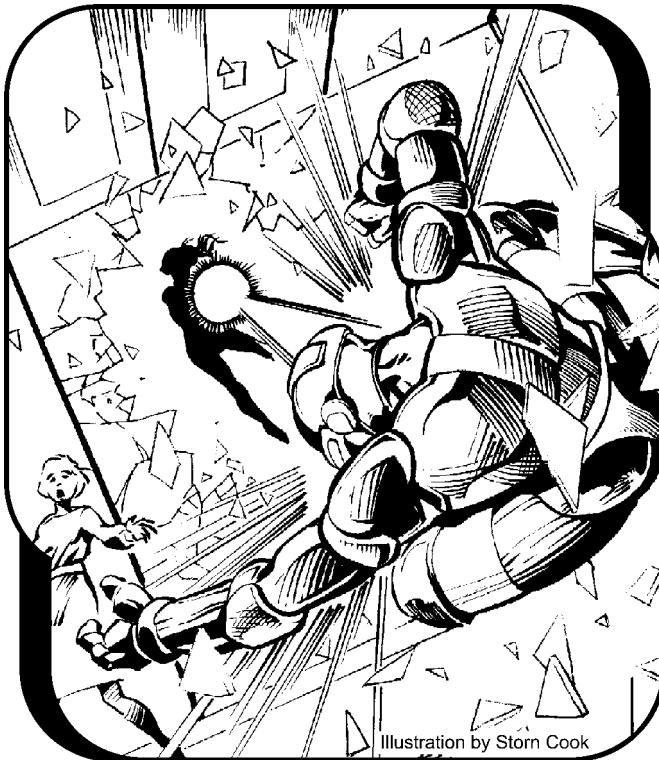


Illustration by Storn Cook

brought them into conflict. The tong wars of the 1920s and 1930s gave Chinatown a reputation for violence that took decades to shake, but now the tongs operate mostly behind the scenes.

CITY CENTER

The ultra-modern City Center, a landscape of steel, glass and concrete, is the lively, bustling heart of the city. The gleaming office towers, high-rise hotels and skyscrapers of the central business district define the San Angelo skyline.

Bicycle messengers weave through traffic-clogged streets as throngs of business-suit clad men and women pack the sidewalks, briefcases and cellular phones in hand. The very air seems to crackle with frenetic energy.

Millions of square feet of office space are crammed into just a few square miles, and the tallest buildings in San Angelo are found in City Center. Many corporations have a headquarters, or a least a division headquarters, in downtown San Angelo, including Prospector Bank, Avalon Enterprises and HyperDyne Computers.

A 36-story high-rise, the new corporate headquarters of Eclipse Industries, is under construction in City Center. Slated for completion next year, it will be the third-tallest building in San Angelo.

Law offices, banks, stock brokerages, real estate firms, ad agencies, publishing houses and thousands of other businesses fill the shining towers of the City Center.

Sorry...late...rode as fast as

I could. Whew! Thanks for the water.

These, the police, they had 21st Street closed. Six block detour. Some supers, some big fight, I don't know. You won't tell my boss I was late, will you?

-Nick Delanty, 22, bicycle messenger

At ground level, copy centers and computer boutiques serving the offices above, not to mention the occasional deli jam-packed at lunch but otherwise deserted, are found.

Multi-story parking garages, some public, some private, are crammed here and there among the high-rises, but the City Center has a severe parking shortage. On-street parking is limited on most blocks, and always metered.

Spreading out from the high-charged citadels of commerce at its core, the City Center contains a sea of storefronts, office complexes, bank branches and civic buildings.

University Medical Center covers several square blocks in City Center, as does the open-air San Angelo Plaza shopping mall.

Architecture buffs often visit the columned Federal Courthouse and domed San Angelo County Courthouse, not to mention the ornate St. Kieran's Catholic Church.

A number of government offices are found in the City Center, including the historic San Angelo City Hall, county administrative offices and the federal building. The police and sheriff's headquarters are likewise located in this district, as is the San Angelo County Main Jail.

The San Angelo Convention Center also attracts visitors to the City Center.

OLD SAN ANGELO

Covering a 4- by 6-block area along the river, Old San Angelo transports visitors back to the Gold Rush origins of the region. Distinctive 1800s-era buildings line raised wooden sidewalks and horse-drawn carriages ply cobblestone streets.

An authentic part of Gold Rush San Angelo, the area was allowed to deteriorate shamefully until a restoration effort took hold in the late 1950s. The decaying, unsafe brick buildings built in the 1800s were rebuilt and restored to their original appearances, while a modern drainage system was built to replace the collapsing, cavernous sewers of days gone by.

Now one of San Angelo's top tourist attractions, Old San Angelo is packed with souvenir shops, restaurants, bars and a handful of museums. High-rent offices can be found on the second and third stories of most buildings, catering to firms more interested in ambience than convenience.

Mounted city police patrol the streets, and horse-drawn carriages provide transportation for the romantic. On-street parking is limited, and visitors are advised to make use of nearby parking garages.

Some of the more historical attractions in Old San Angelo include the first Prospector Bank office, a one-room schoolhouse, the old City Jail and a state museum spotlighting the Gold Rush.

RIVERFRONT

Originally a warehouse district, the wedge-shaped Riverfront neighborhood has undergone something of a renaissance in recent years.

Adventurous young artists, musicians, actors and professionals have renovated some aging warehouses into lofts, studios and other living spaces. Others have been converted into dance clubs, bars and nightspots. A few *avant garde* theaters have also sprouted in Riverfront. The streets near Chinatown, in particular, boast a thriving nightlife.

The district got its start in the 1920s and 1930s, when enterprising businessmen began constructing warehouses to accommodate shipping on the San Angelo River. When the Port of San Angelo opened a few miles down river in 1963, the area began an economic tailspin. Many warehouses fell into disuse, some

even being seized by the government for non-payment of back taxes. In the early 1990s, the city targeted Riverfront for redevelopment efforts. Low-interest loans and tax breaks persuaded some property owners to convert their dilapidated warehouses into residential or commercial spaces.

Now Riverfront is emerging as a hip address for actors, artists, musicians and other performers, not to mention young professionals and other adventurous sorts. The area has a vibrant, village-style atmosphere coupled with a sparkling nightlife.

Some of the city's hottest new nightclubs, including the Matrix, are found in renovated Riverfront warehouses.

Also, empty warehouses are sometimes rented by teenagers for raves, underground all-night dance parties notable for the copious consumption of LSD, marijuana and designer drugs.

The tide of redevelopment has not reached every part of Riverfront, however. Several blocks continue to be dominated by rusty, silent warehouses that are sometimes subject to break-ins by homeless people seeking shelter.

THE STRIP

A seedy collection of porn theaters, shabby motels, adult bookstores, tattoo shops, sex clubs, massage parlors and underground clubs, the Strip is the rank underbelly of the downtown.

In daylight hours, the Strip has a wan, faded look. Beer bottles, discarded hypodermic needles and other trash litter the streets. A few hardy barflies staggering off to an early start at favored watering holes are the only signs of life.

But at night the Strip, lit by flickering neon signs, comes to life once again. The strip clubs and darkened bars throw their doors open, while the nether regions of the Strip are transformed into an open-air market for narcotics, flesh and other illicit pleasures.

Clerks at threadbare motels negotiate hourly rates with streetwalkers and their patrons as nearby adult bookstores and porn theaters do a brisk trade.

The back-alley massage parlors and escort services of the Strip are often targets of police prostitution raids. A few fraying liquor stores round out the commercial picture.

New to the scene are underground nightclubs, popular with young people into the Gothic or vampire scene. Attired totally in black, with pale faces and dark makeup, the patrons of these clubs only add to the eerie unreality that is the Strip at night.

The numerous tattoo and piercing parlors in the neighborhood also attract disaffected young people.

Other than a handful of poverty-stricken families staying at the abundant cheap motels in the Strip, the neighborhood has very few permanent residents.

Crime is profligate in the Strip. Nearly any variety of drug, from heroin or crack to the newest "designer" drugs, can be purchased here. Prostitution is rampant, along with sales of obscene materials such as child porn and almost any other vice crime that can be imagined.

The many "johns" who flock to the neighborhood each night are also easy targets for thieves and robbers, who know that few of their embarrassed victims will report the crime.

The San Angelo Police Department has a heavy presence in the Strip, and the vice squad spends much of its time in the neighborhood.

THE WHARVES

In Gold Rush times, this part of the downtown built a reputation as a rough-and-tumble waterfront district of rowdy saloons,

Well, I wouldn't ever ordinarily be in that neighborhood, what's it called, the Strip? Except my car, it, uh, had a flat tire and I, um, pulled off the freeway.

So it's dark, all the street lights are out and I'm walking ... no, I mean, changing my, uh, my tire. On the car. Um, and these guys, these thugs, come walking up. They start pushing me around. They've got knives, pipes, a baseball bat. One of them grabs my wallet.

Then, well, it all happened so fast. One of the punks goes flying, and another collapses onto the pavement. They're all shouting, I'm ducking, there's a whole battle going on around me. Just like that, it's all over, and the punks are sprawled all over the place and Paragon's standing there. He hands me back my wallet and tells me to go on home.

So that's what happened.

Um, look, you don't have to use my name, do you?

-Name withheld

dance halls and brothels. Over the years, these institutions died an inevitable death, and the neighborhood became sadly dilapidated.

The low rents appealed to artists, and the area underwent a brief renaissance in the 1950s and 1960s as a center of the San Angelo art world before sinking back into decay.

After decades of neglect, city leaders targeted the area for an ambitious redevelopment project in the late 1980s. Lured by tax incentives and promised public works projects, investors bought up the neighborhood and rechristened it The Wharves.

Working together, the city and the property owners marketed the area to hotel chains, swanky restaurants and other high-class establishments. Construction began soon after, and transformed the formerly rundown waterfront into a clean, attractive area of five-star hotels, fine dining and classy nightspots.

Parker Square, a bright, open area surrounding a tiled fountain, is popular with visitors and nearby office workers alike. The steady streams of passers-by attract an array of colorful street performers, including jugglers, mimes and magicians. Pickpockets, flimflam artists and other disreputable characters are also frequent visitors.

A collection of low-rise brick office buildings, a few remnants of the early days of the neighborhood, surround Parker Square. They mostly house advertising agencies and design firms, along with a few ritzy eateries and watering holes catering to the style-conscious.

POINTS OF INTEREST

Eclipse Plaza*: A 36-story office tower under construction by Olympus Construction Inc. When completed, the building will house the corporate offices of Eclipse Industries. It will be the third-tallest building in the city.

CAMPAIGN TIP

An abandoned warehouse in the seedier part of Riverfront might make a good location for a villain hideout, or for the base of a vigilante or underground hero team.

A Description of San Angelo

DOWNTOWN MAP KEY

NUMERICAL LISTING

- National Guard Armory
- SA County General Hospital
- N Street Shelter
- Golden Rule (Homeless Shelter)
- University Medical Center
- San Angelo Plaza Mall
- San Angelo City Hall
- San Angelo Police Dept.
- SA County Sheriff's Dept.
- SA County Main Jail
- SA County Courthouse
- U.S. Federal Courthouse
- St. Kieran's Catholic Church
- SA County Admin. Building
- San Angelo Convention Center
- Liberty Square
- Eclipse Plaza
- Prospector Bank Building
- HyperDyne Computers
- Avalon Enterprises
- First Prospector Bank Office
- Old City Jail
- CA State Gold Rush Museum
- Parker Square
- Old City Cemetery
- San Angelo Corporate Center
- Twilight Tower
- Historic SA Opera House
- St. Lawrence Dining Hall
- Kelley Medical Center
- Temple Beth Israel
- Samuel Brackett City Park
- San Angelo City Zoo
- UC San Angelo (UCSA)
- San Angelo City College
- Argonaut Society Hall
- Brackett House Museum
- First Baptist Church of SA
- Fraternity Row
- Franklin Park
- Historic San Angelo Rail Depot
- Al Qazar Mosque
- Faraday Memorial Clinic
- Saint Mary's General Hospital
- SA Ctr. for the Performing Arts
- SA Metropolitan Museum
- Temple of Atlantis
- Van Ruyter Museum of Art
- Cathedral of St. Mary
- St. Basil's
- San Angelo Sports Complex
- St. Anthony's Catholic Church
- Eastside City Park
- Muro de los Heroes
- Fairtime Mall
- CA State Univ. SA (CSUSA)
- Del Oro River Parkway
- La Vista Cabana Club
- Meridian Engineering
- Sacred Heart Memorial Hosp.
- San Angelo Christian Center
- Jeremiah Bannon Park
- Veteran's Memorial Hospital
- Federal Building
- Harper School of Law
- Hunter-Price Arms
- Peregrine Aircraft HQ
- Pantheon Steel
- Texxon Oil Co. Distr. Center
- Justice Foundation Office
- Justice Foundation Base
- Wilder Karate Center
- Wei Cheng Kung Fu School
- Kelley La Vista Hospital

- Children's Hospital of SA
- Pacific Glen Psych. Hospital
- Orloff Building
- Raven Books
- First Bank of Chinatown
- Delta Financial Bank
- Gramercy Press
- Inner Light Publishing
- T'ien Sun Temple
- Fu Shen Temple
- Wong Taisin Temple
- Full Gospel Mission
- Jobz Inc.
- San Angelo Blood Bank
- San Angelo Women's Center
- Central City Racquet Club
- San Angelo Times
- Business Chronicle
- Chinatown Express
- Golden City Magazine
- San Angelo Clarion
- San Angelo Weekly
- Vietnamese Journal
- All That Jazz
- Catfish Cantina
- Club Calypso
- 8-Ball
- Laff Riot
- Old Town Brewery
- The Matrix
- Rio Club
- Snakepit
- Tropicana
- Zero Hour
- Twister's
- Ekaterina's
- Emerald Palace
- Las Palomas
- River Princess Riverboat
- Theater Tutti
- 28th Street Theater
- Chinese Cultural Center
- Minuteman Circle
- Veterans Memorial Bridge
- Golden City Expressway Bridge
- Curry Street Bridge
- Sutter Bridge
- Prospector Bridge
- Mission San Angeles

BY NEIGHBORHOOD

DOWNTOWN Old San Angelo

CA State Gold Rush Museum (23)
First Prospector Bank Office (21)
Historic SA Opera House (28)
Old City Jail (22)
Old Town Brewery (103)

City Center

28th Street Theater (115)
All That Jazz (98)
Avalon Enterprises (20)
Central City Racquet Club (90)
City Hall (7)
Delta Financial Bank (80)
Eclipse Plaza (17)
Federal Building (64)
Full Gospel Mission (86)
HyperDyne Computers (19)
Justice Foundation (70)
Justice Foundation Team Base (71)

Kelley Medical Center (30)
Liberty Square (16)
Old City Cemetery (25)
Pacific Glen Psych. Hospital (76)
Peregrine Aircraft HQ (67)
Prospector Bank Building (18)
Rio Club (105)
St. Kieran's Catholic Church (13)
SA Administration Building (14)
San Angelo Blood Bank (88)
San Angelo Clarion (95)
San Angelo Convention Center (15)
San Angelo Corporate Center (26)
SA County Courthouse (11)
SA County Main Jail (10)
SA County Sheriff's Dept. (9)
San Angelo Plaza Mall (6)
San Angelo Police Department (8)
San Angelo Times (91)
Temple Beth Israel (31)
Twilight Tower (27)
U.S. Federal Courthouse (12)
University Medical Center (5)

Wharves

Club Calypso (100)
Golden City Magazine (94)
Gramercy Press (81)
Parker Square (24)
River Princess Riverboat (113)
Twister's (109)

Chinatown

Chinatown Express (93)
Chinese Cultural Center (116)
Emerald Palace (111)
First Bank of Chinatown (79)
Fu Shen Temple (84)
T'ien Sun Temple (83)
Wei Cheng Kung Fu School (73)
Wong Taisin Temple (85)

Riverfront

Inner Light Publishing (82)
Jobz Inc. (87)
The Matrix (104)
St. Lawrence Dining Hall (29)
Theater Tutti (114)

Armory

Golden Rule (4)
SA County General Hospital (2)
N Street Shelter (3)
National Guard Armory (1)

The Strip

8-Ball (101)
Snakepit (106)
Tropicana (107)

MIDTOWN

Brckett Park
Minuteman Circle (117)
Samuel Brackett City Park (32)
SA Ctr for the Performing Arts (45)
San Angelo City Zoo (33)
San Angelo Metropolitan Museum (46)

Van Ruyter Museum of Art (48)
Piper Glen
Argonaut Society Hall (36)
Temple of Atlantis (47)

Poverty Gulch

Brackett House Museum (37)
First Baptist Church of San Angelo (38)
San Angelo City College (35)

University Commons

Al Qazar Mosque (42)
Catfish Cantina (99)
Faraday Memorial Clinic (43)
Franklin Park (40)
Fraternity Row (39)
Harper School of Law (65)
Historic San Angelo Rail Depot (41)
Raven Books (78)
Saint Mary's General Hospital (44)
San Angelo Weekly (96)
University California San Angelo (34)

NORTHSIDE

Irish Bar

Del Oro River Parkway (57)
Hunter-Price Arms (66)
Pantheon Steel (68)

Bannon Park

Jeremiah Bannon Park (62)
Veteran's Memorial Hospital (63)

EASTSIDE

North Mission

Las Palomas (112)
Muro de los Heroes (54)
St. Anthony's Catholic Church (52)
San Angelo Sports Complex (51)

Central East Side

Children's Hospital of San Angelo (75)
Eastside City Park (53)
Mission San Angeles (123)

Cathedral Square

Cathedral of Saint Mary (49)
Ekaterina's (110)
Orloff Building (77)
St. Basil's (50)

LA VISTA

North La Vista

Business Chronicle (92)
Fairtime Mall (55)
Kelley La Vista Hospital (74)
Laff Riot (102)
La Vista Cabana Club (58)
Meridian Engineering (59)
Sacred Heart Mem. Hospital (60)
San Angelo Christian Center (61)
San Angelo Women's Center (89)
Wilder Karate Center (72)
Zero Hour (108)

College Gardens

CA State Univ. San Angelo (56)

WEST SAN ANGELO

Texxon Oil Company Distr Ctr (69)
Vietnamese Journal (97)



A Description of San Angelo

Liberty Square: An open plaza with an eye-pleasing mix of fountains, trees, grassy knolls and park benches. The square honors the Liberty Corps, a hero team active in the 1930s and 1940s. A bronze monument statue of the team stands at the center of the plaza.

Liberty Square also contains a handful of bronze plaques honoring more recent San Angelo heroes who have been killed in the line of duty.

Most supers consider Liberty Square "neutral ground" as a gesture of respect to the fallen heroes. Even criminal supers are unlikely to attack foes here, and a few have at times arranged meetings with their heroic rivals at the plaza to pass on information, make threats, discuss mutual enemies or fulfill some other non-combat purpose.

Old City Cemetery: An 80-acre cemetery that dates back to the late 1800s. A wrought-iron fence surrounds the old graveyard, which is crowded with headstones, a variety of monuments, crypts and tombs. Many San Angelo pioneers are buried here. Historical brochures are available, and weekend tours are sometimes held at the cemetery.

Old San Angelo Sewers*: Replaced by a modern drainage system in the 1950s, the cavernous 1800s-era storm drains below Old San Angelo are a dark reflection of the bustling city above. A dank, crumbling maze of passages, the century-old drains are largely unmapped. Some people claim they go on for miles below the streets of San Angelo. City officials discourage access to the sewers, however, citing the extreme danger of collapse.

I hear there's something living in those old storm drains below Old San Angelo. They go on for miles, you know. My brother works for the city sanitation department, and he says some of his buddies have spotted this weird creature down there. The city's keeping it all hushed up, though.
-Vivian Flanders, 41, homemaker

Prospector Bank Building: A 38-story office tower that houses the corporate headquarters of Prospector Bank. Bank offices occupy the first several floors of the tower, but the rest is rented by other companies. The top story contains the exclusive Skyline Club, a private dining establishment catering to the ultra-rich. The Prospector Bank Building is the second-tallest building in San Angelo.

San Angelo Corporate Center*: A 32-story office tower, once the tallest building in San Angelo but now eclipsed by newer developments.

Twilight Tower*: Officially the Morgan Office Tower, this imposing piece of the city skyline is commonly called the "Twilight Tower" for the smoked gray glass used in its construction. Built in 1988 by Morgan Construction Co., the office tower rises 42 stories, making it the tallest building in the city.

The building has a high occupancy rate, housing innumerable law offices, accounting firms, consultants, engineering companies, stock brokerages and other professional offices. Some of the top firms in the city are found here, including the law firm of Graham, Drake & Wagner, the political consulting firm of Hardesty & Associates and Highland Securities. The Twilight Cafe in the first floor is considered one of San Angelo's finer dining establishments.

OTHER POINTS OF INTEREST

Chamberlain Administrative Center (p. 51)

City Hall (p. 46)

Convention Center (p. 143)

Federal Courthouse (p. 28)

N Street Shelter (p. 124)

Golden Rule (p. 124)

Historic San Angelo Opera House (p. 142)

Kelley Medical Center (p. 98)

Police Headquarters (p. 62)

St. Kieran's Catholic Church (p. 112)

St. Lawrence Dining Hall (p. 124)

San Angelo County Courthouse (p. 75)

San Angelo County General Hospital (p. 98)

San Angelo County Main Jail (p. 77)

San Angelo Plaza (p. 83)

San Angelo County Sheriff's Dept. HQ (p. 66)

Temple Beth Israel (p. 112)

University Medical Center (p. 98)



Hey, you remember that crazy guy who speaks at the City Council meetings every week, talking about how the supers are really angels of God? I saw him in Midtown today!

-Vicki Crowe, 18, student

MIDTOWN

An eclectic blend of sidewalk cafes, Victorian mansions, office buildings, museums, bungalows and boutiques, Midtown is the laid-back residential counterpart to the high-energy downtown.

In-line skaters jet down the streets at midnight, while bicycles line the sidewalks outside the numerous coffeehouses. Artists, poets and musicians mix easily with young professionals, university students and twenty-something slackers in the relaxed neighborhoods of Midtown.

Picnics and zoo visitors flock to the vast Samuel Brackett City Park, a vital escape valve from the pressures of city life, which defines the western edge of Midtown.

And high-fashion society balls in the elegant mansions of Poverty Gulch and other exclusive enclaves are just another piece of the Midtown puzzle.

As San Angelo began to spread out from its riverfront origins, residents began to buy up land in Midtown. Some of the first to build in the area were successful prospectors who erected ostentatious Victorian mansions in the Poverty Gulch neighborhood.

Over the next century, Midtown continued to prosper as a residential offshoot of the downtown. Stores, offices and other businesses followed their customers, while universities, museums and libraries sprang up to educate the public.

All these elements come together in modern Midtown, a funky yet pleasant mix of housing, businesses and nightlife.

Along major streets, apartments or flats are often located upstairs from boutiques, restaurants and mom-and-pop stores of all types. A few corner groceries remain in Midtown, survivors of the influx of supermarkets and reminders of days gone by.

Dusty bookstores, including some specializing in rare or antique volumes, seem to be everywhere, surrounded by shops catering to almost any need. A number of specialty shops can be found only in Midtown, in fact. Art galleries, coffeehouses, funky dive bars and sidewalk cafes add to the charm of the community.

Midtown also contains a number of old-fashioned meeting halls built in the early 20th century by various fraternal orders and lodges. The halls, which are usually available for rent, are popular for wedding receptions, parties, aerobics classes and other uses.

The array of architectural styles seen in Midtown are a large part of its charm, with a preponderance of Victorians, craftsman bungalows and commercial buildings that hint of other times. A high percentage of the houses have been converted into apartments or offices.

The more exclusive addresses in Midtown are home to Victorian mansions, Tudor manors, colonial-style homes and other high-toned architectural marvels.

Dear Nana,
How are you? We are fine. Thank you for the present. Mommy says it is for housewarming, but our house is already warm.

I like our new apartment. It's all the way on the sixth floor. I'm not allowed to use the elevator by myself, but I look out the window and pretend I'm a giant or I'm flying.

Nana, we saw a super-hero! We were on the bus to the museum near the big park when he flew right over us. He was all bright and shiny, and he waved at me! Mommy says his name is Cavalier, and he is in the Justice Foundation. We bought their comic book.

I have to go to bed now.
Love,
Kerrie

PS We got a turtle. Nana I can't wait for you to visit us this summer.

-Kerrie Kendall, 7, student

The area is home to the University of California, San Angelo. San Angelo City College, the oldest and largest of four community colleges in the county, can also be found in Midtown. Several prominent San Angelo hospitals, museums, churches and other religious institutions are located in the community as well.

Residents of Midtown are as varied as its architecture, ranging from older homeowners to university and community college students. Many young professionals have made Midtown their home, and the district has long been popular with local artists.

Of course, more exclusive neighborhoods such as Poverty Gulch and Brackett Park continue to be the preserve of the wealthiest San Angelinos.

Auto burglaries are a serious problem in Midtown, as most residents must park on the street, but otherwise the community does not have an excessive crime rate.

BRACKETT PARK

Broad, leafy avenues lined by the homes of the well-to-do make up the Brackett Park neighborhood, which takes its name from the sizable park containing the San Angelo Zoo and other attractions found at the heart of the community.

The shady boulevards of the decidedly upscale neighborhood are traveled by Mercedes Benzes, Jaguars, Porsches, Cadillacs

and even an occasional Bentley.

The neighborhood is also home to a stately progression of elegant museums, theaters and other institutions, including a performing arts complex, on Hall Boulevard just opposite the sprawling city park.

The Victorian homes of Poverty Gulch continue into Brackett Park, mixed with classy Tudors, French chateaus, Mission-style homes, Southern Colonials and other beautiful estate-style mansions.

Expansive, well-manicured lawns shaded by towering oaks, elms, ash and other trees front the refined homes, which are often protected by walls or fences.

Stylish brownstones can be found in more densely populated portions of Brackett Park, along with a handful of clothing boutiques, swanky sidewalk cafes and old-time ice cream shops.

One of the city's oldest neighborhoods, Brackett Park is home to some of the wealthiest and most influential San Angelinos. Retirees, investors, corporate executives, attorneys, doctors, and bankers are all well-represented among its residents.

PIPER GLEN

Once a working-class neighborhood of bars, delis, barber shops, boxing gyms and fraternal lodges, Piper Glen has been overtaken by an influx of yuppies.

Formerly known as Basque Ravine, after the shepherds who once camped there, the neighborhood began to change in the 1980s as well-off professionals began buying up the stylish but fading houses in the area.

They restored the homes and gave the neighborhood a more upscale name, Piper Glen, that quickly supplanted its original moniker. Soon a wave of cappuccino bars, pricey cafes serving California cuisine and other yuppieified establishments began to replace the blue-collar businesses along Piper Avenue.

The Argonaut Society hall, built by a loose collection of daredevils and adventurers in 1930s San Angelo to house a social club and museum, has alone resisted the tides of change. The building, owned by a handful of surviving members, remains closed to the public.

Young urban professionals, many of whom are employed as up-and-coming attorneys, corporate executives and bankers in City Center skyscrapers, are the chief residents of Piper Glen.

A few old-timers, who stubbornly still call it Basque Ravine, remember the rough-around-the-edges character that once made the neighborhood distinctive.

POVERTY GULCH

Named for a creek that proved unprofitable for gold panners, Poverty Gulch is actually one of the city's most exclusive addresses. Tucked in between Brackett Park and downtown, Poverty Gulch is home to many of San Angelo's oldest families.

The stately historic Victorian mansions lining the streets of Poverty Gulch are the pride of the city. Meticulously restored and kept in impeccable condition, they hearken back to the early days of San Angelo when the golden harvest of the rivers fulfilled many a prospector's dream.

The historic Brackett House, built by pioneer Sam Brackett after he struck it rich, can be found here, as can the homes of many other early San Angelo residents.

The First Baptist Church of San Angelo, a pristine white clapboard church dating back to the Gold Rush era, is found in Poverty Gulch. It was the first non-Catholic church built in the city.

A Description of San Angelo

These heroes today, they're just kids. No responsibility. Look at the mess they make with all their fighting. And some of those costumes—they ought to be ashamed.

I remember the Atomic Kid, back in the Big One. WWII. Now there was a hero you could be proud of. Saved my whole unit at Okinawa—took out a pillbox that had us pinned down.

Every Veterans Day, I go over to that statue of him and the other old heroes at Liberty Square, just to say thanks. The VFW used to have ceremonies there every year, but that pretty much fell by the wayside a few years ago. World War II's just something from history classes to folks these days, I guess.

But I still run into a few fellows out there every Veterans Day, old vets like me, coming to remember the Atomic Kid and the others.

—Hal Boyd, 70, retired

Elms and other street trees line the broad, shady avenues of Poverty Gulch, enhancing the beauty of the neighborhood with bursts of color each autumn.

Aside from a few service stations at the edges of the community, Poverty Gulch contains few commercial enterprises of any type.

Each fall, a half-dozen or so of the Victorian mansions are opened to the public in a charity home tour to raise funds for the Percival Cooper Children's Home.

UNIVERSITY COMMONS

Popularly known simply as "The Commons," the University Commons neighborhood spreads out around the UC San Angelo campus. A mix of fraternity houses, apartments, bookstores and coffeehouses, the community caters to the university lifestyle.

Bicycles, in-line skates and buses are the preferred modes of transportation, and the local pizzerias, bars and coffeehouses are packed nightly with young people trying to get away from their studies for a few hours. Conversation in The Commons ranges from the rankest gossip to debate on the philosophies of ancient Greece to furious shouting matches over politics.

Nearly all housing in The Commons has been built or converted for rental purposes. Homes in the neighborhood tend to be older, and many are divided into multiple apartments. Other lots are equipped with cottages, garage apartments or second homes, also for rent.

The numerous apartment complexes in the area likewise tend to be older, with lower rents that appeal to university students. Even so, those on tight budgets often cram as many roommates as possible into their apartments.

Close to campus, a "fraternity row" of Greek houses can be found, though fraternities and sororities can also be found elsewhere in The Commons. Most Greek houses are huge, 2- to 3-story affairs, often decorated with banners or other displays. Noisy, rowdy parties, sometimes with live music, are frequent.

Most residents of The Commons are connected to the university in some way. Students predominate, but numerous professors and university employees also live in the neighborhood.

The supers plan to take over the Earth and make us normal humans their slaves! They're all in on it, the heroes, too. I had proof, but someone took it.

—Sanford Willis, 35, picketer

Businesses in the neighborhood reflect the younger, university-oriented population. Fast food outlets, pizzerias and inexpensive Chinese restaurants are popular, as are laundromats and bicycle repair shops. Coffeehouses and bars can be found on almost every block, it seems. And bookstores, including many offering used books, are everywhere.

Most arrests in The Commons involve underage drinking and public drunkenness, though auto burglaries are also a serious problem. Sexual assault cases are not uncommon, however.

POINTS OF INTEREST

Colonial Theatre: An old movie house built in Midtown in the 1930s. The Colonial Theatre shut its doors 20 years ago due to competition from new cineplexes, and is now sadly dilapidated. A favorite of historic preservationists, the theater has escaped demolition several times after strong protest campaigns persuaded the City Council to halt the plans. There are rumors that a ghost haunts the old movie house.

Franklin Park: A Midtown pocket park containing a monument statue of Benjamin Franklin. The park is favored by pamphleteers and soapbox speakers, who enlighten passers-by on everything from communism to UFOs. Activists from UC San Angelo sometimes hold rallies at the park.

Historic San Angelo Rail Depot: A passenger rail depot dating back to the 1920s. The station, restored in the 1980s, features historic displays in the lobby. Its Spanish-style architecture gives the rail depot a distinctive look.

OTHER POINTS OF INTEREST

- Al Qazar Mosque (p. 111)
- Brackett House Museum (p. 142)
- Faraday Memorial Clinic (p. 97)
- First Baptist Church of San Angelo (p. 112)
- Horizons Club
- St. Mary's General Hospital (p. 98)
- Samuel Brackett City Park (p. 143)
- San Angelo Center for the Performing Arts (p. 142)
- San Angelo City College (p. 80)
- San Angelo Metropolitan Museum (p. 142)
- San Angelo Zoo (p. 144)
- Temple of Atlantis (p. 115)
- UC San Angelo (p. 79)
- Van Ruyter Museum of Art (p. 142)



OTHER COMMUNITIES

The neighborhoods of downtown and Midtown might form the heart of San Angelo, but the metropolis encompasses a dozen other suburbs, industrial districts and communities.

ARROYO VERDE

High-tech factories, top research labs and pioneering software design studios crowd the Arroyo Verde valley just south of urban San Angelo.

The leading-edge reputation of Arroyo Verde has attracted many of the chief scientists, engineers and programmers in the world of advanced technology to the region, fueling the city's latest economic boom.

A sea of office and industrial parks surround a few campus-like manufacturing plants in Arroyo Verde. New complexes are springing up all over in response to the ongoing influx of new businesses. Meanwhile, contractors are busy extending roads, water lines and other necessary infrastructure as the county expands Arroyo Verde southward.

Named for one of the many creeks in the region, Arroyo Verde once held only pasture-land and a few fruit orchards. As urban sprawl drew nearer, county officials designated the area for industrial development, but the land remained mostly agricultural until the late 1980s.

Construction of the huge HyperDyne Computers plant in the 1980s brought an influx of suppliers, vendors and software designers to the region. The addition of new high-tech plants in the early 1990s established the area's reputation in the technological world.

Its farmland past all but forgotten, Arroyo Verde now cultivates the fruits of advanced technology.

In addition to HyperDyne Computers, one of the city's top employers, Arroyo Verde is home to companies manufacturing computer chips, circuit boards, advanced radio equipment, robotics, ultra-light aircraft and sophisticated vision-enhancing equipment. One of the countless smaller firms in the district designs and builds racing sailboats for international competitors.

Private research-and-development labs in a variety of scientific fields also call Arroyo Verde home, including Orion Labs, Helix Technologies and BioGen Sciences. Several major corporations, like Eclipse Industries and Avalon Enterprises, have labs in the area.

Super-cooling for top-line computer systems, bio-engineered crops and high-energy storage batteries are just a sampling of the projects being researched in Arroyo Verde labs.

The commercial scene caters to the daily influx of commuters from San Angelo suburbs. Drive-through coffee stands, fast food stops, convenience stores and lunch delis are all common sights.

A few subdivisions and modern apartment complexes are scattered among the office and industrial parks comprising most of Arroyo Verde, but the residential population is slight.

Crime rates are moderate, primarily involving property crimes and auto thefts. However, cases of industrial espionage and even sabotage have been reported.

In addition, many Arroyo Verde plants use toxic chemicals or other hazardous materials. While they abide by stringent safety guidelines, accidents at these plants could be catastrophic for employees and possibly even the rest of San Angelo.

Virtually every large manufacturer has a private security force, and the business parks dotting the terrain often contract with security firms for regular patrols.

CAMPAIGN TIP

As the premier center of high technology in San Angelo, Arroyo Verde is a natural target for technologically-oriented villains. Thefts, kidnappings and extortion schemes are all possibilities. Also, industrial accidents can provide a number of adventure ideas or origin stories.

POINT OF INTEREST

Arroyo Lake: A large artificial lake at the heart of Arroyo Verde. The lake, a popular spot for lunch-time picnics by employees of nearby businesses, provides a stop for migrating ducks, geese and other waterfowl. It also adds a welcome bit of greenery to the sprawl of pavement, asphalt and concrete that makes up modern Arroyo Verde.

OTHER POINTS OF INTEREST

- Avalon Enterprises (p. 85)
- BioGen Sciences (p. 118)
- Consolidated Electronics (p. 88)
- CryoDynamics (p. 119)
- Eclipse Industries (p. 85)
- FutureWorks Robotics (p. 119)
- Helix Technologies (p. 117)
- HyperDyne Computers (p. 89)
- Infinity Software (p. 89)
- New Frontiers Inc. (p. 119)
- Orion Labs (p. 118)
- Radiant Concepts (p. 119)
- Taiyo Corp. (p. 90)



BRENTON

One of the city's most relentlessly poor communities, Brenton has the dubious distinction of claiming both the lowest per-capita income and highest crime rate in San Angelo.

Block after block of cheap apartments, semi-abandoned buildings and run-down tract houses plagued by crime and violence offer tangible proof that the community does not share the prosperity enjoyed by the rest of San Angelo.

Brenton also contains the highest concentration of public housing in the city, rife with the social ills ailing many such projects.

Homebuilders seeking to cash in on the commuting opportunities offered by newly built Interstate 7 put up the first houses in Brenton in the 1950s. But the community proved to be too distant from major employers to prosper.

Brenton deteriorated rapidly, and in the 1960s San Angelo County built numerous public housing projects to shelter its poorest residents.

The area's job outlook is bleak. A few convenience marts, liquor stores, pawn shops and check-cashing outlets are about the extent of the business scene. The only supermarket shut its doors in the 1970s, and all efforts to attract a replacement have failed.

Hardworking families from Korea, India and Vietnam own some small businesses in the vicinity. But many storefronts are empty as owners opt for a safer, more profitable environment. Some now house a few of the myriad churches in Brenton.

Poverty and unemployment mire residents in this isolated, neglected corner of the city.

A Description of San Angelo

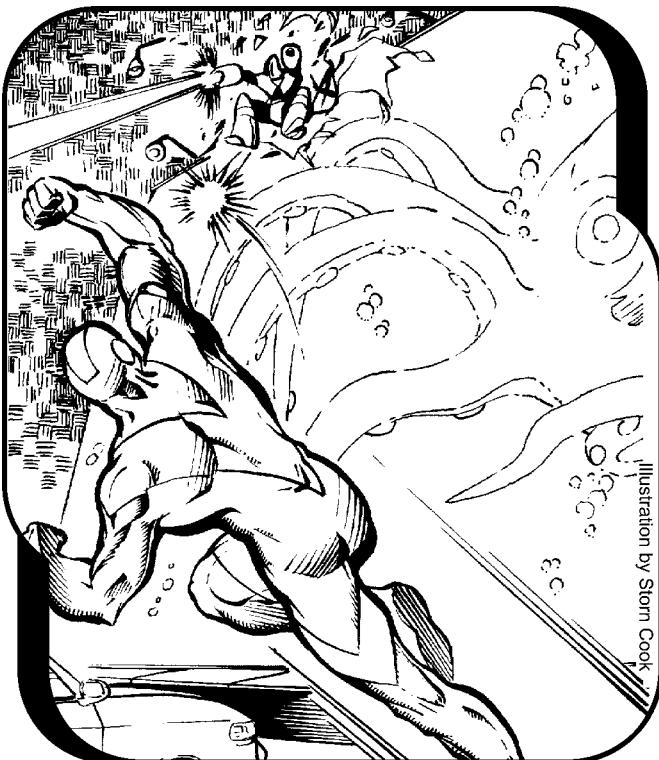


Illustration by Storm Cook

Hey, did you see the ShortStop on Stark Boulevard this morning? I drove by on my way to the lab. The whole place is flattened, just a heap of rubble. It's incredible. The cop there said some super flipped out when the clerk wouldn't give him a free Grand Slam Gulp. I don't know about you, but I would have given it to him.

-Christopher Gonsalves, 40, engineer

Brenton is also home to numerous dedicated community activists who are fighting to take back their streets and parks, however. Pastors, youth center operators, educators and a host of others face a daily struggle to restore pride to the community.

Despite efforts to clean up the area, Brenton suffers from a grievous crime rate. Gang problems are acute in most neighborhoods. Bloody clashes between rival sets of the Nomads and Prophets street gangs are frequent. Violence and property crimes of all kinds are rampant in Brenton.

POINTS OF INTEREST

The Bunker: A liquor store in a squat cement building resembling a World War II bunker, hence its name. The graffiti-covered Bunker seems to be a magnet for trouble, and community activists cite the business as a major source of problems in the neighborhood.

Esperance Plaza: The largest public housing project in San Angelo County, with more than 750 units. For years the Esperance Plaza Prophets virtually controlled the complex, which became a glaring eyesore of broken windows, graffiti, torn fencing and discarded junk.

The county recently began a major cleanup effort at Esperance Plaza, making repairs, painting over graffiti and hauling away the piles of broken appliances in front of some units. The Sheriff's

Whatcha doin? Oh, these are for ol' Mrs. Marks. She broke her leg, so Mom's makin' me do her grocery shopping 'til she gets better.

You 'member that fight on the TV couple weeks ago, where Amok threw that bus at Lotus? Dude, Mrs. Marks was on that bus! Yeah. Messed her up.

Aw, I don't mind. Mrs. Marks, she cool. She useta bake me cookies.

-Jamal Pulliam, 14, stud

Department has stepped up patrols near the complex and opened an office in a vacant unit to boost its presence inside the projects.

While several known gang members have been evicted, many Esperance Plaza residents still live in fear of the Prophets and are wary of aiding authorities. The outcome of the battle to take back control of the complex is still in doubt, and in large part depends on the county's willingness to continue funding the expensive campaign.

OTHER POINTS OF INTEREST

Mt. Zion A.M.E. Church (p. 112)



CASTLE HEIGHTS

Houses are popping up like weeds in Castle Heights on the southernmost edge of metropolitan San Angelo.

Thousands of head of cattle once roamed where streets, suburban homes and modern shopping centers now arise in a seemingly unstoppable tide of development.

In the early days of San Angelo, the entire region was part of the vast Castle Ranch. Cattle baron Frederic Castle sold part of his land to the railroad in the 1870s for a depot and small town, which became known as Castle Heights.

Over time, fruit and nut orchards began to replace cattle ranching as the mainstay of the region. Castle Heights remained primarily a cluster of storefronts, surrounded by a few blocks of houses, lining the old railway. In the 1980s, however, demand for new housing for workers at nearby Arroyo Verde and Southport factories brought developers to Castle Heights.

Now suburban-style subdivisions surround old Castle Heights, while modern shopping centers are found at either end of the tiny historic downtown district.

Residents of Castle Heights tend to be middle-class, mostly employees at the high-tech factories in Arroyo Verde. The community has a slightly below-average crime rate.

POINTS OF INTEREST

Castle Heights Auto Mall: A gigantic conglomeration of auto dealerships just off Highway 170.

Opened in 1993, the 100-acre facility contains 16 dealerships representing every major foreign and domestic auto maker. About 5,700 new and used vehicles are on display at the lots, which rack up \$450 million in total annual sales.

OTHER POINTS OF INTEREST

Castle Heights Community Hospital

Castle Heights Country Club (p. 127)

Kelley Castle Heights Hospital (p. 98)



EASTSIDE

A residential community with many homes dating back to the early 20th Century, Eastside contains several early suburbs of downtown San Angelo. It is governed by the city.

Separated from downtown San Angelo by the raised Interstate 7 highway, Eastside neighborhoods tend to be more spread out than the densely packed city core. Neat grids of shady streets are lined by single-family homes and an occasional apartment house.

Most neighborhoods are quiet, slightly upscale environs with a bevy of beautiful homes in a variety of styles. The Gothic architecture of Cathedral Square marks one exception, and to the north moneyed neighborhoods give way to the grittier North Mission district.

Naw, I don't go into Cathedral Square no more. Too creepy, ya know? Besides, I heard there's this new hero workin' the neighborhood. Whattyacallim—the Brat? Naw, wait, it's the Bard. Yeah, an' Joe Kushnick sez he's got some magic flute thingie. Messes wit yer head. Nothin' to be foolin' around wit, ya ask me.

-Bill Ward, 45, criminal

Eastside neighborhoods are home to several San Angelo landmarks, including the vast Cathedral of St. Mary, Mission San Angeles and the San Angelo Sports Complex.

Housing development began in Eastside at the turn of the century as well-to-do residents sought homes outside the crowded downtown but still conveniently close to their businesses. In time, Eastside became a popular address for middle-class residents as well.

A few grocery stores, supplemented by hardware stores, nurseries, dry cleaners and other small businesses catering to daily household needs, constitute most of the commercial scene in the community.

A handful of restaurants hearkening to tourists are found near the Mission San Angeles, and gas stations, fast food outlets and motels beckon to travelers on I-7. Industrial ventures play a key role in the North Mission economy, while authentic ethnic foods are a popular commodity in Cathedral Square.

Single-family homes are the norm, though a few small apartment complexes are located in the community, particularly in North Mission and Cathedral Square.

Homeowners in most Eastside neighborhoods tend to be middle- to lower-upper-class, and a generational change has brought an influx of young families into the community.

Property crimes are the chief law enforcement complaint of Eastside residents, though the North Mission neighborhood is troubled by gang problems.

NEIGHBORHOODS OF NOTE

Cathedral Square: Shadowed by the towering Gothic spires of St. Mary's, the streets of Cathedral Square have an ominous air, especially at night, when tendrils of fog come stealing up from the river to veil the neighborhood in a silent shroud of mist.

One of the oldest outlying neighborhoods of downtown San Angelo, this community has a distinctly Old World flavor and a well-deserved reputation for eerie goings-on.

The sprawling Cathedral of St. Mary, built in the early 20th century, lies at the heart of the neighborhood, fronting a cobblestone plaza inhabited by hundreds of pigeons and ringed by old-fashioned cafes, bakeries and shops.

The Gothic architecture of the visually stunning cathedral carries over to some of the apartment homes, townhouses and storefronts in the community. Arches, flying buttresses and even a scattering of gargoyles adorn older buildings.

Enhancing the Old World feeling are the onion-shaped parapets of St. Basil's Cathedral, a Russian Orthodox church serving as a distinctive architectural and religious landmark in the neighborhood.

Architecture and design students on field trips from various San Angelo universities are a frequent sight in Cathedral Square.

A portion of the neighborhood has been dubbed Little Kiev to denote the Ukrainian, Russian and Eastern European origins of many residents. Bakeries, delis and restaurants catering to the tastes of these new arrivals attract diners from all over San Angelo.

The uncanny nature of Cathedral Square by night has given rise to innumerable tales of supernatural happenings in the neighborhood. The Bard, an arcane hero in medieval garb, serves as a mystical protector of the community.

North Mission: The North Mission district has become a focal point of Latino life in San Angelo, though all ethnic groups are well-represented among its population.

Originally laid out as an industrial district, North Mission never took off and soon became an inexpensive residential area. From the 1940s onward, the community attracted great numbers of Latino residents unable to secure housing in white neighborhoods.

Housing ranges from aging single-family homes to old-fashioned apartment buildings. While most homes are well-kept, the occasional eyesore with peeling paint, overgrown yards, rusting cars on blocks and other debris catches the eyes of passers-by.

Commercial and industrial buildings tend to be unattractive structures often constructed of cinderblocks, corrugated metal or other inexpensive materials.

Despite the rundown look of the neighborhood, a vibrant spirit infuses North Mission.

Strikingly colorful murals, many extolling Latino pride, decorate walls throughout the community. Old-fashioned bodegas offer credit and a friendly atmosphere to locals. Cultural festivals featuring mariachi bands, Mexican folk dances and other highlights are frequent.

Religion is also key to the lives of North Mission residents. St. Anthony's Catholic Church is the best-attended church in the city, and religious holidays, such as Dio de los Muertos, or Day of the Dead, are assiduously observed by the faithful in the neighborhood.

Employment prospects are not especially good in North Mission. Many residents hold down low-paying positions in San Angelo industries or any of a range of unskilled labor jobs.

A variety of light industry operations have located in North Mission, attracted by low rents and a ready supply of cheap labor. Welding shops, souvenir T-shirt printers and lumber yards are just a few examples.

Several towing companies and landscape maintenance firms are also based in North Mission.

Along with bodegas, a handful of supermarkets, pharmacies and other shops catering to household needs, the commercial scene includes a number of well-regarded restaurants serving authentic Mexican dishes.

The San Angelo Sports Complex, the home arena of the San Angelo Nuggets basketball team, is located in North Mission.

Crime problems are moderate to severe in North Mission. A number of gangs, some established in the late 1960s, are active in the neighborhood. The Vario Mission Boys are considered the largest and most powerful North Mission gang.

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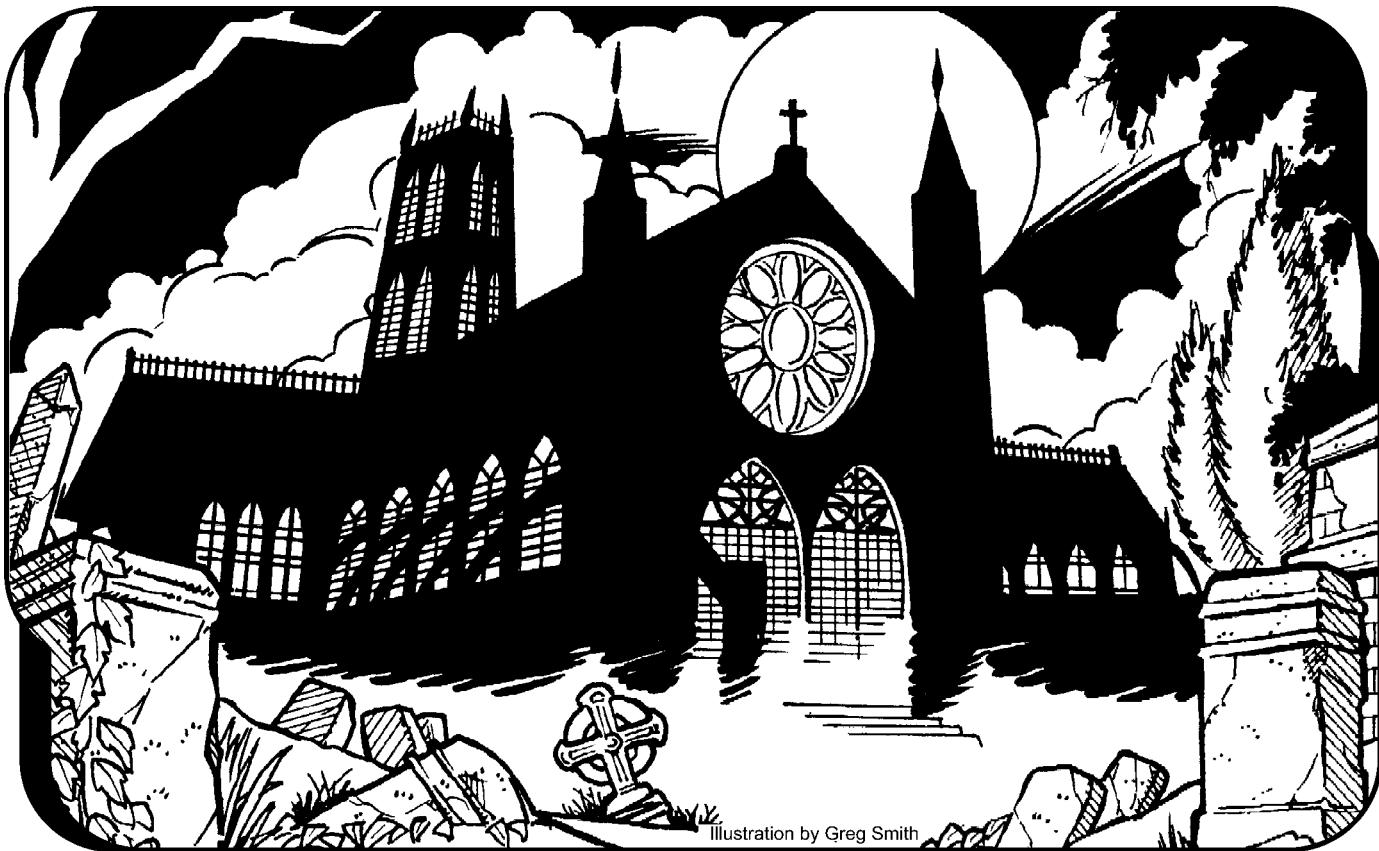


Illustration by Greg Smith

POINTS OF INTEREST

Cathedral of St. Mary*: A beautiful, eerily silent church in the Cathedral Square neighborhood. The vast cathedral dates back to the early days of San Angelo.

Displeased by the sad state of the chapel at the old Mission San Angeles, Bishop Cristoforo D'Amico claimed land for the Catholic Church in 1884 and insisted a cathedral that would properly extol the glories of God be built.

The determined, some say obsessed, bishop personally oversaw construction of the mammoth cathedral, a Gothic monument on a scale rarely seen on the West Coast. Soaring twin towers crown a facade decorated with sculptures, with additional towers, a profusion of flying buttresses and spiky pinnacles rising around the upper reaches of the edifice. Huge stained-glass windows give walls a curtain-like appearance, and leering stone gargoyles serve as rainspouts.

D'Amico continued to add to the cathedral over the next 40 years, surrounding it with a haphazard collection of chapels, vestries, religious libraries, convents and other buildings.

Adding to the confusing layout are a series of tunnels, catacombs and other underground spaces.

Construction finally ceased after D'Amico died in 1923, and St. Mary's served as a center of Catholic life in San Angelo for the next 50 years. But changes in earthquake safety laws forced the closure of the cathedral in the early 1970s. The offices of the archdiocese were moved to St. Kieran's Catholic Church in City Center, where they remain today.

Renovation efforts, hampered by court suits filed by historical preservationists, allowed the church to reopen the cathedral on a limited basis in 1983. The rest of the sprawling Gothic complex in Cathedral Square remains closed to the general public.

Eastside City Park: A sizable park in an upscale Eastside neighborhood featuring a duck pond, playground, soccer fields and a grassy picnic area. Joggers, walkers, parents pushing strollers and families out for a picnic lunch are all frequent sights at the pleasant park.

Muro de los Heroes: The "Wall of the Heroes," a mural in the North Mission neighborhood that commemorates Latino heroes. The Aztec king Montezuma, farm labor leader Cesar Chavez and Golden Age speedster Velocidad are just a few of the images on the colorful mural.

The artist Emilio painted the Muro de los Heroes under a grant from the city Arts Commission and redevelopment agency.

OTHER POINTS OF INTEREST

Children's Hospital of San Angelo
Mission San Angeles (p. 142)
Order of the Knights Templar (p. 122)
St. Anthony's Catholic Church (p. 112)
St. Basil's Cathedral (p. 112)
San Angelo Sports Complex (p. 135)



LAKEVIEW

Once an outlying town, Lakeview has been engulfed by the tide of urban development sweeping out from central San Angelo. The community is governed by the county.

An old-time downtown of sidewalk storefronts and cross-hatched streets forms the core of Lakeview. Newer suburban-style subdivisions, some exclusive gated communities of custom-built homes, surround central Lakeview.

Found at the base of the foothills leading to the Sierra Nevada, the hilly community offers several fine views of Lake Oro.

Lakeview started out in the early 1900s as a cluster of shops serving nearby fruit growers and other farmers. In those days, it was known as Hamilton Corners.

Construction of Oro Dam in the 1940s brought a new prosperity and new name to the town, which eventually became known as Lakeview for the reservoir to the north.

As urban San Angelo crept eastward in the 1950s and 1960s, the community became a popular address for residents seeking a less crowded locale and Lakeview now anchors the east edge of the metropolis.

Retail-oriented businesses predominate in Lakeview, particularly in the old downtown. The core area is particularly well-known for its many antique shops.

The community has a full range of housing options, from older homes downtown to huge mansion-style houses in exclusive neighborhoods.

Along with residents of all income levels, Lakeview is home to some of the wealthiest people in San Angelo, particularly in the Falcon Bluff and Royal Grove neighborhoods.

Crime in Lakeview tends to be fairly light, especially given the heavy use of private security forces and gated streets in upscale neighborhoods.

NEIGHBORHOODS OF NOTE

Falcon Bluff: Perhaps the most exclusive address in San Angelo, Falcon Bluff is home to a handful of beautiful estates overlooking the picturesque Del Oro River Canyon below Oro Dam.

Gated driveways wind off into the densely wooded hillside, leading to the magnificent blufftop mansions, some boasting dozens of rooms. Most homes are not visible from the street, lending residents a cherished bit of privacy.

The acres of property surrounding each architectural masterpiece boast elaborate gardens, horse pastures, woodland areas and vast green lawns.

While there are no commercial enterprises in Falcon Bluff, the estates provide plenty of employment for servants, chefs, gardeners and handymen.

Some of the city's wealthiest residents, including Aristides Pappagianis, Thaddeus Long and Benjamin Morgan, dwell in Falcon Bluff. Fancy high-society parties are held almost every weekend at one or the other of the mansions along the blufftop.

Crime in the ritzy neighborhood is light. Most estates are equipped with burglar alarms, motion sensors, video cameras and other security gear, not to mention private security officers.

Royal Grove: A wealthy suburban enclave in an exclusive part of Lakeview, Royal Grove surrounds a championship golf course and country club.

Vast custom-built homes costing \$500,000 or more are the norm in Royal Grove. Some of the most valuable houses are built right on the golf course. The private links are owned by the Royal Grove Country Club, the most expensive and prestigious country club in the city.

The community also contains a handful of small, upscale shopping centers housing pricey boutiques and eateries.

Numerous top corporate executives, business owners, doctors and attorneys live in Royal Grove. The neighborhood is popular with the city's "nouveau riche" crowd.

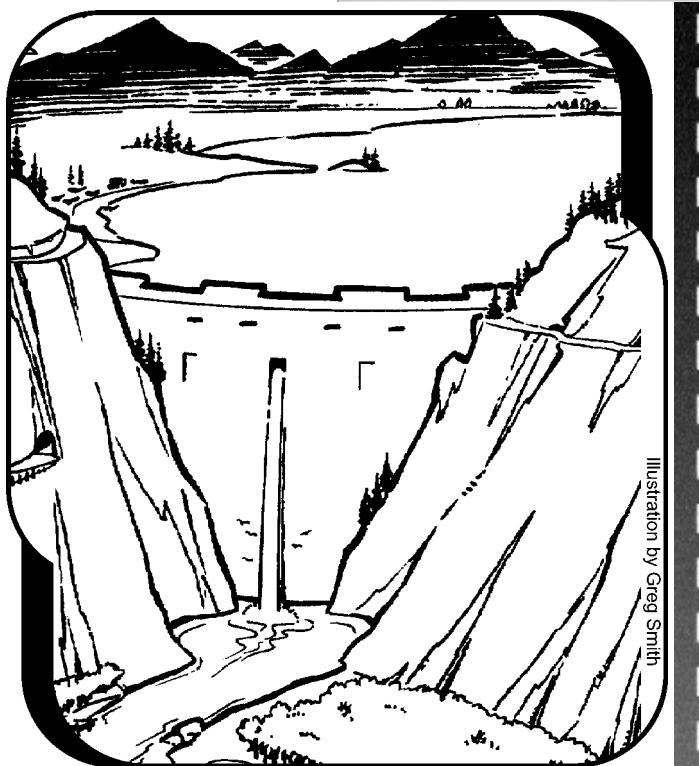


Illustration by Greg Smith

The streets of Royal Grove are privately owned, and security personnel guard a gate at the entrance to the subdivision 24 hours a day. The community also employs a private security patrol. Most homes are equipped with costly alarms and security systems.

POINTS OF INTEREST

Hunt Gardens: A stunning garden on the former estate of 1920s financier Andreas Hunt in Falcon Bluff. The lavish garden includes a hedge maze, delightful burbling fountains and numerous sculptures. A small replica of Stonehenge can also be found in the garden.

Exotic plants and rare flowers from all over the world bloom in the Hunt Gardens.

The estate, owned by East Coast relatives since Hunt's death in 1952, is open to the public on weekends. The mansion is closed, but guided tours of the gardens are offered for a reasonable price.

Quail Valley: A valley in the foothills above Lakeview at the heart of a controversy involving environmentalists and builder Benjamin Morgan.

The Morgan Development Co. purchased Quail Valley in 1995. The property is zoned for agricultural use, but the firm seeks to rezone the valley for construction of high-end housing. The proposed project would create hundreds of construction jobs and bring in millions of dollars.

But critics claim that Quail Valley is an environmentally sensitive habitat for several endangered species. They want the land set aside as a nature preserve. The fire hazards of extensive development in the brushy hills and canyons are also a concern.

County planners are evaluating the advisability of allowing development in the valley, under heavy pressure from both factions in the high-stakes dispute.

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Illustration by Storm Cook

OTHER POINTS OF INTEREST

- Ashcroft Riding Stables (p. 127)
- St. Mary's Lakeview Hospital (p. 98)
- Lakeview Airport (p. 44)
- Lakeview Community College (p. 80)
- Royal Grove Country Club (p. 127)



LA VISTA

La Vista is a solidly middle-class mix of quiet suburban neighborhoods and commercial ventures ranging from corner convenience marts to gigantic shopping malls. The unincorporated community is governed by San Angelo County.

On weekends, neighborhood yards are full of activity as residents mow lawns, trim shrubs, garden or just chat over some iced tea. Backyard pools are almost a requirement, and nearly every driveway has a basketball hoop over the garage door. Parks, front yards and even streets are often the scenes of after-school games of football, kickball or baseball.

Key La Vista boulevards, meanwhile, are clogged by shoppers traveling to the vast shopping malls and other shrines to consumerism in the community.

In the 1940s, real estate entrepreneur Thomas Porter bought up several hundred acres of orchards and pasture land west of the burgeoning city of San Angelo. He built scores of low-cost homes for returning World War II veterans, giving rise to modern La Vista.

Now La Vista contains both housing and consumer-oriented commercial ventures, and numerous office parks housing every kind of professional or business office imaginable.

Retail strip centers and larger shopping centers anchored by supermarkets handle the everyday needs of suburbanites, but the real commercial powerhouses are La Vista malls.

The community contains several malls, ranging from small but select collections of ritzy stores catering to an upscale clientele

up to gigantic, multi-level malls jammed with hundreds of stores. Shoppers throng these mega-malls, and the parking lots are almost always packed. The largest, most popular example is the three-story Fairtime Mall, located in Western La Vista.

Family-oriented entertainment venues, such as movie theaters, miniature golf courses, bumper boat rides and bowling alleys are also popular.

In addition, outdoor recreation opportunities abound in La Vista. Little League, Pop Warner football and soccer leagues are popular among La Vista families, and local high school teams are strongly supported. The Del Oro River Parkway lines the northern edge of the area, beckoning to joggers, hikers and cyclists.

The county-owned La Vista Public Golf Course is popular with duffers, though the links are considered some of the least challenging in the city. Those seeking a more rarefied air can visit the Oakhills Country Club, a golf course and dining facility with an exclusive membership.

Education also plays a key role in the daily life of La Vista residents. Along with various elementary, junior high and high schools, the area is home to the California State University, San Angelo campus.

Homes in La Vista tend to be tract-style traditional houses on smaller lots, with winding streets and numerous courts. Other architectural styles, particularly Mission or Santa Fe homes, are not uncommon, however, and a handful of streets are known for spacious, lovely estate-style homes. Apartment complexes, some quite large, are generally limited to major boulevards.

A host of parks, neighborhood schools, churches and library branches round out the residential picture in La Vista.

Most residents own their homes, and range from retirees to mid-level managers or government employees. La Vista is also home to innumerable retirement communities and nursing homes for seniors.

Crime problems are light to moderate in La Vista, which boasts a number of Neighborhood Watch groups.

NEIGHBORHOODS OF NOTE

College Gardens: The College Gardens neighborhood surrounds the campus of California State University, San Angelo, and reflects a college atmosphere.

Apartments, condos, townhouses and duplexes cluster around the university, as do a handful of fraternity and sorority houses. A sizable share of the single-family homes in College Gardens are rented to students as well.

More upscale subdivisions and condominium complexes cater to professors and instructors at CSU San Angelo.

College tastes also influence the commercial scene in College Gardens, though perhaps not to the degree found in University Commons. Pizzerias, fast food outlets, convenience stores, used book stores and a few nightclubs occupy shopping centers near the college.

Given that CSU San Angelo tends to be more of a "commuter" campus, several gas stations are also found near the campus.

POINTS OF INTEREST

Paradise Beach: A nude beach along the Del Oro River. Located along a remote stretch of the river, the beach can be difficult to reach by land, which enhances its popularity with sunbathers.

Since Paradise Beach is public property, nudity is technically illegal but sheriff's deputies rarely bother to hike to the beach to issue citations. Their one or two visits each year are typically sparked by long-running complaints from nearby homeowners.

OTHER POINTS OF INTEREST

- California State University, San Angelo (p. 80)
- Del Oro River Parkway (p. 144)
- Fairtime Mall (p. 84)
- La Vista Cabana Club (p. 128)
- La Vista Public Golf Course (p. 144)
- Meridian Engineering (p. 119)
- Oakbridge Country Club (p. 128)
- Sacred Heart Memorial Hospital
- San Angelo Christian Center (p. 111)



What was that? I don't hear so good anymore...Whispering? Oh, the Whisper. Yes, I saw him once, back in '24 or '25, 'twas, I'd just finished my shift at the Hunter-Price factory up in Irish Bar and I was out having a smoke when the Whisper comes leaping over the alleyway, chasing someone cross the rooftops. Long black coat, wide-brim hat-creepy-lookin'. There one second, gone the next. Never did hear if he caught the feller he was chasing.

—Hollis Smith, 96, retired

NORTHSIDE

A ragged collection of fading industrial districts and struggling residential neighborhoods, the Northside has aged badly since getting its start nearly 100 years ago. The city has jurisdiction over the community.

Belching smokestacks, modest homes, barking junkyard dogs, colorful gang graffiti and occasional gunshots are just a few of the sights and sounds of Northside.

First settled by gold panners who sought their fortunes on the Del Oro River, Northside caught the eye of factory builders at the turn of the century. Close enough to the city for crucial services, yet far enough away that their activities would draw few complaints, Northside seemed perfect for the early industrialists.

As the plants established along the Valley Pacific Railroad lines began to prosper, inexpensive housing for the rising numbers of factory workers began to go up.

Today Northside is a mix of older middle-class neighborhoods, industrial districts and a few high-crime areas. The heavy industry that once sustained the northern part of the city has declined with the new emphasis on light industry and high-tech enterprises in outlying regions of San Angelo. As a result, Northside has undergone an economic downturn.

Northside residents tend to be poor, and a high percentage rank below the poverty line. Many work long hours for low pay at nearby factories, while public assistance checks support a number of other households in the community.

Racial tensions are high in the ethnically mixed Northside area, and simmering grudges occasionally boil over into violent confrontations.

A few outlaw motorcycle gangs are active in Northside, and some neighborhoods are claimed by crack-dealing street gangs. Overall, the area has a high crime rate.

rent apartments, often roach- or rat-infested, are also scattered here and there in the neighborhood.

A few old-fashioned corner groceries can be found among the convenience stores, liquor marts and bars constituting most of the local commercial scene.

Veterans Memorial Hospital, an imposing but age-worn facility constructed in the 1940s, looms over the shadowed streets and decrepit homes of the neighborhood. Many Bannon Park residents are employed at the hospital, though typically in low-paying jobs as laundry workers, orderlies or janitors.

Crime has become a serious concern in Bannon Park, particularly crack dealing and gang-related violence. The Northside Posse is the largest independent street gang in the area. Sets of the Nomads and Prophets street gangs are also active.

The city police department has assigned neighborhood police officers to help residents retake their streets and park, and numerous Neighborhood Watch associations have formed in recent months despite threats by the gangs.

In spite of the determination of some residents to fight back, Bannon Park remains a dark, dangerous place shunned by other San Angelinos.

Irish Bar: A sandbar named for a Gold Rush-era mining camp populated by Irish prospectors gave this industrial neighborhood its name. One of the earliest industrial districts of San Angelo, Irish Bar is home to some of the first factories in the city, including the Hunter-Price Arms plant.

A dismal, dingy neighborhood, Irish Bar also contains numerous other factories, trucking terminals, warehouses, auto wrecking yards and distribution centers. Dead-end streets, railroad freight lines and a jumble of rail spurs complicate traffic through the neighborhood. Rust-stained corrugated metal warehouses, weeds sprouting in fenced storage yards and a profusion of diesel big rigs form the overwhelming impression of most visitors.

A constant barrage of noise assaults the ears in Irish Bar, from rumbling truck engines to blaring public address systems and piercing whistles at manufacturing plants. Smoke, fumes and other odorous emanations are also frequent.

Some of the key industries found in Irish Bar include a fiberboard pressing plant, a soft drink bottler, a corrugated box facility and a mobile-home manufacturer.

A few newer business enterprises can also be found in the neighborhood, including a gigantic FoodBasket supermarket distribution center. Smaller businesses include auto body shops, wrecking yards, mini-storage lots, recycling centers and some light manufacturing. The city Corporation Yard, which houses most city-owned vehicles, repair shops and other facilities, can also be found in Irish Bar.

There are very few homes in Irish Bar; the noise, fumes and other nuisances of living in an industrial area made residential development unprofitable. As a result, the streets of the neighbor-

NEIGHBORHOODS OF NOTE

Bannon Park: A rundown neighborhood of dilapidated older homes, Bannon Park takes its name from a nearby park honoring a pioneer San Angelo banker. Despite its moneyed name, the neighborhood has fallen on hard times.

Houses in the area recall the 1930s, with detached garages, gravel driveways and wooden clapboard siding. But peeling paint, sagging foundations and overgrown yards betray years of neglect at many homes. Vacant weed-covered lots, sometimes surrounded by rusted chain-link fences, are not uncommon. Piles of abandoned furniture and other debris are frequent sights along the streets, which are plagued by flooding problems in the winter.

A mix of residents live in the neighborhood, from elderly original homeowners to younger families seeking low-cost housing. Many houses are inexpensive rentals—owned by absentee landlords who have moved up to better neighborhoods. Boxy, low-

A Description of San Angelo

hood are virtually deserted at night, making Irish Bar a popular area for drug sales and other illicit activity. Stolen cars are frequently abandoned in the neighborhood, where they are quickly dismantled by thieves or destroyed by vandals.

POINTS OF INTEREST

Jeremiah Bannon Park: The large park that gives the Bannon Park neighborhood its name has been virtually taken over by drug dealers and street gangs.

Graffiti-covered restrooms, untended landscaping and knots of street toughs congregating on crumbling blacktop basketball courts accord the park a menacing air.

Pantheon Steel*: A shuttered steel foundry in Irish Bar. Founded in the 1930s, Pantheon Steel played a key role in the city's economy for decades until an aging, outdated plant began to drag profits down in the early 1980s. The company fell prey to a hostile takeover by financier Donald Croft, who laid off hundreds of employees and liquidated its assets.

Every day for eighteen years I drove past this great little fruit stand. They'd sell fresh corn and tomatoes, strawberries—whatever was fresh and in season, right from their own fields.
One day I'm driving to work and I see these two guys fighting up in the sky. One's covered in flames. All of a sudden this fireball falls out of the sky and hits in the field, up ahead, on the side of the road. I'll be damned if it didn't hit that fruit stand. Eight years, and in a second it's gone, just like that.
I really miss that fruit stand.
- Jeremy Whiteman, 57, plant worker

The plant itself, however, remains unsold. An outmoded design that precludes equipping the facility with robotics, coupled with longstanding pollution problems, has blocked all attempts to sell the property.

As a result, the huge plant stands empty and silent, already stripped of what equipment could be sold to other foundries.

OTHER POINTS OF INTEREST

City Corporation Yard (p. 50)
City Water Plant (p. 50)
Hunter-Price Arms (p. 86)
Veterans Memorial Hospital

RANCHO MADERA

The modern community of Rancho Madera once lay at the heart of the vast holdings of Mexican rancher Juan Madera. The ceding of California to the United States in 1848 brought an end to his cattle empire, and Madera eventually returned to Mexico a broken man.

Now a suburban bedroom community, Rancho Madera consists chiefly of middle-class neighborhoods interspersed with schools, parks and churches.

A few clusters of apartment complexes, four-plexes and other rental housing shelter poorer residents, particularly Southeast Asian or Russian newcomers to the U.S. Crowding, crime, health code violations and safety deficiencies are problems at some complexes.

Supermarkets, video rental stores and fast food eateries occupying shopping centers along key boulevards comprise the bulk of the business scene.

Many longtime workers or mid-level managers at industries in nearby Southport reside in Rancho Madera, as do numerous Peregrine Aircraft employees.

Crime is on the rise in the suburban community, partly due to influxes from Brenton and South San Angelo neighborhoods. Sheriff's investigators are also worried by reports of activity by Southeast Asian gangs and the Organizatsiya in Rancho Madera.

OTHER POINTS OF INTEREST

San Angelo County Juvenile Hall (p. 77)
Montgomery Youth Center (p. 77)
National Guard Armory (p. 100)
Rancho Madera Community College (p. 80)
St. Mary's Rancho Madera Hospital (p. 98)

SOUTHPORT

An industrial area dating back to the late 1800s, when a number of agriculture-related plants were established, Southport is today one of the top centers of employment in the city.

In the early days of San Angelo, easy access to the railroad and the proximity of the river lured several dairy creameries, bakeries, canneries and fruit-packing plants to the region.

As the economic base of San Angelo diversified, so did the types of industries found in Southport. Today the region contains a toy factory, plastics plant, furniture manufacturer and a music CD packaging facility, to name just a few. Other Southport ventures produce everything from plumbing fixtures to chainsaws to hospital beds.

Several agriculture-related operations, the largest being a Heartland Foods tomato cannery, continue to prosper in Southport, though they now rely primarily on milk, produce, wheat and other products trucked in from outlying areas.

The city's largest private employer, Peregrine Aircraft, operates a 625-acre design and manufacturing plant in Southport.

Intermixed with the huge factories are warehouses and innumerable industrial parks housing a variety of small business ventures, ranging from spa manufacturers to tool-and-die shops. Many industrial park tenants are suppliers, consultants and vendors for the corporate giants a few blocks away.

The popular 49er Amusement Park, open all week in the Spring and Summer and weekends in the Fall, is another attraction in the community.

Southport also contains the Texxon Golden Dome stadium, home of the San Angelo Miners football team, conveniently located near Highway 170.

NEIGHBORHOODS OF NOTE

Devil's Bar: Named for a treacherous sandbar in the nearby San Angelo River, the Devil's Bar region contains a jumble of junkyards, auto wreckers, firing ranges and other noisy or unsightly operations, including a rendering plant.

Vacant fields overgrown with grasses and wildflowers comprise the bulk of Devil's Bar. A few houses are scattered here and there, mostly ranch-style dwellings situated on several acres. Many Devil's Bar residents keep horses or other livestock.

POINTS OF INTEREST

Junkyard Row*: A progression of auto wrecking yards found in Devil's Bar. Replete with junked vehicles of every make and model, these yards are a favorite stop for auto enthusiasts and do-it-yourself repair buffs.

OTHER POINTS OF INTEREST

Anderson Pharmaceuticals (p. 87)
49er Amusement Park (p. 144)
Heartland Foods Inc. (p. 88)
Peregrine Aircraft (p. 87)
San Angelo Speedway (p. 135)
Texxon Oil Co. (p. 90)
Texxon Golden Dome Stadium (p. 135)
TJT Furniture Inc. (p. 90)

SOUTH SAN ANGELO

A sprawl of diverse neighborhoods, South San Angelo got its start in the early 1920s as builders ventured across the San Angelo River to construct housing for downtown office workers.

Plentiful fruit orchards gave way to neat grids of modest homes, and the community is now a major residential area in the metropolis as well as home to the Ace Braddock Municipal Airport.

Solid middle-class neighborhoods comprise the lion's share of South San Angelo, but the community also contains a handful of poorer environs plagued by crime, drugs and joblessness.

Gang violence in these poverty-stricken pockets has cast a pall over the reputation of all South San Angelo, irking homeowners in more stable neighborhoods.

Markets and stores meeting everyday household needs line busy streets, while the 85-store Elmhurst Mall fights the poor public image of the community to lure regional shoppers.

Most South San Angelo residents commute to office jobs downtown, factories in Southport or high-tech enterprises in Arroyo Verde. Others hold down low-paying service or retail jobs, and public assistance checks support some households in depressed neighborhoods.

Gangs, drug trafficking and violent crimes are a severe problem in some portions of South San Angelo. Overlaid by a patchwork quilt of gang turfs, the community sees more than its share of violence as rival gangs compete for crack markets.

The Prophets and the Nomads are the two largest street gangs in South San Angelo.

NEIGHBORHOODS OF NOTE

Aero Parkway: The middle-class Aero Parkway neighborhood envelops Ace Braddock Municipal Airport, a favorite with private pilots and corporate jets alike. The Aero Parkway Public Golf Course, one of the city's older nine-hole courses, acts as a buffer around the busy airport.

Aero Parkway homeowners, many of whom are longtime residents, have established a citizen patrol to fight influxes of crime from troubled nearby neighborhoods. Armed with cellular phones, citizens drive the streets at night and call police to report suspicious activity.

Lemon Terrace: One of South San Angelo's poorest neighborhoods, Lemon Terrace has a dire problem with crack-dealing street gangs and other illicit activity.

Cheap apartments provide much of the housing in Lemon Terrace, and businesses are almost non-existent. Empty shopping centers and boarded-up storefronts are everywhere.

The Lemon Terrace Prophets are the strongest gang in the neighborhood, and control several heavily guarded crackhouses. Violence with rival Nomads sets is common. Colorful, cryptic gang graffiti decorates walls, vacant buildings, overpasses and just about everything else that stands still long enough.

OTHER POINTS OF INTEREST

Ace Braddock Municipal Airport (p. 44)
Elmhurst Mall (p. 84)
Kelley South San Angelo Hospital (p. 98)
Wastewater Treatment Plant (p. 50)

Lemon Terrace isn't so bad. I've lived here 30 years, raised my children. There are a lot of good quality people here, but all you ever see on the TV are the dopers, the gang-bangers.

Do you know we built a park in this neighborhood? Just down the block there's an empty lot. The Justice Foundation bought the property for us, and people here in this neighborhood built the playground. One of the heroes was supposed to help, but they had some emergency—I think some lunatic tried to blow up downtown or something.

That's OK, though. The heroes are just one part of the city—it's still up to the rest of us to do for ourselves. That's what I'm teaching my grandchildren. And we're going to keep on taking back Lemon Terrace, one block at a time, working together.

-Vickie Harris, 53, homemaker

WEST SAN ANGELO

Heavy industry and inexpensive neighborhoods are the chief components of West San Angelo, found across the Del Oro River from central San Angelo.

An unincorporated area governed by Oro County, the community has become something of a dumping ground for noxious factories, unsightly rice silos and low-cost housing.

The nearby Port of San Angelo fueled the growth of heavy industry in West San Angelo, already home to a few plants, in the 1960s. Builders threw up modest neighborhoods and cheap apartment complexes to house the influx of workers.

Industry continues to dominate the business scene, though problems with contaminated groundwater, air pollution and unsightly facilities have taken the luster off the operations.

The proximity of the port also brought mills to West San Angelo, mostly to prepare rice or grain to be shipped overseas. Towering silos loom over these places, some now shuttered by bankruptcy.

A compact downtown area of stores and offices dominates the commercial scene. Community boosters are trying hard to lure office space across the river with low rents and inexpensive land, however.

A profusion of tawdry neon-lit motels are also a key, though less desirable, component of the West San Angelo business scene.

Blue-collar factory workers, along with low-paid or unemployed individuals in need of low-cost housing, constitute a sizable share of the population.

A Description of San Angelo

A fairly heavy crime rate afflicts West San Angelo, and a few street gangs are active in the community. Prostitution at the numerous cheap motels is also a problem.

POINTS OF INTEREST

Oro Causeway: The causeway, a vast basin on the western edge of West San Angelo, plays a critical role in flood protection for the region. Water from the Del Oro and San Angelo rivers is diverted into the causeway during heavy storms to avert downstream flooding. Once things quiet down, the water can safely be released back into the rivers.

Willow Bend Marina: One of several Del Oro River marinas. The Willow Bend Marina is home to various houseboats and other river vessels. Some people live full-time on their boats, and one of the vessels houses an art gallery business.

OTHER POINTS OF INTEREST



Allied Chemicals (p. 87)

Mien Community Temple (p. 112)

Port of San Angelo (p. 24)

U.S. Fertilizer (p. 90)

UTILITIES

Water, power and telephones are critical to keeping urban San Angelo going. These vital utilities are provided by a mix of government agencies and private enterprise.

Water: Drinking water for urban San Angelo residents comes from the Lake Oro reservoir or one of the two rivers. Treatment plants prepare the water for domestic use, and sewer plants filter out impurities before the water is returned to the rivers. Wells are typically used only in emergencies or in times of drought.

A branch of the city public works department oversees the water system within the city limits. In the suburbs, water needs are met by independent special districts. Water in rural San Angelo comes primarily from wells, either privately owned or managed by irrigation districts.

Sewers: Due to the flood danger facing the city, urban San Angelo has an extensive storm drainage system. Canals, creeks and underground piping are all used to divert rainwater.

The earliest parts of the system, cavernous storm drains dating back to the late 1800s, were replaced in the 1960s and are now mostly abandoned. No maps exist for much of the old sewer system, which runs for miles below the downtown.

Gas and Electricity: The Western Gas & Electric Co., a private utility company, provides natural gas and power to all San Angelo County residents as well as those in neighboring counties.

Hydroelectric plants in the Sierras provide much of the power distributed by Western Gas & Electric Co. Five large substations are scattered around the metropolis, regulating distribution of electricity to the county.

While a private enterprise, its activities are regulated by the state Public Utilities Commission. The commission must also approve all proposed rate changes.

Telephones: Valley Bell, created in the 1980s breakup of a telecommunications giant, provides telephone service to most of the San Angelo area.

GETTING AROUND SAN ANGELO

Most people get around San Angelo by driving; in fact, a car is almost a necessity in the sprawling city. There are other forms of transportation available, however, as well as options for getting into or out of the city.

SAN ANGELO INTERNATIONAL AIRPORT

The San Angelo International Airport provides commercial passenger and freight service to most U.S. cities, as well as Canadian and Mexican destinations.

Opened in 1965, the airport serves nearly 9.6 million passengers each year. All of the top U.S. airlines have regular flights from the airport. Its vast parking lots are crowded, and the airport restaurants, gift shops and car rental agencies are always bustling. A detachment of the Sheriff's Department provides security at the San Angelo International Airport.

OTHER AIRPORTS

Along with the international airport, San Angelo features a number of smaller airports catering to private aircraft.

The Ace Braddock Municipal Airport, named for a World War I pilot born in San Angelo, has two runways, 60 hangars and nearly 200 aircraft tie-downs. Numerous charter services, airplane repair firms and other businesses can be found here. The airport, located in South San Angelo, is heavily used by San Angelo businesses as well as private pilots.

The Lakeview Airport, a single-runway airport with 120 aircraft tie-downs, mostly serves private plane owners in nearby neighborhoods.

The Marshall Airport, just outside that rural town, has a single runway, 60 tie-downs and a dozen hangars. Along with several charter services and cropdusters, businesses at the airport include the Aero Grill, an old-fashioned diner.

CAMPAIGN TIP

Transportation can play a major role in many adventures. Supers without a movement-based power can cause a team to take a more conventional mode of travel, such as a bus, train or commercial jet, whether traveling across town or to even more distant locales, and this presents plenty of opportunities for the GM.

Supervillains who learn about a team hopping on public transportation to travel to another city, for instance, can set up a moving "death trap" for the heroes.

On a more mundane level, even persistent fans cornering a recognized hero, with no way to escape, can present the hero with a challenge of a different sort!

A disaster or crisis enroute, such as a severe storm, engine failure, and so on, can present the heroes with opportunities to rescue some (or all) of the passengers and crew.

COLE "POPS" FULLER CROPDUSTER

Cole "Pops" Fuller has been a cropduster at the Marshall Airport for more than 20 years. He flies a biplane that just barely stays airworthy with the hard work of his "mechanic," his teenage niece Becca Harding.

"Pops" Fuller has a reputation as a daredevil, even among other cropdusters. He takes on the jobs no one else risks, dusting fields littered with power lines, trees and other obstacles. Fuller has walked away from two crashes while cropdusting.

His more sophisticated, business-like competitors consider Fuller something of a throwback to the old days of cropdusting—something he takes as a compliment.

Fuller, 48, stands 5'10" and has a heavy build. He has thinning brown hair and brown eyes. Fuller habitually wears an old-fashioned flyer's jacket, and dons goggles and sometimes even a scarf while flying.

Cole "Pops" Fuller: PL 2; Init +1 (Dex); Defense 11 (+0 base, +1 Dex); Spd 30 ft.; Atk +2 melee (+1S, punch); SV Dmg +1, Fort +1, REF +1, Will +2; Str 11, Dex 13, Con 12, INT 10, Wis 11, Cha 10. *Feats:* Iron Will. *Skills:* Driving +2, Knowledge (agriculture) +2, Knowledge (aviation history) +2, Knowledge (fertilizers, herbicides & insecticides) +2, Pilot +6, Profession (cropduster) +3, Spot +2. *Equipment:* Leather jacket, pilot's gear, parachute, cropduster (bi-plane).

STR 4, REF 6, HLT 4, PRE 5, INT 4, WIL 4
DEF 16,INI 5, MOV 10, TGH 4, LIF 20

Disadvantages: Distinctive Features (Pilot's clothing, easily concealed) [-2], Follower (Becca Harding, niece) [-2], Psych. Disad. (Daredevil) [-5], Psych. Disad. (Rivalry with other cropduster pilots) [-5].

Advantages: Famous (Daring pilot, local) [5].

Skills: Area Knowledge (Marshall) +3, Area Knowledge (San Angelo County) +3, Awareness +3, Business +3, Driving +2, Geography +1, Knowledge (Agriculture) +1, Knowledge (Aviation history) +3, Knowledge (Fertilizers, herbicides & insecticides) +3, Mechanic +1, Navigation +2, Para +1 (Parachutes +2), Piloting +5 (Bi-planes +2), Professional (Cropduster pilot) +4, Swimming +2, Trading +3.

Equipment: Leather jacket, pilot's gear, parachute, cropduster (bi-plane).

HELICOPTERS

The number of helicopters in the skies over San Angelo is on the rise. The police and sheriff's departments have aerial patrols, and the University Medical Center operates an air ambulance service. Three local television stations have helicopters as well.

Private helicopter companies based at local airports offer charter services, and a few top companies maintain helicopters. Several of the taller office buildings in downtown San Angelo have rooftop helipads.

BUSES AND LIGHT RAIL

Rapid Transit, a regional agency funded by the city and county, handles the mass transit needs of the San Angelo metropolitan area.

Bus routes follow most of the main streets, with stops every couple of blocks or so. Express routes, particularly commuter runs from La Vista to the downtown, have fewer stops. Rapid Transit

buses vary greatly, from run-down vehicles to new natural gas-powered models. Buses are stored at the Rapid Transit yard below the elevated I-7 freeway downtown.

The Light Rail system, built in the 1980s, has lines in the downtown, Eastside, La Vista, Pleasant Grove and South San Angelo. It has not yet been extended into Arroyo Verde, Brenton, Castle Heights, Lakeview, Rancho Madera, Southport or West San Angelo.

The tracks run parallel to surface streets or in freeway center dividers, and for the most part are not elevated. Stations are located anywhere from three to five miles apart. Electricity-powered trains run from 5:30 a.m. to midnight every day.

Numerous private bus companies also operate in San Angelo, offering trips to other cities, charter buses and other services. The largest is Roadrunner Bus Co., a national line providing bus trips all over the United States. The company operates several depots in San Angelo, including a large bus station in Riverfront.

Sorry I'm late. You're never going to believe this. Yes, I know I'm supposed to be in the office by 9 a.m., but-The time now? It's 10:30. I know-Listen to me! My bus got transported to another dimension! You can't dock my pay for that!

-Toni Houston, 23, office clerk

RAILROADS

The railroad, once a chief element in the economic life of San Angelo, has waned somewhat in importance but remains key to many industries.

Valley Pacific Railroad tracks run through several communities and tie San Angelo to the rest of the nation. The city and railroad have eliminated most at-grade road crossings for safety and traffic flow reasons, but a number remain, particularly in Castle Heights and the downtown. Spurs extend off the main lines to connect to industrial plants and other vital locations.

The railroad runs a freight yard in Pleasant Grove, where boxcars arriving from all over the United States are assembled into new trains bound for other West Coast cities. Built in the late 1800s, the yard today has a serious pollution problem.

Valley Pacific Railroad security officers patrol the yards, but are helpless to stop the innumerable hobos who use freight trains as free transportation.

Amtrak provides passenger rail service to San Angelo, stopping at a restored historic train depot in Midtown as well as a larger modern station in City Center.

TAXIS

Taxis are not common in San Angelo, except in the downtown and at the airport. Most of the dozen or so taxi companies in the city will send cabs to other communities on request.

BOATS AND SHIPS

The Port of San Angelo, detailed earlier, handles cargo shipping for the region. While recreational boating is popular, boats and ships are rarely used for transportation in the city. A few of the paddlewheelers docked near The Wharves sometimes take jaunts down the delta.

Government

The government of San Angelo plays a vital role in the everyday lives of all its citizens—even the superhuman ones. Along with being a chief employer in the region, government agencies provide an array of critical services to residents, everything from street repairs to drinkable water.

The City Council and other government leaders can also have a profound influence on the paranormal population. A friendly administration could offer sanctioning and other aid, while hostile officials could crack down on vigilantes or even try to ban use of superpowers entirely.

City Ordinance 5.21.29: No place designated as a base, headquarters or other focal point of activity by individuals with paranormal powers, also referred to as supers, heroes and superheroes, shall be established without a Special Use Permit by the City Council.

— San Angelo City Code

GOVERNMENT



GOVERNMENT JURISDICTIONS

The city of San Angelo lies within San Angelo County, but the division of governmental duties between the two entities has been spelled out by state law or, in some cases, by long-standing agreement.

In the city of San Angelo, the City Council handles zoning, development and budgetary decisions. The city is also responsible for roads, water, parks, trash collection and other municipal services.

In unincorporated San Angelo County, decisions on zoning, finances, services and so on are made by the elected Board of Supervisors. Welfare and public health agencies, which serve residents of both the city and county, are overseen by the county.

Some services in unincorporated areas of the county, such as parks, water and fire protection, are handled by special districts headed by independently elected boards. A few services, such as the public library system, are jointly funded by the city and county.

CITY GOVERNMENT

An elected City Council, headed by the mayor, oversees municipal affairs in San Angelo. There are seven council seats; six council members are elected by district, while the mayor is chosen by all the voters in the city. Council members and the mayor serve four-year terms. Elections are held every two years. Four council seats are on the ballot in one election, with the mayor's post and other two seats going before voters two years later. City codes do not limit the number of terms a council member may serve.

The mayor sets the council agenda each week, with the aid of the city manager. While he often has considerable political influence, the mayor's official duties are mostly ceremonial and promotional in nature.

Most decisions on city policies, personnel, ordinances, development projects and other major actions must be made by the full City Council, which meets every Wednesday night.

The seat of city government is the historic downtown San Angelo City Hall. A modern annex across the street houses most city offices, however.

THE MAYOR'S OFFICE MAYOR ALEX MARTINEZ

The first Latino mayor of San Angelo, Alejandro "Alex" Martinez was elected to the City Council in 1986. He captured the post of mayor in 1992, and won re-election in 1996. No serious challengers have yet emerged for the next election.

The son of Mexican immigrants to California, Mayor Martinez maintains close ties with the Latino population of San Angelo. However, he enjoys a strong base of support among residents of all ethnic backgrounds, though conservatives tend to dislike Martinez.

Recently, the mayor has spoken out strongly against efforts to limit immigration, crack down on illegal aliens and overturn affirmative action programs. Martinez views these attempts as unfair attacks on Latinos in particular.

He has also spoken in defense of the civil rights of supers, though Martinez has roundly condemned the actions of criminal paranormals in San Angelo.

There are rumors that the mayor, a Democrat, may seek higher office in the near future, possibly running for Cassandra Knight's seat in the House of Representatives when she retires.

An attorney before entering the political scene, the mayor has a wife, Teresa, and two daughters, Maria, 23, and Mercedes, 19. Martinez fought several bouts as an amateur boxer in his youth, something his political advisers are fond of pointing out during campaigns.

Martinez, 50, stands 5'8" tall and has a burly build. He has gray-streaked black hair, dark brown eyes and a mustache. He is skilled at putting visitors at ease, though Martinez can also be quite caustic in political debates.

Mayor Alex Martinez: PL 3; Init +0 (Dex); Defense 12 (+2 base); Spd 30 ft; Atk +2 melee (+0S, punch); SV Dmg +0, Fort +0, REF +0, Will +1; Str 12, Dex 11, Con 10, INT 14, Wis 13, Cha 14. **Feats:** Attack Focus (unarmed), Connected, Leadership, Talented (Knowledge [bureaucracy] and Knowledge [law]). **Skills:** Bluff +3, Diplomacy +6, Drive +2, Gather Information +5, Knowledge (bureaucracy) +5, Knowledge (law) +5, Language (Spanish), Profession (city mayor) +5, Sense Motive +4. **Equipment:** Nice suit, pocket watch, luxury car (city vehicle).

STR 5, REF 4, HLT 5, PRE 7, INT 6, WIL 6
DEF 14,INI 5,MOV 9,TGH 6,LIF 27

Disadvantages: Dependents (Family) [-2], Duty (to city government) [-5], Psych. Disad. (angered by prejudice) [-5], Psych. Disad. (political rivals) [-2].

Advantages: Famous (Mayor, well known local figure) [5], Membership: City Government (MR 10/Mayor, Minor) [20], Perk (license to practice law) [2], Wealthy (Well off) [2].

Skills: Area Knowledge (San Angelo) +6, Awareness +3, Bureaucracy +6, Business +1, Conversation +5, Dancing +2, Deduction +2, Driving +2, Economics +1, History (Mexican) +1, Intrigue +1, Knowledge (Law) +4, Knowledge (State politics) +3, Language (English; Spanish is native) +3, Negotiation +2, Orate +7, Persuasion +6, Politics +6, Professional (Boxer) +1, Professional (Lawyer) +3, Professional (Politician) +6, Religion +2, Riding +1, Society +5, Style +2, Swimming +2, Unarmed Combat (Boxing) +3, Writing +2.

Equipment: Nice suit, pocket watch, luxury car (city vehicle).

Good morning, and thanks for returning my call. I wasn't sure how to get in touch with you—I'm glad the Justice Foundation relayed my message.

I called on behalf of Mayor Martinez. He's very impressed with your handling of the recent Amok incident, and he'd like to present you with a plaque on behalf of the city. We've tentatively scheduled a ceremony for 9 a.m. Thursday on the steps of City Hall. Is that a good time for you? Oh, you have a day job. A secret identity? Well, do you think you can get the morning off without making your boss suspicious?

— Tony Harlow, 42, mayor's assistant

THE CITY COUNCIL

The city of San Angelo is divided into six council districts, which are redrawn after each census. Each council member represents about 250,000 citizens. Council posts are nominally non-partisan, and San Angelo voters tend to frown on excessive involvement by political parties in council races. However, a number of Democratic and Republican politicians got their start on the City Council.

SELECTED COUNCIL MEMBERS

Councilwoman Emily Carver: An outspoken advocate for her African-American constituents in South San Angelo, Emily Carver has worked hard to bring jobs and services to the poorer neighborhoods in her district. She has also strongly criticized the San Angelo Police Department for not working harder to curb gang

violence in South San Angelo. Carver, an African-American loan officer at Prospector Bank, defeated veteran councilman Randolph McAlpine in 1996 to win her council seat.

Councilman Ralph Chan: Now a retired community college vice-chancellor, Ralph Chan has served on the City Council since 1972. Chan, an older Chinese-American man who represents the downtown area including Chinatown, is conservative on fiscal issues but progressive on social questions. In 1986, the hero Twister saved Chan's grandchildren after a boating accident on Lake Oro. Since then, Chan has been a firm supporter of paranormals in San Angelo.

Councilman Tom Kincaid: A strong pro-business voice on the council, Tom Kincaid represents the city's middle-class Eastside neighborhoods. Elected in 1994, Kincaid quickly emerged as the leader of a council faction opposed to the mayor's championing of social causes. He owns a chain of mini-storage lots in San Angelo and other Northern California cities.

CITY EMPLOYEES

The day-to-day business of keeping San Angelo going falls to the thousands of municipal workers employed by the city. Their activities are overseen and directed by the top executives of the city, who are hired (and occasionally fired) by the City Council.

Lower-ranking civil employees are hired by the city personnel office. Rank-and-file city workers, who are represented by a public employees union, can't be fired without cause.

The city of San Angelo employs approximately 16,244 people.

Don't let anyone tell you the sewer monster's just a myth. I've seen it with my own eyes. And it's nothing human, believe me.

I mean, there are people living down there, in those big closed-off drains below old town. Troglobytes, we call 'em. We find the fast food wrappers and other stuff they leave here an' there sometimes. But this thing, it ain't no trog.

I was down under 32nd Street when I heard a noise. I turned around, and there it was, splashing down a side tunnel. Something big. Had these green scales and a tail. I dropped my flashlight in the water then, so I didn't see much else.

My boss, he said I must've been drinking on the job. But I know what I saw.

— Clarence Hoyle, 32, public works employee

CAMPAIGN TIP

City Hall could provide an interesting workplace for a hero's associate. A friend or loved one could come across evidence of corruption, prompting a kidnapping or blackmail attempt. Or the hero could work at City Hall in his Secret ID. A particularly demanding post, such as an aide to the mayor, could lead to all kinds of complications. But such a job can also make the PC privy to some interesting information on the behind-the-scenes workings of city government, not to mention provide valuable contacts with top officials, civic leaders and other San Angelo powerbrokers. Finally, contacts at City Hall are a must for any well-connected PC or NPC.

Government

GM'S OPTION

Battles between superpowered foes can be incredibly destructive. A City Council hostile to paranormals could direct the City Attorney's Office to file suit against the PCs or their enemies for compensation for any damage to public property. In fact, the city could seek an injunction banning the PCs from operating in San Angelo altogether if it could prove they pose a threat to the health and safety of others.

NOTABLE CITY DEPARTMENTS

CITY ATTORNEY

The City Attorney's Office handles all civil litigation involving the city and advises the City Council on legal matters. This office does not handle criminal prosecutions, which are the responsibility of the county district attorney's office.

CITY MANAGER

The city manager acts as the chief executive officer of San Angelo. Much like the head of a corporation, he oversees the day-to-day operation of city government, sets policy and ensures that City Council directives are carried out. His office also prepares an annual budget, which the council reviews and approves each July, the start of the fiscal year.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

The sizable Community Development Department oversees three key city functions: city planning, urban redevelopment and economic development.

The Economic Development Office tries to attract new businesses, bringing jobs, tax revenue and other benefits, to San Angelo. The office also strives to keep firms already in the city happy.

The Planning Department advises city officials on zoning and development questions. Planners also review proposed projects to ensure that they meet city, state and federal regulations.

Finally, the Redevelopment Agency works to rejuvenate blighted neighborhoods through civic improvements and new construction, providing tax breaks or other financial incentives to persuade developers to build in rundown areas.

PARKS AND RECREATION

The expansion and upkeep of the San Angelo city park system, including public museums and the San Angelo Zoo, is the responsibility of the Parks and Recreation Department.

Recreational activities and facilities are also overseen by the department. Adult softball leagues are very popular in San Angelo, and many city businesses sponsor at least one team of employees. Youth soccer leagues are also exploding in popularity.

Public pools are open every summer, and community centers provide classes, meeting halls and other programs. The Parks and Recreation Department also runs a series of after-school programs for latchkey children in conjunction with the San Angelo City Unified School District.

ORGANIZATION OF CITY HALL

ADMINISTRATIVE SERVICES

Computer Services Division

Finance Office

Accounts Payable

Business Licenses

Payroll

Purchasing/Procurement

Treasurer

Human Resources Division

Risk Management Office

CITY ATTORNEY

CITY CLERK

Elections Office

Records Office

CITY COUNCIL

CITY MANAGER

Fiscal Affairs/Budget Office

City Manager

Public Information Officer

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Economic Development Office

Planning Department

Building Division

Permits

Inspections

Code Enforcement Division

Design Review Division

Historic Preservation Office

Zoning Administrator

Redevelopment Agency

FIRE DEPARTMENT

GENERAL SERVICES

Architectural Services

Building Maintenance

Construction Management

Contract Administration

MAYOR'S OFFICE

PARKS AND RECREATION

Administration

Parks Planning

Golf Division

History and Science Division

Museums

Old San Angelo

Park Maintenance Division

City Cemeteries

Street Trees

Recreation Division

Adult Sports

After-school Day Care

Community Centers

Senior Centers

Teen Centers

Community Pools

Youth Sports

Zoo

POLICE DEPARTMENT

PUBLIC WORKS DEPT

Administration

Public Works Director

Animal Control

Animal Control Shelter

Corporation Yard

Vehicle Maintenance

Sign Shop

Engineering Division

Traffic Engineering

Parking Division

Parking Enforcement

Parking Maintenance

Refuse Collection Division

Recycling Coordinator

Road Maintenance Division

Street Lighting

Street Sweeping

Utilities Division

Water

Sewer

Wastewater Treatment Plant

PUBLIC WORKS

The largest department in city government, public works provides most of the basic services people associate with municipal government. Road repairs, trash pick-up and street cleaning are all performed by public works employees.

The department also oversees utilities such as water and sewer service, though power and gas are provided by private utility companies. In addition, the department offers animal control services and operates an animal shelter.

In the city, enforcement of parking codes is the responsibility of the Public Works Department, not the police. Parking enforcement officers, who are unarmed and are not sworn peace officers, patrol the city streets and issue citations.

The city police and fire departments are detailed under **Public Safety**.

CITY OFFICIALS OF NOTE

City Manager Gene Chandler: The city manager of San Angelo for the past 25 years. Some people say Chandler has more influence over civic affairs than any elected official. He prefers to operate behind the scenes, rarely granting interviews to reporters and keeping a fairly low profile at public council meetings. Rumors that Chandler may announce his retirement soon are flying around City Hall.

City Attorney Michael Wasserstein: A skilled, knowledgeable attorney with a reputation as a hard-nosed negotiator. Wasserstein, a middle-aged man with a fondness for expensive suits, is infamous at City Hall for his bad puns.

Recreation Supervisor Tessa Akiyoshi: A perky, energetic young woman who oversees the three teen centers operated by the city Parks and Recreation Department. The centers try to keep teens off the streets and out of trouble by offering hassle-free places to play basketball, study, hold garage band concerts or just hang out. The centers are fairly popular, due mostly to Akiyoshi's innovative ideas on attracting teen visitors and her infectious enthusiasm for the program. Akiyoshi is engaged to Officer Carey Sorenson, who serves on the Paranormal Alert Response Team of the San Angelo Police Department.

OK, so LA has your quakes, your fires, your riots. Well, we've got the supers to clean up after and believe you me, they can be a lot worse than any natural disaster.

I remember one time I went to repair this broken water main after some scrap between a bunch of supers, except it wasn't so much broken as just ... gone. One of the heroes told me some guy fighting on t'other side accidentally teleported it to Antarctica during the battle.

Tell me the last time an earthquake did that.

— Brett Harper, 34, public works employee

Public Works Director Frank Lindbergh: A 40-year veteran of city government, Lindbergh is the most senior city executive. He started out at the bottom on a road repair crew, worked his way through college and moved up through the ranks to become head of the city Public Works Department 15 years ago.

Blunt and sometimes tactless, Lindbergh stands out from the crowd of younger, more polished city officials. But he has molded his department into a model of efficiency, especially since the advent of superpowered humans. Public works employees are skilled at cleaning up and repairing broken infrastructure in the wake of battles between supers.

As he gets closer to mandatory retirement age, Lindbergh has become more irascible than ever, and some gossip has it that he may be asked to take early retirement.

Redevelopment Coordinator Darell Bunch: A young, aggressive African American man hired a few years ago to energize the redevelopment agency. Bunch led the successful redevelopment of the Wharves neighborhood downtown, which attracted national attention.

His latest project involves the fading warehouse district in Riverfront, though troubled Northside and South San Angelo neighborhoods are also a priority for his agency.

CAMPAIGN TIP

PCs who are popular or have good reputations might be the target of recruiting efforts by Akiyoshi, who is always looking for local celebrities to appear at the teen centers. She could also try to persuade a PC to serve as a mentor to troubled youths or help out in other ways.

CITY COMMISSIONS

A number of appointed commissions help govern San Angelo. Some are authorized to issue rulings on behalf of the City Council, while others merely advise the council. Appointments to commissions are made by the council, and are often used to repay political favors. Also, serving on a key city commission, particularly the Planning Commission, has paved the way for many a City Council campaign.

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT COMMISSION

One of the most influential panels in city government, the Economic Development Commission advises the City Council on the San Angelo business scene.

A collection of heavy hitters in corporate and political circles sits on the commission, including real estate broker Joseph Fong, builder Benjamin Morgan and newspaper publisher Peter K. Fletcher. Other commissioners include a Prospecter Bank vice president and a senior partner in the law firm of Madison, Fairchild & Associates.

The commission meets monthly to discuss city-related economic and business issues. Some of its recent recommendations to the City Council have included reducing city fees to aid newly started small businesses and streamlining the permit process for new construction.

The effect of supers on the city business scene has been a topic of debate at several commission meetings. One bloc of commissioners, led by Morgan, contends that supers are damaging the economic reputation of the city with their violence and property destruction. But another faction argues that supers are an incentive to tourism and high-tech companies. The dispute remains unresolved, and the panel has not yet submitted a report on the topic to the City Council.

Behind the scenes, commissioners use their influence to help persuade companies to locate in San Angelo and act as unofficial mediators in disputes involving local businesses.

The constant pressure from the Economic Development Commission to reduce fees and government regulations has caused some friction on the City Council. Mayor Martinez does not get along well with the panel, but Councilman Tom Kincaid strongly supports it.

OTHER CITY COMMISSIONS OF NOTE

The city has dozens of commissions dealing with everything from employee relations to street trees. Some meet every other week, while others confer just once or twice a year.

Human Rights Commission: The Human Rights Commission, recently created at the urging of Mayor Alex Martinez, looks into allegations of discrimination and abuses of civil rights in the city. The panel also frequently takes stands on state, national or even

Government

international issues, which has made it something of a laughing stock among conservative San Angelinos.

Gay rights, possible civil rights violations by San Angelo vigilantes and questions on the rights of supers have been topics on recent Human Rights Commission agendas.

Planning Commission: The city Planning Commission rules on zoning and development-related issues in the city. However, votes on controversial projects are almost always appealed to the City Council by the losing side—a source of great frustration to most commissioners.

CAMPAIGN TIP

PCs who make a habit of pulping foes or pushing normals around could find themselves the subject of Human Rights Commission hearings. While the commission has no actual power, this could create a real public relations problem for the PC. On the other hand, PCs seeking help in fighting anti-mutant discrimination might find allies on the commission.

NOTABLE PLACES

City Hall: The historic San Angelo City Hall was constructed in 1922. An example of architectural styles heavily influenced by the Spanish missions of early California, the picturesque building is now a historic landmark.

However, San Angelo has long since outgrown the nearly 75-year-old City Hall, and most offices are now housed in an annex across the street. Only the City Council chambers, city manager's office and city clerk's office are located at the original City Hall.

Corporation Yard: Most public works employees report for work at the city Corporation Yard in Irish Bar, which houses all city-owned heavy equipment, such as street sweepers, dump trucks and refuse trucks. The huge yard also contains gas pumps, a sign shop producing all street signs for the city and a garage maintaining most city vehicles.

Water Treatment Plant: Commonly called the Waterworks, its original name, this Irish Bar facility treats water drawn from the Del Oro River for use by San Angelo citizens. Access to the plant, run by the city public works department, is limited but security is fairly light.

The city Wastewater Treatment Plant, a separate facility several miles down river in South San Angelo, uses bacteria, chemicals and other processes to clean the water from San Angelo sewers before it is returned to the river.

COUNTY GOVERNMENT

An elected Board of Supervisors directs the government of San Angelo County. The five supervisors are elected by district, and they select one of their number as chairman each year. The chairman runs board meetings, but has no other powers.

Supervisors are elected to four-year terms. Elections are held every two years, with three supervisorial seats up for election in one cycle and the other two in the next. There is no limit on the number of terms a supervisor may serve.

Supervisorial posts are part-time in nature; most board members also hold other jobs. The board meets weekly on Wednesday mornings.

The board's chambers and most county offices are found at Chamberlain Center, built in 1981 and named for a longtime supervisor of the 1940s-1960s, downtown.



Illustration by Greg Smith

Supervisory districts, which are redrawn after each census, cover all areas of the county, including the incorporated city of San Angelo. Each supervisor represents roughly 600,000 citizens. While supervisory posts are nominally non-partisan, political parties are frequently active behind the scenes in key races.

PROMINENT SUPERVISORS

Supervisor Erik Bates: A retired football player for the San Angelo Miners, Erik Bates now owns a nightclub in Garrett's Landing. Bates, who had no prior political experience, surprised many observers by winning his supervisory seat in a 1995 special election after the accidental death of Supervisor Rod Weber. Supervisor Jeffrey Daley has taken Bates under his wing, and the two often vote together on key issues.

Supervisor Jeffrey Daley: A men's clothing store owner, Jeffrey Daley won election to the board in 1990 on a strong law-and-order, pro-business platform.

He has often spoken out on the need for greater control of paranormals—both heroes and criminals—whom Daley argues pose a serious threat to the safety and security of San Angelo citizens.

Daley also advocates allowing extensive development of the environmentally sensitive Quail Valley area. However, his proposals on these issues have been blocked by the board majority.

Daley's election campaigns have been heavily financed by developer Benjamin Morgan. He represents the Lakeview and La Vista areas.

Supervisor Connie Nishimura: A consultant on welfare and other human assistance questions, Connie Nishimura has represented downtown and Eastside neighborhoods since 1984. She's led the opposition to proposals to build in the Quail Valley area.

There are rumors that Nishimura, who is well-known in the national debate over welfare reform, may be tapped for a post in the White House.

COUNTY EMPLOYEES

The county of San Angelo employs roughly 32,727 people who provide a wide range of services to residents of both the city and unincorporated county. Their activities are overseen by several department heads.

Unlike city government, a number of chief county officials are elected, including the district attorney, sheriff, clerk, treasurer-tax collector and assessor.

Elected officials report to the Board of Supervisors, but cannot be fired or disciplined by the board, giving them some degree of independence. However, supervisors control the budgets of all county departments, and often use this fact to

control elected department heads.

Other key county agencies, such as the planning, public works and human assistance departments, are headed by board appointees. These personnel serve at the will of the board, and can be disciplined or removed by supervisors.

Rank-and-file county employees are hired by the county personnel office. They are represented by a public employees union and cannot be fired or disciplined without cause.

MEDICAL EXAMINER'S OFFICE

The medical examiner, sometimes inaccurately called the coroner, is charged by law with investigating all unnatural deaths in the county.

Forensic pathologists, medical doctors employed by the office, conduct autopsies in all cases of homicide, and most cases of suicide and accidental death. They are often called to the scenes of unnatural deaths to get a better idea of the circumstances.

Pathologists are also charged with conducting autopsies when the cause of death is in doubt. They are often called to testify on the medical evidence at murder trials.

In addition to its investigatory role, the Medical Examiner's Office acts as a watchdog of public health and safety. Its findings can spur the early discovery of a disease outbreak, reveal fatal product safety flaws and provide insight into trends in death statistics.

The San Angelo County Medical Examiner's Office, or morgue, is located downtown. The high-tech modern morgue contains autopsy rooms, cold-storage facilities and various offices, and was built in 1990 to replace an overcrowded, outdated facility.

The autopsy rooms are equipped with video cameras to provide records of procedures, and one room is sealed and specially ventilated for autopsies on especially noxious bodies. An extensive lab handles most toxicology and other blood tests, though DNA testing is handled by private labs under contract to the county.

A closed-circuit television system is used when bodies must be identified by friends or relatives, sparing them the necessity of going into less-public areas of the morgue.

Detectives, district attorney's investigators and other law enforcement personnel are frequent visitors to the morgue.

The chief medical examiner is appointed by the county Board of Supervisors. Dr. George Kassis is the current chief medical examiner of San Angelo County.

OTHER COUNTY DEPARTMENTS

Assessor's Office: Appraisers from the Assessor's Office set the taxable value of all property in San Angelo County. Records of property ownership, sales and transfers in the county are kept by the office, and are available for review by the public.

County Clerk: The County Clerk's Office issues birth and death

We're out patching Marshall Boulevard one day back in the '80s. Hot as all get-out, in the middle of nowhere. Norm, he just got on with public works a week earlier, and he's working the backhoe. Takes it onto the shoulder, which collapses into this irrigation ditch.

Norm's not hurt, but we're all standing around wondering how to get our backhoe out of the ditch when along comes Alloy, doing those giant leaps he used to make. He takes one look, steps into the ditch and lifts out the backhoe. Puts it back on the road, pretty as you please. 'Be more careful next time,' he says, winks, and leaps off.

— Bob Warzawski, 44, road crew supervisor

CAMPAIGN TIP

Heroes in darker or more street-oriented campaigns will probably see a lot of the county medical examiner's office as they investigate mysterious deaths.

Inventive GMs can work the office into a variety of plots, however. Perhaps a vile cult steals bodies from the morgue for some wicked ritual, for example. In fact, the body could be that of a supervillain accidentally killed by the PCs or police—the cult may want to resurrect him or just tap into his power for a really dangerous spell.



Government

County Clerk: The County Clerk's Office issues birth and death certificates, marriage licenses and business licenses to the public. Copies of these documents are among the public records kept at the office.

The elections office, part of the clerk's responsibilities, registers voters, prepares ballots, tallies votes on election day and keeps records of campaign contribution forms filed by candidates. These forms, which are public records, list every person who donates more than \$100 to the candidate.

The list of registered voters in the county, which reports addresses and political affiliations, is also a public record.

CAMPAIGN TIP

As with the Assessor's Office, the public records at the County Clerk's Office could prove invaluable to PCs conducting an investigation. On the other hand, villains, reporters or anyone else could use these records to dig up a little information on the PCs, particularly those with Public IDs or those who make no particular effort to protect their IDs.



County Executive's Office: The chief appointed official in county government, the county executive answers only to the Board of Supervisors. She oversees the day-to-day business of running county government, implements board policies and prepares the multi-million dollar annual county budget.

Health & Human Assistance Dept.: One of the largest in county government, the Health and Human Assistance Department oversees public health and welfare services to all San Angelo County residents. The agency handles welfare, workfare, AFDC and general assistance programs to the poor and indigent citizens of San Angelo County.

The public health division operates free clinics for the poor, conducts health inspections of restaurants, checks on reports of environmental hazards, keeps track of health statistics and monitors

CAMPAIGN TIP

As with city government, county offices could make an interesting workplace for a DNPC, other NPC or even a hero's Secret ID. The job could be either mundane or fascinating, depending on which office employs the character.

Contacts with top county officials, or even ordinary employees in key departments, can be a useful resource for well-connected PCs and NPCs. Even villains can use such contacts—a stooge in the Medical Examiner's Office could be useful in a scheme to frame a PC hero for murder, for example.

 tors cases of infectious diseases, such as tuberculosis.

Finally, child protective services investigates and intervenes in cases of abuse or neglect of children.

Office of Emergency Services: Normally a small, quiet department, the Office of Emergency Services plays a vital role when calamity strikes. It coordinates a unified response to county-wide

CAMPAIGN TIP

The Office of Emergency Services could well call on PCs, particularly sanctioned heroes, for assistance in battling wildfires, flooding or other threats in San Angelo County.



emergencies, works with state and federal agencies, collects information on local needs and performs other crucial tasks.

Superintendent of Schools: The county Superintendent of Schools, who is elected, oversees all the school districts in San Angelo County. This office ensures that districts have sound fiscal

ORGANIZATION OF COUNTY GOVERNMENT

AGRICULTURAL COMMISSIONER

Cooperative Extension
Weights and Measures

AIRPORTS

AIR QUALITY MANAGEMENT DISTR.

ANIMAL CONTROL

Animal Control Shelter

Dog Licenses

ASSESSOR'S OFFICE

Property Records

Appraisals

AUDITOR-CONTROLLER'S OFFICE

BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

Clerk of the Board

Administrative Assistants

COUNTY CLERK

Elections Office

Campaign Financial Records

Registrar of Voters

Voter Registration

Marriage Licenses

Records

COUNTY COUNSEL

COUNTY EXECUTIVE

Budget Analysis

DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S OFFICE

GENERAL SERVICES AGENCY

Building Maintenance Division

Construction Management Division

Contract Administration Division

Data Processing Division

Graphics and Printing Division

Purchasing Division

HEALTH & HUMAN ASSISTANCE DEPT.

Health Services Division

Alcohol and Drug Abuse Prevention

Eldercare Services

Emergency Medical Services

Medical Clinics

Mental Health Services

Public Health Services

Health Officer

Environmental Health Office

Hazardous Materials Bureau

Inspections

Permits

Public Health Nursing

Tobacco Education Program

San Angelo County Gen. Hospital

Human Assistance Division

General Assistance Program

Welfare Services

Welfare Fraud Investigation

SOCIAL SERVICES DIVISION

Child Protective Services

Children's Receiving Home

Job Training Program

Public Guardian/Conservator

LOCAL AGENCY FORMATION COMM.

MEDICAL EXAMINER'S OFFICE

OFFICE OF EMERGENCY SERVICES

Civil Defense

PARKS AND RECREATION DEPT.

Administration

Parks Planning

Golf Division

Regional Parks Division

PERSONNEL SERVICES AGENCY

PLANNING DEPARTMENT

PROBATION DEPARTMENT

PUBLIC DEFENDER'S OFFICE

PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT

Administration

Public Works Director

Building Division

Inspections

Permits

Corporation Yard

Vehicle Maintenance

Sign Shop

Engineering Division

Traffic Engineering

Refuse Collection Division

County Landfill

Recycling Coordinator

Transfer Stations

Road Maintenance Division

Street Cleaning Section

SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT

SUPERINTENDENT OF SCHOOLS

Business Services

Office of the Superintendent

Regional Occupation Program

Special Education

SUPERIOR-MUNICIPAL COURTS

TREASURER-TAX COLLECTOR'S OFFICE

VETERAN'S SERVICE OFFICE

practices, fulfill state education codes and meet other requirements. The office also keeps track of county-wide test scores and other measures of school quality. Individual school districts are run by elected boards of trustees and appointed superintendents.

The sheriff, district attorney, public defender, probation department and court system are covered in **Public Safety**.

COUNTY OFFICIALS OF NOTE

County Administrator Helen Voorhes: An adept, capable administrator who has held the top job in San Angelo county government for the past eight years. Always diplomatic, Voorhes gets along well with her bosses on the Board of Supervisors. She is married to Richard Voorhes, a vice-president with Eclipse Industries.

Assessor Irving Holland: A lean, cadaverous man, Irving Holland has been San Angelo County assessor for the past 20 years, running unopposed in his last two elections. Holland is known as a stickler for accuracy who over the years has hounded dozens of employees out of his office for minor errors.

Dr. George Kassis: The chief medical examiner for San Angelo County. A scientist in an increasingly politicized post, Dr. Kassis has a reputation for being "difficult." He insists on keeping his office apolitical and directs pathologists to evaluate cases solely on the medical evidence. The medical examiner has also clashed with county supervisors over budgeting for his department.

There is some speculation that his years of making enemies are about to catch up with Dr. Kassis, who does not hold an elected position. As the highest-ranked civil servant in county government, he cannot be fired without cause, however.

Planning Director Lynn Rodriguez: A quiet, knowledgeable planner elevated to the position of department director less than a year ago, Rodriguez has had a difficult time adapting to her new responsibilities. She has also faced heavy pressure from Supervisor Jeffrey Daley and other advocates of construction in the environmentally sensitive Quail Valley area near Lakeview, who want her department to produce favorable analyses of the proposal.

Chief Building Inspector Edgar Marino: Head of the building inspection division of the Public Works Department, Marino has

You ever have to appraise a superhero base? I mean, how do you determine a property value for something like that?

— Mervin Horwood-Willis, 30, appraiser

stained the office with a reputation for corruption. An exposé in the San Angelo Times recently revealed several cases of inspectors accepting bribes to sign off on improperly constructed homes, offices and other buildings. County supervisors have ordered an investigation of the charges by the county administrator's office, and the district attorney may also be probing the building inspection division.

Health Officer Dr. Sanjiv Natarajan: A native of India, Dr. Natarajan serves as the chief health official in county government. A strong advocate of providing medical services to the poor and indigent, Dr. Natarajan has had to fight to keep the county's free health clinics open in the face of severe budget cuts in recent years. He has also resisted efforts to eliminate the county's already minimal funding of the non-profit Faraday Memorial Clinic, which provides medical care to supers.

CAMPAIGN TIP

Property records at the assessor's office could prove an interesting investigative asset to PCs—just who owns the land where that supervillain base was built, anyway?

COUNTY COMMISSIONS

As in the city of San Angelo, a number of appointed commissions advise the Board of Supervisors on key issues. A few, such as the county Planning Commission, are authorized to make decisions on behalf of supervisors, although commission actions can be appealed to the board.

NOTABLE PLACES

Chamberlain Administrative Center: A 10-story building in downtown San Angelo housing the county administration offices. Built in 1981, the center was named after Horace Chamberlain, a county supervisor from 1942–66. Most county departments are based here, though some, such as the Health and Human Assistance Department, have branch offices throughout the county. The Board of Supervisors meets here.

Corporation Yard: Like its city counterpart, the county corporation yard houses the heavy equipment and shops of the Public Works Department. The yard is located in Pleasant Grove. Smaller satellite yards, mostly used to store road maintenance equipment, are found in Marshall and Garret's Landing.

San Angelo County Landfill: The 675-acre county landfill near Marshall handles all the refuse generated in the San Angelo area. The county funds and operates the landfill, while other jurisdictions, such as the city, pay "tipping fees" to use it. A newly built recycling facility at the landfill sorts glass, aluminum and paper recyclables, but the bulk of the refuse goes into the ground.

The landfill does not handle toxic wastes, but hazardous chemicals routinely make their way to the facility by accident or design. Also, the county bomb squad typically responds to the landfill several times each year to dispose of potentially explosive chemicals.

CAMPAIGN TIP

A toxic waste spill at the San Angelo County Landfill could be part of the origin story for a PC or NPC super. If the chemicals were illegally dumped by an unethical or careless company, the newly created super might seek revenge.

STATE AND FEDERAL GOVERNMENTS

Numerous state and federal agencies are active in the San Angelo area, particularly those dealing with health, the environment and law enforcement.

State offices are scattered throughout urban and suburban San Angelo, mostly in rented office space or shopping center storefronts.

Federal offices are based at the eight-story Federal Building downtown. Built nearly 30 years ago, the building is now badly outdated and lacks enough room for all the federal agencies active in the San Angelo area.

As a result, many agencies rent space in the Twilight Tower or other downtown office buildings. Construction of a new, 15-story federal building is slated to begin next year.

This chapter outlines the organization, duties and notable people of the various agencies charged with protecting the people of San Angelo.

LAW ENFORCEMENT

A number of law enforcement agencies are active in the San Angelo area. The police department, a branch of city government, handles law enforcement within the city limits. The county Sheriff's Department has jurisdiction over the unincorporated county, operates the jail system and provides security for the courts as well as the San Angelo International Airport. Finally, state and federal law enforcement agencies have a presence in San Angelo.

SAN ANGELO CITY POLICE DEPARTMENT

The San Angelo Police Department, which is part of city government, enforces the law within the city limits. Officers can pursue fleeing suspects into other jurisdictions, but otherwise normally work in conjunction with the appropriate local law enforcement agency when they must leave the city.

The department is commonly referred to as the SAPD, or the "saps" by criminals and others less enamored of the police. Naturally, San Angelo police hate the term "saps."

The police department employs approximately 2,450 sworn officers, plus about 800 clerical personnel and support staff. Non-administrative officers are represented by a police union, but state law forbids police officers to strike.

STRUCTURE OF THE POLICE DEPARTMENT

The San Angelo Police Department, or SAPD, has a fairly simple organization. At the very top is the police chief, hired by the City Council. The current police chief, Jack O'Shea, has held the post for the past eight years.

Ricardo Alvarez serves as assistant chief of the San Angelo Police Department. He works directly with the chief, carries out special assignments and runs the department in O'Shea's absence.

Below the chief's office, the San Angelo Police Department has four tiers of command. The deputy chiefs are administrators who oversee the five divisions of the department: administration, internal affairs, detectives, patrol and training.

Next are captains, who are also mainly administrators. Each patrol sector is commanded by a captain. Other captains are responsible for the various bureaus and details making up each division.

Lieutenants are supervisors who ensure that the day-to-day operations of the department run smoothly. One lieutenant acts as a watch commander on every shift for each patrol sector. Lieutenants also head some bureaus, and assist captains commanding other details.

The sergeants comprise the final tier of command. Sergeants directly supervise the men and women on the street. Department policy calls for a sergeant to respond to major incidents, but since each sergeant oversees four to six units on an average shift this is not always possible.

Below the sergeants are the street officers themselves. There are two ranks of officers, corporals and patrolmen. Corporals are more experienced officers who have passed an exam, but in practice they do not "pull rank" on patrolmen. In general, the first officer on the scene, whether a patrolman or corporal, commands until a sergeant or lieutenant arrives.

Training Officers are patrolmen who are partnered with new officers as necessary to teach them SAPD policies and procedures. Training officers receive corporal's pay while they are training a new officer, but otherwise are considered patrolmen with no real rank.

In most West Coast police departments, "detective" is an assignment, not a rank. Since only experienced, proven officers are assigned to investigation squads, most personnel in these details will be sergeants or corporals. In the SAPD, detectives normally rotate back to street patrol duties after three to five years in investigations. The best detectives are sometimes granted exceptions to this rule on request, however.

POLICE CHIEF JOHN "JACK" O'SHEA

Jack O'Shea started his police career more than 30 years ago after a stint in the U.S. Army. After returning from Vietnam, he got a job at a small-town police department in Illinois and began studying criminal justice in college. O'Shea earned a night school degree and moved on to the St. Louis Police Department, where he quickly rose through the ranks.

In 1985, the former chief, Kent Robinson, brought O'Shea to the San Angelo Police Department. O'Shea briefly served as a deputy chief, then took over as assistant police chief while Robinson groomed him to head the department. When Robinson retired in 1989, O'Shea beat out 94 applicants nationwide to succeed Robinson as police chief.

While he presents the image of an old-fashioned police chief, O'Shea keeps up with changes in the organization and administration of modern police departments. He judiciously implements new techniques and policies, such as the Neighborhood Police Officer program. In addition, O'Shea has a zero-tolerance policy toward brutality and corruption. Reports of wrongdoing are quickly investigated, and officers found guilty of violations can be reassigned, demoted,

ORGANIZATION OF THE SAN ANGELO POLICE DEPT

Administration Division

- Chief of Police
- Fiscal Affairs/Budget
- Public Affairs/Media
- Personnel/Payroll
- Crime Analysis/Statistics
- Paranormals Affairs Office
- Internal Affairs Division

Detectives Division

- Homicide Bureau
- Sex/Elderly Assaults/Child Abuse Bureau
- Robbery Bureau
- Burglary Bureau
- Organized Crime Bureau
- Vice/Gambling Bureau
- Narcotics Bureau
- Computer Crime Bureau
- Gang Task Force (Joint unit w/ SA Sheriff's Dept., DOJ & CHP)
- Juvenile Crime Bureau

Patrol Division

- Sector One
- Sector Two
- Sector Three
- Sector Four
- Airborne Detail
- Dispatch Center
- Traffic Enforcement/Motor Bureau
- Special Weapons and Tactics
- Paranormal Alert Response Team
- Community Relations Bureau
- Neighborhood Police Program

Training Division

- Police Academy
- Reserve Forces Bureau

suspended or fired. However, the chief always stands behind his officers in public and firmly defends the department against outside criticism or interference.

Most officers generally respect Chief O'Shea, despite periodic grumbling about pay, working conditions and other issues.

The chief opposes vigilante activity, mostly because he believes that it places the public at greater risk than having trained officers handle dangerous criminals. However, he is willing to enter into agreements with heroes who are law-abiding. For example, O'Shea supported the city sanction given to the Justice Foundation hero team.

In recent months, O'Shea has had to defend his department against Councilwoman Emily Carver's accusations of laxness in curbing gang activity in South San Angelo. He has also fended off proposals to have the city Human Rights Commission investigate complaints of police brutality.

Mauler, a hulking super-criminal who hates the police, has vowed to get the chief someday.

O'Shea, 54, has silver-gray hair and blue eyes. He stands 6' tall and appears slim. He keeps in shape by running regularly, and competes in seniors track-and-field events. O'Shea is a widower with two grown sons, one of whom is a deputy sheriff in L.A.

A devout Catholic, O'Shea has in recent years become good friends with Archbishop Francis Kelly of the San Angelo Archdiocese.

Police Chief John "Jack" O'Shea: PL 4; Init +1 (Dex); Defense 12 (+1 base, +1 Dex); Spd 30 ft; Atk +3 melee (+1S, punch; +2S, tonfa), +3 ranged (+3L, pistol); SV Dmg +0 (+5 armor), Fort +0, REF +1, Will +1; Str 12, Dex 12, Con 11, INT 12, Wis 12, Cha 15. **Skills:** Diplomacy +3, Drive +3, Gather Information +3, Intimidation +5, Knowledge (bureaucracy) +4, Knowledge (law) +4, Profession (police chief) +5, Search +3, Sense Motive +3, Spot +2. **Feats:** Assessment, Connected. **Equipment:** Sig Sauer P-229 .40 cal. pistol (+3 lethal damage), body armor (+5), handcuffs (hardness 5).

8/6.05.2: Officers responding to any event involving a subject known to possess or exhibit paranormal powers (as defined by CA Health & Safety Code) shall complete department form SP113-8, to be attached to the report. A copy of the entire report shall be forwarded to the Paranormal Affairs Office.

8/6.05.3: When completion of the form is impractical due to the urgency of the situation, or other circumstances at the officer's discretion, the form shall be completed and submitted to the division commander within 72 hours.

8/6.06.1: Officers shall categorize observed paranormal abilities and annotate form SP113-8 accordingly. Classifications include...

Source: SAPD General Orders



Illustration by Greg Smith

Police Chief John "Jack" O'Shea

STR 5, REF 5, HLT 6, PRE 7, INT 7, WIL 6

DEF 15, INI 6, MOV 11, TGH 6, LIF 30

Disadvantages: Distinctive Features (commanding presence, easily concealed) [-2], Enemy (hunted by Mauler) [-5], Psych Disad (Protective of police force) [-2], Psych Disad (physical fitness advocate) [-2], Psych Disad (sense of duty to employees) [-5], Psych Disad (sense of duty to Catholic faith) [-2].

Advantages: Ally (10 contacts in city government and other law enforcement agencies) [20], Attributes (+3 MOV) [15], Famous (Police Chief, well known local figure [5], Membership: SAPD (MR 10/Chief of Police, Minor) [20]

Skills: Area Knowledge (Saint Louis) +3, Area Knowledge (San Angelo) +6, Awareness +4, Biology +2, Bureaucracy +5, Chemistry +2, Computers (Use) +2, Concentration +3, Conversation +5, Criminology +5, Dancing +2, Deduction +5, Driving +4, Firearms +3 (Pistols +2), First Aid +3, Fish and Game +3, Gunsmith +1, History +2, Interrogation +2, Intrigue +4, Intuition +3, Knowledge (Criminal law) +3, Knowledge (San Angelo city government) +3, Melee Weapons +2 (Tonfa/PR-24 +2), Orate +5, Persuasion +5 (Authority +2), Politics +2, Professional (Police Chief) +4, Professional (Police officer) +6, Religion +3, Society +2 (San Angelo underworld +2), Sport (Golf) +3, Surveillance +2, Swimming +2, Tactics +2, Unarmed Combat (Arrest control) +2, Writing +4.

Equipment: suit, uniform, Sig Sauer P-229 .40 cal. pistol (Dmg: 4d6 P/L, Acc: 0, Rmod: +2, STR: 3, Max: 50, RoF: 4, Amm.: 12, Wt: 2), body armor (AV: 16, Loc: 6-13, Wt: 2, Notes: 1/2 AV vs. pointed weapons), mace/CS, handcuffs (AV 12, Hits 6, Eff: Subject is Restrained), portable two-way radio, unmarked car (w/radio, emergency lights & siren).

Public Safety

SAPD PERSONNEL BREAKDOWN

Chief of Police	1
Assistant Chief	1
Deputy Chief	5
Captain	25
Lieutenant	145
Sergeant	325
Corporal	490
Training Officer	110
Patrolman	1,350

DIVISIONS OF THE SAPD

Some details on the more active or well-known bureaus and personnel in the SAPD.

ADMINISTRATION DIVISION

Most of the employees of this division are not sworn officers, who are needed on the streets. The clerks, office managers and other personnel in the administrative division play a vital role in keeping the department running, however.

Some of the notable bureaus in the division include:

Public Affairs/Media: Sgt. Alyssa Walker serves as the public information officer of the San Angelo Police Department, handling press inquiries and scheduling public appearances. Tough and capable, Walker can hold her own with the most persistent reporter, but dislikes this duty. She has repeatedly asked to be returned to street patrol, but her superiors value Walker in her current post.

Paranormals Affairs Office: Headed by Lt. Chet Dawes, this detail tracks incidents of superhuman crime and known superhuman criminals in San Angelo. Dawes also serves as a liaison between the police department and sanctioned heroes, such as the Justice Foundation. An experienced, no-nonsense officer with an ironic sense of humor, Dawes gets along fairly well with supers.

INTERNAL AFFAIRS DIVISION

This is the smallest division in the San Angelo Police Department, with just five officers, a secretary and a deputy chief. Officers from this division investigate reports of wrongdoing and corruption on the police force. The division also probes every incident in which an officer shoots someone. A stint in the IAD is considered a good stepping-stone to administrative rank, but the officers in this division are not popular with rank-and-file officers.

DETECTIVES DIVISION

As noted above, police officers rotate back and forth between the patrol and detectives divisions. Administrators consider this a good way to keep a high ratio of experienced officers vs. "green" personnel in each division. The policy also helps prevent burnout, particularly in the high-stress detective bureaus like homicide, and allows the department more opportunity to reward proven officers with greater responsibilities.

Special task forces are sometimes organized within the division to handle specific cases, such as a serial killer or serial rapist.

Some of the notable bureaus within the division include:

Burglary Bureau: Technically this bureau investigates all burglaries, but in fact the sheer number of such crimes in San Angelo

means only the most brazen or costly thefts will be actively investigated. Detectives do not even respond to most home burglaries.

Computer Crime Bureau: A fairly recent addition to the police department, this small bureau investigates cases involving computers and the Internet. Recent investigations have involved the theft of credit card numbers from Prospector Bank databanks and a band of teenage hackers who altered the San Angelo City web page to include obscene messages.

Gang Task Force: A joint effort of the city Police Department, San Angelo County Sheriff's Department, California Highway Patrol and state Department of Justice, the task force fights gang activity throughout the metropolitan San Angelo area.

Officers, deputies and other personnel assigned to the task force gather intelligence on gangs, arrest gang members suspected of crimes and try to stem gang-related violence. Task force activities are overseen by the police department.

Homicide Bureau: One of the most prestigious details, the homicide bureau investigates all unlawful deaths in the city. Homicide detectives are known for being experienced investigators and quick thinkers. This assignment can be extremely stressful, due to the often gruesome nature of the crimes and considerable pressure to quickly solve well-publicized cases.

Narcotics Bureau: Detectives in this bureau are often called on to work undercover, making drug buys to gather evidence on suspected dealers and distributors. The bureau sometimes brings in San Angelo sheriff's deputies or officers from neighboring jurisdictions for undercover work when the target might recognize a San Angelo police detective.

The Internal Affairs Division watches the narcotics bureau closely, due to the large sums of untraceable cash involved in these cases. The detectives resent this scrutiny, since no one on the detail has been accused of corruption in more than 10 years.

Organized Crime Bureau: This small bureau mostly keeps track of the various motorcycle gangs active in the San Angelo area. Detectives also keep an eye out for incursions by mafia families, yakuza syndicates or other organized crime groups from the Bay Area or Southern California.

SERGEANT DUC LAM

Gang Detective

Duc Lam and his family fled Vietnam in 1978, taking to the Pacific Ocean in an aged, barely seaworthy boat badly overcrowded with refugees. Gun-toting pirates came across the craft in the ocean, robbing the refugees and brutalizing the women. Lam vowed then that he would never let that happen to him, or anyone around him, ever again.

After reaching the United States, his family was resettled in San Angelo. Lam studied hard in high school, learning English quickly and earning a criminal justice scholarship to California State University, San Angelo. He also began studying martial arts.

In 1988, Lam became the first Vietnamese-American officer hired by the San Angelo Police Department. As a patrol officer, Lam received several commendations for heroism and eventually was promoted to sergeant.

He joined the gang task force in 1994, specializing in Southeast Asian gangs. Many refugees are afraid of police and will not even report crimes. With the aid of Phuoc Tran of the Mien Community Temple, Lam has succeeded in building some inroads into the Southeast Asian community.

In 1995, he arrested three members of a Southeast Asian gang later convicted of a brutal home invasion robbery in Rancho Madera. The gang has sworn revenge on Lam.

Lam has also befriended Tam "Tommy" Pak, a young Amerasian man involved in an Asian gang known as the Thunder Knights. Lam hopes to persuade Pak to leave the gang life behind.

Lam, 31, stands 5'6" tall and has a lithe build. He has black hair and brown eyes, and speaks fluent English with a slight accent. Lam is unmarried.

Sergeant Duc Lam: PL 4; Init +1 (Dex); Defense 13 (+1 base, +2 Dex); Spd 30 ft; Atk +2 melee (+0S, punch), +4 ranged (+3L, pistol); SV Dmg +1 (+5 armor), Fort +1, REF +2, Will +1; Str 11, Dex 14, Con 13, INT 12, Wis 12, Cha 14. **Feats:** Assessment, Connected. **Skills:** Drive +3, Gather Information +5, Intimidation +5, Knowledge (bureaucracy) +3, Knowledge (gangs) +3, Knowledge (law) +3, Profession (police detective) +5, Search +3, Spot +3. **Equipment:** handgun (+3 lethal damage), body armor (+5), handcuffs (hardness 5).

Sergeant Duc Lam

STR 5, REF 7, HLT 6, PRE 5, INT 5, WIL 5
DEF 17,INI 6, MOV 13, TGH 5, LIF 28

Disadvantages: Psych Disad (Hopes to steer Tam "Tommy" Pak away from gang life) [-2]

Advantages: Ally (Phuoc Tran, Mien Community Temple) [5], Ally (Street gangs, contacts only) [2], Famous (Decorated officer, within law enforcement circles only) [2]

Skills: Area Knowledge (San Angelo) +4, Awareness +4, Bureaucracy +1, Climbing +3, Computers (Use) +3, Concentration +3, Criminology +4, Deduction +4, Disguise +3, Driving +5, Firearms +4 (Pistols +2), First Aid +3, Flexible Weapons +2, Gambling +2, Gunsmith +1, Interrogation +2, Intuition +2, Knowledge (San Angelo Police Dept.) +3, Knowledge (San Angelo's underworld) +4, Knowledge (Southeast Asian gangs) +6, Language (English; native is Vietnamese) +3, Melee Weapons +2 (Tonfa/PR-24 +2), Professional (Police detective) +4, Shadowing +3, Society +3 (Streetwise +2), Sport (Baseball) +2, Stealth +5, Surveillance +2, Swimming +2, Symbols (Gang graffiti) +4, Tactics +2, Unarmed Combat (Ju-jutsu) +4, Unarmed Combat (Police Arrest Control) +4, Writing +1 (Reports +4).

Equipment: Denim jeans, T-shirt, sunglasses, pager, Sig Sauer P-229 .40 cal. pistol, body armor (AV: 16, Loc: 6-13), mace/CS, handcuffs (AV 12, Hits 6, Eff: Subject is Restrained), portable two-way radio, unmarked police car (w/ radio, emergency lights and siren), H&K MP5 9mm SMG in trunk of car.

STANDARD PATROL OFFICER EQUIPMENT

Sig Sauer P-229 .40 cal. pistol: +3 lethal damage

PR-24: +2 stun damage

Pepper Spray: Stun +4 (extra: Dazzle; flaw: Uses [8], Device)

Handcuffs: hardness 5



Illustration by Scott Cook

Sig Sauer P-229 .40 cal. pistol: Dmg: 4d6 P/L, Acc: 0, Rmod: +2, STR: 3, Max: 50, RoF: 4, Amm.: 12, Wt: 2

Tonfa/PR-24: Dmg: 2d6 B/L, Size: M, Init: 0, Acc: 0, STR Min: 2, Wt: 1

Mace/CS: Dmg: Special, Type: Special, Acc: -1, Rmod: -2, STR Min: 1, Max: 5, RoF: 1:5, Amm: 15, Wt: —, Notes: See sidebar.

Handcuffs: AV 12, Hits 6, Eff: Subject is Restrained

I'm coming out of this pawn shop over on Fourth Street with a sack full of cash when this loon jumps out from behind a parked car. He's decked out in this oddball superhero costume, except it's all raggedy-looking. I mean, he wore this old shirt with the sleeves hacked off for a cape!

So he comes out with, 'Captain Cabbage commands you to halt in the name of justice!' At least, that's what it sounded like to me.

'Captain Cabbage? Your name is Captain Cabbage?' I ask him. I'm laughing so hard I can barely get the words out.

He gets all puffed up, real indignant-like, and says, 'My name is Captain Courage, you miscreant! I am the embodiment of the courage of the common man, the valor of the little people, the bravery of ...'

I never got to hear the rest of it, though, 'cause that's when the police pulled up. I was laughing so hard I couldn't hardly breathe—couldn't run or even put up a decent fight. Probably the easiest collar the saps ever made.

— Larry Yarbrough, 28, jail inmate

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MACE/CN

Description: Alphachloroacetaphenone gas, also known as "tear gas" or "CN", was widely used by law enforcement before pepper spray replaced it as the chemical weapon of choice. CN gas typically comes in a pressurized canister with a button "trigger" at the top of the canister. The CN itself is in crystalline form and is suspended in an inert liquid. When the trigger is depressed and the agent expelled from the canister, the crystals become exposed to air and they quickly vaporize. This vapor is an irritant to membrane tissues, causing stinging pain and tearing, but takes several seconds to become effective.

Effects: A successful hit causes the target to suffer a -3 penalty to both REF-based skill rolls and sight-based Awareness rolls. A hit in the face delays the effect for 1 Turn. Hit on chest delays effect for 2 Turns. Any other location results in no effect.

"I'm tired of having to go into court and explain why I didn't just shoot the gun out of some perp's hand. The heroes make it look like it's easy, but I'm not Quickshot or the Rifleman—I'm just a cop doing my job."

— Brady Fox, 31, SAPD detective

The northern sectors (Sectors One and Two) and southern sectors (Sectors Three and Four) are overseen by a lieutenant who acts as a shift commander. Each sector contains four to six beats.

Each sector is also supervised by a sergeant. Each beat contains one patrol car, or unit, on each shift. During the night and early morning (6pm to 2am), they are two-man units, and during the day most are one-man units.

Some of the notable programs within the patrol division include:

Airborne Detail: The San Angelo Police Department owns two two-man helicopters, based at Ace Braddock Municipal Airport. One officer pilots the helicopter, while the other acts as an observer and operates a mounted spotlight. One of the helicopters is normally in the air every night. They are used to patrol troubled areas, pursue fleeing suspects and assist in searches.

Community Relations Bureau: This bureau oversees citizen Neighborhood Watch groups, which encourage residents to keep an eye out for suspicious people or activities and report anything unusual to police. Its personnel also coordinate anti-drug campaigns and other crimefighting efforts in the community.

Dispatch Center: The dispatching center receives all incoming emergency police calls, keeps track of radio transmissions by patrol units and routes units to handle calls. All police radio transmissions are scrambled to prevent criminals from listening in on police operations, but illegal descramblers can be purchased on the black market.

SAPD RADIO CHANNELS

- 1 Patrol Sector 1
- 2 Patrol Sector 2
- 3 Patrol Sector 3
- 4 Patrol Sector 4
- 5 Records
- 6 Tactical Ops Channel (SWAT, PART, etc.)
- 7 Tactical Ops Channel 2
- 8 Car-to-car
- 9-10 Unassigned (Can be assigned by GM, or used for sanctioned heroes)

Mounted Officers: A handful of city police officers are qualified for horseback patrols, but the department does not make extensive use of horses except in Old San Angelo. Horseback patrols are mostly used during special events, such as parades or the county fair, and for crowd control.

K-9 Officers: A dozen officers in the San Angelo Police Department are partnered with police dogs. These highly trained dogs are adept at finding and pursuing fleeing suspects, and instill such fear in criminals that suspects often simply give up when a police dog arrives on scene. The dogs are also used in search and rescue operations, and a few are trained to sniff out drugs or explosives.

PATROL DIVISION

The patrol division contains most of the department's sworn personnel. Officers in the patrol division work the streets, responding to crimes and keeping an eye out for trouble on their beats.

Patrol officers normally do not investigate crimes; they take reports from victims, make an arrest if the suspect can be found and move on to the next incident. In major crimes, such as homicides or robberies, they secure the crime scene and await the arrival of detectives.

However, an alert patrol officer can do a lot to curb crime and get criminals off the street. For good or ill, they are also the chief representatives of the department to the public.

The city is broken down into four numbered patrol sectors: Sector One includes Northside and Eastside; Sector Two encompasses Downtown and Midtown neighborhoods; Sector Three covers the South San Angelo neighborhoods located west of Interstate 7; Sector Four includes the remaining South San Angelo area east of I-7.

"Lt. Grogan never did find out who put the skunk in his car, but he suspected DeBruin and me. So we got assigned to paddy wagon duty in the Armory—we call it the wino wagon.

"We're sitting there in the wagon drinking some coffee one night when this homeless guy staggers out into Polk Avenue. I yell at him to get out of the street, but before I can even get the words out, up comes this Mack truck. Brakes squeal, and crunch! Bum goes flying.

"I radio dispatch for an ambulance, except I know it's a morgue wagon we really need. I'm trying to talk on the radio, but DeBruin keeps grabbing my arm and pointing at the street.

"It's the bum! He's gone through a brick wall into some store, I mean right through the wall. But now he's crawling out and looking around, kind of confused. Not a scratch on him. He wanders off down the street.

"Now there's something you don't see every day," I tell DeBruin."

— Jack Nally, 29, police officer

Human officers in the K-9 program are volunteers who are reimbursed by the SAPD for their dog-related expenses. The police dogs are popular attractions at schools and community events, especially among children, and live at home with their human partners.

The dogs themselves are considered officers, and a plaque at police headquarters memorializes Macho, a police dog shot and killed by a bank robber in 1990.

Neighborhood Police Officers: A popular program instituted by Chief Jack O'Shea in 1993, this effort assigns selected officers to work with residents in troubled neighborhoods. Cooperating with community associations and Neighborhood Watches, the officers try to identify trouble spots, curb gang activity and generally help residents take back their neighborhoods.

The NPOs also work with other government offices to tear down abandoned buildings, enforce health codes, target illegal liquor sales and combat other crime-related problems in neighborhoods.

Paranormal Alert Response Team: The elite PART squad handles incidents involving superpowered crime suspects. Officers on this detail are equipped with special gear for detaining and holding paranormals, including some prototype devices created by local high-tech labs.

Most PART squad members have other assignments within the department, but are always on call to respond to emergencies involving superhumans.

Under a mutual-aid agreement with San Angelo County, the sheriff's department can call on the city PART squad as needed. Lt. Jerry House commands the PART squad, with Lt. Chet Dawes of the paranormals affairs office acting in an advisory capacity.

LT. JERRY HOUSE

PART Commander

A veteran San Angelo Police Department officer, Lt. Jerry House joined the force in 1981. He quickly distinguished himself in his patrol duties. Coupled with his expertise as a sharpshooter, gained from a stint in the U.S. Marine Corps, his hard-charging attitude soon earned House an invitation to join the department SWAT team.

"So we got the callout,
10-88A—supers-involved incident.

Dispatch says some guy's going nuts over in the
Fairtime Mall parking lot, tossing cars around, and the
SO asked for a mutual assist.

"We get out there in the PART van and deploy, but the
negotiators eventually talked the super down so it ended
up that we didn't have much to do. Turned out he was
some teenager who'd just been dumped by his girl-
friend."

— Beverly Fancher, 28, police officer

He initially served as a SWAT sniper, but later switched to the squad's entry team, winning accolades in both roles. In an incident watched live by thousands of San Angelo television viewers in 1988, House fired the shot that killed a gunman holding 38 hostages inside a Prospector Bank branch.

When the San Angelo Police Department formed the Paranormal Alert Response Team in 1992, House was the first choice to head the new squad. He has proven to be a competent and



Illustration by Greg Smith

effective leader who trains his elite squad relentlessly to meet the extreme dangers inherent in battling paranormal crime.

He does not get along well with paranormals, even recognized heroes. House takes an especially dim view of self-proclaimed heroes who interfere in PART squad operations. House takes the decision to sanction some heroes as an affront to his team, which he believes is fully capable of dealing with the superhuman crime threat without the assistance of free-lance "heroes" whose loyalties House perceives as questionable. He tends to treat all paranormals as potential adversaries.

Mauler, a wanted criminal with immense strength, has sworn revenge on House for his arrest by the PART squad a few years ago.

House has been divorced twice, and is currently unmarried. His three children, two sons from his first marriage and a young daughter from his second, live with their mothers.

House, 38, has intense blue eyes, thinning red hair and a mustache. He stands 5' 11" tall and looks very fit. The PART lieutenant follows a boxing workout routine at the police gym to keep in shape.

Lieutenant Jerry House (PART Commander): PL 5; Init +1 (Dex); Defense 13 (+1 base, +2 Dex, +1 Dodge bonus); Spd 30 ft; Atk +6 melee (+3S, punch), +5 ranged (+3L, pistol); SV Dmg +7 (+5 armor), Fort +2, REF +2, Will +1; Str 16, Dex 15, Con 15, INT 13, Wis 12, Cha 16. *Feats: Assessment, Fame, Leadership, Point Blank Shot. Skills: Climb +5, Drive +4, Intimidation +6, Knowledge (bureaucracy) +4, Knowledge (law) +3, Knowledge (local supers) +4, Knowledge (tactics) +5, Profession (police lieutenant) +4, Search +2, Spot +2. Equipment: handgun (+3 lethal damage), body armor (+5), handcuffs (hardness 5).*

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Lieutenant Jerry House (PART Commander)

STR 7, REF 7, HLT 7, PRE 7, INT 6, WIL 6

DEF 17, INI 7, MOV 14, TGH 7, LIF 33

Disadvantages: Dependent (children) [-2], Distinctive Features (Police officer, easily concealed) [-2], Duty (to SAPD) [-5], Enemy (hunted by Salvo) [-5], Psych Disad (dislikes paranormals) [-2],

Advantages: Attributes (+2 MOV) [10], Famous (PART leader, local figure) [2], Membership: SAPD (MR 6/ Lieutenant, Minor) [12]

Skills: Acrobatics +2, Area Knowledge (San Angelo) +6, Awareness +3, Bureaucracy +3, Climbing +5, Combat Engineer +1, Computers (Use) +2, Concentration +3, Criminology +2, Demolitions +2, Driving +5, Electronics +1, Firearms +5 (Rifles +2), Gambling +2, Heavy Weapons +2 (Machine Guns +2, Portable launchers +2), History (Marine Corps) +1, Intuition +2, Knowledge (Military world) +3, Knowledge (SAPD) +3, Knowledge (San Angelo paranormals) +6, Knowledge (San Angelo's underworld) +3, Melee Weapons +3, Operate Electronics +2, Persuasion +2 (Intimidation +2), Professional (Police Lieutenant) +3, Shadowing +3, Society +2 (Military +2, Streetwise +2), Stealth +6, Surveillance +2, Swimming +3, Tactics +6, Unarmed Combat (Police Arrest Control) +3, Writing +2 (Reports +2).

Equipment: Uniform (patrol), uniform (fatigues), Sig Sauer P-229 .40 cal. pistol, body armor (AV: 16, Loc: 6-13), mace/CS, handcuffs, portable two-way radio, unmarked police car (w/radio, emergency lights and siren).

CAMPAIGN TIP

GMs can use the write-up of Lt. Jerry House as a template for other PART squad members.

PART members respond to incidents in two armored vans, one carrying the team and its equipment, with the second equipped to safely transport captured paranormals.

PART ARMORED VAN

PART Armored Van: Siz: Large; Move: 6 (Mode: ground; *Tactical Spd*: 30 ft.; *Travel speed*: 64 mph); Hardness: 20; *Armor Bonus*: 10; Cost: 26; Features: Radio Broadcast, Radio Hearing

PART Armored Van

STR 16, DEF: 6, AV: 24, Hits: 54, MOV: 40 (Max: 120), Wt: 6.4 tons

Equipment: Police Radio: Radio Listen and Transmit

A typical PART response involves a squad of nine officers and Lt. House. The PART officers carry standard SAPD SWAT equipment, including bullet-proof vests, radios, flashlights and flex-cuffs.

Squad members are armed with sub-machine guns or shot-guns, in addition to handguns. They also carry tear-gas grenades to flush out barricaded suspects and "flash-bang" grenades to blind or distract suspects during high-risk entries.



Illustration by Storn Cook

PART/SWAT EQUIPMENT

Common Equipment:

Sig Sauer P-229 .40 cal. pistol: +3 lethal damage

Pepper Spray: Stun +4 (*extra*: Dazzle; *flaw*: Uses [8], Device)

Body armor: +5

Trauma Plate: Armor (*source*: Science; *extra*: Impervious; *flaw*: Impervious only applies for shots to the heart)

Radio: Radio Broadcast, Radio Hearing (*source*: Science; *flaw*: Device)

Handcuffs: hardness 5

Flexcuffs: hardness 2

Black fatigues and jungle cap: +1 Hide in darkness/ shadow

Combat boots & Sunglasses

Entry Team Additional Equipment:

Night Vision Goggles: Darksight (*source*: Science; *flaw*: Device)

H&K MP5 9mm SMG: +4 lethal damage (*source*: Science; *extra*: Autofire)

...or...

Remington 870 12-gauge shotgun: +6 lethal damage (*source*: Science; *flaw*: Uses [8])

Flash-bang Grenade: Dazzle +6 (*source*: Science; *extra*: Energy Blast +3, Area; *flaw*: Device, Uses [1])

Tear Gas Grenade: Dazzle +6 (*source*: Science; *extra*: Stun, Area, Continuous; *flaw*: Device, Limited—Continuous can be negated/blown away with strong wind, Uses [1])

Sniper Additional Equipment:

Sniper rifle with scope: +7 lethal damage (*source*: Science; *extra*: Telescopic Sight +3 [range increment 80 ft.])

Special PART Equipment:**Titanium Handcuffs:** hardness 10**Prototype Tangler Field:** Snare +4 (source: Super-science; extra: Removable; flaw: Device, Uses [4])**Pacifiers:** Paralysis (source: Super-science; extra: Continuous, Sustained; flaw: Device, Uses [1])**Common Equipment:****Sig Sauer P-229 .40 cal. pistol:** Dmg: 4d6 P/L, Acc: 0, Rmod: +2, STR: 3, Max: 50, RoF: 4, Amm.: 12, Wt: 2**Body armor:** AV: 16, Loc: 6-13, Wt: 2, Notes: 1/2 AV vs. pointed weapons**Trauma Plate:** AV: 20, Loc: 13**Radio:** scrambled, multi-channel**Handcuffs:** AV 12, Hits 6, Eff: Subject is Restrained**Flexcuffs:** hard nylon or plastic cable ties; AV 4, Hits 3, Eff: Subject is Restrained**Black fatigues and jungle cap:** +1 Stealth in darkness/shadow**Combat boots:** AV: 4, Loc: 17-18**Sunglasses***Entry Team Additional Equipment:***Night Vision Goggles:** Infrared vision (Restricted field of vision, -1 Awareness)**H&K MP5 9mm SMG:** Dmg: 3d6 P/L, Acc: 0, Rmod: +3, STR: 3, Max: 100, RoF: 3:10, Amm.: 32, Wt: 3

...or...

Remington 870 12-gauge shotgun: Dmg: 6d6 P/L, Acc: +1, Rmod: +4, STR: 5, Max: 100, RoF: 2, Amm.: 8, Wt: 3**Flash-bang Grenade:** Dmg: 6d6 B/S, Acc: 0, Rmod: 0, STR: 3, Max: STRx5, RoF: 1/2, Amm.: -, Wt: .4, Notes: EX**Tear Gas Grenade:** Dmg: 6d6 Sp/Sp, Acc: 0, Rmod: 0, STR: 3, Max: STRx5, RoF: 1/2, Amm.: -, Wt: .4, Notes: Tear gas/CS, EX*Sniper Additional Equipment:***Sniper rifle with scope:** Dmg: 7d6 P/L, Acc: +1, Rmod: +4, STR: 4, Max: 1000, RoF: 1, Amm.: 5, Wt: 4, Notes: +4 RMod w/scope**Special PART Equipment:****Titanium Handcuffs:** AV 24, Hits 6, Eff: Subject is Restrained**Prototype Tangler Field:** Dmg: See Notes, Acc: 0, Rmod: 0, STR: 3, Max: 50, RoF: 1, Amm.: 3, Wt: 3, Notes: Entangles opponent in net w/ AV: 6, Hits: 6**Pacifiers:** Dmg: See Notes, Acc: 0, Rmod: 0, STR: 3, Max: 100, RoF: 1, Amm.: 1, Wt: 3, Notes: Causes 4d6 Sp/S damage each turn, continuous

You ever have that nightmare where you shoot the bad guy and nothing happens? That's what it was like. I unloaded 12 rounds into him, and nothing happened. Well, not quite nothing. He laughed.

- James White, 30, police officer

The PART squad carries some special equipment to help even the odds against superpowered foes. The squad has several sets of titanium handcuffs rated to handle individuals with up to eight times normal human strength. "Pacifier" tranquilizers are also used to control superpowered individuals for transportation to a secure facility.

Also, the squad carries three prototype "tangler" guns developed by Orion Labs. If the three guns are fired at the same opponent, they may create an electrical field entrapping the target. However, each shot expends a huge amount of energy, so the guns can only be fired three times before requiring several hours to recharge.

Law enforcement agencies all over the United States consider the San Angelo PART squad a model for special-action teams dealing with paranormals. Officials from England, France, Japan and Russia have visited San Angelo to inspect the team.

Special Weapons and Tactics: The SWAT team draws experienced officers from throughout the department to form an elite, highly trained force capable of dealing with the gravest threats to the city.

The heavily armed SWAT team handles situations involving hostages, barricaded suspects, snipers and anything else beyond the capabilities of ordinary officers.

Lt. Bill Weathers, a calm, professional police veteran, serves as SWAT team commander for the department.

TRAINING DIVISION

This division handles the training for all new police department personnel. New hires are required to attend a 24-week academy before being assigned to duty with a training officer, who provides additional on-the-job instruction in department policies and procedures.

The department does not maintain a permanent, year-round academy; academies are scheduled two or three times a year as needed. Classes are held at police headquarters, with field instruction taking place at the department firing range or other locations.

This division also provides advanced officer training and update training for experienced personnel. Finally, the training division oversees reserve officers, who are called in to help police public events such as fairs or parades or to bolster understaffed patrol sectors. Most reserve officers are either retired law enforcement personnel or recent academy graduates waiting for the next examination for a full-time position with the department.

OFFICERS OF NOTE

Cpl. Margaret Barrera: A detective in the Sex/Elderly Assaults/Child Abuse Bureau, Barrera handles sexual assault cases. Her compassion and skill earned Barrera Officer of the Year honors in 1992. She is skilled at karate and can often be found training at the Wilder Karate Center.

Sgt. Brady Fox: A flamboyant undercover detective with the Narcotics Bureau known for taking stunning risks and making spectacular arrests. In 1995, Fox captured a drug dealer by grabbing the man and leaping out a fifth-story hotel window into the pool below. He's also been involved in several shootouts. Most of Fox's colleagues are now afraid to work with him.

Officer Ray Hodges: A patrol officer assigned to Sector One (Northside) who holds the department record for drunken driving arrests. Hodges jokes that he has a "sixth sense" about intoxicated drivers, but his almost uncanny ability to spot drunks actu-

Public Safety

ally stems from years of experience and training. He sometimes teaches seminars for other departments on this topic.

Sgt. Curt Wiesbeck: A veteran officer who serves as president of the police union. Wiesbeck has held the job for 10 years, mostly due to his skill at winning favorable contracts from the city. He has also molded the union into a potent political force in City Council elections, which gives the organization added clout at the bargaining table.

Wiesbeck, whose salary is paid by the union, works full-time for the San Angelo Police Officers Association but retains his peace officer status.

NOTABLE LOCATIONS

Police Headquarters: The headquarters building, located downtown, contains the administrative offices of the department and the main garage for patrol vehicles. The detectives division is also based at police headquarters, though some bureaus maintain satellite offices in police substations around San Angelo.

The eight-story headquarters was built in 1980 on the site of a historic, but badly outdated, police building following years of public debate and intense opposition from city preservationist organizations.

UNIFORMS AND INSIGNIA

Officers in the San Angelo Police Department wear black uniforms with shoulder-mounted radios. They do not wear hats unless in dress uniform.

Detectives are not required to wear uniforms, but are expected to dress in business-like attire unless they are taking part in an undercover operation.

The SAPD uses Ford Crown Victorias almost exclusively, and has recently started buying a brand new fleet to replace aging 1994 and 1995 patrol vehicles. The cars are painted white, with blue stripes. Both front doors bear the department logo, a stylized badge.

In addition, the police department maintains a fleet of 60-plus Kawasaki 1000 Police motorcycles, and two river boats.

The department also has a number of unmarked cars for investigations, and for undercover work keeps a handful of sports cars and luxury cars seized from drug dealers.

SAN ANGELO COUNTY SHERIFF'S DEPT.

The Sheriff's Department has jurisdiction over all unincorporated areas of San Angelo County. The department covers a far larger area than the police department, but deals with a lower population density.

As with the police department, deputies can pursue fleeing suspects into other jurisdictions, but otherwise normally work in conjunction with the appropriate local agency.

One of the department's chief responsibilities involves operating the county jail system. All arrestees in San Angelo County are housed at one of the county jail facilities, whatever the arresting agency. The city, California Highway Patrol and other law enforcement agencies help finance the jail system through funding agreements or booking fees, but most of the expense falls under the county budget.

The Sheriff's Department employs approximately 2,400 sworn personnel, about 900 of whom work in the corrections division, and roughly 600 clerical workers and support staff.

ORGANIZATION OF THE SACSD

Office of the Sheriff

Undersheriff
Internal Affairs Bureau

Administration Division

Fiscal Affairs
Public Affairs/Media
Personnel/Payroll
Crime Analysis/Statistics

Corrections Division

Main Jail
Del Oro Correctional Center
Work Project

Investigations Division

Homicide Bureau
Sex/Elderly Assaults Bureau
Child Abuse Bureau
Robbery Bureau
Burglary Bureau
Narcotics Bureau
Gang Suppression Unit
Financial Crimes Bureau
Fugitive Warrants Bureau
Explosives Ordnance Detail *

Technical Services

Radio Maintenance
Communications Bureau (Dispatch)
Identification Bureau

Patrol Division

North Patrol (based at Pleasant Grove Substation)
South Patrol (based at Castle Heights Substation)
Resident Deputy Program
Mounted & Parks Detail (motorcycles & horses)
River Detail (2 boats, 4 jet skis)
Aero Detail (4 helicopters)
Special Enforcement Detail (SED)
Community Services Bureau

Training & Reserve Forces Division

Sheriff's Academy
Reserve Forces Bureau

STAFFING RATIOS

While the Sheriff's Department has about the same number of total employees as the city police force, it actually has a lower ratio of patrol officers to population because about one-third of its employees work in corrections.

The San Angelo Police Department puts 1.3 officers on the street for every 1,000 people in its jurisdiction, while the county Sheriff's Department fields .8 patrol officers per 1,000 people.

Both departments are considered understaffed—the preferred ratio for law enforcement agencies is 2 patrol officers per 1,000 people.

Non-administrative personnel are represented by a union, the Deputy Sheriff's Association, but are forbidden by state law from striking.

A professional, competent organization, the Sheriff's Department suffers from funding problems that have rendered it understaffed and slightly under-equipped. As a result, sheriff's officials spend most of their time trying to stretch limited resources to handle the rising crime problems of the growing county population.

Nevertheless, clever use of federal grants and other resources has allowed the Sheriff's Department to institute some new programs, such as helicopter and river patrols, in recent years.

STRUCTURE

The San Angelo County Sheriff's Department somewhat resembles the city police department in organization, with some changes to reflect its different responsibilities.

At the top of the hierarchy is the sheriff, who is elected by the voters every four years. The current sheriff, J.T. Preston, has held the job for five years.

* inter-departmental unit, with SAPD, CHP and Air Force 1203rd EOD Detachment

SHERIFF JOHN TAYLOR PRESTON

Sheriff J.T. Preston took office six years ago after the previous sheriff, Jerry Wilder, decided not to run for re-election. Before taking over as sheriff, Preston had served 15 years in the Sheriff's Department, working his way up to the rank of captain.

Preston has a forceful, blunt personality that earns him few points with more politically minded county supervisors, but he doesn't care. In particular, Preston has clashed repeatedly with the board over funding for the department, and is not above taking his case to the public via newspaper and television interviews.

He favors cowboy hats and Western wear, and an autographed photo of John Wayne hangs prominently in Preston's office. An avid horseman, he rides with the Sheriff's Posse in parades and other community events.

But those who take Preston for some kind of country bumpkin are making a mistake. He is an able administrator who stays on top of the latest trends in law enforcement and is skilled at stretching the limited resources of his department to accomplish its mission.

The sheriff is beginning to have some arthritis problems, especially in his wrist, which was broken in a struggle with a drunken driver nearly 20 years ago.

J.T. Preston is 48 years old, with close-cropped, receding brown hair and brown eyes. A strong, barrel-chested man, he stands 6'5" tall. Preston is married and has three grown children, including a daughter who lives in San Angelo.

Sheriff John Taylor Preston

STR 6, REF 6, HLT 5, PRE 8, INT 6, WIL 7
DEF 16,INI 7,MOV 12,TGH 7,LIF 29

Disadvantages: Distinctive Features (plain-spoken sheriff) [-2], Enemy (rivalry with County Supervisors) [-2], Enemy (watched by the media) [-2], Physical Disad (arthritis) [-2], Psych Disad (aggressive, blunt personality) [-2]

Advantages: Ally (8 contacts in local government and local law enforcement agencies (each is Conv.) [16], Famous (Sheriff, local figure) [2], Membership: San Angelo County Sheriff's Department, MR 10/Sheriff, Minor) [20]

Skills: Animal Handling +2, Area Knowledge (San Angelo county) +5, Awareness +3, Bureaucracy +5, Computers (Use) +1, Conversation +5, Criminology +2, Deduction +5, Driving +4, Firearms +3, Fish and Game +4, Knowledge (Horses) +4, Knowledge (Law enforcement administration) +6, Knowledge (San Angelo county government) +3, Knowledge (San Angelo Sheriff's Dept.) +6, Knowledge (San Angelo's underworld) +2, Melee Weapons +2 (Tonfa/ PR-24 +2), Orate +5, Persuasion +5, Politics +2, Professional (County Sheriff) +3, Riding +3, Swimming +2, Writing +4.

Equipment: Business suit, cowboy hat, dress uniform, Sig Sauer P-229 .40 cal. pistol, body armor (AV: 16, Loc: 6-13), radio (scrambled, multi-channel), handcuffs, unmarked county car w/police radio.

"Listen up, rookie. I've got 10 weeks to retirement, so if we run into any supers, you let me handle it, OK? Some of these guys get testy around guns, and I don't wanna get disintegrated, electrocuted, turned to stone, teleported to Dimension X or nothin' else. You hear me?"
—Gus Pappas, 49, deputy sheriff



Sheriff John Taylor Preston: PL 5; Init +1 (Dex); Defense 13 (+1 base, +2 Dex); Spd 30 ft; Atk +3 melee (+1S, punch; +2S, tonfa), +3 ranged (+3L, pistol); SV Dmg +1, Fort +1, REF +2, Will +2; Str 13, Dex 14, Con 12, INT 13, Wis 14, Cha 17. *Feats:* Connected, Fame, Leadership. *Skills:* Drive +4, Diplomacy +5, Gather Information +4, Handle Animal +4, Intimidation +6, Knowledge (bureaucracy) +5, Knowledge (law) +5, Knowledge (sheriff's department) +4, Profession (county sheriff) +6, Ride +5, Search +4, Spot +4. *Equipment:* handgun (+3 lethal damage), handcuffs (hardness 5), radio (radio hearing).

The Undersheriff, Ned Pickett, serves as an assistant to the sheriff and fills in when Preston is away from the office.

Below the sheriff's office, the department has three tiers of command. Captains oversee each of the divisions of the department, aided by lieutenants who supervise various bureaus and details within each division.

In the patrol division, one lieutenant serves as watch commander on each shift for both patrol sectors. He keeps up-to-date on patrol activities, and may respond in person to major incidents.

Sergeants supervise the men and women on the street, and are the last tier of command. Below the sergeants are the street officers themselves. There are two ranks of officers, corporals and officers.

As in the San Angelo Police Department, corporals are more experienced officers who have passed an exam, but do not have a role in the command structure of the department.

Training officers are partnered with new officers as necessary to teach them Sheriff's Department policies and procedures. Training officers receive corporal's pay while they are training a new officer, but otherwise are considered officers with no real rank.

Public Safety

DIVISIONS OF THE SAN ANGELO COUNTY SHERIFF'S DEPARTMENT

Some of the more notable divisions and bureaus of the sheriff's department are covered below. Offices that handle identical duties to their counterparts in the San Angelo Police Department are not covered.

CORRECTIONS DIVISION

The largest branch of the Sheriff's Department, this division staffs the San Angelo County Jail and the Del Oro Correctional Center. These facilities are described in greater detail under the Corrections System section.

Juvenile Hall and other youth facilities are overseen by the county Probation Department.

Most new deputies are assigned to a one- to two-year stint in the corrections division before moving to the patrol division.

DETECTIVES DIVISION

Most of the bureaus in the detectives division are smaller than those in the police department, given the understaffing problems facing the agency.

Also, the Sheriff's Department does not rotate officers between the patrol and detectives divisions, so openings on the various squads are less frequent and more highly coveted.

Some of the bureaus of note include:

Explosives Ordinance Detail: The bomb squad deals with all incidents of suspected explosives in San Angelo County. Members are expert at detecting, removing, defusing and safely detonating bombs of many kinds, but this duty remains extremely hazardous.

This detail has some protective equipment, included heavy padded armor and face shields, and a remote-controlled, wheeled robot used to move suspected explosives.

Lt. Nick Machado of the sheriff's department heads the bomb squad, which also includes Deputy Tom "Bulletproof" Parker.

Financial Crimes Bureau: Detectives in this bureau investigate fraud and embezzlement cases. Most of the detectives on this detail are near-experts on financial matters, and a few are trained accountants.

Fugitive Warrants Bureau: This overworked, under-staffed bureau seeks suspects with active arrest warrants. Since warrants are issued whenever a criminal defendant fails to appear for trial, there are thousands of such cases in San Angelo County alone. The bureau also assists other jurisdictions in seeking fugitives

I worked with Mind-Master on a few cases before he went bad, you know. He saved my butt a couple of times, at least a couple.

He was a good guy, not weird like some of these supers. We used to talk sometimes about how society was falling apart. Crime, terrorism, old ladies afraid to leave their homes. He even got kind of hot talking about litterbugs! No respect for others, he said. I mean, litterbugs? But that's just how he was. One-track mind.

I guess he just couldn't take it anymore. I'm not saying he was right to do what he did, now. But I understand how he felt.

— Hugh Fields, 42, sheriff's detective

who have fled to San Angelo. For the most part, detectives in this bureau focus on apprehending violent offenders or felons.

PATROL DIVISION

Next to the corrections division, the patrol division is the largest in the San Angelo County Sheriff's Department. Officers in this division patrol the communities and rural back roads of the county, responding to crimes, making arrests and keeping an eye out for trouble.

SHERIFF'S DEPUTY STANDARD EQUIPMENT

Sheriff's deputies carry most of the same equipment as their police department counterparts. However, the Sheriff's Department allows its officers to choose their own weapons (at their own expense), based on experience and personal preference, as long as they satisfy departmental guidelines. Deputies may opt to carry the standard issue firearm, the Beretta 92FS, 9mm semi-auto.

Patrol officers normally do not investigate complex crimes; they take reports from victims, make an arrest if the suspect can be found and move on to the next incident. In major crimes, such as homicides or robberies, they secure the crime scene and await the arrival of detectives.

However, an alert patrol officer can do a lot to curb crime and get criminals off the street. For good or ill, they are also the chief representatives of the department to the public.

The county is divided into North Patrol and South Patrol, with the San Angelo River being the dividing line. Both North and South Patrol areas are further divided into roughly a dozen beats each. Two substations, one in Pleasant Grove and one in Rancho Madera, serve as the headquarters for each patrol division.

In urban San Angelo, North Patrol handles Pleasant Grove, Lakeview and La Vista. South Patrol is responsible for Castle Heights, Arroyo Verde, parts of South San Angelo, Rancho Madera and Southport.

Response times, which are beginning to rise, are a serious concern for the patrol division. Also, a budget-prompted crackdown on overtime means that some beats are under-staffed at times, with one or two fewer units on the streets than prescribed.

The San Angelo Deputy Sheriff's Association has lodged numerous complaints about this practice, which it claims places deputies at greater risk since backup is not always readily available.

DEPUTY TOM "BULLETPROOF" PARKER

Deputy Sheriff

On patrol in Castle Heights one night in 1993, Deputy Tom Parker knocked on the door of a home where a domestic disturbance had been reported. The next thing he knew, Parker was lying on the front lawn with the sound of a shotgun blast ringing in his ears.

As he watched his partner draw her gun on the drunken man with the 12-gauge shotgun in the shattered doorway, Parker knew he was already dead—he hadn't even been wearing his bullet-proof vest, and he'd taken the blast full in the chest. He waited for the darkness to come.

But it never did, so Parker got up and brushed the splintered wood from his torn uniform. Aside from a few scratches and some bruising, he was unhurt. He helped his stunned partner subdue the sobbing drunk, and then went to the hospital.

That night, Parker discovered that he was a low-powered metahuman, or LPM, with some slight resistance to physical injury. Pistols and knives are unlikely to harm Parker, though high-powered rifles and other heavy weapons can still cause him serious injury.

His fellow deputies have dubbed him "Bulletproof," a nickname that Parker somewhat dislikes but bears good-naturedly.

Aside from his unusual ability to resist damage, Parker is a typical patrol officer in the sheriff's department. He also serves with the department bomb squad, since his power makes it safer for him to handle explosives than other deputies.

A quiet, low-key man, Parker prefers to blend in with the crowd. The modest fame that his paranormal power has brought him makes Parker uncomfortable, but he believes that God gave him this power for a reason, so he tries to put it to good use.

Parker, 30, is an African-American man with short black hair and brown eyes. He and his wife plan to start a family soon, though Parker is worried about the potential genetic effects of his LPM powers.

Deputy Tom "Bulletproof" Parker: PL 5; Init +1 (Dex); Defense 12 (+1 base, +1 Dex); Spd 30 ft; Atk +4 melee (+1S, punch; +2S, tonfa), +4 ranged (+3L, pistol); SV Dmg +1 (+5 Protection), Fort +1, REF +1, Will +0; Str 12, Dex 12, Con 13, INT 10, Wis 10, Cha 11.

Skills: Climb +2, Demolitions +4, Disable Device +3, Drive +4, Intimidation +3, Knowledge (law) +4, Move Silently +2, Profession (police officer) +4, Search +3, Sense Motive +1, Spot +3.

Feats: Assessment, Fame, Point Blank Shot, Talented (Spot and Listen).

Powers: Protection +5 [Source: Mutation; Cost: 10 pp]

Equipment: handgun (+3 lethal damage), baton/PR-24 (+2 stun damage), handcuffs (hardness 5).

Deputy Tom "Bulletproof" Parker
STR 4, REF 4, HLT 4, PRE 3, INT 3, WIL 3
DEF 14,INI 4, MOV 8, TGH 4, LIF 18

Disadvantages: Dependent (wife) [-2], Distinctive Features (deputy sheriff, easily concealed) [-2], Duty (to Sheriff's Dept.) [-5], Psych Disad (unassuming) [-2]

Advantages: Famous (Low-powered metahuman, well-known local figure) [5], Membership: San Angelo County Sheriff's Department (MR 3/Deputy, Minor) [6]

Skills: Area Knowledge (San Angelo county) +4, Awareness +4, Bureaucracy +1, Chemistry +2, Computers (Use) +3, Concentration +4, Criminology +1, Demolitions +4, Driving +5, Electrician +1, Electronics +1, Firearms +3 (Pistols +2), First Aid +3, Intuition +2, Knowledge (Explosives) +4, Knowledge (Law enforcement) +3, Knowledge (San Angelo underworld) +1, Knowledge (San Angelo Sheriff's Department) +3, Melee Weapons +2 (Tonfa/PR-24 +2), Operate Electronics +2, Professional (Deputy sheriff) +5, Society +3 (Streetwise +2), Surveillance +1, Swimming +2, Tactics +2, Unarmed Combat (Police Arrest Control) +3, Writing +1 (Reports +2).

Powers: Armor: AV 15, inobvious

Equipment: Baretta 92FS 9mm semi-auto, body armor (AV: 16, Loc: 6-13), portable radio (scrambled, multi-channel), handcuffs, 12-ga. shotgun in patrol car.



Illustration by Bryce Nakagawa

Aero Detail: The San Angelo County Sheriff's Department has four Bell helicopters. Three were surplus U.S. Army helicopters acquired from the federal government as a grant.

The helicopters are based at Forgan Air Force Base. One of the helicopters is normally in the air each night, and one usually flies during daylight hours.

They are used to patrol troubled neighborhoods, pursue fleeing suspects and assist in searches. Each helicopter is equipped with a high-powered spotlight.

Drowning Accident Rescue Team: A volunteer squad of specially trained and equipped sheriff's deputies who take on assignments below the waters of San Angelo's rivers and lakes. The DART team, as they are more commonly known, searches for drowning victims, recovers bodies, searches for evidence underwater and so on. Deputies from the team also visit local schools to talk about water safety. The San Angelo Police Department regularly calls on the sheriff's dive team for assistance under a mutual-aid accord.

Mounted and Parks Detail: A detail that uses horses, bicycles and Kawasaki motorcycles to patrol the trails, pathways and parks of San Angelo County.

The Sheriff's Posse, which includes both active and retired members of the mounted detail, is a popular attraction at parades and once traveled to Washington D.C. to march in a presidential inaugural parade.

Resident Deputy Program: A program used by the department to patrol remote hamlets in San Angelo County. Resident deputies live in the communities they police and keep their patrol vehicles 24 hours a day. When not on patrol, they respond to emergencies from their homes. This allows the department to forego assigning deputies from the substations to patrol these towns, some of which are more than an hour's drive from metropolitan San Angelo. Resident deputies are employed in Marshall, Garrett's Landing and Canfield.

River Detail: The sheriff's department owns two motorboats and four Jet Skis used to patrol the San Angelo and Del Oro rivers.

Public Safety

River patrol deputies cite reckless boaters, inspect boats for safety equipment and sometimes help land-based deputies catch suspects who try to flee along the riverbank. Sgt. Rick Russell heads the boat detail.

Special Enforcement Detail: An elite, highly trained team of officers that responds to incidents involving heavily armed or barricaded suspects in the county. Similar to a police SWAT squad, the SED team has the firepower and skills to handle the most dangerous threats to public safety. Lt. Frank Stalker commands the sheriff's SED team.

SED TEAM EQUIPMENT

The Special Enforcement Detail uses equipment similar to that detailed for the San Angelo Police Department SWAT and PART teams.

TECHNICAL SERVICES

This division handles the communications and identification needs of the department.

The communications center handles all 911 emergency calls in San Angelo County. Operators route the calls to the appropriate agency, such as the police department or a fire protection district. A joint powers authority of participating agencies provides funding for the center, which is staffed and operated by the Sheriff's Department.

The center also handles dispatching and radio communications duties for Sheriff's Department patrols.

This division also includes an identification bureau, responsible for fingerprinting and other evidence collection at crime scenes. The bureau also fingerprints job applicants, registers sex offenders and processes applications for concealed weapons permits.

Transcript of 911 Call

Operator: 911, what is your emergency?
 Caller: Hello, yes, there's a man going crazy out in the street. Can you send the police?
 Operator: A man going crazy? What's he doing?
 Caller: Yes. He's shouting and throwing things at people's houses.
 Operator: OK, can you describe him for me?
 Caller: He's, uh, about 12 feet tall, with blue hair and glowing eyes ... red eyes. Glowing red eyes.
 Operator: Twelve feet tall, with blue hair and glowing red eyes? OK, ma'am, is he armed?
 Caller: Oh no! (loud crunching sound)
 Operator: Ma'am, are you all right? Stay on the phone...
 Caller: I'm OK. No, he's not armed, but he just threw my Honda up on the neighbor's roof. Please hurry!

SHERIFF'S PERSONNEL OF NOTE

Bernadette Capelli: The sheriff's personal secretary, Capelli serves as an effective barrier between Sheriff Preston and those who would waste his time. A woman of imposing size and an abrasive personality, she can be extremely intimidating. However, Capelli is very loyal to the department.

Cpl. Jordan Emerson: A helicopter pilot in the Aero Detail of the sheriff's department. Emerson, who piloted a U.S. Army helicopter gunship in the Gulf War, loves to fly. He won a departmental commendation for bravery in 1995 after landing his chopper

in a hazardous area of high-tension power lines to pick up a deputy wounded in a shootout.

Lt. Calvin Abukawa: A veteran detective in the homicide bureau respected for his knowledge of forensic science and criminology. Abukawa is an expert at crime scene examination and acts as a consultant to other local departments on the subject at times.

Deputy Robert Hernandez: A popular deputy assigned to the Pleasant Grove substation as a patrol officer, Hernandez comes from a family of cops. His father, one of the first Latinos hired by the sheriff's department, was killed in the line of duty 15 years ago when he unwittingly pulled over a car driven by a prison escapee. Robert's uncle, Tony Hernandez, is a D.A. investigator, and his two brothers, Joe and Hector, are deputies assigned to the main jail. Also, his sister, Teresa, is a bailiff in the county court system.

NOTABLE LOCATIONS

Sheriff's Headquarters: The nine-story Clarence Wayne Sheriff's Administrative Building, named after the first elected sheriff of San Angelo County, is located in downtown San Angelo. Known informally as the sheriff's headquarters, it houses the administrative offices of the department and most of the investigations bureaus.

Pleasant Grove Substation: This substation serves as the headquarters for north sector patrols.

Rancho Madera Substation: This substation serves as the base for south sector patrols. The high-crime neighborhoods assigned to officers stationed in Rancho Madera recently prompted some wags to nickname the substation "Ground Zero."

Community boosters who got wind of the moniker complained, however, and sheriff's officials are now trying to stamp out use of the name.

UNIFORMS AND INSIGNIA

Deputies wear forest green pants and tan shirts, with shoulder-mounted radios. They don't wear hats unless in dress uniform.

Detectives are not required to wear uniforms, but are expected to dress in suits or other business attire unless they taking part in an undercover operation.

The department maintains a fleet of 1994 and 1995 Chevrolet Caprices as patrol vehicles. With the Caprice Police Package models being discontinued, the department has begun purchasing 1997 Ford Crown Victorias for use as patrol vehicles and unmarked cars for detectives and executive officers.

The older Caprices have a forest green and white paint scheme, while the newer Crown Victorias are all white, which helps them stay cooler during the scorching San Angelo summers and cuts painting costs. Both front doors bear the Sheriff's Department logo.

In addition, the department uses 1995-96 Ford Broncos for rural and parkway duty.

The department also maintains several unmarked cars for investigative work, and has a handful of sports cars and luxury cars, seized from drug dealers, used for undercover operations.

STATE LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES

Two state agencies also handle law enforcement responsibilities in the San Angelo area:

Highway Patrol: The Highway Patrol handles traffic enforcement

duties on state and federal highways in the San Angelo area. While police handle traffic enforcement on city streets, the Highway Patrol enforces vehicle codes in unincorporated areas under an agreement with the county.

The state Highway Patrol has offices in Pleasant Grove, Rancho Madera and the town of Marshall.

The Highway Patrol also has a helicopter (call-sign H-22) and a light plane, which are used for aerial patrols over the freeways throughout the Central Valley. The plane is equipped with radar, and is used in conjunction with ground units to nab speeders.

Highway Patrol officers wear tan uniforms and drive black-and-white patrol cars. Motorcycles are also used by the highway patrol, mostly during the summer months.

State Parks: The Lake Oro State Recreation Area is patrolled by State Park rangers, who carry firearms and are authorized to make arrests. However, sheriff's deputies are normally called in to assist with serious incidents and investigate major crimes.

State parks rangers wear uniforms similar to those of sheriff's deputies and drive light green four-wheel-drive Chevrolet Blazers. Rangers also use three motorboats and six Jet Skis for patrols on Lake Oro.

FEDERAL LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES

A number of federal law enforcement agencies are active in the San Angelo area. They enforce federal laws and sometimes offer assistance to local law enforcement agencies.

Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms: Agents from this bureau, a branch of the federal Treasury Department, enforces federal laws relating to alcohol, tobacco, explosives and firearms. The ATF maintains a small office, headed by Adrian Masselli, at the Twilight Tower.

Drug Enforcement Agency: The DEA investigates drug-related crimes in San Angelo, focusing on tong-related heroin smuggling and methamphetamine sales by motorcycle gangs. Meth labs in rural San Angelo are also a target of the DEA in joint operations with the Sheriff's Department.

Colin Hunt heads the small DEA squad based at the Prospector Bank Building office tower. There are rumors that the squad is probing tong-related opium smuggling at the Port of San Angelo.

The DEA and county sheriff's department are running a joint undercover operation targeting the methamphetamine ring run by the Flaming Skulls motorcycle gang.

Federal Bureau of Investigation: The FBI office in San Angelo probes all federal crimes, such as bank robberies, terrorism and some civil rights violations. Agents also keep an eye on tongs and motorcycle gangs in the city.

Dale Parsons is the special agent in charge, or SAC, of the San Angelo FBI office, based at the Federal Building downtown.

Immigration and Naturalization Service: A branch of the federal Department of Justice, the Immigration and Naturalization Service has a small office in San Angelo. Investigators with INS occasionally conduct raids on businesses suspected of knowingly employing illegal aliens.

The INS also investigates individuals suspected of smuggling undocumented aliens into the United States for pay.

One recent case involved Chinese immigrants who had been crammed into a freighter due to dock at the Port of San Angelo. Conditions aboard the ship were so squalid that one woman died before the ship was stopped by the U.S. Coast Guard and INS officials.

CORRUPTION

Law enforcement agencies in San Angelo are not overrun with corruption—far from it. While most agencies no doubt have a few bad apples, there is no systematic bribe-taking, such as the reported “padding” of entire precincts in East Coast departments.

Contrary to popular belief, the fabled “code of silence” among peace officers does not always extend to corrupt cops, who are likely to be reported to their superiors.

BRUTALITY AND EXCESSIVE FORCE

Almost all San Angelo officers, of any department, do not condone the use of excessive force or beatings. Most officers also see a difference between subduing a suspect and beating a confession out of someone, however.

Officers tend to “close ranks” around colleagues who are accused of excessive force by a criminal suspect. But officers with a reputation for brutality will find few supporters on any police force and will soon find themselves the target of internal affairs division investigations.

EMERGENCY SERVICES

Crime and criminals are not the only threats to public safety in San Angelo. Fires, auto accidents and medical emergencies must also be dealt with. These are the responsibility of San Angelo firefighters and private ambulance companies.

SAN ANGELO FIRE DEPARTMENT

The San Angelo Fire Department, a branch of city government, responds to all fires and other emergencies in the city limits. The department can call on other agencies, including the Forgan Air Force Base fire department, for assistance when battling extensive blazes or other large-scale emergencies.

Likewise, other agencies can call the city fire department for aid. Each year, the department typically sends

Public Safety

A fire start in our apartment. Bad wiring, I think. Our landlord very cheap. I get family out, but my daughter inhale smoke. Coughing very bad. Fire department come very quickly to help, put out fire, give daughter oxygen. Then hero land near fire trucks.

Paramedics talk to him, and he come over. Says, 'Your daughter need go to hospital. I fly her very fast.' Wife and I say yes, and hero carries daughter to hospital.

She OK now. Hero save her life. My family love U.S., best place, love heroes.

— Hung Tran, 38, school custodian

several companies to help battle wildfires in the mountains or in Southern California.

The fire department employs 3,600 people and has 85 stations scattered throughout the city. Department headquarters are located in an annex to Station #1 downtown.

STRUCTURE OF THE FIRE DEPARTMENT

The fire chief, who is appointed by the City Council, heads the department. The current chief, Dean Mandel, has held the job for the past three years.

The Deputy Fire Chief, Franklin Sexton, assists Mandel and runs the department in his absence. The fire marshal, David Ortiz, heads the fire prevention bureau.

Below the office of the chief, the San Angelo Fire Department has a simple, four-tiered command structure. Division chiefs command each of the bureaus, except for the fire prevention bureau.

The fire suppression bureau, which handles the firefighting duties of the department, splits the city into three divisions, each commanded by an assistant chief. Next in line are the battalion chiefs, who supervise a number of fire companies inside a division. Battalion chiefs normally respond to fires, but do not enter burning buildings—they direct the overall strategy of battling the blaze.

Finally, captains are in charge of companies. A company may consist of a truck, an engine or both. Fire trucks are huge rigs with aerial ladders, while engines are the somewhat smaller, more commonly seen vehicles. Each carries three to four firefighters.

Depending on the assignment of the companies, a station may

My company's up on the roof of this old storefront downtown. It's just after dawn, spring, so it's nice and cool. Same old story—some homeless people broke in the night before, lit a fire to stay warm and it got away from them. Now it's burning pretty good. We're ventilating the roof when I feel it start to give underneath me. I shout to my guys to get outta there, but before I can jump clear it collapses.

I'm looking straight down into hell. That's exactly what it looked like, a burning hell. The guys are all shouting 'Cap! Cap! Cap's gone through the roof! I'm mentally saying goodbye to my wife and kids, you know, when suddenly I'm jerked up by the collar of my turnout.

I look up, and this super's got ahold of me, pulling me out of the hole. Don't know where she came from. She carried me down to the street, then flew off. Never found out her name.

— Robert Plummer, 41, fire captain

also be equipped with grass-fire rigs, boats, water tankers, ambulances or other specialized vehicles. Some stations contain three companies—a truck, an engine and an ambulance.

Captains respond to all emergency calls, and generally stay with their companies inside burning buildings or other emergency scenes.

Engineers, who must have some firefighting experience and pass a written test, drive the trucks and engines. At the bottom are the firefighter-paramedics, who make up the bulk of the department's personnel. Not all firefighters are paramedics, but they all have at least some emergency medical training. Paramedics have advanced training that qualifies them to administer drugs, start IVs, intubate and defibrillate patients.

All firefighters in the city are paid, full-time professionals—volunteer firefighters were phased out in the 1960s. The city has been trying to increase the number of female firefighters, but the department remains almost 95 percent male.

FIRE CHIEF DEAN MANDEL

Dean Mandel took over as fire chief in 1994, after serving as an assistant chief in the Angel Beach Fire Department.

Resentment lingers over the City Council's choice of Mandel over several applicants from within the San Angelo Fire Department, and he is not well-liked by most fire personnel. The chief has proven an able, if unremarkable, administrator, however.

Mandel, 52, has thinning blond hair and blue eyes. He stands 6' tall and has an average build. He and his wife have four children, ranging in age from 4 to 16 years old.

Fire Chief Dean Mandel: PL 2; Init +1 (Dex); Defense 11 (+1 Dex); Spd 30 ft.; Atk +2 melee (+1S punch; +3L, axe); SV Dmg, +1, Fort +1, REF +1, Will +0; Str 12, Dex 12, Con 12, INT 12, Wis 11, Cha 13. *Feats:* Connected. *Skills:* Climb +3, Diplomacy +2, Drive +2, Jump +3, Knowledge (bureaucracy) +4, Listen +4, Medicine +3, Profession (fire chief) +6, Search +3. *Equipment:* flame-retardant suit [Amazing Save (Damage) +3, fire only; *Flaw:* Device], fire-fighting gear.

ORGANIZATION OF THE SAFD

Administration Bureau

Community Liaison Officer
Fire Chief

Administrative Services Bureau

Accounts Payable Unit
Manuals and Orders Unit
Maps and Drafting Unit
Payroll Unit
Personnel Services Unit

Fire Prevention Bureau

Fire Marshal's Office
Arson Section
Education Section
Hazardous Materials Section
Industrial and Commercial Section
High-Rise Unit
Public Safety Section
Institutions Unit
Schools and Churches Unit
Technical Section
Plan Check Unit

Fire Suppression and Rescue Bureau

North Division
Central Division
South Division

Support Services Bureau

Disaster Preparedness Division
Training Division

Fire Chief Dean Mandel

STR 5, REF 4, HLT 5, PRE 5, INT 4, WIL 4

DEF 14,INI 4,MOV 9,TGH 5,LIF 23

Disadvantages: Dependent (family) [-2], Enemy (watched by the media) [-2], Infamous (unpopular within Fire Dept. circles) [-2]

Advantages: Ally (state and local fire agencies) [5], Famous (Fire Chief, local figure) [2], Membership: SAFD (MR 10/ Chief, Minor) [20]

Skills: Area Knowledge (San Angelo) +3, Awareness +3, Bureaucracy +4, Climbing +3, Computers (Use) +1, Driving +4, First Aid +3, Fish and Game +2, Knowledge (Firefighting) +3, Knowledge (San Angelo Fire Dept.) +6, Pharmacology +1, Physician +2, Professional (Fire Chief) +3, Surgery +1, Swimming +3, Symbols (Haz-mat and chemical) +3, Writing +2.

Equipment: Turnout gear—fire jacket and pants (AV: 16, Loc: 5-18, Wt: 10, Notes: 1/4 AV vs. physical damage) and helmet (AV: 16, Loc: 3-4, Wt: 1), portable two-way radio, Chevy Suburban (Fire Chief's vehicle).

SAFD PERSONNEL BREAKDOWN

Fire Chief - 1

Deputy Chief - 1

Fire Marshal - 1

Division Chief - 5

Assistant Chief - 3

Battalion Chief - 9

Captain - 255

Engineer - 375

Firefighter/Paramedic - 2,450

BUREAUS OF THE FIRE DEPARTMENT

Some of the more interesting or active bureaus of the city fire department:

FIRE PREVENTION BUREAU

Headed by the fire marshal, this bureau investigates all suspicious blazes and conducts fire inspections in the city. Personnel in this office also review plans for all developments proposed in the city for fire safety, access needs and other requirements.

Some of the notable details within this bureau include:

Arson Section: All suspicious blazes in the city are probed by this office. Arson investigators are armed and have the authority to make arrests in connection with their investigations. They are also very knowledgeable about arson techniques and accelerants such as kerosene, as well as insurance fraud and other common motives for arson.

Education Section: This office handles fire prevention education in San Angelo public schools, arranges firehouse tours for youth groups and organizes other outreach programs.

Hazardous Materials Section: This section keeps track of the storage and transportation of all hazardous materials in the city. These records are used to keep firefighters responding to blazes or other emergencies informed of potential hazardous materials risks associated with a particular business or other location.

**LEN DESANTIS****Arson Investigator**

Leonard DeSantis joined the San Angelo Fire Department nearly 15 years ago after several years with the Marshall Volunteer Fire District in rural San Angelo County. After a few years as a firefighter and engineer, he earned a night school degree in criminal justice and transferred to the arson investigation squad.

In 1994, DeSantis cracked the "Pyre" case, which had thrown San Angelo into a citywide panic. Superpowered arsonist Geoffrey Lindsay set 20 fires in 12 days, killing two people and causing hundreds of thousands of dollars in damage. In cryptic letters to the San Angelo Times, he dubbed himself "Pyre" and announced his intent to burn down the entire city.

After a harrowing, round-the-clock investigation, DeSantis tracked Pyre to his seedy Armory apartment. With the aid of the Justice Foundation, he captured Pyre, who was later sentenced to the Gaviota Island Federal Penitentiary.

A very private person, DeSantis keeps to himself and prefers to work alone. Although he is very respected within the department, he has few friends and most of his co-workers know little about his private life.

DeSantis, 42, has brown hair and eyes with a dark complexion. He stands 5'10" and has an average build. DeSantis is divorced, with no children.

Len DeSantis, Arson Invstigator: PL 3; Init +1 (Dex); Defense 11 (+1 Dex); Spd 30 ft.; Atk +2 melee (+1S, punch), +2 ranged (+3L, pistol); SV Dmg. +1, Fort +1, REF +1, Will +1; Str 12, Dex 13, Con 12, INT 11, Wis 13, Cha 10. Feats: Alertness, Contacts. Skills: Climb +3, Gather Information +2, Jump +3, Listen +5, Profession (arson investigator) +5, Search +5, Spot +4. Equipment: handgun (+3 lethal damage), handcuffs (hardness 5), flame-retardant suit [Amazing Save (Damage) +3, fire only; Flaw: Device], fire-fighting gear.

Public Safety



Illustration by Greg Smith

Len Desantis, Arson Investigator

STR 5, REF 6, HLT 5, PRE 5, INT 5, WIL 4
DEF 16,INI 6,MOV 11,TGH 5,LIF 23

Disadvantages: Enemy (Pyre, supervillain) [-5], Psych Disad (keeps to himself) [-2], Psych Disad (dedicated to duty) [-5]

Advantages: Ally (contacts, street informants) [2], Famous (respected firefighter, local figure, limited to fire department) [2], Membership: SAFD (MR 6/Investigator, Minor) [12]

Skills: Accounting +2, Area Knowledge (Marshall) +3, Area Knowledge (San Angelo) +4, Awareness +5, Bureaucracy +1, Chemistry +3, Computers (Use) +2, Conversation +4, Criminology +3 (Arson investigation +4), Deduction +4, Driving +4, Firearms +3, First Aid +4, Forensics +1, Instruction +3, Knowledge (Arson investigation) +3, Knowledge (Firefighting) +3, Knowledge (Fraud) +1, Knowledge (San Angelo Fire Dept.) +3, Language (English; native is Italian) +3, Melee Weapons +2 (Axes +2), Pharmacology +1, Professional (Arson investigator) +4, Professional (Firefighter) +2, Shadowing +3, Society +2 (Streetwise +2), Swimming +2, Symbols (Haz-mat and chemical) +3, Writing +2 (Reports +2).

Equipment: Beretta 92FS 9mm semi-auto pistol, body armor (AV: 16, Loc: 6-13; usually in trunk of car, not worn), portable radio (scrambled, multi-channel), handcuffs, turnout gear—fire jacket and pants (AV: 16, Loc: 5-18, Wt: 10, Notes: 1/4 AV vs. physical damage) and helmet (AV: 16, Loc: 3-4, Wt: 1), unmarked county car (w/Fire Dept. radio, emergency lights and siren).

FIRE SUPPRESSION BUREAU

This bureau, responsible for fighting fires and handling other emergencies, contains most of the personnel and resources of the San Angelo Fire Department.

This bureau is split into three divisions, which are further broken down into battalions and companies. Fire companies, commanded by a captain, usually consist of the crew on a truck or an engine. Thus, each station houses one or two companies.

Unlike some agencies, the San Angelo Fire Department does not separate firefighters into fire or rescue companies. All companies are capable of either assignment.

If reinforcements are required at a fire or other emergency, the department can call a "second alarm." Additional companies and personnel are dispatched. Third or even fourth alarms can also be called if further assistance is required.

A few companies have specialized equipment or training for certain emergencies, though they still spend most of their time as ordinary firefighting companies:

Cliff and River Rescue: These companies carry climbing gear, stretcher baskets and other equipment for conducting rescues on the steep bluffs along the San Angelo and Del Oro rivers.

Hazardous Materials: Companies assigned to handle hazardous materials emergencies are equipped with full-body suits and other protective gear. They are trained in identifying, handling and cleaning up toxic chemicals, and are knowledgeable about the medical effects of exposure to hazardous substances.

1997 CITY FIRE STATISTICS

Total Calls: 163,668
Fires: 12,057
Medical Assistance: 109,575
Other Emergencies: 42,036

Special Signals

Second Alarms: 104
Third Alarms: 20
Fourth Alarms: 2
Fifth & Higher Alarms: 0
— Source: San Angelo Fire Department

SUPPORT SERVICES BUREAU

Training and disaster preparedness are the responsibility of the Support Services Bureau. This branch of the fire department organizes academies for newly hired firefighters, arranges update training and handles continuing education services.

Personnel assigned to this bureau also draft plans for responding to earthquakes, floods, chemical spills and other disasters in San Angelo.

UNIFORMS AND INSIGNIA

City firefighters, engineers and captains wear light blue shirts and navy blue slacks. They wear short-sleeve shirts in the summer. Of course, they wear protective "turnout" gear, including coats, boots, helmets and breathing apparatus, when responding to a fire.

Administrators—battalion chiefs and higher ranks—wear white uniform shirts.

Engines, trucks and other vehicles of the San Angelo Fire Department are the traditional red, with reflective stripes and the department name in gold letters over a logo on the doors.

Remember the Consolidated Electronics warehouse fire back in '91? I was with Co. 8 then. We were sitting around the station watching 'L.A. Law' on the tube when we got a call-out on the third alarm. You should've seen all the trucks. Guys from all over the city were there.

We get the news that some of the night shift is trapped on catwalks up near the roof, so our company goes in. The whole warehouse is burning up now—it's slow going, but we're making our way to 'em.

Then part of the roof comes flying off, and this super is plucking people off the catwalk and flying them out. Easy as pie—for him, anyway.

Well, so much for that, we say, and start headin' out. I'm thinking I'm gonna be there all night mopping up—not much hope of supers helping with that, huh?—when a load of debris drops out of the rafters, lands right on top of me.

Broke my back. They told me later the guys barely got me out of there. I was in the hospital for six months, and I had to retire from the department.

The super got a parade down Kirby Boulevard. I got a pension and a gold watch.

The watch stopped 'bout a year ago.

— George Maguire, 44, disabled

NOTABLE PEOPLE

Firefighter Mitch Loughlin: A firefighter with a reputation for making dramatic rescues. He has pulled several people from blazes over the years, often placing himself at considerable risk. In 1994, Loughlin was seriously injured when a stairway collapsed underneath him in an apartment building fire, but he returned to active duty a few months later.

He is a Native American from the Canfield Indian Rancheria near Lake Oro.

Engineer Russ O'Connell: An engineer stationed downtown, O'Connell has restored an antique San Angelo Fire Department engine that he drives in parades. One of the most senior firefighters in the department, O'Connell is also known for his distinctive handlebar mustache.

"Sparky the Fire Dog": Actually a firefighter inside a costume, Sparky the Fire Dog is a popular character with San Angelo schoolchildren. He visits schools and community events to pass along fire safety tips.

FIRE PROTECTION DISTRICTS

In the unincorporated areas of San Angelo County, fire protection duties are handled by independent special districts. These districts, which are overseen by elected fire boards, are funded by a share of property tax revenues. Fire districts are organized along much the same lines as the city fire department, though some rely on volunteers for the bulk of their personnel.

There are several fire districts in San Angelo County. The three largest are the Foothills, Pleasant Grove and South San Angelo Consolidated fire protection districts.

Remote parts of San Angelo County are covered either by volunteer fire departments from the nearest community or by the California Department of Forestry, under agreement with the county.

Each fire protection district has its own uniform and insignia. The color scheme of fire vehicles likewise varies, with lime-green, white or yellow nearly as popular as the traditional red.

STATE AND FEDERAL AGENCIES

Agencies of the state and federal governments also have some responsibility for fire protection in the San Angelo area.

California Department of Forestry: Firefighters from the forestry department, or CDF, battle blazes in state parks, such as the Lake Oro State Recreation Area. Also, San Angelo County contracts with CDF to provide fire protection in remote parts of the county not covered by other fire districts. The CDF operates a number of air tankers, huge airplanes used to drop water and flame retardant on wildlands fires.

U.S. Air Force: A detachment of Air Force personnel provides fire protection at Forgan Air Force Base in Pleasant Grove. The department has special training and equipment for air crashes, and can be called on for assistance by other fire agencies.

U.S. Forest Service: The U.S. Forest Service, a branch of the federal Department of the Interior, is responsible for fire protection in national forests. The famed "smoke jumpers," firefighters who parachute to remote wildlands fires, are affiliated with the USFS.

PRIVATE AMBULANCE FIRMS

In addition to the ambulances operated by local fire agencies, three private ambulance firms serve the metropolitan San Angelo area. These companies are licensed by the Board of Supervisors and overseen by the county health services division.

ET: The busiest private ambulance service in San Angelo. Owner Austin Lane began ET, which stands for "Emergency Transport," just five years ago. The company has expanded rapidly and lured a number of the best ambulance crews away from other firms. His employees have asked Lane several times to change the name of the company, which makes them the butt of endless "alien" and "extra-terrestrial" jokes, but he likes the ET name and will not change it.

Metropolitan Ambulance: Once the busiest private ambulance company in San Angelo, Metropolitan Ambulance has been overtaken in recent years by newcomer ET. As a result, "Metro" crews are nervous about their future. There are rumors that owner Ravi Singh faces bankruptcy after over-extending himself replacing outdated ambulances. The tension has sparked a rivalry between Metro and ET crews, and a recent softball game between the firms ended in a brawl.

Valley Medical Systems: In recent years, Valley Medical Systems has gained a reputation as the worst private ambulance company in San Angelo. Horror stories of ambulances running out of gas, breaking down and getting lost on emergency calls are often told. The owner of Valley Medical Systems, Naomi Coffey, is known as a miser loathe to spend money on salaries, upkeep, new ambulances or anything else. Coffey spends most of her time cajoling county officials out of revoking her license to operate in San Angelo.

CAMPAIGN TIP

Paramedics will try to treat injured supers, unless doing so puts them at risk. However, superhumans often have powers that could hinder or prevent medical treatment—for example, armored skin could rule out intravenous injections! Most ambulances do not carry special equipment for treating supers.

Public Safety

We got a call to this frat house in the Commons. Big party going on, lots of beer, loud music. We're figuring an alcohol poisoning or drug O.D. You work a rescue wagon, you see these things a lot.

So this guy comes up and tells us the victim's in the pool. OK, so it's a drowning. We hustle to the pool.

Well, the guy's not drowning, but he is at the bottom of the pool smiling up at us. He's got gills and fins, just like a fish. His buddies say he changed as he swam around the pool after taking some drugs—mushrooms I think.

We called in some specialists from Faraday, but you wouldn't believe what a pain in the butt it was to transport that guy—he couldn't breathe plain o' air anymore.

— Tony Rudenko, 30, paramedic

THE JUDICIAL AND PENAL SYSTEMS

Once an officer or detective makes an arrest, the case moves to the criminal justice system. As with law enforcement, most of the activity occurs at the county level, though the federal and state governments also play roles in the administration of justice.

THE DISTRICT ATTORNEY'S OFFICE

The county District Attorney's office is responsible for the filing of criminal charges and prosecution of all criminal cases in San Angelo County, including the city of San Angelo.

The D.A. reviews arrest reports filed by local law enforcement agencies, including the San Angelo Police Department, San Angelo County Sheriff's Department and the Highway Patrol, and decides on which cases formal charges will be filed. Charges may also be filed based on police affidavits.

The D.A.'s Office is headed by the San Angelo District Attorney, who oversees the administration of the approximately four dozen deputy district attorneys who try the various misdemeanor and felony cases in the San Angelo Municipal and Superior courts.

The District Attorney is an elected position with a four year term. Deputy D.A.s are full-time county employees, hired by the D.A. In addition to Deputy D.A.s, the D.A.'s Office employs a dozen criminal investigators and as many assistant investigators. Their duties include conducting follow-up interviews with witnesses, collecting and reviewing additional evidence, and so on, to bolster the prosecution's case.

ORGANIZATION OF THE DA'S OFFICE

Administration

District Attorney	Homicide
Office Manager	Organized Crime
Personnel/Payroll	Property Crimes
Records	Robbery
Consumer Affairs Div.	Sex Crimes/Child Abuse
Family Support Div.	Investigations Div.
Felony Crimes Div.	Juvenile Crimes Div.
Career Criminal	Misdemeanor Crimes
Drug Crimes	Traffic Section

STRUCTURE OF THE D.A.'S OFFICE

The elected district attorney of San Angelo County, Jan Lehman, heads the office.

DISTRICT ATTORNEY JAN LEHMAN

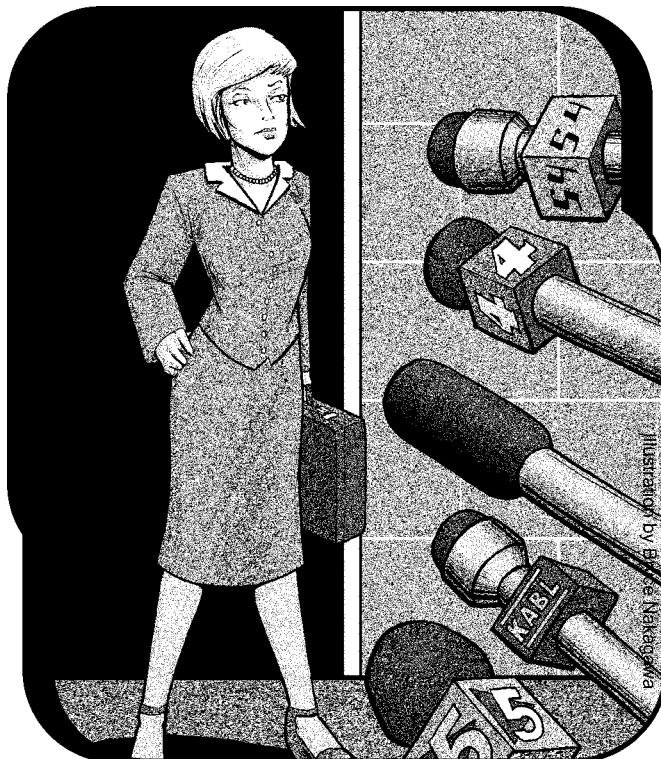
Jan Lehman was elected two years ago after a tight race with former D.A. Garry Harrison. Her strong position on juvenile crime and Harrison's drunken driving arrest on the eve of the election were the chief factors in her victory. Prior to her election, Lehman worked as a deputy district attorney prosecuting criminal cases in the office for 12 years.

Lehman's biggest accomplishment as district attorney to date is the conviction of San Angelo's notorious crime boss, Arlisson Kalstrom, on multiple racketeering charges.

So far, Lehman has not taken a strong stance on vigilante activities by superhumans. Her office has aggressively prosecuted paranormal criminals, however, and Lehman has spoken out in favor of enhanced penalties for defendants who use superpowers in a crime.

Lehman, 44, has short blond hair and green eyes. She wears contact lenses. Lehman and her husband, corporate attorney Anthony Gordon, have two young children. The family often spends weekends in the Napa Valley wine country.

District Attorney Jan Lehman: PL 3; Init +0 (Dex); Defense 10; Spd 30 ft; Atk -1 melee (-1S, punch); SV Dmg +1, Fort +1, REF +0, Will +0; Str 9, Dex 10, Con 12, INT 12, Wis 11, Cha 13. *Feats:* Assessment, Attractive, Connected, Talented (Knowledge and Profession). *Skills:* Bluff +5 (+8), Diplomacy +3 (+6), Gather Information +5, Innuendo +5, Knowledge (juvenile crime) +4, Knowledge (law) +7, Knowledge (wine) +2, Profession (district attorney) +7, Sense Motive +2. *Equipment:* Suit, pager, cell



District Attorney Jan Lehman

STR 3, REF 4, HLT 5, PRE 5, INT 5, WIL 4
DEF 14,INI 5, MOV 8, TGH 4, LIF 23

Disadvantages: Dependent (family) [-2], Physical Disad (nearsighted, -3 to Awareness rolls, correctable with glasses/contacts) [-2], Psych Disad (professional rivalry with Deputy DA Roger Feist) [-2], Psych Disad (seeks justice) [-2]

Advantages: Allies (contacts within the judicial and legal community) [5], Attractive (+3 to social skill rolls) [2], Famous (tough DA, local figure) [2], Perk (License to practice law) [2], Membership: DA's office (MR 10/District Attorney, Minor) [20]

Skills: Area Knowledge (San Angelo) +2, Bureaucracy +4, Business +2, Computers (Use) +4, Criminology +1, Dancing +3, Deduction +3, Driving +2, Intrigue +2, Knowledge (Civil law) +4, Knowledge (Criminal law) +5, Knowledge (Juvenile crime) +3, Knowledge (San Angelo legal scene) +4, Knowledge (Wine) +1, Orate +4, Politics +1, Professional (Attorney) +5, Research +3, Society +3, Swimming +2, Writing (Legal documents +2) +4.

Equipment: Suit, pager, cell phone, contact lenses.

DIVISIONS OF THE D.A.'S OFFICE

Details on the more interesting or active divisions of the District Attorney's Office.

Consumer Affairs Division: Attorneys in this division handle cases dealing with false advertising, faulty or dangerous merchandise, "lemon law" violations and other illegal business practices.

Family Support Division: The attorneys in this division are charged with ensuring that non-custodial fathers and mothers pay child support as required by the courts. Their task is complicated considerably by defendants who flee the state, work under the table, assign their assets to other family members and try almost every other conceivable dodge to avoid making payments.

Felony Crimes Division: Most deputy D.A.s work in this division, which handles the bulk of the office's caseload. Felonies are major crimes, such as robbery, sexual assault and murder, that carry a potential penalty of more than a year in county jail, any prison time or a fine of more than \$1,000.

The attorneys in this division and its various bureaus prosecute all felony criminal cases in the city and county of San Angelo.

Many cases never go to trial, however. Cases with exceptionally strong evidence, or very weak evidence, are often settled by negotiations between the prosecutor and defense attorney.

These "plea bargains," which must be approved by the judge in the case, often involve a guilty plea to a lesser offense to avoid the time and expense of a jury trial.

While plea bargains are not popular with the public, they are the only way for the D.A.'s Office to handle its caseload. Also, taking every case to trial would almost certainly cause a breakdown in the already clogged court system.

ANDREW CARLISLE**Deputy District Attorney**

Andrew Carlisle is a long-time deputy D.A.. He has been practicing law for over 20 years, five with the Public Defender's Office and the remainder as a deputy D.A.. Carlisle was on the prosecution team that brought down reputed mobster Arlisson Kalstrom, something that Carlisle downplays in conversation.

Now, are you strong enough to pick up a car? That's very impressive. How about a bus? A train locomotive? A jet fighter? So, something like ripping the doors off an armored car, you're certainly strong enough for that, aren't you?

— **Juliet Price, 33, deputy D.A.**

Carlisle specializes in prosecuting organized crime cases, few as there are in San Angelo, and white-collar crimes. One day he hopes to make that the case that will propel him to the national spotlight—and a lucrative private practice after retiring from county service.

A 48-year-old man, Carlisle has black hair and a close-trimmed black beard, which is beginning to show some gray. He has brown eyes and wears glasses. In his spare time, Carlisle is an avid sailor who owns his own sailboat.

INVESTIGATIONS DIVISION

This division handles the investigatory needs of the District Attorney's Office. Although police or sheriff's deputies perform the initial investigation of crimes, more work is often needed to prosecute a defendant. Witnesses must be found and re-interviewed, alibis probed and new evidence examined.

D.A.'s investigators are often former police or sheriff's detectives, sometimes retired for health reasons but still able to carry out investigative work.

MISDEMEANOR CRIMES DIVISION

Attorneys in this division handle all misdemeanor cases, such as most traffic violations, petty thefts, minor assaults and other lesser crimes.

In general, misdemeanors are crimes that carry a potential penalty of no more than a year in jail or a fine of less than \$1,000.

NOTABLE PEOPLE

Deputy D.A. Roger Feist: A grandstanding publicity hound who works in the criminal prosecution division. Keenly aware of public opinion and his own popularity, Feist seems more interested in gaining favorable press than the pursuit of justice, and his prosecution of cases reflects this. His numerous contacts inside and outside the San Angelo legal scene give Feist a powerful voice in the internal politics of the D.A.'s Office, however. Feist is expected to challenge D.A. Jan Lehman in the next election, and most observers project a down-to-the-wire finish. There are reports that he has already engaged the services of political consultants Hardesty & Associates.

Investigator Tony Hernandez: A former San Angelo Police Department detective who retired after 20 years on the force and went to work for the D.A.'s Office. His bad knee, injured while pursuing a burglary suspect over a fence, does not impede Hernandez in his new job.

He's known for his slow, methodical approach to investigations and extensive knowledge of the San Angelo crime scene. His three nephews, including Deputy Robert Hernandez, work for the county sheriff's department.

Deputy D.A. Juliet Price: A brash, brilliant prosecutor who specializes in cases involving superpowered defendants. A great-great-granddaughter of Gabriel Price, a famous marshal of early San Angelo, Price backs up her dramatic courtroom style with intense preparation. She has an extremely high conviction rate.

Public Safety

Price, who drives a flashy red sports car and attracts speeding tickets like a magnet, is unmarried and has a busy social life.

Deputy D.A. Malcolm Washington: A quiet, competent attorney who heads up the consumer affairs division. Washington avoids office politics, preferring to focus on prosecuting businesses that cheat their customers or manufacture defective products. His division has been praised by consumer affairs advocates for tackling deceptive advertising by local auto dealerships.

Washington, who is blind, has a guide dog named Bolo and uses a special computer that scans documents for translation into Braille or reads them aloud.

CAMPAIGN TIP

Superpowered individuals have captured the public's imagination, and Feist will try to turn this to his advantage. PCs who are not popular may find Feist unwilling to prosecute cases they have been involved in, leading to the release of captured foes. On the other hand, Feist will try to ingratiate himself with popular PCs, hoping to link himself to them in the minds of the public—which may not be very desirable for the PCs either.



THE PUBLIC DEFENDER'S OFFICE

The county Public Defender's Office represents criminal defendants who cannot afford their own attorney. The office is run by the public defender, who is hired by the Board of Supervisors. His assistants include both full-time county employees and private attorneys under contract.

The courts can assign cases to outside attorneys in private practice when the Public Defender's Office cannot represent a defendant due to a conflict of interest.

Supervisors try to keep funding of the office, which is not popular with the public, to a minimum. As a result, salaries and benefits are low. Most attorneys in the Public Defender's Office are either fresh out of law school or extremely committed to public defense.

STRUCTURE OF THE PUBLIC DEFENDER'S OFFICE

The office has a very simple organization, with the public defender at the top. Next are his over-worked, underpaid attorneys, and finally the small support staff of secretaries, clerks, and legal assistants.

Steven LeGuinn is the public defender of San Angelo County. He has held the post for only two years, and changes his mind almost daily about continuing to head the office.

Your Honor, I object to the introduction of the police line-up as evidence. My client was the only reptile-man in the line-up. Of course the witness was going to identify him as the suspect in a crime involving supers! He should have been put in a line-up with other reptile-like people, or at least other supers. I move that any testimony on this topic be disallowed.

— Tanya Simmons, 35, public defender

On one hand, the office is a nightmare to supervise, with a skimpy budget, unsympathetic supervisors and a revolving-door staff. On the other hand, the high-pressure conditions forge a strong sense of camaraderie in the office, and helping his inexperienced assistants beat the higher-paid, better-funded deputy district attorneys in court has proven extremely satisfying.

LeGuinn, 44, has thinning, curly brown hair and a mustache. He wears glasses and has brown eyes, usually bloodshot from lack of sleep.

LeGuinn has been gaining weight since taking the public defender's job as it allows him little time to keep fit.

NOTABLE PEOPLE

Brent Flynn-Davies: A crusading assistant public defender with a special interest in the rights of paranormals. Flynn-Davies has won acquittals for a number of superhumans accused of crimes in the past five years.

A skilled and capable lawyer, he is one of the few defense attorneys in San Angelo to win such cases against Deputy D.A. Juliet Price. Flynn-Davies has rejected numerous offers to join private law firms, preferring to defend the poor and indigent.

THE PROBATION DEPARTMENT

Officers of the San Angelo County Probation Department are responsible for ensuring that criminals sentenced to probation fulfill the terms of their sentence. This office also oversees the Juvenile Hall and other youth detention facilities in the county.

Probation officers are expected to meet regularly with their charges, partly to make sure they do not leave the county and partly to provide counseling, help in finding a job and other aid. In some cases, officers can search the home or car of a person on probation without warning or consent to make sure the person is not violating the terms of his probation.

Due to budget cuts, however, the county probation department is severely understaffed. Each probation officer has hundreds of cases, far too many to handle. As a result, most cases go unsupervised.

The county Juvenile Hall and other facilities are detailed under The Corrections System.

Rufus Hopkins is the chief probation officer of San Angelo County.

STATE AND FEDERAL ATTORNEYS

The state and federal governments also have prosecutorial branches that are active in San Angelo.

The state Attorney General's Office provides assistance to the District Attorney's Office as needed. The office also investigates allegations of official misconduct or mishandling of cases by district attorneys.

The U.S. Attorney is the federal equivalent of a county district attorney, and has a similar staff and duties. Ellen Wang is the United States Attorney for the federal district encompassing San Angelo County.

THE COURT SYSTEM

Once the D.A.'s Office files charges or a civil suit is filed, the matter goes before the courts for adjudication. There are actually two court systems in San Angelo—state courts deal with matters of state law, while federal courts handle violations of federal law.

CAMPAIGN TIP

By definition, crimefighting heroes are bound to wind up in court at some point, and really busy crime-busters may be seeing a lot of the county courthouse. Of course, PCs can always be employed there in their Secret IDs as well.

The court system can provide GMs and players with a lot of interesting adventure ideas. A villain on trial might try to stage a breakout, or his colleagues might launch a rescue attempt. The breakout could fail, leaving the villains holed up in the courthouse with the judge, jury and other innocents as hostages.

Or a nefarious mastermind could blackmail, bribe or threaten a judge or jury to let his minions off the hook, sparking an investigation by the PCs.

The heroes might become involved as witnesses giving testimony, or they might be asked to provide extra security at the courthouse during the trial of a major supervillain.

Even if the PCs aren't needed to testify in court, the prosecutor could need their help to track down a surprise witness or last-minute piece of evidence crucial to getting a conviction.

On the other hand, it might be the hero herself who has to go on trial—maybe as the target of a prejudiced prosecutor, or as the victim of a frame-up by a villainous foe. While the PC tries to defend herself in court, her friends scour the city in search of evidence proving her innocence.

One twist might be to summon a PC to the courthouse in his Secret ID for jury duty! In fact, the trial could be that of a villain he captured earlier—creating a real moral dilemma since the hero can't exactly disqualify himself without revealing his Secret ID.

STATE COURTS

Matters of state law, which include most civil and criminal cases, are handled by the state courts. State courts have a simple four-tier structure.

At the bottom are justice courts and municipal courts. Each county is divided into several districts. Districts with fewer than 40,000 residents have a justice court with one judge. A few rural areas of San Angelo County have justice courts.

More populous districts are served by a municipal court. The state legislature determines the number of judges in each municipal court.

Justice and municipal courts have jurisdiction over civil cases involving up to \$25,000 and try all misdemeanors and infractions. Preliminary hearings for felonies are also heard in municipal or justice courts. These hearings determine whether there is sufficient evidence to warrant a trial in Superior Court.

Routine traffic violations are often decided by traffic referees, who are experienced attorneys hired by the courts to free judges for more serious cases.

Judges of justice courts are elected to six-year terms. Vacancies are filled by the county Board of Supervisors. Municipal court judges are also elected to six-year terms, but vacancies are filled by the governor.

The county Superior Court hears appeals from municipal and justice courts, all felony cases, wills and estates, divorces, mental competency hearings, custody disputes and many other kinds of civil cases.



Illustration by Louis Frank

The juvenile court is a branch of the Superior Court that deals with defendants under 18 years of age, though minors can be tried as adults for certain crimes. Procedures for juvenile court trials differ from other cases—for example, there is no jury.

In addition, the Superior Court has appointed a handful of referees to deal with routine and uncontested cases in divorce, probate or juvenile law.

The state legislature determines the number of Superior Court judges in each county. Superior Court judges are elected by county voters for a six-year term. The governor fills vacancies, and most judges come to the bench by gubernatorial appointment.

The state and county share the cost of all three kinds of trial courts, though salaries of municipal and Superior Court judges are set by the legislature.

Above the trial courts are the Courts of Appeal and the state Supreme Court. These entities handle appeals of civil and criminal verdicts reached in lower courts.

Death penalty cases are automatically appealed from the Superior Court to the state Supreme Court.

There are strict legal guidelines regarding the discipline and removal of judges during their terms of office. A state commission of judges and attorneys investigates allegations against judges. The panel can admonish a judge privately or advise his retirement or removal to the Supreme Court.

Judges can be censured or removed for conviction of a felony or crime involving moral turpitude, failing to perform duties, habitual drug or alcohol abuse, misconduct in office or conduct that brings the judicial office into disrepute. Judges can also be forcibly retired for serious disability.

Most local trial courts are housed at the historic San Angelo County Courthouse downtown.

Court facilities actually occupy two buildings, a century-old domed courthouse next to an eight-story modern building. The old courthouse houses the Superior Courts, while the municipal courts, records, offices and other facilities are in the modern annex.

Public Safety

CRIMINAL PROCEDURE

There are a number of steps involved in bringing a criminal suspect to trial on a felony charge. Most cases in superhero campaigns are likely to be felonies.

First comes the arrest by local law enforcement officers, based on probable cause that the person committed the crime in question. The D.A.'s Office may or may not be involved in the case at this point, though it often is in the case of a long-running investigation. After all, there's no point in making an arrest if the D.A. won't file charges.

The arrestee is booked and sent to a holding cell. In a few cases, the arrestee may be released or allowed to post bail at this point. Most of the time, however, the individual remains in custody until his first appearance in court. These hearings are normally held within a day or two of the arrest, after the D.A.'s Office has filed charges. The judge informs the defendant of the charges, sets bail if applicable and orders a court-appointed attorney if necessary.

The next step is a preliminary hearing, held in municipal court for felonies. At a preliminary hearing, the prosecution tries to prove that it has enough evidence to warrant a trial. The prosecution is not required to reveal its entire case at this proceeding.

If the municipal court judge agrees that the case should go to trial, an arraignment is held in Superior Court. At this hearing, the defendant enters a plea of guilty or not guilty. Many cases are resolved at this point with a guilty plea, reached in a plea bargain between the defense and prosecution. Judges are not bound by plea bargains, however.

If the case proceeds, a pre-trial hearing is held at which various motions are considered, such as motions to suppress evidence or disallow certain testimony. Once the judge has ruled on the motions, a trial is scheduled.

Criminal trials are decided by a jury of 12 people, and jury decisions must be unanimous. An acquittal cannot be appealed, but a guilty verdict can. When the jury is unable to reach agreement, a hung jury is declared and the prosecution can opt to try the defendant again if it seems worthwhile.

If the defendant is found guilty, a sentencing report outlining his past record, potential for rehabilitation and other pertinent information is prepared. After a sentencing hearing, at which victims may be allowed to speak, the judge passes sentence. Sentencing is often constrained by state laws requiring prison terms for certain crimes.

Courthouse corridors are often filled with attorneys hurrying to trial, witnesses waiting to testify and newsmen in search of a scoop.

FEDERAL COURTS

Cases involving federal laws are tried in the federal courts, located downtown at the U.S. Courthouse.

The courthouse has a huge pigeon population, resulting in unsightly stains all around the building and frequent complaints. Periodic attempts to thin out the birds using poison have drawn complaints from San Angelo animal rights groups, however.

JUDGES OF NOTE

Judge Arthur S. Beach: A longtime municipal court judge considered something of a bumbler by his colleagues. Beach has been known to fall asleep during long, boring court sessions. His

After he got out of the hospital, Dave came back to work for a few days, but it just didn't work out. I didn't mind his insect eyes so much myself, but it made the customers nervous. I just didn't have any choice but to ask him to resign.

Now he's suing me for wrongful dismissal and discrimination. My attorney says it's a precedent-setting case. It could go all the way to the Supreme Court.

Great, I said. That's all I need.

— **Eugene Ingalls, 45, business owner**

fellow jurists try to keep all but the simplest of cases out of his courtroom.

Judge Stewart Blackbridge: A no-nonsense jurist with a short temper. A Superior Court judge, Blackbridge runs a tight ship and likes trials in his court to keep a snappy pace. Attorneys who engage in time-wasting or courtroom theatrics are likely to incur his wrath.

Even though he handles more cases each year than any other Superior Court judge, few of his decisions are overturned on appeal. A veteran jurist, Blackbridge also serves as presiding judge of the San Angelo County Superior Court.

Judge Meredith Holiday: Her colleagues call her "Doc" Holiday, but criminal defendants have another name for her: "Hang 'Em" Holiday.

A Superior Court judge, Holiday has a reputation for handing down extremely tough sentences and brutal lectures on personal responsibility to those convicted in her court. An experienced jurist, she has no patience for excuses.

Judge Harold Kwan: A Superior Court judge known for his extensive knowledge of civil law. A calm, well-prepared judge, Kwan oversees some of the most complex civil cases for the courts. He is a workaholic who is well-liked but not especially sociable with his colleagues.

Kwan has quietly helped dozens of Asian American young people go to college over the years—paying tuitions, using his contacts to line up jobs and providing other aid as needed.

Judge David Stein: A juvenile-court judge who has been criticized for handing down light sentences to young defendants, even gang members convicted of violent crimes.

Stein strongly opposes vigilante crimefighters, and takes a hard line on evidence or testimony based on their activities. His decisions are always within the law, but defendants captured by vigilantes are frequently let off on technicalities in Stein's court.

Victim's rights groups have called for his removal, though Stein is several years away from his next election and cannot be removed without proof of misconduct or incompetence.

Judge Baxter Theiles: The youngest Superior Court judge in San Angelo County. Theiles, who formerly served in the Municipal Court system, was elevated to the Superior Courts following the scandal-tainted resignation of Judge J. Prescott Marr.

Considered something of an idealist, Theiles tends to hand down imaginative sentences, such as ordering a check forger who defrauded scores of businesses to personally apologize to every single store owner. His rulings have caused controversy among both civil rights activists and victim's rights advocates, who see them as either too harsh or too light.

His older brother, Ernie "Tinfoil" Theiles, lives on the streets of San Angelo. The judge has tried for years to persuade his brother to get help for his mental problems, to no avail.

Order! Order in the court! Ms. Jacobs, please tell your client to come down off the ceiling. I will not have this courtroom turned into a circus!

— Judge Stewart Blackbridge, 60, judge

THE CORRECTIONS SYSTEM

The final component of the criminal justice system, the corrections system handles the punishment of convicted criminals sentenced to incarceration. The state corrections system of jails and prisons handles prisoners convicted of state crimes, while those convicted of federal crimes go into the federal prison system.

Supers whose powers make them an escape risk or a danger to other inmates can be sent to Gaviota Island Federal Penitentiary, an ultra-secure facility for superpowered inmates, even if they have not been convicted of a federal crime.

This generally involves a court hearing at which the state must prove to a judge that the prisoner cannot be safely contained by state facilities.

STATE CORRECTIONS

The state corrections system detains individuals convicted of violating state laws. Those convicted of misdemeanors or lesser felonies, generally crimes requiring less than a year's incarceration, serve their time in a county detention facility.

All county detention facilities are operated by the Sheriff's Department, except Juvenile Hall, which is under the Probation Department.

People convicted of felonies may go into the state prison system, which has 22 prisons of varying degrees of security, all overseen by the California Department of Corrections. Various facilities around the state house inmates requiring medical care. The CDC decides where to place inmates based on their criminal history, sentences and other factors.

Of all the people convicted of felonies in San Angelo County, about 67 percent serve their time in county facilities, 20 percent in state prisons and the remainder on probation.

SAN ANGELO COUNTY MAIN JAIL

The San Angelo County Main Jail, located downtown, houses arrestees awaiting trial and inmates convicted of misdemeanors or lesser felonies.

People being detained for trial are kept separated from prisoners sentenced to incarceration.

The eight-story building houses more than 2,800 inmates and is staffed by 700 sheriff's personnel. The jail has segregated facilities for men and women, but faces severe overcrowding prob-

lems. County voters have rejected two bond measures to fund construction of a new jail.

Capt. Phillip Turpin oversees jail operations for the Sheriff's Department.

— Carl Frazier, 36, deputy sheriff

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Capt. Phillip Turpin oversees jail operations for the Sheriff's Department.

DEL ORO CORRECTIONAL CENTER

Located in Pleasant Grove, the Del Oro Correctional Center is designed to handle inmates deemed less dangerous than those at the main jail. Non-violent offenders and inmates with short sentences are supposed to be housed at the lightly secured facility. Overcrowding at the main jail downtown has forced the Sheriff's Department to place some higher-risk inmates at the Del Oro Correction Center, however.

The correction center, an H-shaped two-story building surrounded by a fence topped with concertina wire, houses 1,200 prisoners and has a staff of 200. Capt. Will Robbins is in charge.

SAN ANGELO COUNTY JUVENILE HALL

Inmates younger than 18 years old are sentenced to Juvenile Hall, found in Rancho Madera. Youths are also detained at the facility, which is overseen by the county Probation Department, pending bail or trial.

The county Juvenile Hall has 500 beds and is a medium- to maximum-security facility.

Other youth-oriented correctional facilities include the Boy's Ranch and the Montgomery Youth Center. Non-violent, first-time offenders are sometimes sentenced to the Boy's Ranch in rural San Angelo County, where counselors attempt to rehabilitate them through work, discipline and group therapy. Despite its name, the ranch houses both boys and girls.

Youthful offenders deemed unsuitable for the Boy's Ranch are sent to the Montgomery Youth Center, a minimum security facility in Rancho Madera, to serve out sentences of less than six months.

Minors sentenced to prison are the responsibility of the California Youth Authority. The closest California Youth Authority prison is the Gold River Youth Camp in the Sierra foothills.

CALIFORNIA STATE PRISON, CANFIELD

Now known as California State Prison, Canfield, the prison near Lake Oro dates back to 1886. The oldest parts of the prison, one of the first built in California, are solid granite.

A maximum security facility, the prison houses 6,800 inmates—nearly double its official capacity of 3,650. As a result, all but the most dangerous inmates are double-bunked in cells.

Most inmates are divided along racial lines into prison gangs. White supremacist, Latino and black gangs are the most numerous and most powerful. Vicious gang wars wracked the Can, as it is known, in the 1970s but finally faded under a severe security crackdown.

Gang members were dispersed throughout the state prison system, and gang leaders were sent to the infamous ultra-secure Pelican Bay State Prison.

While violent incidents still occur at the Canfield prison, they tend to be personal disputes and not gang-related. The last fatal stabbing at the prison took place in 1995.

The last successful escape occurred in 1983, when the criminal known as Phosgene broke out, killing two correctional officers. The incident helped prompt construction of Gaviota Island Federal Penitentiary.

Public Safety

While the Canfield prison is capable of housing extremely low-powered supers, more powerful supers are normally transferred to Gaviota Island.

Along with five cellblocks, California State Prison, Canfield has a correctional industry operation that manufactures furniture for state offices. Inmates are paid to work in the furniture plant on the basis of skills, production and hours worked. By state law, products of the prison industry operation cannot be sold.

Other facilities include a chapel, recreation yards, dining halls, kitchens and a library containing a collection of law books for so-called "jailhouse lawyers."

Inmates spend most of each day out of their cells, returning only for counts and at night to sleep. Those who do not work in the furniture plant are assigned other jobs around the prison, mostly landscaping and upkeep. Prisoners spend their off-hours visiting friends, watching TV or working out in the recreation yard, which includes basketball courts and weights.

The prison reservation covers 2,520 acres, mostly rough, wooded terrain surrounding the actual prison facilities. California State Prison, Canfield, has a staff of 2,261. Warden Thomas B. Oliver runs the prison with the assistance of his administrative staff.

FEDERAL CORRECTIONS

The Bureau of Prisons, a branch of the Department of Justice, operates the federal corrections system to incarcerate prisoners convicted of federal crimes.

The bureau runs more than 50 prisons across the United States, ranging from minimum-security camps where white-collar criminals spend their afternoons playing tennis to maximum-security penitentiaries.

Prior to 1990, the most secure federal penitentiary was located in Marion, Ill. Leaders of prison gangs, escape artists and other dangerous inmates are sent to the prison, where they are locked in their cells 23 hours a day. But even the Marion prison proved incapable of dealing with superpowered inmates.

In response to the rising problem of incarcerating paranormal criminals, the U.S. government opened Gaviota Island Federal Penitentiary in 1990.

Rich? Oh, he's in the joint.
Yep, Canfield State Prison. You didn't hear?
Boy, talk about your basic bad luck. He's mugging this old lady up in Bannon Park when this super-creep comes by.
Beat the crap out of Rich and left him for the saps.

— Vic Matranga, 39, criminal

GAVIOTA ISLAND FEDERAL PENITENTIARY

Originally known as *Isla de las Gaviotas* ("Isle of the Gulls"), Gaviota Island was nothing but a windswept rock off a wild part of the Northern California coastline until 1988. Faced with a growing number of superhuman inmates, several of whom had already made spectacular escapes from standard correctional facilities, the U.S. Congress approved construction of a multi-billion-dollar ultra-secure prison for paranormals on the island.

Gaviota Island Federal Penitentiary opened in 1990. The only facility of its kind, the prison holds only the most powerful and most dangerous superhuman convicts.

Due to the extreme cost of constructing and operating the prison, it was designed to handle state prisoners as well as federal inmates. States must prove to a judge that they are incapable of safely housing a paranormal convict before he can be sent to Gaviota Island.

The island itself is a desolate rock rising 100 feet from the ocean about two miles offshore. The rocky shoreline is met by steep cliffs on all sides, and the only access is by helicopter.

The penitentiary is mostly underground, with only a fenced compound of support buildings and a helipad on the surface. The first sub-story contains administration facilities, the second and third cellblocks and the fourth a geothermal power plant.

Inmates are housed singly in cells specially designed to counteract their powers. Gaviota Island Federal Penitentiary has a capacity of 200, and is nearing its limit. The federal government is considering building a second, similar facility off the East Coast.

Warden Elias Kamen has been in charge of the Gaviota Island prison since it opened.

LIFE IN SAN ANGELO

San Angelo 1500 →
Life in San Angelo

Wednesday, March 11, 1998

10 a.m. Anti-drug assembly at Juan Madera High School

11:30 a.m. Drop Salvos gun off at Orion Labs for analysis

1 p.m. Meeting at Peregrine Aircraft on Turbojet repairs

2 p.m. Workout and training session

4 p.m. Criminal Justice 101 at San Angelo City College (quiz on Chapt. 4!)

7 p.m. Charity Ball for Percival Cooper Children's Home

— Daily planner, *Azteca*

There may be heroes in the sky over San Angelo, but for most people everyday life in the city is a lot like life anywhere.

There are schools to attend, timecards to punch and groceries to buy. Martial arts classes in the evenings for the kids, and a trip to church on Sunday for the family.

And so it goes in suburban San Angelo. But the city is also home to many less fortunate individuals, for whom a hot meal and warm bed at a local shelter is a big deal.

On the opposite side of the coin, life for San Angelo's upper class can be a dizzying whirl of high-society balls, black-tie banquets at the country club and yacht club jaunts on the river.

It's all part of living in San Angelo.

THE ACADEMIC WORLD

One of the top employers in the city, the field of education has a profound influence on the daily lives of hundreds of thousands of San Angelinos. Several public school districts, private schools, colleges and universities handle the educational needs of the area.

HIGHER EDUCATION

Universities and colleges play a critical role not only in the lives of residents but in the economic life of the city.

As a center of corporate business activity, not to mention scientific research and high technology, San Angelo has a compelling need for college graduates. Many come from out-of-town institutions, but companies in the city strongly support local universities as well.

Census figures show that 23 percent of San Angelo residents attended at least some college. Nearly 16 percent hold bachelor's degrees and 8 percent have graduate degrees.

CAMPAIGN TIP

Colleges and universities are a natural setting for DNPCs and Secret IDs, along with NPC experts to be consulted by the heroes. And research projects gone awry can provide any number of origin stories or adventure seeds.

UC, SAN ANGELO (D4)

Founded in 1915, UC San Angelo occupies a lush, 1.3-square-mile campus in the University Commons neighborhood of Midtown.

The 1,200-acre campus extends partway up a hillside and showcases a variety of architectural styles, from ultra-modern to



Illustration by Storn Cook

classical. Grassy fields and groves of trees are scattered throughout the beautiful school.

Some of the 28,102 students enrolled at the university live in on-campus dorms, while others reside in fraternity or sorority houses or the numerous nearby apartment complexes. A spirit of activism runs strong at the university, and students often organize on- and off-campus protests against various social injustices.

The 1,869 faculty members at UC San Angelo include some of the top minds in a variety of fields. In addition to teaching duties, professors are expected to conduct research.

An effort to design an in-car computerized locator map using satellite positioning technology is just one of hundreds of research projects underway at the university.

UC San Angelo employs 12,415 people in all, not including student employees.

The sociology, mathematics, physics, chemistry, history, English and engineering programs at the university are nationally known. The medical school, affiliated with University Medical Center, and law school are also well-regarded.

Science and technology-related schools are also strong, and many UC San Angelo graduates go on to find jobs at the multitude of high-tech corporations in the city.

You try teaching physics to a roomful of people who grew up watching supers fly around on pure willpower. Try explaining Newton to them! Then you've got time travel, other dimensions ...being a physics professor was a lot easier in the old days.

— Henry Warren, 62, college professor

OTHER COLLEGES

In addition to UC San Angelo, the city is home to a California State University system campus and a handful of private colleges.

In California, the University of California system, which charges higher tuitions, offers doctorate and professional degrees in addi-

Life in San Angelo

tion to undergraduate degrees. The California State University system offers bachelor's and some master's degrees.

A rivalry exists between the two public San Angelo universities, mostly carried out at an annual football match-up and in the form of fraternity pranks.

Private colleges in the city tend to be small. Most are night-school offerings for business people or trade schools in secretarial and technical fields.

State University, San Angelo (I7): San Angelo State, as it's commonly called, offers instruction to 30,149 students at its 345-acre campus near the San Angelo River, on Peterson Drive in La Vista. Dorms and Greek houses are present, but the college social scene is not strong. Many students attend part-time while working full-time jobs, and others live at home to save money.

The university has a faculty of 1,654 and employs 2,702 people in all, excluding student employees.

The business, political science and engineering programs at San Angelo State have excellent reputations.

Harper School of Law (D6): A private Midtown school with an enrollment of 1,500, the Harper School of Law takes its name from a past U.S. Supreme Court justice who was born in San Angelo. Degrees in taxation, business and transnational business law are offered at the school.

COMMUNITY COLLEGES

There are four community colleges in the San Angelo area. Community colleges are two-year schools offering associate degrees and minimal registration fees. In order to save money, many people fulfill their general education requirements at a community college, then move on to a four-year college to earn a degree. Many older adults returning to school are also seen at these campuses.

Delta Community College: A small campus in the south San Angelo County town of Garrett's Landing, Delta Community College offers boating safety classes accredited by the U.S. Coast Guard as well as more traditional coursework.

Dorms provide housing for some of the 12,000 students at the school, one of the few community colleges in the state with on-campus housing.

Lakeview Community College: The newest addition to the city's community college system, Lakeview Community College has an enrollment of about 9,000.

Financed partly by endowments from wealthy Lakeview residents, the campus boasts state-of-the-art facilities including a fiber-optic communications and computer network.

Rancho Madera Community College: A suburban campus, Rancho Madera Community College has 14,000 students. Many of its classes are geared toward technical fields, and the college works closely with manufacturing plants in nearby Southport for guest lecturers, internships and other programs.

San Angelo City College (C7): The oldest and largest community college in San Angelo, San Angelo City College occupies a charming but aged campus in Midtown.

About 20,000 people attend classes at the school, which offers a pre-veterinary program that enables students to work at the nearby San Angelo Zoo. Courses in photography and visual arts are also popular.

SCHOLARS OF NOTE

Ken Ashida: A UC San Angelo genetics professor and a participant in the human genome project, an international effort to map human DNA. Ashida strongly supports the project, but others fear it could be used to discriminate against people based on their genetic makeup. A map of normal human DNA, once completed, could form the basis of a test for superpowers.

Ashida is a licensed pilot who enjoys flying his private plane to conferences across the U.S.

Everett Flagg: A criminal justice professor at San Angelo State who is an expert on vigilantism. Flagg is regularly quoted in news stories on the legal and societal implications of self-appointed crime-fighters. Law enforcement agencies faced with a rise in vigilante activity, particularly among supers, also call on Flagg for advice.

Carolyn Hillman: A computer science instructor at UC San Angelo. Hillman, a recent graduate of the university, has become known in the high-tech scene for her radical theories on artificial intelligence. One of her long-term research projects involves an effort to create an AI computer.

Lucy Perez: A UC San Angelo sociologist whose theories on interaction between normals and supers are causing a stir in the academic world. Her research suggests that divisions are already forming in society between normals and supers.

The god-like feats of supers inspire resentment and feelings of inadequacy in the normal population, Perez says. Supers, on the other hand, tend to identify more with other supers than with non-powered society.

Her theories are not yet widely known, but several magazines are preparing stories on Perez and her provocative ideas.

Lawrence Rabinowitz: An astronomy instructor at California State University, San Angelo. Rabinowitz, who also runs a small university-owned observatory in the foothills, has personally discovered several comets over the years.

Though he rarely speaks of it, Rabinowitz is a Holocaust survivor. A child at the time, he struggled to survive in a Nazi labor camp until it was liberated by American GIs. His parents and many other relatives perished in the death camps, however.

April Revette: A UC San Angelo physics professor and the granddaughter of scientist Hal Revette, creator of an artificial singularity in 1982. April Revette believes that her grandfather did not perish in the explosion of his laboratory, as commonly thought, but was pulled through the singularity into another dimension.

She is obsessed with re-creating the singularity to rescue her grandfather. Revette is secretly diverting grant money from a fuel cell research project to finance a clandestine effort to duplicate her grandfather's work.

Hendrick Wheeler: An anthropology instructor at San Angelo City College who teaches a course on magic and witchcraft. He is versed in arcane beliefs from around the world, as well as people and places in San Angelo associated with the supernatural. Wheeler has numerous contacts in the various pagan and New Age movements in the city.

PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SCHOOLS

Several public school districts serve the San Angelo metropolitan area. Most are unified school districts, meaning they include elementary, middle or junior high, and high schools. A few contain only elementary schools, sending older students on to a union high school district that encompasses several smaller elementary school districts.

Districts are governed by independent elected school boards. These boards, typically having five to seven trustees, set the budget, curriculum and policies of each district. A hired superintendent oversees day-to-day operations and implements board decisions.

The county Office of Education, or the state Department of Education, can step in when a school board fails in its responsibilities, particularly in fiscal affairs. The state has taken direct control of bankrupt districts in other California cities, but that has never happened in San Angelo.

School funding comes from a variety of sources, including state tax revenues, property taxes, lottery funds and fees on new development to finance school construction. Nevertheless, financial problems are nearly constant at most public school districts.

SAN ANGELO CITY UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

The largest in the county, the San Angelo City Unified School District serves the population within the city limits of San Angelo.

The district has an enrollment of 163,529, overseeing nearly 190 elementary schools, 26 middle schools and 25 high schools. Some are neighborhood schools, while others are magnet schools focusing on computers, the arts, job training or other specialized fields.

A seven-person school board governs the district, which is headed by Superintendent Gordon Bester. Relations between trustees are cordial, despite political differences on budget and academic matters. Class sizes, sex education, teacher's contracts and parental efforts to ban certain books have been volatile topics at recent school board meetings.

Thousands of teachers report to work each day at San Angelo City Unified School District campuses. A number of city school teachers have earned state and even national recognition for their enthusiasm, dedication and innovative new techniques.

Although the district also has its share of bad apples, most teachers are dedicated to providing the best education possible to their young charges, often under somewhat trying circumstances.

Overall, the city school district has a mediocre reputation, due largely to the serious maintenance problems at many of its older campuses. Leaky roofs, electrical shorts, broken heaters, peeling linoleum floors and a lack of air conditioning are frequent complaints. School custodians also battle graffiti and vandalism.

Budget problems have constrained district efforts to address these problems, though multi-million dollar programs to remove asbestos and upgrade outdated playground equipment are under way.

School safety is also a concern to many parents, particularly in crime-plagued South San Angelo and Northside neighborhoods. The gang problems in the communities carry over to the schools, and the district security force often has its hands full keeping order.

High schools in the San Angelo City Unified School District are largely named after early settlers and other San Angelo pioneers.

School libraries a step behind when it comes to modern world

SAN ANGELO—Ronald Reagan is still president of the United States. The last war in the Middle East took place in 1973. And the first space shuttle launch is still several years away.

At least according to some of the books still on library shelves

OTHER SAN ANGELO PUBLIC SCHOOL DISTRICTS

Canfield Unified School District

Castle Heights Elementary School District

Delta Unified School District

La Vista Unified School District

Brenton Elementary School District

Marshall Unified School District

Pleasant Grove Unified School District

Rancho Madera Elementary School District

South San Angelo Union High School District

CAMPAIGN TIP

One staple of four-color comics often overlooked by gamers is a team of teenage heroes. A group of superpowered youngsters from San Angelo high schools could be an interesting addition to your campaign, either as a PC or NPC team.

Along with worrying about homework, driver's licenses and the prom, the teen heroes could fight gangs, drugs and other problems facing young people. Keeping a Secret ID while living at home definitely poses an additional challenge!

Even if players aren't interested in a long-term campaign involving teen heroes, a mini-campaign in this sub-genre could provide a refreshing break from your main storyline.

PRIVATE SCHOOLS

Along with public schools, numerous private schools serve the educational needs of San Angelo. They range from tiny home schools of less than a dozen pupils to campuses as large as any public school. Most private schools are religious in nature, though they are generally open to students of any faith.

In particular, the Catholic Archdiocese of San Angelo operates a number of private schools covering all grade levels from elementary to high school. While costly, the Catholic schools offer numerous scholarships and financial aid programs to poorer families.

EDUCATORS OF NOTE

Superintendent Gordon Bester: The superintendent of the San Angelo City Unified School District, hired five years ago from a school district in the Midwest. Bester has proven a capable administrator, though his self-promotional style sometimes rankles colleagues. A bombastic, enthusiastic man, he tends to take credit for everything positive in the district. Bester keeps the district public

in the San Angelo City Unified School District, where budget shortfalls have long hobbled new-book acquisition programs.

"Our school libraries are shamefully out of date," admitted Superintendent Gordon Bester, "although recent funding programs

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relations staff busy cranking out press releases on his latest achievements.

Halley Brooks: A science teacher at Juan Madera High School, twice named Teacher of the Year in San Angelo County. An energetic and innovative teacher, Brooks is very popular with students. Her class projects, such as a cardboard-boat building contest with a regatta in the school swimming pool, are famed and much-copied events. Brooks, who was paralyzed in a youthful diving accident, uses a wheelchair to get around.

Brother Francis Carmody: A Jesuit priest who serves as principal of St. Sebastian Catholic High School, the largest private school in San Angelo. A soft-spoken man popular with teens, Brother Carmody holds the boys-only school to very high academic standards. He is also quite active in outreach efforts in poorer neighborhoods, and has personally intervened in countless cases to reduce or waive tuition fees to allow families to send their sons to St. Sebastian.

Dr. John H. Keyser: A San Angelo dentist who serves on the Rancho Madera Elementary School District board of trustees. Elected in 1994, Keyser has earned a reputation as a rabble-rouser. His accusations of fiscal mismanagement against fellow trustees and administrators have severely strained relations on the school board.

Hannah Schmidt: A German-language instructor at Samuel Brackett High School who heads the teacher's union in the San Angelo City Unified School District. Born in Germany, Schmidt leads a class trip to Munich each year. In her job as president of the San Angelo City Teachers Association, Schmidt plays hardball with the school board. Pickets at board meetings are not unusual during contract negotiations, and Schmidt led a two-week teacher's strike in 1990.

Chester Wang: A history teacher at Lakeview High School known as an expert on San Angelo history, particularly during the days of the Gold Rush. Wang has also published a book on the experiences of Chinese railroad workers in California during the 1800s. He is married to U.S. Attorney Ellen Wang.

It was cool, Mom! He picked up the whole bus and flew it off the bridge, right before it fell into the river! Mom, why are you crying?

— Jason Bryant, 9, student

April 3

Please excuse Bobby for being absent yesterday. He found a strange crystal key on his way to school and accidentally opened a cosmic gateway. By the time the heroes rescued him and closed the gate the school day was almost over.
Please call me or Savant at Justice Foundation HQ if you have any questions.

Brenda Meadows

TOP 5 PRIVATE SCHOOLS

1. St. Sebastian Catholic High School
2. San Angelo Christian Schools
3. Gold Trail Academy
4. St. Mary Catholic High School
5. Liberty Christian School

Source: Business Chronicle

THE COMMERCIAL SCENE

International corporations, multi-billion dollar banks and high-tech labs may grab headlines, but commercial enterprises are the chief component of the business scene in metropolitan San Angelo.

Most ordinary residents will never sit in on an Eclipse Industries board meeting or visit Orion Labs, but they likely visit some of these businesses every day.

LOCAL CHAINS

The San Angelo business community contains numerous local chain stores and franchises, characterized by almost identical building layouts and shared marketing campaigns.

BARNES CO.

A key supplier of household goods, Barnes Co. department stores are found in many San Angelo shopping malls.

The firm dates back to the first general store in San Angelo, opened by Amos Barnes in the days of the Gold Rush. His son expanded the business and opened the first department store in the city in the 1920s.

Corporate executives now run the profitable chain of department stores, though the Barnes family remains a major stockholder. Appliances, tools, electronics and clothing are among the top-selling products at Barnes Co. department stores.

OTHER LOCAL CHAINS

In addition to franchises of nationally known companies, San Angelo is home to numerous locally owned chains selling everything from fast food to books.

Antonio's: A popular chain of eateries, Antonio's franchises offer inexpensive American-style Mexican food. Open 24 hours, they are favored by the late-night partying crowd. Antonio's outlets are all over the city, typically in small burger-stand style buildings.

Burger Meister: Burger Meister is a locally-owned chain of fast food restaurants offering hamburgers, fries, soft drinks and other typical fare.

The popularity of Burger Meister declined somewhat after a 1995 food poisoning scare, but the firm's profits have rebounded. A subsidiary of Eclipse Industries.

ChromaLab: A chain of one-hour photo developing stores found throughout San Angelo, ChromaLab is owned by the Durham Corp.

Fontaine's Department Store: Expensive, high-end stores located in many shopping malls, Fontaine's Department Stores offer an extensive clothing selection, along with perfume, jewelry, linens, household goods such as china and crystal, and some furnishings. A popular bridal registry entry.

FoodBasket Market: A supermarket chain with stores throughout urban San Angelo, FoodBasket Markets include pharmacies and deli counters. The company operates a distribution center in the Irish Bar neighborhood in Northside.

Lightspeed Video: One of the largest video rental chains in San Angelo, Lightspeed Video runs brightly colored, neon-lit stores throughout the city. Picketing organized by Rev. John Warden of

the Church on the Hill recently prompted the chain to remove adult movies from its shelves.

Masked Bandit Pizza: A top-selling chain of pizza delivery outlets, Masked Bandit Pizza has an annoying cartoon mascot resembling an Old West outlaw. Most people shorten the name to MBP.

Norton's Books: A consumer-oriented bookstore located in most San Angelo shopping malls, Norton's Books features all the latest best-sellers and popular magazines.

Nugget Records: A music store with outlets all over San Angelo, Nugget Records has retained its original name from the early days of the business. The chain now stocks compact discs almost exclusively. Magazines and videos are also sold at Nugget Records. The shops are infamous among San Angelinos for their uniformly surly, bizarrely attired teenage clerks.

ShortStop: ShortStop is a chain of 24-hour convenience stores with a baseball theme. A frequent target of robberies, the markets have been dubbed "stop-and-rob" by local police and sheriff's personnel.

CAMPAIGN TIP

These stores, fast food eateries and other businesses can be used to add some color to your campaign. Inventive GMs can put them to all kinds of uses, from scenery for street battles to sources of employment for NPCs.

Instead of simply saying that some slob villain's hideout is littered with fast food debris, a GM could specify they are Masked Bandit Pizza boxes. In fact, clever PCs might seize on such a trivial detail to open a new avenue of investigation, leading the adventure in a whole new direction. Even if this doesn't occur, the added detail helps players envision the scene, and maybe even gives them a better feel for the villain's personality.

While they're unlikely to play a major part in adventures—supervillains in the comics rarely stoop to knocking over burger joints and record stores—these places can go a long way toward making players believe their PCs are part of a real, live city. The more interested they are in the city, the more opportunities you will have for some good role-playing.

PROMINENT STORES

Along with a plethora of chain stores, the San Angelo business scene includes several popular and interesting independent operations. (Art-related businesses and galleries are covered in *Media, Entertainment and the Arts*.)

Aardvark Records: An independent music store in the University Commons neighborhood, Aardvark Records specializes in used records and CDs. The owner, ex-hippie "Starchild" Zane, recently opened a vintage clothing shop next door. Both businesses are quite popular with high school and college students.

I'd just been promoted to supervisor, and everything's going fine, until this super comes crashing through the roof into Produce. The fight wasn't even on our block, fer chrissake! It wouldn't have been so bad, except his ice powers froze all the vegetables. And you should have seen the water when it all melted! It looked like a flood.

— Warren Albright, 34, supermarket manager

City Food Co-op: The City Food Co-Op is a cooperative grocery store found in Midtown. The Co-op offers discounts to shareholders, though anyone can shop at the store. Along with a good selection of commercial foods, the Co-op stocks organic produce, tofu, vegetarian foods and other specialty items.

Daley's for Men: A City Center clothing store, Daley's for Men specializes in costly designer business suits and tuxedoes. Jeffrey Daley, a San Angelo County supervisor, owns this store.

Durette Jewelers: One of the oldest jewelry shops in San Angelo, Durette Jewelers is now located in La Vista after fleeing a decaying downtown neighborhood. The shop, still owned and operated by the Durette family, has a reputation for honesty and fine work.

Empire Books: Empire Books is a used bookstore in University Commons specializing in rare and out-of-print books. Sagging bookshelves are crammed with tomes of all types, and stacks of new arrivals await shelving near the front counter. A treasure trove, though finding a particular book can be like searching for a needle in a haystack due to the haphazard organization of the store. Lydia Haynes-Smith has operated Empire Books for over a decade.

G.I. Surplus: A military surplus store in Pleasant Grove, G.I. Surplus features commercial camping, hiking and backpacking gear in addition to assorted uniforms, fatigues, knives and other armed forces cast-offs. One urban myth popular among San Angelo young people holds it that a secret room at G.I. Surplus contains an arsenal of machine guns, rocket launchers and other military heavy weaponry. The owner of G.I. Surplus, Deke Benning, is a retired Air Force master sergeant.

North Mission Market: An old-fashioned "corner grocery," the North Mission Market is owned by Armando and Marguerite Cruz. The couple extends credit to regular customers, and hands out free candy to neighborhood children with good grades when report cards are issued. The store stocks a modest selection of foods, but homemade burritos cooked fresh each morning by Marguerite are its most popular offering. The North Mission Market is one of just a handful of "mom-and-pop" groceries left in San Angelo. Competition from convenience stores and chain supermarkets has driven most corner stores out of business. The Cruz's are the parents of the hero Azteca of the Justice Foundation.

Pippa's Fashions: Pippa's Fashions is an expensive, high-fashion clothing boutique in Lakeview owned by Philippa Cabrini, a clothing designer who came to San Angelo years ago from her native Italy. A favorite shopping stop for San Angelo's social elite.

Spy Shop: The Rancho Madera-based Spy Shop offers high-tech surveillance equipment, night-vision goggles, miniature cameras and other equipment. The county Sheriff's Department takes a dim view of this operation, and detectives are investigating reports that fake IDs are sold at the Spy Shop. Joel Parish, a rakish entrepreneur, runs the store, but crime figure Trung Binh Do is a silent partner in the business.

SHOPPING MALLS

The city is home to several shopping malls, huge conglomerations of shops, department stores, fast food eateries and cinemas surrounded by acres of parking lots. Thousands of people shop at these malls every day, and thousands more find jobs at the businesses within.

San Angelo Plaza (C10): The newest addition to the city retail scene, San Angelo Plaza has already become a mecca for diehard shoppers.

Life in San Angelo

The two-story mall covers a one-by-six block stretch of downtown. The open-air mall features underground parking garages and boasts more than 130 shops, including five department stores. A six-screen theater and food court are also found at the mall.

A Norton's Books outlet and a Fontaine's Department Store are just two of the many businesses at San Angelo Plaza. Mall tenants employ more than 3,000 people, a figure that nearly doubles in the holiday season.

Opened in 1992, San Angelo Plaza replaced a dilapidated outdoor mall mostly made up of storefronts along a street that had been closed to vehicle traffic and planted with grassy strips intermixed with an occasional fountain.

Elmhurst Mall: An older single-story structure, the Elmhurst Mall in South San Angelo suffers from the bad reputation of the surrounding neighborhood. Though crime inside the mall is light due to a heavy presence of private security, shoppers from other neighborhoods are afraid to go there.

The enclosed Elmhurst Mall has 85 stores with four anchor tenants and an aging movie theater showing second-run films. Mall tenants employ 1,185 people.

Fairtime Mall (12): The largest shopping mall in San Angelo, Fairtime Mall contains 210 tenants including seven anchor stores and an eight-screen cinema. Located in La Vista, the three-story enclosed mall has more than 4,800 employees.

Parking at Fairtime Mall can be an ordeal, particularly during the holiday season, despite the recent addition of a five-story parking garage.

Marshall Factory Outlets: A collection of 60 stores on the outskirts of the rural town of Marshall, the Marshall Factory Outlets offer bargains galore to dedicated shoppers. Retail manufacturers offer their overstocked, slightly damaged or out-of-style merchandise for sale at the outlets.

Clothes, shoes, books, athletic gear and household goods are just some of the products available at reduced prices. Construction of another 12 outlets is underway at the center.

CAMPAIGN TIP

With thousands of people jammed into a contained area, shopping malls are excellent targets for supervillains interested in hostage-taking or extortion. A well-planned takeover of a mall by several supervillains could present a real challenge for the PCs—particularly if some of them have been trapped inside the mall in their Secret IDs!

THE CORPORATE WORLD

The cornerstone of the San Angelo business scene, corporations are also key players in almost every aspect of city life. Business titans are influential players in the political arena, while corporate affairs provide endless grist for legal and financial specialists.

Corporations sponsor all kinds of scientific and medical research, both by company scientists and outside researchers. They are also interested in strange phenomena.

Advertising, government, law enforcement, entertainment—corporations touch almost every aspect of modern life in San Angelo, not the least of which is employment. Big corporations, especially manufacturers, provide most of the private sector jobs in the city. A national places-rated survey ranks San Angelo in the

top 20 U.S. cities for job opportunities, and economists expect the city's job market to grow 7.2 percent by 2000.

My presentation? Oh, yeah, it went great, unless you count the fact that no one paid any attention. My one big chance to impress the board of directors... it was in the boardroom on the top floor. I've never even been on the top floor before!

I'm standing up there in my best suit, I've got all those charts I spent the last three weeks on. I even color-coded my notes!

And I suddenly get the feeling no one's listening. They're all looking out the window behind me! These flying supers are duking it out over the San Angelo Corporate Center four blocks away. The chairman thanked me for my time—I wasn't even half-finished.

Man, I need a drink.

— Phil Cosgrove, 34, junior executive

CORPORATIONS

San Angelo is home to the corporate headquarters of numerous national and even international operations, many of which originated in the Golden City. Most also have their primary production centers in or near the city.

Of course, companies from all over the world also own factories, labs and other facilities in San Angelo, including top manufacturers in a number of fields. The high-tech reputation of the Arroyo Verde area has attracted many prominent businesses, in particular.

This section primarily covers manufacturing-oriented corporations. Banks, health-care and retail-oriented companies are covered elsewhere in *Life in San Angelo*.

CAMPAIGN TIP

The corporate world holds all kind of potential for GMs and players alike.

All those NPCs and DNPCs in your campaign—not to mention the PCs themselves—have to work somewhere, and most are no doubt employed at one of the many corporations in San Angelo. Owners and corporate officers are listed for only a handful of the corporations detailed in *San Angelo: City of Heroes*, making it very easy for players to insert their own NPCs or PCs into the top spots of interesting companies.

Or GMs can use these companies as competitors to PC-owned corporations. Some business rivals might even stoop to underhanded tactics like industrial espionage or sabotage, possibly with the aid of villains, to deal with PC companies.

The corporate world also provides a place for wealthy PCs and NPCs to make investments. After all, when you buy stock you buy into a specific company. Players might want to detail just which corporations their fabulously wealthy PC has in his stock portfolio—providing GMs with all kinds of hooks for later adventures, as suggested under Banking and Finance in *The Professional World*.

CAMPAIGN TIP

Corporations can be tremendous assets to PC heroes—not to mention a dangerous adversaries. They can provide invaluable equipment, advice and facilities to the heroes. A really diplomatic PC might even get them to do so for free!

Corporate sponsorship of hero teams is another possibility. After all, providing a base, high-tech vehicles, supercomputer and other typical team needs can be pretty expensive. A corporation might be willing to defray some of the costs in exchange for the good publicity of having its own hero team.

Of course, the heroes will likely be expected to film TV commercials and other advertisements for the company. And some of the less ethical corporations in San Angelo might have other, shadier uses for employee heroes.

Villains can also get involved in the corporate world. If the PCs can hold down top corporate jobs in their Secret IDs, so can some of their criminal counterparts. Coupling the raw power of supervillain with the resources and contacts of a key corporate exec can make for a dangerous combination.

Out of ruthlessness or desperation, a corporation could hire villains to take out the competition. For example, a super-saboteur or spy might be hired to conduct some industrial espionage or arrange an "accident" at a rival plant. Less subtle tactics, like hiring some villainous thugs to wreck a competitor's factory, are also a possibility.

Or a villain might just take it into her head to do a little company-smashing of her own, whether out of revenge for the industrial accident that created her in the first place or as part of an extortion scheme.

Finally, corporations themselves can act as villains to the PCs. The tremendous resources and capabilities of some of these firms make them able behind-the-scenes foes for PCs, particularly since the heroes can't strike back without taking the law into their own hands and possibly endangering hundreds of innocent employees.

AVALON ENTERPRISES

Founded in 1970, Avalon Enterprises is dedicated to finding humanitarian solutions to global problems through high technology.

Pollution, world hunger, disease, over-population and homelessness are some of the ills targeted by Avalon Enterprises researchers. A company policy forbids it from taking contracts to develop weapons or military technology of any kind.

While it might seem a poor financial risk, Avalon Enterprises has actually turned a tidy profit from its inventions over the past three decades. A surprisingly high number of its research endeavors, deemed too risky by competitors, have paid off handsomely.

In fact, its founder and president, Averell Pendleton (see *Denizens of San Angelo*), ranks as one of the wealthiest men on the planet. Now a billionaire recluse, he controls the corporation from his palatial estates on various private islands around the world. He hasn't been seen in public since 1990.

Pendleton founded Avalon Enterprises in 1970 as a research and development firm in San Angelo. He personally invented some of its first products, and holds several patents.

Soon the company began to expand, and it has continued to grow into an international powerhouse. Partially-owned subsidiaries handle the manufacturing and distribution of products, leaving Avalon Enterprises free to concentrate on research.

Low-cost water desalination plants, cleaner energy sources, undersea habitats and advancements in hydroponic farming are just a few projects under way at company labs. The exploration of space, particularly the possibility of colonizing other planets, is one of the long-term goals of Avalon Enterprises. Corporate researchers are working closely with NASA on a proposal to step up exploration of Mars, for example.

Avalon Enterprises is a privately held corporation, meaning its stock is available only to a select group of buyers. It is not traded on the stock market.

The company has 25 principal subsidiaries and 13,992 corporate employees. In 1996, Avalon Enterprises posted \$201 billion in sales and a \$300 million profit.

The corporate headquarters of Avalon Enterprises are located in a 16-story tower in downtown San Angelo. The firm also owns an extensive research complex in Arroyo Verde.

But Avalon Enterprises has facilities all over the globe, including a handful in very out-of-the-way places such as Antarctica, the Amazon rainforest and the ocean floor off the coast of Florida.

ECLIPSE INDUSTRIES

A savage top-level power struggle wracks Eclipse Industries, a sprawling conglomerate with a hand in everything from fast food eateries to heavy industry.

The current chief executive officer, C. Fullerton Hughes, has held the position since the 1970s. Weakened by age and infirmity, Hughes has lost control of the conglomerate, however.

A feud has broken out among ambitious executives eager to replace the ailing Hughes at the helm of the company. Top executives, division chiefs and subsidiary presidents are locked in a vicious behind-the-scenes battle for the lucrative and influential post.

The two chief contenders appear to be Stephen Bow, executive vice president for acquisitions, and Pepper Coyle, chief marketing director.

The competition has split Eclipse Industries into factions, with lower-ranked executives and employees lining up behind various contenders in hopes of cashing in when their candidate succeeds to the top spot.

As they battle for influence and the notice of the board of directors, Eclipse Industries executives are cutting costs to boost division profits, launching risky new research projects in hopes of creating a breakthrough new product and quietly trying to undermine rivals.

Confusion and conflict at the top levels of the conglomerate are also paving the way for some shady dealings. Lack of executive oversight, coupled with a relentless pressure to boost revenues, has led to under-the-counter sales of weapons technology, for example.

Meanwhile, Hughes seems disinterested, indeed even oblivious, to the infighting going on among his subordinates. The board of directors can hardly be unaware of the battling, but it has so far failed to take action.

Founded in 1952 by a group of American investors, Eclipse Industries started out as a steel manufacturer but soon diversified into almost every field of business enterprise. In time, it grew into an international conglomerate.

Life in San Angelo

Eclipse Industries and its affiliates are among the chief defense contractors in the U.S., particularly in the field of high-tech military weaponry. Current projects include efforts to develop rail guns, powered combat armor and a hovercraft propulsion system for tanks.

Obtaining new companies continues to be a key part of the corporation's strategy. The conglomerate specializes in targeting weak or struggling businesses, then swooping in with an attractive buyout offer.

Rumors of firms suffering suspiciously timed accidents or other problems coinciding with takeover efforts by Eclipse Ind. are circulating in the business world. In one case, an Idaho steel foundry had a fatal accident during a federal safety inspection after rejecting overtures from Eclipse Industries. The corporation later picked up the steelworking company in a hostile takeover as the price of the foundry's stock plummeted.

The federal Securities and Exchange Commission is quietly investigating the reports, but as yet no proof of any irregularities has been found.

Some acquisitions are absorbed by related Eclipse Industries companies, while others are simply liquidated and a few are allowed to operate as wholly-owned subsidiaries. Revenues from these firms flow into Eclipse Industries coffers, and the conglomerate has the final say on their operations.

Ruthless cost-cutting directives forced on subsidiaries have resulted in a dismal worker safety record and numerous fines for violating environmental laws. Corporate executives are not particularly concerned, however, as long as profitability and the value of Eclipse Industries stock remain high.

CAMPAIGN TIP

Eclipse Industries is a classic villainous corporation, and can be an extremely useful campaign tool for GMs.

Its shoddy safety practices can result in all kinds of industrial accidents, some of which might produce supers. The conglomerate may also be a target of environmental-themed NPCs angry over pollution, illegal toxic waste dumping and other unsound practices.

A sprawling, runaway organization, Eclipse Industries can be a key supplier of high-tech gadgetry for villains in the campaign. Items can easily be stolen from corporate labs, in both break-ins and inside jobs by disgruntled employees. Under-the-table sales to underworld figures by greedy corporate execs are another potential source of villainous gadgets.

The behind-the-scenes battle for control of Eclipse Industries can generate all kinds of adventure plots as ambitious corporate executives try to win influence and take down rivals. Supervillains for hire can certainly become involved in the fray, but a really clever exec might figure out a way to trick the PCs into helping him - perhaps by providing false tips about illegal activities in a rival division of the conglomerate.

Finally, PC-owned companies, particularly profitable high-tech industries, could be targeted for a takeover by the conglomerate. When the PC rejects its buyout offers, all heck could break loose!



Eclipse Industries is a public corporation, meaning shares are traded on the stock exchange for purchase by the general public. The company board of directors, selected by shareholders, includes San Angelo powerbroker Benjamin Morgan.

The international conglomerate owns more than 70 subsidiaries and employs 336,100 people around the world. It reported \$87 billion in 1996 sales, with \$1.3 billion in profits.

Eclipse Industries subsidiaries found in San Angelo include Allied Chemicals, Burger Meister restaurants, Patchwork Textiles, ShortStop convenience marts and U.S. Fertilizer. A logging company owned by Eclipse Industries, Elliott Lumber, operates near the city.

The corporate headquarters, found downtown in City Center, employs 1,500 people. The 36-story Eclipse Plaza, slated for completion next year, will house its new corporate offices and space for lease to other businesses. In addition, the defense division of Eclipse Industries operates a research complex in Arroyo Verde.

HUNTER-PRICE ARMS

One of the oldest corporations in San Angelo, Hunter-Price Arms was founded in 1886 by the sons of two pioneers from the Gold Rush-era beginnings of the town.

Joshua Price, son of lawman Gabriel Price, and Silas Hunter, son of a rancher, opened their munitions factory in the Irish Bar neighborhood in August 1886. Eventually, the operation expanded to produce rifles and pistols, as well as explosives.

Hunter-Price Arms munitions have been used in every U.S. conflict since the Spanish-American War, and the company continues to be a key military supplier. It also sells weapons and ammunition to other nations, though such deals must be reviewed by the U.S. government.

Its current product list includes assault rifles, grenades, mortars, anti-personnel mines and artillery shells. Hunter-Price Arms also sells hunting rifles, shotguns and handguns, along with ammunition of various calibers, to stores around the nation.

Overshadowed by larger U.S. gun-makers, Hunter-Price Arms recently turned its eye to experimental high-tech weaponry to expand its influence.

The firm has formed a joint partnership with Orion Labs to develop a working rail gun, a next-generation cannon that fires shells not by detonating charges but by accelerating them on rails by electromagnetic force. Eclipse Industries is also at work on a prototype rail gun.

Hunter-Price Arms is still based in San Angelo, and the city is also home to its primary manufacturing center. The firm employs 2,010 people at its Irish Bar plant, and reported \$224.4 million in sales for 1996.

TOP 10 MANUFACTURERS

Name (local employees)

1. (reserved for PCs or GM-created firm)
2. Peregrine Aircraft (23,390)
3. HyperDyne Computers (6,500)
4. Anderson Pharmaceuticals (5,620)
5. (reserved for PCs or GM-created firm)
6. Consolidated Electronics (4,940)
7. Taiyo Corp. (4,485)
8. Allied Chemicals (2,400)
9. Heartland Foods Inc. (2,340)
10. (reserved for PCs or GM-created firm)

PEREGRINE AIRCRAFT

A gigantic aerospace company, Peregrine Aircraft is responsible for some of the most advanced military aircraft in the world.

The firm is also well-known for hiring its own corporate hero, the super known as Dynamo. Officially a special consultant on security, Dynamo also plays a major role in public relations and marketing campaigns at Peregrine Aircraft.

The company got its start in the back room of a San Angelo drug store in 1928, where inventor Arnold Havelind designed a racing biplane for pilot Gig Norris. Norris won several races in the plane before perishing in a mid-air collision in 1934.

Originally known as Norris Air, the company changed its name to Peregrine Aircraft in 1935 and began developing commercial airliners. Havelind continued as the chief designer into the 1940s. The corporation got into the field of military aircraft during World War II, and fighters, bombers and other attack planes have been its mainstay ever since.

Other Peregrine Aircraft products include missiles and spacecraft, particularly rocket engines for launching satellites. Defense cutbacks have hurt Peregrine Aircraft in recent years, and thousands of workers were laid off in 1990-91. But the company has started to bounce back by refocusing its efforts on commercial applications and foreign sales.

Despite defense budget cuts, the U.S. government continues to be one of the company's chief customers, with defense contracts accounting for fully half of its annual sales. In 1994, Peregrine Aircraft won a U.S. Army contract to develop the next generation of attack helicopters. The company is also at work on a top-secret military transport plane employing stealth technology. Along with building aircraft for the U.S. military, Peregrine Aircraft sells older models to other nations. All foreign sales must be approved by the U.S. government, however.

Peregrine Aircraft has been a public corporation since the 1950s, meaning its stock is sold to the general public. The company is run by a board of directors elected by shareholders, though a hired chief executive officer manages its day-to-day affairs.

Headquartered in San Angelo, Peregrine Aircraft conducts principal operations in six states and Canada. Its facilities include a 320-acre manufacturing plant in San Angelo and a flight test range near the Southern California city of Angel Beach.

Peregrine Aircraft has 67,378 employees and posted \$14.3 billion in 1996 sales. The company does 65 percent of its business in the U.S., with Europe accounting for 14 percent. Africa and the Middle East provide another 9 percent of its sales.

In San Angelo, Peregrine Aircraft operates a corporate headquarters downtown and a 625-acre manufacturing facility in Southport with 23,390 employees. The plant contains more than 200 office complexes, aircraft assembly hangars, engine-testing sites, research labs and maintenance shops.

OTHER CORPORATIONS OF NOTE

Hundreds of corporations of every description are found in San Angelo. Some are based in the city, while others are divisions or subsidiaries of international conglomerates.

ALLIED CHEMICALS

A minor player in the chemicals industry, Allied Chemicals has nonetheless had a colorful history going back to the earliest days of World War II.

Chemist Paul Duquette founded Allied Chemicals in 1939, and the company soon became a vital wartime industry. Acids

and solvents from the San Angelo plant were used around the country to manufacture tanks, aircraft and other armaments.

The company was targeted by Nazi saboteurs in 1942, but the intervention of the Golden Age hero known as the Minuteman foiled their scheme.

After the war ended, however, Allied Chemicals suffered a series of reverses and went into decline. The board of directors forced the aged, ailing Duquette out as CEO in 1964, but a string of successors failed to lift the company out of its financial doldrums.

In 1988, corporate raider Donald Croft attempted a hostile takeover of Allied Chemicals. The bid failed, but the financial strain of fighting off the takeover weakened the company and left it ripe for a buyout by international conglomerate Eclipse Industries in 1992.

Executing its usual strategy for new subsidiaries, the megacorporation ordered drastic cost-cutting and layoffs to boost profitability. The brutal cuts backfired in 1994, however, when a chemical spill at the San Angelo plant was attributed to the paring of safety-related expenses. A civil case followed, and Allied Chemicals was ordered to pay \$10 million to injured workers.

Allied Chemicals continues to produce acids and solvents used in heavy industry as its chief product, but has also begun investing in plastics and polymers.

Based in San Angelo, Allied Chemicals operates labs and production plants in five states. The company has virtually no international presence, a situation its new owners are trying to remedy. Allied Chemicals has roughly 8,400 employees and posted \$430 million in sales in 1996. Along with its corporate headquarters, the firm's San Angelo facilities include a 32-acre West San Angelo plant that employs 2,400 people. Hydrochloric acid and sulfuric acid are just two of the primary products of the plant.

ANDERSON PHARMACEUTICALS

From over-the-counter cold medicines to high-cost prescription drugs, Anderson Pharmaceuticals makes it all. A top player in the pharmaceutical industry, the company manufactures several well-known brands of drugs and antibiotics. One of San Angelo's oldest firms, Anderson Pharmaceuticals celebrated 125 years in business in 1996.

After the Civil War ended, pharmacist-turned-Union soldier J.B. Anderson headed for California to try his luck at prospecting. He ended up in San Angelo, where he finally did find gold—but not in the rivers or mines.

After a few weeks in the squalid, disease-ravaged mining camps, Anderson persuaded some prospectors who had struck it rich to invest in a pill-manufacturing plant. The gamble paid off, and Anderson eventually bought out his partners. After his death in 1902, his sons and grandsons ran the business until 1956.

Originally located in Irish Bar, Anderson Pharmaceuticals relocated to a modern factory in Southport in 1948. In the 1950s,

I lost my job when Consolidated downsized last year, haven't been able to find work since. My wife had to take a second job to support the family.

I see these supers on the TV all the time. They zoom all over the world, once in awhile have some big battle with some other costumed freaks. And they get paid for that?

You know some of 'em are doing commercials now? And that Dynamo, she got a PR job with Peregrine Aircraft.

Meanwhile, I got turned down for four more jobs last week.

— Brian McCulloch, 40, unemployed

Life in San Angelo

the corporation opened its first overseas plants and began to diversify with the purchase of a cosmetics company. Other acquisitions followed, but in 1978 the firm made a strategic decision to concentrate on the medical market and sold its unrelated subsidiaries.

Today, Anderson Pharmaceuticals produces many brands of drugs and antibiotics, including medicines for arthritis, depression, cancer, heart disease and ulcers. The corporation also markets a line of vitamins.

Anderson Pharmaceuticals has a long tradition of investing in research, which has paid off with numerous profitable new drugs over the years. Current projects include a promising new drug for treating schizophrenia and research into biotechnology and genetic engineering. Clinical trials on its new products are sometimes conducted in conjunction with physicians at the University Medical Center in downtown San Angelo.

Based in San Angelo, the corporation produces and distributes its products around the world. Anderson Pharmaceuticals has 26,500 employees and had \$7.2 billion in 1996 sales. The corporate headquarters is located in Southport, adjacent to a key manufacturing plant and research campus. The company employs 5,620 people in San Angelo.

CONSOLIDATED ELECTRONICS

When the topic of American businesses hurt by foreign competition arises, Consolidated Electronics is one of the examples most often cited.

Founded by engineer Ronald Latimer in 1936, Consolidated Electronics boomed during World War II as a maker of military radio equipment. In the 1950s, the firm added televisions to its product line. The later acquisition of a clock manufacturer further diversified the company.

But competition from low-priced Japanese imports began to take a toll on sales in the 1970s. Ronald Latimer retired as presi-

dent and CEO in 1984, passing control of the firm to his son, Roger, who still runs the struggling corporation.

Company products now include stereos, CD players, clock radios, VCRs, televisions and other consumer electronics.

Over the past 12 years, however, Consolidated Electronics has seen its market share continue to shrink as firms in South Korea, China and Taiwan joined the electronics boom. CE has laid off employees in each of the past three years, going from 22,500 full-time positions in 1994 to 15,900 in 1996. It had \$1.1 billion in 1996 sales, but reported a net loss of \$187 million.

Based in San Angelo, Consolidated Electronics sold its pricey downtown headquarters in the early 1990s and moved its corporate offices to an annex at its Arroyo Verde factory.

The Arroyo Verde complex also includes research labs, which are now minimally staffed. In all, Consolidated Electronics employs 4,940 people in San Angelo.

The company also operates warehouses in four states, along with six factories and warehouses in Mexico.

HEARTLAND FOODS, INC.

Rare indeed is the kitchen cupboard that doesn't contain at least one Heartland Foods Inc. product. Based in the Midwest, the corporation sells canned soups, sauces and vegetable juices.

The company began in 1876 as a canning and preserving business, but soon moved on to soups as a primary product. In 1912, Heartland Foods Inc. became one of the first American companies to achieve national distribution of a food brand.

Over the years, the company built a reputation as a conservatively managed business and cautiously began to diversify beyond soups in the 1980s. Only 20 percent of its profits are from overseas sales, and Heartland has targeted Mexico and Asia as future markets.

BUSINESSES IN SAN ANGELO

Business	Type	Pg	Business	Type	Pg
Aardvark Records	Independent music store	83	Kelley Hospitals	Health care	—
Allied Chemical	Chemical manufacturing, R&D	87	Lightspeed Video	Video rental	82
Anderson Pharmaceuticals	Drug and antibiotics manufacturer	87	MacGregor Paper Co.	Paper recycling	—
Antonio's	American-style Mexican food	82	Marshall Factory Outlets	60-store shopping center	84
Avalon Enterprises	Humanitarian technology R&D	85	Masked Bandit Pizza	Pizza delivery outlet	83
Barnes Co.	Household goods, chain	82	Morgan Development Company	Construction	92
Black Widow Pesticides	Pesticide manufacturer	—	Morgan Property Management Inc.	Office property management	92
Bradley Homes	Residential home builder	92	North Mission Market	Old-fashioned "corner grocery"	83
Burger Meister	Fast food	82	Norton's Books	Bookstore chain (in malls)	83
ChromaLab	One-hour photo labs	82	Nugget Records	Music store outlets	83
City Food Co-op	Cooperative grocery store	83	Olympus Construction Inc.	Home and office construction	92
Consolodated Electronics	Consumer electronics	88	Patchwork Textiles	Clothing, bedding manufacturer	—
Daley's for Men	Clothing store	83	Peregrine Aircraft	Aerospace co./defense contractor	87
Durette Jewelers	Jewelry store	83	Pippa's Fashions	High-fashion clothing boutique	83
Durham Corp.	Film manufacture & processing	82	Prospector Bank	Banking	—
Eclipse Industries	Parent corporation	85	San Angelo Clarion	Newspapers	—
Elmhurst Mall	Shopping mall	84	San Angelo Plaza	Shopping mall	83
Empire Books	Used bookstore	83	San Angelo Times	Newspapers	—
Fairtime Mall	Shopping mall	84	ShortStop	24-hour convenience store	83
Fontaine's Dept. Store	High-end department stores	82	Spy Shop	High-tech surveillance equipment	83
FoodBasket Market	Supermarket	82	St. Mary's Hospitals	Health care	—
G.I. Surplus	Military surplus store	83	Taiyo Corporation	High-tech products	90
Heartland Foods, Inc.	Food products	88	Texxon Oil Company	Petroleum refining & distribution	91
Hitomi Co.	Diversified conglomerate	—	TJT Furniture Inc.	Office furniture	91
Hunter-Price Arms	Weapons and ordnance	86	U.S. Fertilizer	Fertilizer manufacture	91
HyperDyne Computers	Computer manufacturer	89	Valley Pacific Railroad	Rail transportation	92
Infinity Software	Computer games	89	Villegas & Sons	Road construction	92

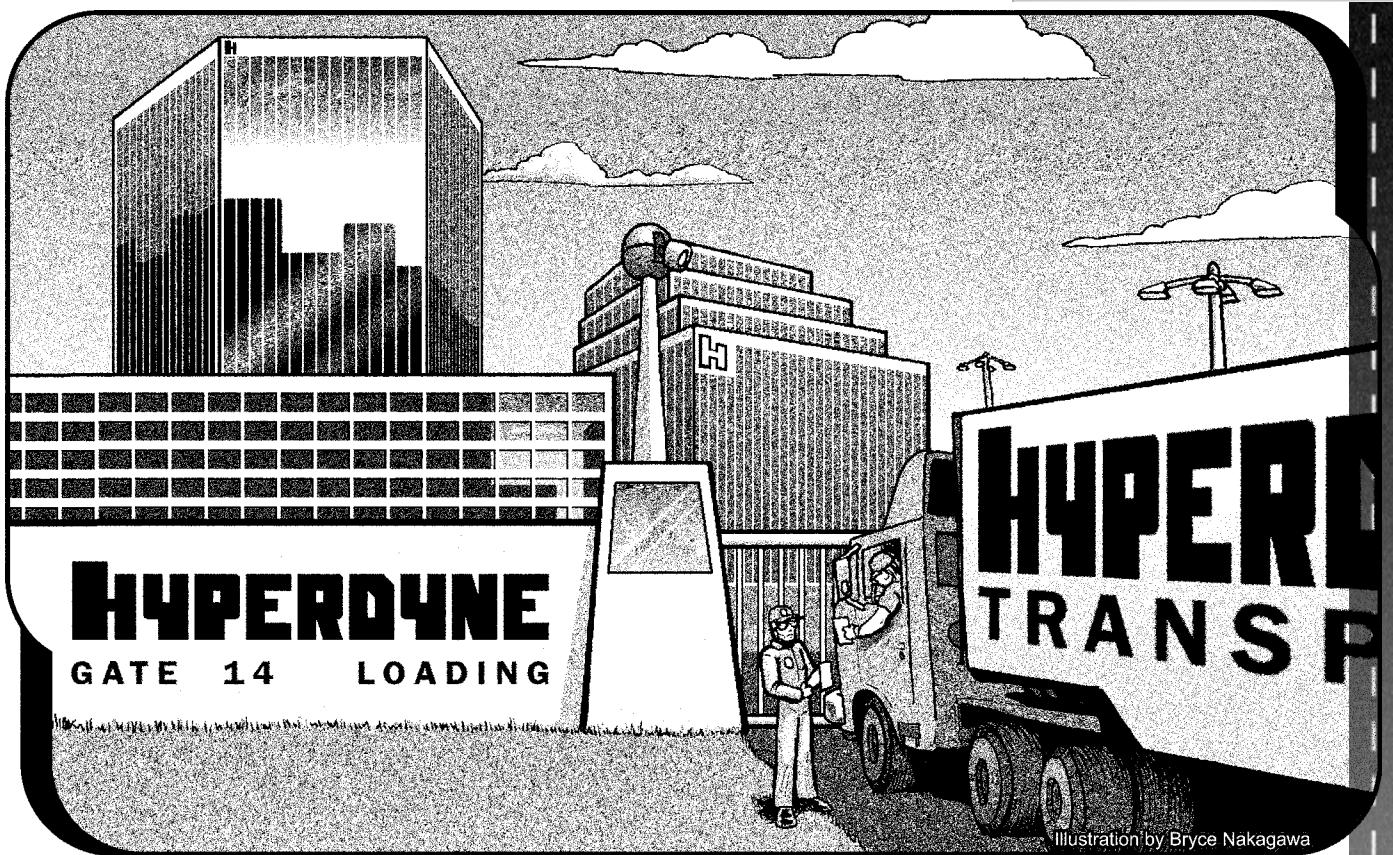


Illustration by Bryce Nakagawa

Headquartered in Iowa, Heartland Foods Inc. has canneries in 12 states. The company employs 42,560 people and reported \$7.7 billion in 1996 sales.

In San Angelo, Heartland Foods Inc. operates a Southport cannery that produces canned soup, tomato juice, canned pasta and spaghetti sauce. Opened in 1948, the plant uses tomatoes trucked in from rural south San Angelo County and nearby Oro County.

The factory normally employs 2,340 people, but temporary workers hired at the peak of the tomato harvest run the number up to 2,600 or more.

HYPERDyne COMPUTERS

A top U.S. computer manufacturer, HyperDyne Computers is striving to stay ahead of the pack in the crowded personal computing market. The firm is among the top 10 providers of desktop computers, servers and peripherals in the United States.

In 1964, engineer Wayne Frazier founded HyperDyne Computers in a spare bedroom of his San Angelo house. Years of design work in his spare time paid off in 1973 when HyperDyne introduced one of the first hand held scientific calculators.

Frazier plowed the profits from his first success into expanding HyperDyne Computers, allowing the corporation to produce a line of business computers a few years later. In the 1980s, the company scored again, cashing in early on the personal computer boom.

The company has been traded publicly on the stock market since the mid-1970s, and when Frazier retired in 1986 the board of directors recruited the head of a rival company to run HyperDyne Computers.

In 1994, the corporation won a contract for a 10-year, \$1.5 billion project to design tactical targeting computer systems for the U.S. Air Force.

Still a top contender in its market, HyperDyne Computers has so far failed to carve a niche for itself in the latest computer revolution—the Internet. Company insiders are debating the next step for the corporation.

HyperDyne Computers has acquired several subsidiaries over the years, mostly in the fields of computing and electronics. Among them are a medical diagnostics instrument firm, a microwave-component maker and a computer workstation manufacturer.

Still based in San Angelo, the corporation owns research and production facilities in the United States and 18 other countries. It has sales and support offices in 124 nations. HyperDyne employs 116,000 people worldwide and reported \$38.6 billion in 1996 sales.

Along with a corporate headquarters downtown, HyperDyne Computers has a major design and production facility in Arroyo Verde. A pleasant 585-acre campus, the facility has 6,500 employees and a \$300 million annual payroll.

INFINITY SOFTWARE

A leader in the field of computer entertainment, Infinity Software creates games that capture the imaginations—and pocketbooks—of millions of computer gamers each year.

The company was founded in 1982 as a partnership between game designer Paul Cates and programmer Dave Fitzsimmons. Their first product, a text-based adventure game titled *Hunt for the Lost Mine*, performed moderately well.

Cates and Fitzsimmons used the profits from *Hunt for the Lost Mine* to produce one of the first computer games to capitalize on the re-emergence of superpowered humans. *Justice Squad* became the top seller of 1986, but artistic differences over the game split the partners.

Life in San Angelo



Illustration by Louis Frank

A bitter battle for control of Infinity Software erupted, and in 1988 Cates succeeded in forcing Fitzsimmons out. The buyout left Fitzsimmons a millionaire, but a bitter man. The firm reorganized as a privately held corporation and began a rapid expansion.

Infinity Software has continued to prosper in the 1990s, producing hit computer games in a variety of genres. The studio designs software for both PC and Macintosh platforms, along with game cartridges for home entertainment systems.

The company has more than 100 PC game titles on the market. Recent top sellers include the fantasy game *Crystalgate*, the 3D action game *Hit Man* and the simulation *Ace Braddock: WWI Pilot*. A licensed *Justice Foundation* game originally slated for a Christmas '96 release has been delayed several times.

Based in San Angelo, Infinity Software employs 365 people at its Arroyo Verde design studio and reported \$98 million in 1996 sales.

TAIYO CORPORATION

High-tech products are the lifeblood of Japan-based Taiyo Corp., an international giant in the computer and communications industries. The leading supplier of computer chips worldwide, the corporation ranks fourth in personal computers and seventh in telecommunications.

Founded in Tokyo in 1908 by Japanese investors, Taiyo Corp. started out as an importer of telephone equipment. In the 1960s, the company began dabbling in computer research but did not invest heavily in these efforts until the 1970s. By 1983, Taiyo Corp. had become a top maker of memory chips around the world.

Still on top of the chip market, the company is also investing in new technologies, such as advanced color plasma display panels, as it fends off competitors.

Based in Tokyo, the corporation has 132 subsidiaries and affiliates in 33 countries. Taiyo Corp. employs 154,000 people world-

wide and reported \$43 billion in sales in 1996. In San Angelo, the company owns a 200-acre chip-producing plant in Arroyo Verde. Headed by Kiyoji Takemoto, a senior vice president, the plant employs 4,485 people and contains 1.2 million square feet of manufacturing space.

The factory, which uses numerous toxic and caustic chemicals, has its own water treatment facility and emergency response teams.

TEXXON OIL COMPANY

A familiar name to everyone who owns a car, Texxon Oil Co. is a leading international producer of oil and natural gas. The company has also been a focus of environmentalist ire for pollution and ecologically unsound practices.

Created in the 1912 government-ordered breakup of a petroleum monopoly, Texxon Oil Co. took over the western territories of its progenitor. In the ensuing decades, it became one of the top oil companies in the United States, and then worldwide.

The company's international expansion has continued into the 1990s, as have its efforts to seek out new oil reserves. It recently negotiated rights to oil fields in Indonesia and the former Soviet Union.

Headquartered in Angel Beach, California, Texxon Oil Co. runs 35 refineries worldwide. It operates four U.S. refineries and more than 9,600 gas stations in 38 states. The company is also involved in the petrochemical, coal and power generation industries.

Active in more than 100 nations, Texxon Oil Co. is especially interested in the Asian-Pacific market. The company has 79,000 employees and posted \$116 billion in 1996 sales.

In San Angelo, Texxon Oil Co. has countless service stations along with a Southport plant that produces plastic waste bags, produce bags and grocery sacks. The plant employs about 260 people.

The company also operates a distribution facility in West San Angelo. A dozen or so huge oil tanks, filled by an underground pipeline from an Angel Beach refinery, supply tanker trucks with gasoline for delivery to service stations in several states.

Finally, the corporation helped finance construction of the Texxon Golden Dome stadium in Southport, home of the San Angelo Miners pro football team.

TJT FURNITURE INC.

A top maker of office furniture, the Canadian firm of TJT Furniture Inc. manufactures free-standing modular office partitions, desks, file cabinets and other necessities.

Founded in 1921 in Toronto, the company switched from household decor to office furniture during the hardships of the Depression. The corporation prospered in the post-war business boom, and in 1970 went public.

TJT Furniture Inc. manufactures its products in Canada, the U.S., Japan, Mexico and the United Kingdom. Wholly owned subsidiaries sell its furniture in 32 nations. Other subsidiary firms produce furniture for specialized markets, such as hospitals and prisons.

The company has 7,360 employees and reported \$1.2 billion in 1996 sales. In San Angelo, TJT Furniture Inc. employs 364 people at its furniture-manufacturing plant in Southport.

U.S. FERTILIZER

A supplier of soil-enriching products for agriculture and gardening, U.S. Fertilizer has had a troubled history but appears to be on the rebound.

Founded in 1923 as a subsidiary of Texxon Oil Co., U.S. Fertilizer remained solidly in the middle of the agri-business pack for the next 40 years.

The oil company sold U.S. Fertilizer to the Japan-based conglomerate Hitomi Co. in 1962. The firm continued to perform unspectacularly until the late 1980s, when an expensive new line of fertilizers targeting home gardeners flopped. The financial hemorrhage continued despite several top-level shakeups.

In 1994, Hitomi sold its interest in U.S. Fertilizer to Eclipse Industries. The new owners put the firm back in the black by ruthlessly slashing costs and laying off employees. Today, a leaner U.S. Fertilizer is moving up in the ranks of American agri-businesses.

U.S. Fertilizer owns a key production plant in West San Angelo. Two 8-million-gallon tanks at the plant contain anhydrous ammonia, a deadly poisonous gas used to manufacture fertilizer. The 16-acre facility employs 120 people.

VALLEY PACIFIC RAILROAD

A San Angelo institution, the Valley Pacific Railroad in large part kept the town alive after the Gold Rush dried up. Today competition from trucking and air freight services places considerable strain on its finances, but the railroad continues to tough it out.

Valley Pacific Railroad got its start in 1865, when local banker Jeremiah Bannon and investor Leland Shaw formed the company to connect San Angelo to the transcontinental rail lines being built across the Rocky Mountains.

Work on the railroad line brought hundreds of Chinese laborers to the region, giving rise to San Angelo's colorful and historic Chinatown district.

After the gold boom that gave the city its start played out, access to the railroad kept San Angelo alive as a center of agriculture and later encouraged its industrial growth. The rail company continued to expand by laying new tracks and buying other railroads until rising competition in the mid-20th century sent Valley Pacific Railroad into a slow decline. Financial losses spurred the firm to begin cost-cutting in 1992, reducing its workforce and trying to control expenses.

Today Valley Pacific Railroad operates 16,800 miles of tracks in 15 states. The company has 19,000 employees and reported \$3.1 billion in 1996 sales, a \$3 million loss. In San Angelo, the company operates its primary West Coast freight yard in Pleasant Grove. The 610-acre yard employs 1,560 people and has a \$91 million payroll.

Despite America's reduced reliance on railroads, the romance of the rails remains strong. San Angelo is home to many railroad retirees and diehard rail buffs, who restore old locomotives, build scale-model trains and give talks on the history of the railroad.

CORPORATE EXECUTIVES

Scott Blake: A former U.S. Air Force test pilot and NASA astronaut who heads flight test operations for Peregrine Aircraft. Blake is based at the company's Angel Beach test range, though his job requires frequent visits to San Angelo to confer with designers and corporate executives.

Blake, who is divorced, is very much a ladies' man who is carrying on an affair with Bethany Rhys Waterhouse, the wife of an up-and-coming attorney and a fixture on the high society scene in San Angelo.

Stephen Bow: The ruthless executive vice president for acquisitions of Eclipse Industries. Bow is also secretly the arch-criminal super known as Photon.

Inside Eclipse Industries, Bow is regarded as one of the top contenders for the CEO spot when current chief C. Fullerton Hughes retires. Nonetheless, he is widely feared in the company, and few people dare to cross him.

As executive vice president for acquisitions, Bow uses any tactic or strategy necessary to take over a target company, including industrial espionage and even sabotage. He often hires outside help for these jobs, particularly the free-lance corporate superspy Wisp.

For more information on Stephen Bow, see Photon in the **Allies and Enemies** chapter.

Kenneth Cameron II: The president of Peregrine Aircraft, a leading maker of military aircraft. Cameron joined the corporation in 1962 when it purchased his small firm, which manufactured jet engine parts.

Putting his knowledge of aerospace design to work, Cameron eventually became vice president of engineering for Peregrine Aircraft and captured the post of CEO in 1977. In 1989, Cameron left his management job to become president of the company.

Stock options and other bonuses have made Cameron one of the wealthiest people in San Angelo, but he still exhibits a strong work ethic. The lackadaisical attitude of his only son, playboy Kenneth Cameron III, is a great disappointment to him.

Pepper Coyle: The chief marketing officer for Eclipse Industries and a leading candidate for the job of CEO. A warm, personable executive, Coyle is also an efficient administrator and a skilled player of corporate politics.

Her leadership skills and ability to attract loyal followers are Coyle's greatest strengths. While she lacks the utter ruthlessness of chief rival Stephen Bow, Coyle has a strong sense for strategy that allows her to fend off most attempts to undermine her influence.

Roger Latimer: The president and CEO of Consolidated Electronics, a San Angelo corporation in dire financial straits. Latimer inherited the top jobs, and a controlling share of company stock, in 1984 from his father Ronald, founder of the business.

After years of waiting for his chance to run Consolidated Electronics, Latimer has been frustrated at every turn by competition from low-priced Asian imports. The company has laid off workers in each of the past three years, and posted a net loss in 1996.

OTHER MAJOR CORPORATIONS IN SAN ANGELO

Some retail-oriented corporations are described under The Commercial Scene, while health-care corporations are covered in The Medical World and banks are outlined under The Professional World.

Name	Product
Barnes Co.	Department stores
Black Widow Pesticides	Pesticide manufacturer
Durham Corp.	Film manufacturer, film processing
Fontaine's & Co.	Department stores
FoodBasket Markets Inc.	Supermarkets
Hitomi Co.	Diversified conglomerate
Kelley Hospitals	Health care
MacGregor Paper Co.	Paper recycling
Nugget Records	Retail music stores
Patchwork Textiles	Clothing, bedding manufacturer
Prospector Bank	Banking
St. Mary's Hospitals	Health care
San Angelo Clarion	Newspapers
San Angelo Times	Newspapers

Life in San Angelo

Latimer still considers Consolidated Electronics a family business, and the possibility that it will go bankrupt under his control weighs heavily on him.

Latimer has developed a strong hatred for foreign competitors, Japan in particular, and his frequent criticism of Japanese business practices veers dangerously close to racism. He has appeared on several national news magazine shows to call for drastic hikes in tariffs on Japanese products.

Kyoji Takemoto: A senior vice president with Taiyo Corp. and head of the Japanese company's San Angelo operations. He is known as an able and hard-working executive, though a bit remote to his employees and cool to the San Angelo social scene.

Takemoto's family dates back to the days of feudal Japan, and he is quite proud of his samurai heritage. An heirloom katana handed down in his family for generations sits in a glass display case behind his desk.

THE DEVELOPMENT INDUSTRY

People need homes. Businesses demand offices and stores. And industries require factories. Someone has to build it all, and that's the role of the development industry.

Construction is a multi-million dollar business in San Angelo, employing thousands of people in every trade from architecture to roofing. Many are independent consultants and contractors hired by the big development companies as needed for specific projects.

Nonetheless, developers are not especially popular in San Angelo. Residents, even those who just arrived in the city themselves, think the metropolis has grown too large. High pollution indices, congested traffic and a shortage of open space are all cited as evidence of over-expansion.

As a result, new projects are often opposed by prospective neighbors—particularly when an apartment complex or low-cost subdivision is proposed next to an existing neighborhood. The environmentalist community also dislikes developers.

MORGAN DEVELOPMENT CO.

The top builder of office and industrial space in San Angelo, the Morgan Development Co. is a powerhouse in the political, business and financial worlds.

Several of the skyscrapers gracing the city skyline are the work of Morgan Development Co., including the 42-story Morgan Office Tower—popularly known as the Twilight Tower.

The company, owned by powerbroker Benjamin Morgan, is also extremely active in the industrial arena. It is responsible for factories, labs, warehouses and manufacturing facilities all over San Angelo, but especially in Southport and Arroyo Verde.

Finally, Morgan Development Co. has a hand in residential development, focused on building high-end luxury homes in the Lakeview area. Most of its houses sell for \$250,000 or more.

A proposal by the firm to develop Quail Valley near Lakeview has sparked controversy in San Angelo as environmentalists protest the plans. County officials are considering the proposal.

The company constructed 1.6 million square feet of industrial and commercial space in 1996. It had 120 housing starts and sold \$35.7 million in residential real estate.

A related company, Morgan Property Management Inc., oversees hundreds of thousands of square feet of office space as well as a sizable chunk of downtown real estate.

I was over at the roach coach when this costumed super flew right into the side of the second story. Took out most of the braces, brought the whole place down on himself.

Why would I do anything for him? Listen, pal, it was his own fault that he crashed. He should've watched where he was going.

— Carl Simmons, 39, construction worker

OTHER DEVELOPMENT COMPANIES OF NOTE

A building boom in the 1980s spawned a plethora of construction-related businesses in San Angelo. Though the market cooled off in the early 1990s, development appears to be on the upswing once more—particularly in Castle Heights and Arroyo Verde.

Efforts to redevelop rundown parts of the inner city are also providing new opportunities for the San Angelo development industry.

BRADLEY HOMES

The top residential development firm in San Angelo, Bradley Homes has long had a reputation for fair prices and good-quality work.

Founded in the 1960s by Perry Bradley, the company constructed many of the suburban subdivisions of La Vista and Rancho Madera. Now headed by Jeanette Bradley, the firm remains committed to building affordable homes for middle-class families.

In 1996, Bradley Homes had 760 housing starts, mostly in the Castle Heights area, and a \$123.5 million sales volume.

OLYMPUS CONSTRUCTION INC.

Owned by development mogul Aristeides Pappagianis, Olympus Construction Inc. has a hand in residential, retail and office construction.

Pappagianis, a Greek émigré, founded Olympus Construction Inc. in 1952. Over the years, the firm has built several city landmarks, including the 32-story San Angelo Corporate Center downtown. The company is now constructing the 36-story Eclipse Plaza tower.

In the residential arena, Olympus Construction Inc. specializes in acquiring huge parcels of land and drawing up large-scale development plans for hundreds of acres at a time. Once city or county officials have signed off on the plans, the company sells most of the property to other builders for actual construction.

The redevelopment of existing neighborhoods, in accord with a city program that offers tax breaks and other incentives for building in blighted areas, has become another focus of the operation in recent years.

Olympus Construction Inc. posted 585 housing starts in 1996, and sold \$104 million in residential property. The company also built 227,500 square feet of retail and office space.

VILLEGAS & SONS

A road construction company that has risen rapidly in the development world, Villegas & Sons is owned by Ramon Villegas. The firm has undertaken several road and highway projects in recent years, including constructing new I-7 interchanges in Arroyo Verde and downtown San Angelo.

The company purchased an Oro County gravel mining operation and aggregate plant in 1996, ending its reliance on other asphalt suppliers and boosting its profitability.

Villegas & Sons employs 780 people.

BENJAMIN MORGAN

Development magnate

The boy cowered under the threadbare blankets on his bed as the front door to the dingy apartment slammed shut. He heard the thump and slurred curses as his father staggered into a wall. The boy put his hands over his ears as the two voices in the next room started arguing. When the muted sound of blows began, he pulled the pillow over his head.

* * *

Twenty years later, Benjamin Morgan tore down that seedy apartment house. In fact, he demolished the entire neighborhood to make way for a luxury high-rise hotel. The project brought Morgan his first million dollars.

In the years since, Morgan has risen to become one of the most powerful people in San Angelo. His company, Morgan Construction Co., builds luxury homes, office buildings and high-tech industrial plants throughout the county. Several city landmarks, including the 42-story Twilight Tower, are his work.

A respected, influential figure in the city, Morgan has friends in the top circles of politics, government, and business. He sits on several corporate boards of directors and city advisory commissions.

Morgan's good works and charitable donations have won him numerous humanitarian awards over the years.

Outside the public eye, however, Morgan can be exceedingly ruthless. He allows nothing to stand in his way—not the law, not business rivals, not do-gooders who catch wind of his more questionable activities. And anyone who opposes Morgan is destroyed, utterly.

Behind the scenes, he comes as close as any one person can to running the city.

Personality/Motivation: Control is everything to Benjamin Morgan. Not power. Not money. Not political influence. Those are just tools. Only by being in control, of himself and everything around him, can Morgan ever truly feel safe. And anything he can't control must be eliminated—he will never, ever, be powerless again.

This fundamental need for control is at the heart of his dislike of superhumans, for they are forever beyond his mastery. Individual supers can be corrupted or ruined, but as a whole the heroes and enemies of San Angelo are an eternal wild card.

Morgan hates wild cards.

Quote: *"Who are these heroes, these 'superhumans,' to make decisions for the rest of us? Are they to be the masters of humanity's fate, or are we?"*

Powers/Tactics: Benjamin Morgan is arguably the most powerful man in San Angelo. He can't fly or shoot energy blasts. He doesn't have super strength or enhanced senses. But he pulls the strings of the Golden City. Very little happens in the government or business scenes that does not involve Morgan in some behind-the-scenes capacity.

Morgan has contacts everywhere—government, law enforcement, top corporations, churches, even charitable organizations. And all kinds of people owe him all kinds of debts. His resources and contacts mean that Morgan can usually bring pressure to bear on just about anyone he desires, regardless of the person's position or community standing.



Of course, Morgan stays out of the action himself. Third parties deliver his suggestions and expertly veiled threats. Most of the time his name is never even mentioned. That's the way Morgan wants it. And he always gets what he wants.

Appearance: Morgan, 58, is a heavyset man with short, thinning white hair and blue eyes. He stands 6'2" tall and has a burly build. Morgan favors plaid work shirts and jeans, but will wear a business suit when appropriate.

Benjamin Morgan: PL 3; Init +0 (Dex); Defense 10; Spd 30 ft; Atk +1 melee (+1S, punch); SV Dmg +2, Fort +2, REF +0, Will +4; Str 12, Dex 11, Con 14, INT 16, Wis 15, Cha 16. **Feats:** Connected, Iron Will, Wealth +2. **Skills:** Bluff +5, Diplomacy +6, Demolitions +4, Drive +2, Innuendo +5, Knowledge (accounting) +4, Knowledge (development world) +5, Knowledge (rare orchids) +5, Knowledge (stock market) +5, Knowledge (structural engineering) +5, Profession (company president) +6, Spot +3. **Equipment:** Business suit, casual clothes (e.g., denim jeans and flannel shirt), fine cigar, lighter, cell phone, luxury car, pickup truck, memberships in Skyline Club and Royal Grove Country Club.

Benjamin Morgan

STR 5, REF 4, HLT 5, PRE 7, INT 7, WIL 6

DEF 14, INI 6, MOV 9, TGH 6, LIF 27

Disadvantages: Dependent (Cassidy Morgan, daughter) [-2], Psych Disad (Enjoys raising rare orchids) [-2], Psych Disad (Hates supers) [-5], Psych Disad (Overwhelming need for control) [-10]

Advantages: Allies (Anders Drake, J. Prescott Marr, Randolph McAlpine, Rev. John Warden, Senator Catherine Forbes, Supervisor Erik Bates, all at Conv. level) [12], Allies (C. Fullerton Hughes, County Supervisor Jeffrey Daley,

(Continued next page)

Life in San Angelo

Benjamin Morgan (continued)

Deputy DA Roger Feist, Nathan Hardesty, all at Edge level) [20], Famous (well respected, powerful businessman, local figure) [5], Favors (one favor each from Senator Catherine Forbes, Stephen Bow, Meg Fairchild, Rep. Robert N. Welch, Mayor Alex Martinez, and Sheriff J.T. Preston) [5], Membership: Eclipse Industries Board of Directors (MR 5/Director, Minor) [10], Membership: Morgan Construction Company (MR 8/President, Minor) [16], Perk (Royal Grove Country Club member) [2], Perk (Skyline Club member) [2], Social Adv (well connected) [2], Wealthy (filthy Rich) [10]

Skills: Accounting +3, Appraisal +3, Area Knowledge (San Angelo) +6, Awareness +4, Bureaucracy +6, Business +6, Computers (Use) +2, Conversation +5, Demolitions +2, Driving +3, Economics +4, Electrician +2, Engineering (Structural) +2, Fish and Game +3, Gambling +1, Intrigue +3, Knowledge (Corporate world) +3, Knowledge (Development world) +6, Knowledge (Morgan Construction Co.) +6, Knowledge (Rare orchids) +5, Knowledge (Stock market) +3, Persuasion +5 (Bribery +2), Piloting +3, Professional (Company president) +3, Sailing +3, Society +5, Swimming +1, Trading +7.

Equipment: Business suit, casual clothes (e.g., denim jeans and flannel shirt), fine cigar, lighter, cell phone, luxury car, pickup truck.

OTHER BUILDERS OF NOTE

Perry Bradley: A longtime San Angelo homebuilder and owner of Bradley Homes. Bradley constructed many of the 1960s-era subdivisions in the county. His innumerable donations to local youth groups, not to mention his firm's good reputation, have made Bradley a popular and well-respected figure in the county.

His daughter, Jeanette Bradley, took over the homebuilding business in 1995 after her father was diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease. He now spends most of his time at home and rarely goes out in public.

Pierre Duval: A prominent San Angelo architect known for his expertise in designing high-tech facilities. In recent years, Duval has been hired by several hero teams to design headquarters or bases. He was the primary architect for the Justice Foundation team headquarters.

Duval, a native of France, splits his time between his San Angelo studio and a vacation home on the Riviera. He is courting wealthy widow Helen Payne.

Duane Norwood: The former owner of N&W Co., a housing construction firm that went bust in 1992 under the weight of judgments in court cases filed by unhappy customers.

The company had a bad reputation for shoddy workmanship, and numerous home buyers won civil cases against N&W Co. for selling defective homes.

Faced with mounting debts, not to mention government inquiries into possible violations of environmental laws, Norwood declared bankruptcy in 1992 and dissolved the company. Many of his creditors have yet to see a dime.

Norwood continues to live a comfortable life in San Angelo despite being flat broke on paper, but efforts to prove that he hid assets during bankruptcy proceedings have so far failed.

Aristeides Pappagianis: A Greek émigré who built a development empire in San Angelo. He founded Olympus Construction Inc. in the 1950s and has played a crucial role in the growth of the city ever since.

Pappagianis rarely appears in public nowadays, preferring to let his associates and children handle most of his business affairs. Nevertheless, his behind-the-scenes political influence remains potent.

One of the wealthiest people in the city, Pappagianis lives in an elaborate, well-secured estate in picturesque Falcon Bluff, overlooking the Del Oro River.

LABOR AND UNION ACTIVITY

Labor unions are not especially strong in San Angelo, except in a few key areas. There are several powerful public employee unions in the city, and labor organizations are also strong in construction trades, hotels, trucking and warehousing.

Public reaction to unions is mixed—while some San Angelinos are strongly pro-union, others feel they can get a better deal on their own. Business owners, of course, tend to be very anti-union, citing the exorbitant demands made by some employee groups.

Strikes and other job actions by unions are infrequent, as several corporations have taken advantage of such situations to break unions in recent years.

Corruption in labor unions is fairly rare in San Angelo, and ties to the Mafia are almost non-existent given the mob's relative lack of influence in the region.

THE INTELLECTUAL SCENE

Information is the commodity of the future, and San Angelo is home to several think tanks, consulting firms and other organizations trading in this market.

HORIZON INSTITUTE

The Horizon Institute, a non-profit entity, attempts to gauge the effects of superpowered humans on science, technology, criminal justice, the military and society as a whole.

The Institute is based at a three-story former ranch house in rural south San Angelo County, with a sizable paid administrative staff boasting experts in several fields.

In addition, the list of consultants affiliated with the Horizon Institute reads like a who's who in sociology, law enforcement, defense, business, engineering, science and politics.

The board of directors alone includes a retired admiral, a former justice of the Supreme Court and U.S. Senator Catherine Forbes of California. Nicholas Boyle, an ex-deputy director of the CIA, serves as administrator of the Horizon Institute.

The prime function of the think tank involves carefully evaluating the changes wrought by the activities of superhumans on Earth. The findings of its research, usually conducted by paid staffers or under grants, are disseminated in the appropriate scholarly publications.

Recent papers published by Horizon Institute researchers include an analysis of the effect of paranormals on the sporting world, a review of recent supers-related bills in the U.S. House of Representatives and a report on anti-supers bigotry in a small town in Minnesota.

A branch of the Institute is quietly collecting data on all known supers—heroes, criminals or otherwise. The ultimate purpose behind this intelligence-gathering operation is unknown.

While its research efforts are its primary focus, the Institute provides considerable assistance and advice to supers, particu-

larly heroes. Its helpful staff of experts is always available for consultation on any topic from paranormal medicine to time paradoxes.

The Justice Foundation hero team, in particular, has credited the Horizon Institute for providing information that helped resolve several emergency situations in recent years.

Financing for the Horizon Institute comes from a variety of sources, mostly through donations by private individuals and companies. Some top donors from San Angelo include builder Benjamin Morgan, Eclipse Industries and financier Alistair McDermott.

CAMPAIGN TIP

The experts at the Horizon Institute can be a valuable resource to a PC hero team, particularly to one lacking expertise in a particular field of science or engineering. Also, the Institute may be able to provide advice on handling an extremely unusual situation, like trying to close a dimensional gateway.

JUSTICE FOUNDATION (C9)

A non-profit think tank founded by Averell Pendleton, president of Avalon Enterprises, the Justice Foundation is devoted to researching the root causes of crime, war, terrorism and other forms of violence.

Based in a City Center office building, the foundation has a small paid staff. It primarily offers grants to sociologists, and others investigating topics related to its purpose, who conduct much of the actual research of the think tank.

The other chief activity of the agency involves providing funding and support for the Justice Foundation hero team based in San Angelo.

Most of the funding for the foundation continues to come from Pendleton and Avalon Enterprises, though donations from other sources are not insignificant.

OTHER INSTITUTIONS OF NOTE

The San Angelo business scene includes numerous consulting companies, mostly offering advice on corporate affairs, engineering and development. A few are involved in more esoteric fields, however.

THE GAIA CO.

The Gaia Co. is a San Angelo consulting firm that focuses on environmental concerns, especially pollution. While it poses as an ecologically friendly operation, The Gaia Co. actually exists primarily to help corporate clients get around state and federal environmental laws.

The consulting firm also helps corporations fight citations by the federal Environmental Protection Agency. Its studies, which uniformly shift the blame for pollution from big business, are something of a joke in scholarly circles.

RV&G INC.

A data retrieval company, RV&G Inc. collects information for other businesses on everything from scientific papers to marketing statistics. The firm has an extensive computer database, and also conducts on-line searches for requested data. In addition, RV&G Inc. can perform patent and trademark searches for clients.

THE YGGDRASILL CENTER

A think tank with an environmental focus, The Yggdrasill Center conducts research on the biosphere and ecology around the world.

The center takes its name from Yggdrasill, the great ash-tree of the universe from Norse mythology. The roots of the tree connected the domains of gods, men and the underworld.

Current projects of the center include an investigation into a rise in ocean temperatures off Indonesia, a report on the ecological effects of logging on forests in Washington and a probe of the status of the ozone belt.

Investigations undertaken by The Yggdrasill Center could tip PCs off to a villainous scheme to alter the Earth's environment in some way—a really large-scale threat might involve melting the polar ice caps, for example. Or perhaps the ecological changes are merely inadvertent side effects of some unrelated scheme.

THE MARTIAL WORLD

Martial arts are popular in San Angelo, attracting everyone from school kids to street toughs.

Instructors in almost every fighting art, even some fairly obscure ones, can be found in San Angelo. Chinatown, of course, is a center for martial arts activity, but schools are found throughout the metropolitan area.

WEI CHENG

Kung fu master

Wei Cheng grew up in rural China with his brother, Ho Cheng. At a young age, the boys became students to renowned kung fu master Kien Li. But the brothers grew up to be opposites in almost every way. Wei became noted for his calmness and serenity, while Ho was feared for his explosive temper and arrogant ways.

After one outburst too many, Master Li threatened to dismiss Ho. When Wei tried to speak up for him, fury at his popular brother overcame Ho. He beat Wei brutally before Master Li intervened and expelled Ho.

Wei continued to hone his kung fu skills at the school until the rise of the communists in the 1940s. At the urging of Master Li, who was later imprisoned and killed, he emigrated to the US.

Wei discovered his brother had also come to the states and had settled in San Angelo, but when he visited the city his efforts at reconciliation with Ho failed.

Nevertheless, Wei discovered that he enjoyed life in San Angelo's Chinatown, and he began his own kung fu school to pass on the teachings of Master Li. He soon became a well-known, respected member of the Chinatown community.

Not to be outdone, his brother Ho soon established his own kung fu school in Chinatown, counting numerous members of the tongs, or Chinese organized crime groups, among his pupils.

Over the decades, the intense rivalry between the two brothers has continued to burn bright despite Wei's efforts to heal the breach. This rivalry has extended to their students, who have been involved in several brawls over the years, to Wei's dismay.

Life in San Angelo

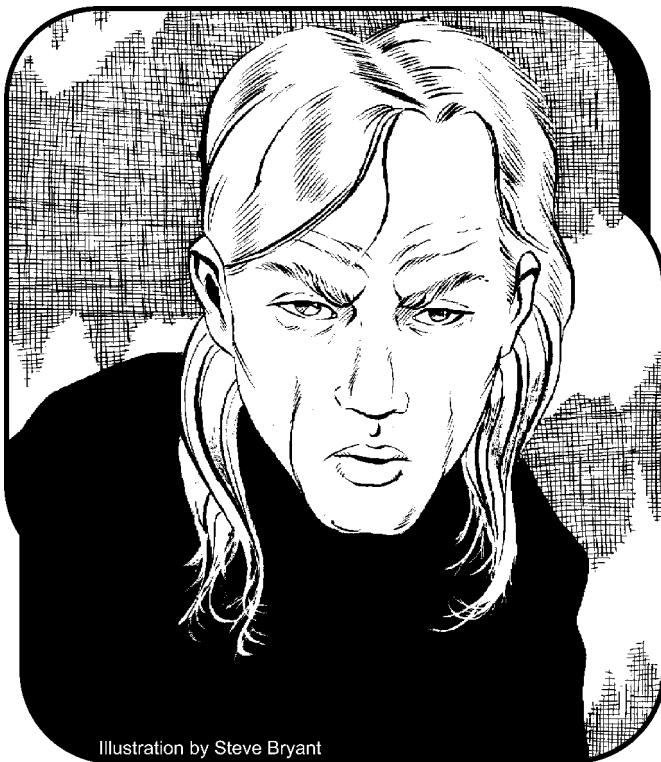


Illustration by Steve Bryant

Already known in the martial arts community as a skilled instructor of authentic kung fu, Wei also has a reputation as a knowledgeable practitioner of ancient Chinese healing arts.

Wei Cheng, 74, has long white hair but otherwise shows few signs of age. Still strong and hale, Wei now restricts his teaching to advanced students, who also act as instructors to beginning and mid-level pupils. A widower, he has several grown children and grandchildren.

Wei Cheng, Kung Fu Master: PL 6; Init +8 (+4 Dex, +4 Improved Initiative); Defense 16 (+2 base, +4 Dex); Spd 30 ft; Atk +6 melee (+2S, punch; +3S, staff), +6 ranged (+2S, misc. items); SV Dmg +2, Fort +2, REF +11, Will +3; Str 14, Dex 18, Con 15, INT 14, Wis 17, Cha 15.

Skills: Acrobatics +7, Balance +7, Climb +4, Concentration +5, Diplomacy +4, Innuendo +4, Knowledge (Chinatown) +4, Knowledge (Chinese myth and legends) +4, Knowledge (martial world) +3, Knowledge (eastern philosophy) +5, Knowledge (Tongs) +3, Language (English; native is Mandarin), Listen +6, Medicine +4, Move Silently +5, Profession (kung fu master) +6, Spot +5, Swim +3.

Feats: Attack Finesse, Attack Focus (unarmed), Dodge, Evasion, Expertise, Improved Initiative, Instant Stand, Lightning Reflexes, Two-Weapon Fighting.

Powers: Amazing Save (Ref) +5, Flight +1 [Source: Mystical; Flaw: Limited—only for walking without leaving tracks].

Equipment: Workout clothes, staff, miscellaneous Chinese weapons (in dojo).

Wei Cheng, Kung fu master

STR 6, REF 8, HLT 7, PRE 6, INT 6, WIL 7

DEF 18, INI 11, MOV 15, TGH 7, LIF 35

Disadvantages: Distinctive Features (serene, easily concealable) [-2], Psych Disad (follows code of the Chinese Master) [-5], Psych Disad (protects the weak) [-5], Psych Disad (rivalry with brother Ho Cheng) [-5], Psych Disad (seeks reconciliation with brother) [-2]

Advantages: Famous (kung fu master, local figure) [2], Fast Reflexes (+4 INI and +6 Awareness vs. surprise, already figured in to INI score) [5], Physical Adv (+2 to STR when using Kung Fu, for damage only) [5]

Skills: Acrobatics +5, Area Knowledge (Chinatown) +6, Awareness +4 (Avoid surprise +6), Business +2, Climbing +3, Concentration +5, Contortionist +5, Driving +2, First Aid +4, Flexible Weapons +7, History (China) +3, Instruction +4, Intuition +3, Knowledge (Chinatown) +6, Knowledge (Chinese healing) +6, Knowledge (Chinese myth and legends) +3, Knowledge (Kung fu) +6, Knowledge (Martial world) +3, Knowledge (Tongs) +1, Language (English; native is Mandarin) +2, Meditation +5, Melee Weapons +7, Philosophy +5, Physician +2, Professional (Kung fu master) +3, Psychology +2, Religion +2, Stealth +3, Swimming +2, Throwing +5, Unarmed Combat (Kung Fu) +8.

Powers: Flight; MOV 4 gliding (only for not leaving tracks), Deflection: Can Block thrown objects, arrows and projectiles.

Equipment: Workout clothes, miscellaneous Chinese weapons (in dojo).

SCHOOLS AND INSTRUCTORS OF NOTE

Dojos, gyms and training centers scattered throughout San Angelo offer instruction in virtually every martial art imaginable, from boxing to the newest street-fighting techniques. The city is also home to many fighting arts masters who pass their skills on to select students.

ALDER MARTIAL ARTS

A chain of schools in San Angelo, Alder Martial Arts offers instruction in karate, Aikido and tai chi. The profitable chain is owned by Tristram Alder, a nationally known karate champ who sometimes even comes by the schools to sign autographs and recruit new pupils.

HOUSE OF THE DRAGON

A martial arts studio in downtown San Angelo, the House of the Dragon teaches kung fu, kickboxing and weapon skills. Vance Hatch, who claims to be an ex-Green Beret, owns and runs the House of the Dragon. Students of this school have a reputation for being bullies.

HYONG-KIM KWANG

A Korean master of Tae Kwan Do, Hyong-Kim Kwang teaches select groups of elite students. He does not advertise, nor does he hold his classes in any particular place. Once prospective students have found Kwang, they must prove their honest desire to be instructed before he will agree to take them on.

SAKAI FIGHTING ARTS

Sakai Fighting Arts is a karate school run by James Sakai, a Japanese-American man who also teaches police self-defense courses for local law enforcement agencies. In addition to karate, he teaches kobojutsu and kenjutsu.

Sakai, a former San Angelo County sheriff's deputy, has strong ties to the local law enforcement community. His school is located in Pleasant Grove.

WILDER KARATE CENTER

A karate and self-defense school in suburban La Vista, the Wilder Karate Center is owned by Alexa Wilder, champion of the 1984 All-City Martial Arts Exhibition.

Wilder also teaches free self-defense seminars for women and children at community centers throughout San Angelo. Her insistence on making martial arts instruction affordable to those who need it means Wilder's school faces nearly constant financial problems.

THE MEDICAL WORLD

Every city needs hospitals and medical personnel to care for its citizens, and San Angelo is no exception.

FARADAY MEMORIAL CLINIC (D6)

A unique medical facility, the Faraday Memorial Clinic specializes in treating the injuries and illnesses of supers in San Angelo, not to mention those of normals caught in the crossfire of superpowered conflicts.

The clinic, located in a three-story Midtown building, opened in 1991. Financier Alastair McDermott funded its construction in

memory of Kip Faraday, also known as the super strong Alloy. The hero, who had won McDermott's friendship by rescuing his son from kidnappers in 1986, died in 1990 of a rare blood disease linked to his paranormal metallic body.

Headed by Dr. Philadelphia Ryan, known as "Dr. Phil" to her patients, the clinic provides medical care to paranormals and conducts research on their specialized needs. Its staff of highly skilled physicians excels at untangling the medical mysteries of treating supers, many of whom have bizarre metabolisms, strange eating habits and unusual allergies.

All records are kept strictly confidential, and the clinic does not require patients to reveal their true identities. Physicians at the clinic are even known to take after-hours visitors or make a house call or two to accommodate patients obsessed with secrecy.

Along with treating supers, the Faraday Memorial Clinic offers medical care to normals who are injured or otherwise affected by paranormal powers. Victims of plasma blasts, bizarre toxins, inter-dimensional teleports, alien viruses and other strange ailments are usually taken directly to the clinic or referred there by doctors at other San Angelo hospitals.

The first of its kind in the United States, the Faraday Memorial Clinic has inspired similar operations in a handful of cities but remains the pre-eminent institution in supers medicine. Clinic physicians often assist supers who have come from all over the U.S. and even other nations, for treatment.

Faraday Memorial Clinic policies mandate equal treatment for all patients, but very few criminals go to the clinic since they are likely to be reported to police and arrested. Physicians are also required by law to report all gunshot victims to law enforcement officials.

The clinic has 20 beds, including a small intensive care unit and an isolation room.

Most of the clinic's annual budget comes from private donations, though the San Angelo County health department provides

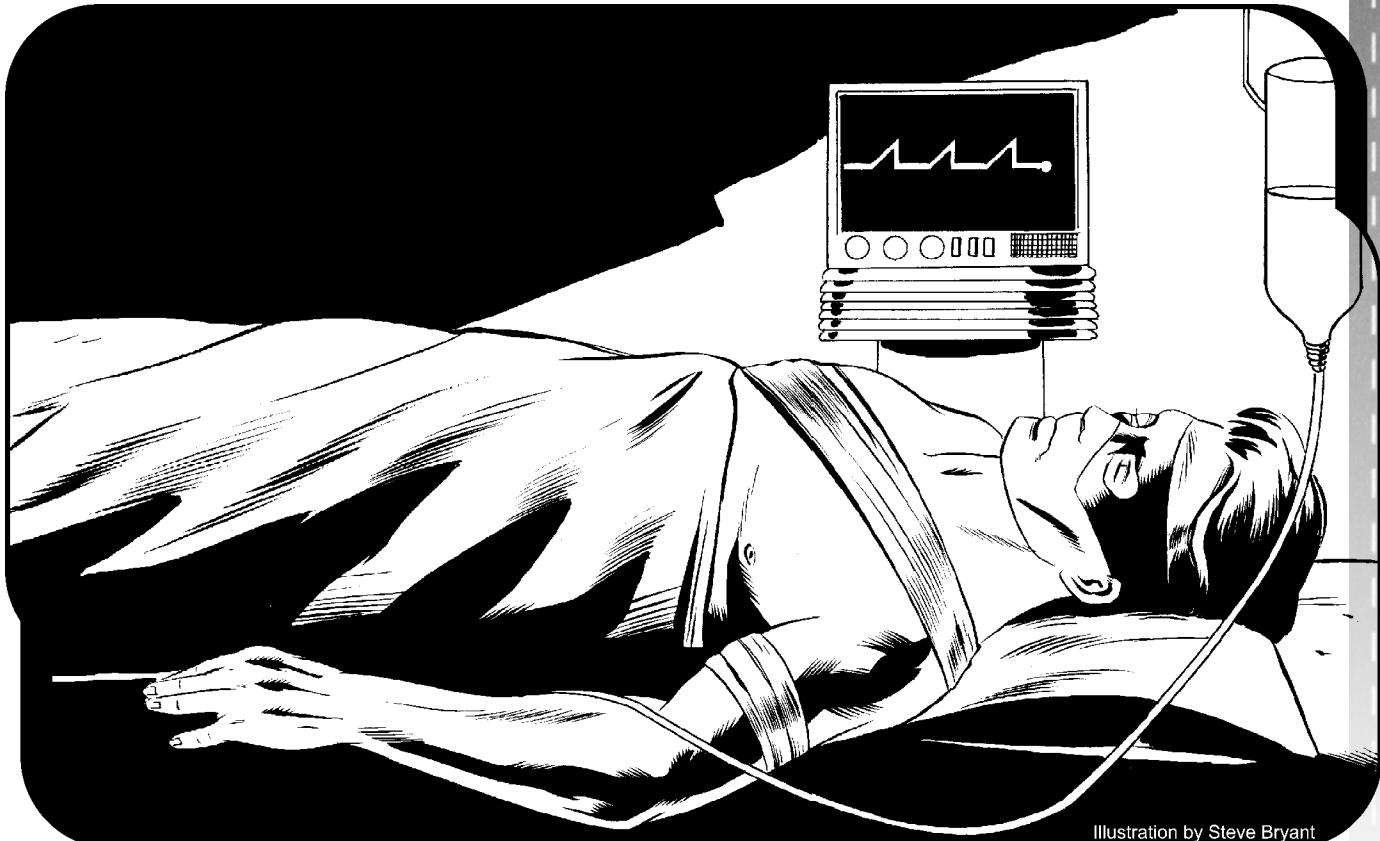


Illustration by Steve Bryant

Life in San Angelo

partial funding for its operations. Public funding for the clinic has been a hot topic at county budget hearings in recent years, however.

UNIVERSITY MEDICAL CENTER (D8)

A downtown hospital affiliated with the University of California, San Angelo, University Medical Center is the largest hospital in the county.

The 641-bed medical center features two eight-story towers, one topped by a helipad, rising over a collection of smaller buildings.

The hospital has 1,141 physicians on staff, and nearly 7,000 employees in all. A teaching hospital, it has a complement of interns and residents in addition to attending physicians. Several University Medical Center doctors are nationally recognized authorities on their specialties.

The medical center has a well-regarded trauma center and an air ambulance service. Critically injured accident and crime victims are often taken to the medical center even if other hospitals are closer.

University Medical Center has specialized facilities for burns, organ transplants, neonatal care, cardiology, orthopedics, oncology and pediatrics, among others. The hospital complex also houses an AIDS research center.

In addition to its teaching programs, the hospital is a focus for medical research of all kinds and constantly advertises for participants in various clinical trials.

CAMPAIGN TIP

An experiment gone wrong at University Medical Center could provide an origin story for a superpowered PC or NPC. A new drug or other treatment could induce superhuman powers in a volunteer, whether by accident or design.

If by design, the incident could be the work of an unethical scientist, or perhaps a villain or secret agency that substituted its own experimental serum for the drug being tested.

OTHER HOSPITALS

Most San Angelo hospitals have been absorbed by chains or alliances, though a handful of independent facilities are scattered here and there.

In addition to acute-care hospitals, San Angelo boasts a multitude of convalescent homes, psychiatric care centers, nursing homes and other health-care facilities. Community clinics operated by the county provide routine health-care services to the poor and indigent.

KELLEY HOSPITALS

A network of local hospitals, Kelley Hospitals was named after the first physician in Old San Angelo, Dr. Avery Kelley.

The health-care firm has hospitals in the downtown, La Vista and South San Angelo. Kelley South San Angelo Hospital has a trauma center equipped to handle extremely critical patients.

The chain recently broke ground on a new facility in the growing community of Castle Heights.

ST. MARY'S HOSPITALS

The St. Mary's family of hospitals was founded at the turn of the century in San Angelo by an order of Catholic nuns. The hospitals are now run by a not-for-profit corporation, though nuns serving as volunteers are still frequently encountered.

The corporation has hospitals in the downtown, Lakeview, Rancho Madera and Pleasant Grove. St. Mary's hospitals are particularly well-known for their childbirth centers and community outreach health classes.

SAN ANGELO COUNTY GENERAL HOSPITAL (E10)

A county-run hospital in the tough Armory neighborhood of downtown, San Angelo County General Hospital primarily provides medical services to the poor and indigent.

Many doctors and nurses are attracted to this hospital by the challenging, fast-paced work, despite the low pay and often unavoidable working conditions. Perpetually under-staffed, under-funded and under-equipped, the outdated 415-bed hospital is nearly always full.

The hospital's reputation is still recovering from a 1994 scandal involving unauthorized experiments on humans by Dr. Anton Megalo, who disappeared while being investigated.

PROMINENT DOCTORS

Dr. Gil Adams: A plastic surgeon with a lucrative private practice. One of the wealthiest men in San Angelo, Adams is an avid mountain climber. He has scaled most of the peaks in California, climbed Mt. McKinley in Alaska and hopes to take part in an expedition to Mt. Everest soon.

Dr. Julia Brandeis: A psychologist and part-time instructor at UC San Angelo who has authored two best-selling books on the psychology of superhuman criminals.

The FBI and other law enforcement agencies sometimes consult her on cases involving insane or disturbed supers. A limp from a childhood injury forces Brandeis to rely on a cane.

Dr. Farah Ghazanfari: An Iranian-born eye surgeon considered one of the top physicians in her field in the world. Already well-known in the medical community, Ghazanfari came to the

SAN ANGELO HOSPITALS

Castle Heights Community Hospital
 Children's Hospital of San Angelo
 Delta Community Hospital
 Kelley Castle Heights Hospital *
 Kelley La Vista Hospital
 Kelley Medical Center
 Kelley South San Angelo Hospital
 Marshall Community Hospital
 Pacific Glen Psychiatric Hospital
 Pleasant Grove Memorial Hospital
 Sacred Heart Memorial Hospital
 St. Mary's General Hospital
 St. Mary's Lakeview Hospital
 St. Mary's Pleasant Grove Hospital
 St. Mary's Rancho Madera Hospital
 San Angelo County General Hospital
 University Medical Center
 Veterans Memorial Hospital
 * Under construction

United States following the fall of the Shah in 1979. She came to San Angelo in the early 1990s after a lengthy recruiting effort by Kelley Hospitals lured her away from an Ohio hospital.

Dr. Anton Megalo: A doctor at San Angelo County General Hospital who vanished in 1994 after officials discovered that he was engaged in unauthorized human experimentation.

Megalo apparently used advanced cybernetic implants to enhance the senses, strength, agility and speed of his test subjects, chiefly derelicts and runaways. The few jour-

THE MILITARY WORLD

The armed forces have a strong presence in San Angelo, thanks primarily to the activities of Forgan Air Force Base in Pleasant Grove.

Aside from the air base, the city also contains several National Guard armories and recruiting offices for all branches of the armed forces.

In addition, a federal Veterans Administration hospital in Northside provides medical care for the area's large military retiree population.

FORGAN AIR FORCE BASE

Forgan Air Force Base in Pleasant Grove serves as one of the chief employers in San Angelo and accounts for the sizable military presence in the community.

The base, established in 1939 as Forgan Field by the Army Air Corps, is named for a pilot from San Angelo killed in World War I. In 1948, the newly formed U.S. Air Force officially renamed the facility Forgan Air Force Base.

During the Cold War, the airbase housed a Strategic Air Command bomber wing and was the site of numerous protests by anti-nuclear demonstrators. The bomber wing has since been decommissioned, and the base now houses an Air National Guard F-16 wing.

Forgan Air Force Base primarily serves as a key aircraft repair and supply depot for the Air Force.

The airbase covers 3,852 acres, with 48 miles of roads and 1.4 million square yards of runways. Approximately 3,600 active-duty military personnel are assigned to Forgan AFB, and another 10,300 civilian employees work at the airfield. The airbase also supports the roughly 6,000 dependents of its active-duty personnel, and provides services to the large population of military retirees in San Angelo.

Three gates on Rogers Boulevard provide access to Forgan Air Force Base, and are manned by sentries 24 hours a day.

The base is practically a small city unto itself, complete with its own housing, shopping, recreation facilities and churches. Public safety needs are handled by special Air Force units, as are all other services, such as road maintenance and trash pickup.

Twelve co-ed dorms, with room for 60 personnel each, provide on-base housing for single officers and enlisted personnel. Forgan Air Force Base also has two housing developments for families. The 100-home Wherry Housing complex on the base is reserved for officers, while the 540-home Capehart Housing complex five miles from the base houses families of both officers and enlisted personnel.

The Air Force administers and polices all military housing, including the off-base site.

An on-base shopping complex contains the commissary, base exchange, a barber shop, beauty salon, florist and snack bar. Dining facilities and a credit union are also available. Fitness centers, a theater, bowling alley, swimming pools and a golf course can also be found at the airbase.

The base also contains some little-known facilities, such as a nuclear reactor used for neutron radiography, a process of checking internal aircraft components for rust that cannot be detected with x-rays.

An ultra-secure portion of the base also houses facilities for top-secret military research. While the Air Force prefers to locate such facilities in out-of-the-way places, the concentration of su-

nals recovered from his abandoned lab hint at a handful of successes, along with countless failures that left his subjects disfigured, crippled or dead.

There are rumors that Megalo still lives somewhere in San Angelo, continuing his illicit experiments and providing medical services to the underworld to finance his research. (For more information on Dr. Megalo see *Denizens of San Angelo*.)

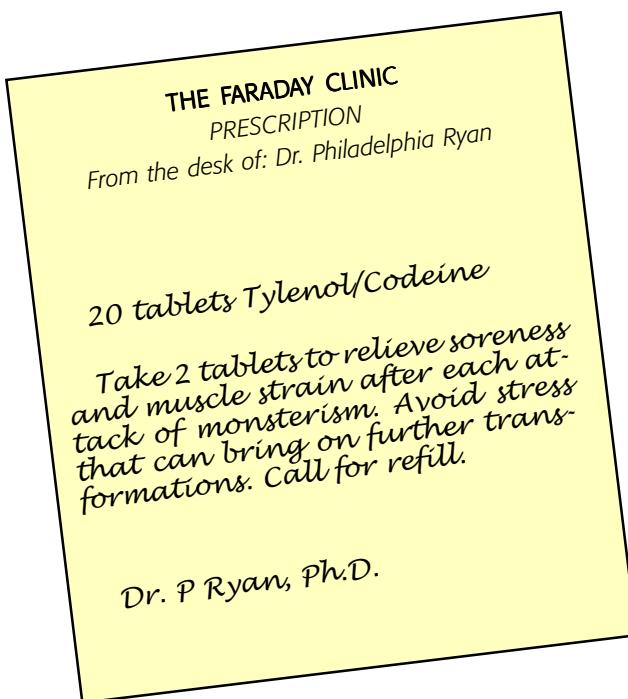
Dr. Gillian Palmer: A popular pediatrician at Sacred Heart Memorial Hospital in suburban La Vista. *Golden City Magazine* named Palmer one of San Angelo's best physicians in a 1995 cover story. An amateur painter, Palmer sells her creations at street fairs and farmers' markets.

Dr. Gregorio Ramos: A brilliant neurosurgeon known for his innovative brain surgery techniques involving laser technology. Originally from the Philippines, Ramos serves on the medical staff at University Medical Center.

Dr. R.J. Spencer: A family physician in private practice. Spencer has penned several books on the declining number of general practitioners in the United States, and regularly appears on talk shows and other venues to discuss his findings. Spencer also heads a charitable organization of California physicians who visit remote areas of third world nations to set up temporary clinics for the populace.

Dr. Harper Welles: A promising young surgical resident at University Medical Center who gained some notoriety and nearly lost her residency for posing nude in a national men's magazine. She is the daughter of attorney Oscar Welles, owner of the Welles Law Firm.

Dr. Victor Yazzie: Chief of the trauma center at University Medical Center. Yazzie has been credited with creating one of the best emergency-care centers in the state. Yazzie, who is a Navajo Indian, has a large collection of authentic Native American art.



Life in San Angelo

pers in San Angelo makes Forgan AFB a logical location for supers-related research.

The Cavalier powered armor program is the largest ongoing project at these facilities.

The base commander is Major General Frank X. Neale, a 35-year veteran of the U.S. Air Force who took charge in 1995.

This doesn't make any sense. I'm reading a thermal signature... My God, it's huge. If it wasn't moving I'd say it was an explosion. Yes sir. Getting a fix now ...it's two klicks south/southeast of San Angelo. Negative, sir, no active silos in that area.

Hold on a... Getting some E.M. interference - off the scale. This is too weird. No, sir, I don't ... wait a minute, I think I... One moment, general. Johnson, remember that fight between those supers outside Albuquerque a few months back? I'll just bet... Bringing the file up now... Match on the thermal signature!

General, I think we're looking at a paranormal battle of some kind. This is not a launch. I say again, this is not a launch.

— Capt. Robert Harlan, 32, NORAD

OTHER MILITARY INSTALLATIONS

NATIONAL GUARD ARMORIES

State National Guard and armed forces reserve units in San Angelo can be called out in times of crisis, such as rioting or natural disasters. Almost all National Guard personnel are part-time volunteers who train one weekend a month and two weeks each summer.

Two armories in San Angelo house equipment for National Guard units, including tanks and Highly Mobile Multi-wheeled Vehicles (HMMWVs) or "humvees." The recent theft of an M-60 tank from a San Diego depot has prompted the National Guard to heighten security measures at all its facilities.

Armories are also used as meeting points and training grounds by National Guard units.

The central San Angelo armory (E10) is located in the downtown neighborhood of the same name, while the other armory is located in Rancho Madera south of the San Angelo River.

Major Luke Halliday, like most of his subordinates a part-time volunteer guardsman, serves as commander of the San Angelo detachment of the National Guard.

MILITARY PERSONNEL OF NOTE

Major General Frank X. Neale: The commanding officer at Forgan Air Force Base. Neale, a 35-year Air Force veteran, started his military career as a bomber pilot during the Vietnam War. The young officer was shot down over North Vietnam and spent two years in a POW camp.

After several months of recuperation following his release, Neale returned to active duty and began to climb in rank. Assignments to the Pentagon and bases all over the United States, Germany and Japan furthered his career.

In 1995, Neale was transferred to Forgan Air Force Base after several years as the commander of a Midwestern airbase. He plans to retire from military duty in two years.

Lt. Col. Martin Chun: The Security Police commander at Forgan Air Force Base. Chun is responsible for protecting and policing the airbase. Personnel under his command staff the base gates, patrol for intruders and investigate crimes committed on the base, as well as provide security for the aircraft and classified facilities on the base.

Chun has headed security at Forgan Air Force Base since 1995. He previously served at bases on the East Coast and overseas, in Europe and Korea. Known for his thoroughness and attention to detail, he also has little patience for sloppiness or incompetence. Airmen unlucky enough to be called into Chun's office after a security breach or other mishap are in for the chewing-out of a lifetime.

Major Luke Halliday: Commander of the San Angelo detachment of the state National Guard. Halliday served in the U.S. Army and the reserves before transferring to the National Guard. He is a volunteer in the guard and holds down a civilian job at Peregrine Aircraft. In his spare time, Halliday trains hunting dogs.

THE MYSTIC SCENE

The power of the flux has brought magic to life, though some claim mystic forces have been at work in the world for millennia. Given the time-defying nature of flux energies, none can say for certain whether these tales are true.

Arcane goings-on are a topic of mystery to most San Angelinos, and those few with direct experience of the mystic scene tend to keep the knowledge to themselves.

Nonetheless, certain places, items and people in San Angelo have gained a reputation for mystic or supernatural ties.

CHINATOWN (C11)

The downtown neighborhood of Chinatown has long been a focus of mystic activity and arcane forces in San Angelo.

In the Golden Age of heroes, Chinatown fell under the power of T'ien Lung, a Chinese sorcerer and arch-criminal who controlled the Wing Chao tong.

Nowadays, the neighborhood has reinvented itself for the tourist trade, but behind the public facade lurks the real face of Chinatown—a place of ancient healing arts, magic, vengeful spirits and other strangeness.

The back alleys of Chinatown are home to countless dusty curio shops offering all kinds of puzzles, gizmos, pets and other oddities, some reputedly bearing bizarre curses. Philosophy-quoting kung fu mystics, often schooled in healing rituals, are also part of the unseen Chinatown.

The arcane forces at play in Chinatown extend into the century-old storm drains below the streets as well, and there are tales of labyrinthine networks of tunnels and secret places in the dark underground.

Based on the superstitions, legends and religious beliefs of ancient Asia, the mystic goings-on in Chinatown are often unintelligible, and invisible, to outsiders.

ORLOFF BUILDING (G9)

A four-story apartment house on Pratt Street in the Cathedral Square neighborhood, the Orloff Building has a Gothic motif popular with architecture students and sketch artists.

The otherwise nondescript building hides a dark secret, however. Constructed in the 1920s, the Orloff Building is actually the



Illustration by Stacia Cook

work of a secret cult. The entire structure has been carefully designed to attract and absorb mystic energies—a gigantic magical battery.

The buildup of 75 years of arcane forces has started to have a strange effect on the Orloff Building. Doors occasionally open and shut of their own accord, drawers fly open and residents sometimes come home to find their furniture mysteriously rearranged.

The purpose of the building, and the goals of its cultist builders, are still a mystery.

RAVEN BOOKS (D5)

A little-known occult bookstore in Midtown, Raven Books stocks candles, incense and other oddments along with hundreds of tomes on arcane topics.

The store's bookshelves are crowded with volumes ranging from compendiums of spells to scholarly texts. Rare manuscripts, a few dating back centuries, are kept behind the counter or locked away in storerooms.

Vincent Kane, son of the mystic Golden Age hero known as Dr. Oblivion, opened Raven Books in 1962. Kane did not inherit his father's magical powers, but shared his interest in things arcane and became well-known in occult circles for his wide-ranging knowledge.

Liz Kane, Vincent's daughter, now runs Raven Books. She doesn't sell books that she considers harmful or dangerous, and refuses customers that may use the knowledge in her vast collection of tomes for evil.

OTHER MYSTIC PLACES

Late-night stories of ghostly visitations, supernatural happenings or other unexplained phenomena are told about many San Angelo landmarks.

BROOKCREST ESTATES

A posh Lakeview subdivision, Brookcrest Estates is purportedly afflicted by a rash of hauntings, poltergeists, possessions and other supernatural activity. Parapsychology experts and psychics hired by desperate homeowners have rated it as one of the most supernaturally active sites in the nation.

Most of the homes in Brookcrest Estates are up for sale, but word of the bizarre happenings in the neighborhood has spread and buyers are scarce.

Unbeknownst to its frightened residents, Brookcrest Estates lies atop an ancient Native American burial ground.

CATHEDRAL SQUARE (G9)

The Old World streets of Cathedral Square have given rise to many stories of supernatural activity, particularly those involving vampires and werewolves. Midnight tales of ghosts, ghouls and demonic creatures in the neighborhood also abound.

Gypsy fortunetellers are a very real part of the Cathedral Square scene, and many of the older women in the neighborhood, immigrants from Eastern Europe, are knowledgeable about healing herbs, protective charms and other methods of combating occult influences.

OLD SAN ANGELO JAILHOUSE (B8)

Some San Angelinos claim the historic Gold Rush-era jailhouse in Old San Angelo is haunted by the ghost of Andrew Jenkins, a town marshal killed by a mob of vigilantes in 1854.

Late at night, his restless spirit rattles the cell doors in the jailhouse to check the locks, just as Jenkins did in life before going to bed, according to ghost-story aficionados.

SPEAR OF DESTINY

A mystic artifact of enormous but undefined power, the Spear of Destiny is believed to be the weapon used by a Roman centurion to pierce the side of Jesus Christ at the crucifixion. Legend has it that whoever possesses the lance will rule the world. After the death of Christ, the Spear of Destiny tumbled down through the pages of history, resurfacing briefly during the Crusades before being lost again to the mists of time.

Numerous stories of the spear tell of its various adventures and particularly the efforts of evil men to gain its power. The opera *Parsifal*, by composer Richard Wagner, recounts the story of a wicked sorcerer who sought to wrest the lance from the Knights of the Holy Grail. The truth of these tales remains unknown, however.

The Spear of Destiny next resurfaced in the dark days leading up to World War II, when Nazi dictator Adolf Hitler, who had a fascination for the occult, ordered his followers to seek out the holy lance to add its arcane power to his military might.

As is so often the case concerning the spear, accounts of this point in its history differ. Some tales have it that the relic was snatched from the hands of Nazi operatives by a daredevil adventurer and taken to the U.S. for safekeeping.

This version was recounted in the highly fictionalized but very popular 1982 film *Tyler North and the Spear of Destiny*.

But other reports suggest that Hitler actually obtained the Spear of Destiny and was only stopped from utilizing its power by a Golden Age hero team, possibly the Liberty Corps, in a secret mission behind enemy lines.

Life in San Angelo

In either case, an iron spear point believed to be that of the fabled Spear of Destiny spent the post-war years on display in glass box in a West German museum.

The artifact, whose authenticity was never proved, was stolen while on loan to the San Angelo Metropolitan Museum in 1950. It has not yet reappeared.

OTHER MYSTIC ARTIFACTS

Various tales and legends ascribe arcane powers to a handful of items found in San Angelo. Most ordinary people are not familiar with these relics or their history.

CODEX OF SUMMONING

A dusty volume dating back to the Middle Ages, the Codex of Summoning appears to contain various complex spells for calling forth demons or other extra-dimensional beings. None can tell if the arcane directions are effective or merely insane scribblings.

The only copy of the tome is shelved in an out-of-the-way area in the rare books room of the Niven Library at UC San Angelo. The book has not been checked out in more than 50 years, and librarians have forgotten that it even exists.

MASK OF THE JAGUAR

A clay mask of Aztec origin on display at the San Angelo Metropolitan Museum, the Mask of the Jaguar was found in a ruined temple in Mexico in the early 20th century.

The Aztecs believed that the war god Tezcatlipoca frequently appeared as a jaguar, historians say. Some obscure legends suggest the mask may be integral to a complex magical ritual intended to bring Tezcatlipoca, or a likeness of the god, to Earth. No record of this ritual is believed to exist today, however.



TAKEMOTO BLADE

An heirloom katana dating back to 1600s-era Japan, the Takemoto Blade has passed to Kyoji Takemoto, a senior vice president with Taiyo Corp. assigned to San Angelo.

Generations of Takemoto samurai wielded this katana, created by a master swordsmith, in the service of their lords. Today the sword is displayed in a glass case in Takemoto's office at the Taiyo Corp. computer chip plant in Arroyo Verde.

Some Japanese legends say the Takemoto Blade carried an enchantment of some kind.

MYSTIC PEOPLE

Harvest Alexander: A witch who is an expert on herbs. Alexander sometimes teaches classes on plant identification for local park districts and learning exchange programs. She also prepares herbal concoctions and homeopathic remedies for a variety of ills.

Father Peter Day: A Catholic priest who reportedly exorcised a child possessed by a demon in the Philippines before being reassigned to San Angelo. A deeply pious man, he now serves as a special assistant to Archbishop Francis Kelly.

Father Day has been forbidden by church superiors, who deny that exorcisms are still performed, to respond to rumors about his experience in the Philippines.

Marcus Fortune: A psychic detective who investigates cases involving supernatural or mystic influences. His offices are found in a non-descript office building in downtown San Angelo, and Fortune doesn't advertise. Most of his business comes from referrals.

Some people say that Fortune once tracked and killed a vampire preying on the Riverfront nightclub scene, earning the enmity of a colony of nosferatu in the city.

Liz Kane: The owner of Raven Books, an occult bookstore in Midtown. The young grand-daughter of mystic Golden Age hero Dr. Oblivion, Kane has a formidable knowledge of the arcane for her relative youth. Heroes often consult her for advice on the world of magic.

Nadia Patrascu: An aged Romanian woman who lives in Cathedral Square. Despite being illiterate, Patrascu has an encyclopedic knowledge of helpful herbs, charms, omens and the supernatural, handed down orally in her family for generations.

Geoffrey A. Shields: A San Angelo collector with a fancy for books and artifacts related to the occult. Shields keeps a sizable collection of bizarre items from around the world in his Brackett Park home, along with an extensive library of magic-related tomes.

Despite his interest in acquiring things arcane, Shields has only a rudimentary knowledge of the mystic world and does not realize that some of his collectibles could conceivably be quite dangerous in the wrong hands.

Police find demon in Cathedral Square

City police officers responded to a prowler call at St. Mary's Cathedral in the Cathedral Square neighborhood early this morning. When they arrived, they were met by a bizarre scene. Police records tell of a large "bat-like demon" hovering over one of the cathedral buildings. The creature was approximately seven



Illustration by Steve Bryant

THE POLITICAL WORLD

The world of politics plays a key role in the story of any big city, San Angelo not excepted.

In addition to the City Council and county supervisors detailed elsewhere, San Angelo is home to numerous state and national politicians, not to mention local political powerbrokers and activists.

CAMPAIGN TIP

PCs will no doubt be drawn into the world of politics at some point. Supervillains are always capturing politicians, it seems, requiring the intervention of the heroes. And politicians inveighing against the "mutant menace" are a staple of many comic books and superhero RPG campaigns.

Inventive GMs can come up with some new twists on these themes, however. Perhaps the PCs are asked to endorse, and even campaign for, a pro-supers candidate. Such a candidate would likely arouse the ire of hate groups and others who dislike supers, sparking attempts to discredit or even assassinate the candidate.

Or the candidate herself could have superpowers, either discreetly or openly. In fact, a popular PC with a Public ID could be asked to run for office by a local political party—he would have instant name recognition with the public, for one thing. Of course, such a campaign would create all kinds of complications

(Continued)

I saw Congressman Garcia on Nightline last week. They all say he's a nutcase, but I think he's the only one making sense. All these supers, with their colorful costumes and flashy powers—it's a sideshow. Bread and circuses, you know?

We're so busy watching the costumed freaks slug it out that nobody notices when the government cuts welfare or the city tries to shut down Golden Rule. It's all a sham.

— "Freedom," 28, revolutionary

CAMPAIGN TIP CONTINUED

for the PC and his compatriots, not to mention being a major distraction from fighting superpowered criminals.

Villains can also get involved in the political scene, perhaps by offering covert financial backing to a candidate or politician who tries to shut down the PC hero team, or running for office by themselves—"Vote Titan for Mayor, or Die" might make a persuasive campaign slogan! Such an escapade could be played for comic relief, or used to mask a deeper, more sinister plot.

SENATOR CATHERINE FORBES

U.S. Senator

Jonathan should have known better. He knew how his mother felt about paranormals, but he'd insisted on bringing the girl to dinner anyway. And when he announced that they were going to be married...





Catherine Forbes tried to be tactful as she explained the prejudice they would face, the dangers of conceiving a child with mutated DNA. But the girl burst into tears, and Jonathan had refused to speak to her as they left.

A few months later, she got the wedding invitation. She didn't attend, of course. Later, Forbes heard the newlyweds had bought a home in downtown San Angelo, a fixer-upper. She privately wished them well, but Forbes hasn't spoken to her son since that dinner party.

* * *

A San Angelo native, Forbes won a U.S. Senate seat in 1990 after a long career in state and local politics. An attorney, Forbes hasn't practiced law in many years, devoting her full attention to her political career.

Forbes, a Republican, advocates stricter government control of supers, whom she considers a potent threat to the safety and security of all Americans. Forbes fears that superpowered individuals might someday take over the world, enslaving those who lack their might. The megalomaniacal schemes of some supers have bolstered her arguments.

She has been slowly gathering support in Congress for a law requiring supers to register with the federal government, but Forbes does not yet feel that she has enough votes and has not introduced the legislation.

In the Senate, Forbes serves on committees overseeing the judiciary and the armed forces. Her positions on these powerful bodies are a measure of her rapid rise at the Capitol.

Though she lives in Washington D.C., Forbes maintains a home in San Angelo and frequently visits for fund-raisers, speeches and other activities. An occasional speaker at the Church on the Hill, Forbes is also a close friend of developer Benjamin Morgan.

She serves on the board of directors of the Horizon Institute, a non-profit think tank that examines the role played by supers in society.

Married to attorney Roger Forbes for 35 years, she has two adult children. In addition to Jonathan, from whom she is estranged, she has a daughter living in Angel Beach.

Personality/Motivation: Senator Catherine Forbes is an experienced, smooth politician who can be as charming or as hard-willed as the situation demands.

Publicly, she presents logical, well-reasoned arguments for stricter government policies on superhumans. Privately, Forbes considers supers to be dangerous, garish and ill-mannered. Even the so-called heroes, who go around in loud, immodest costumes spouting easy solutions to society's ills, are repugnant to her.

Of course, Forbes doesn't consider herself a prejudiced person - just an honest one who can see past the glitz and glamour around supers that have blinded others.

Quote: *"Some people say we need gun control, but superpowers are more dangerous than any firearm. Who's going to control them?"*

Powers/Tactics: A skillful politician, Catherine Forbes is an excellent speaker with a persuasive style. She also has many valuable governmental and political contacts.

Appearance: Catherine Forbes, 54, is a distinguished woman with graying brown hair and brown eyes. She stands 5'6" and has an average build. Forbes wears contact lenses and uses bifocals for reading.

Senator Catherine Forbes: PL 3; Init +0; Defense 10; Spd 30 ft; Atk +0 melee (+0S, punch); SV Dmg +1, Fort +1, REF +0, Will +2; Str 10, Dex 11, Con 12, INT 13, Wis 14, Cha 15. **Feats:** Connected. **Skills:** Bluff +5, Diplomacy +6, Gather Information +4, Innuendo +5, Knowledge (bureaucracy) +5, Knowledge (federal government) +4, Knowledge (politics) +4, Listen +3, Profession (US senator) +6, Spot +3. **Equipment:** Fine suit, sunglasses, purse (w/misc. personal items), cell phone, limousine w/chauffeur.

Senator Catherine Forbes

STR 4, REF 4, HLT 5, PRE 7, INT 5, WIL 6
DEF 14, INI 5, MOV 9, TGH 5, LIF 27

Disadvantages: Physical Disad (nearsighted, -3 to Awareness rolls, correctable) [-2], Psych Disad (prejudiced against supers) [-2]

Advantages: Allies (Benjamin Morgan, C. Fullerton Hughes, Councilman Tom Kincaid, Kenneth Cameron II, Rev. John Warden, Supervisor Jeffrey Daley, all at Conv. level) [12], Ally (Fellow Senators, state Governor, Gen. Frank X. Neale, Rep. Cassandra Knight, Rep. Robert N. Welch, all at Edge level) [25], Ally (US President) [10], Famous (veteran US senator) [5], Favors (one favor each from 3 fellow senators, governor of home state, and County Supervisor Jeffrey Daley) [5], Membership: US Senate (MR 8/Senator, Major) [32], Perk (license to practice law) [2], Perk (Skyline Club member) [2]

Skills: Area Knowledge (San Angelo) +3, Area Knowledge (Washington DC) +3, Awareness +3, Bureaucracy +5, Computers (use) +2, Conversation +5, Cooking +2, Dancing +3, Driving +2, Economics +2, History +2, Instruction +4, Intrigue +2, Knowledge (federal government) +6, Knowledge (federal judiciary) +3, Knowledge (political rivals) +3, Knowledge (political world) +6, Knowledge (US military) +3, Knowledge (US Senate) +6, Negotiation +4, Orate +6, Persuasion +5, Politics +4, Professional (attorney) +1, Professional (US senator) +6, Society +5, Style +3, Swimming +2, Writing +5.

Equipment: Fine suit, sunglasses, purse (w/misc. personal items), cell phone, limousine w/chauffeur.

OTHER NATIONAL POLITICIANS

Rep. Manuel Garcia: A Democrat from Pleasant Grove who has served in the House of Representatives since 1992. A political firebrand who tends to label his detractors as racists, Garcia has condemned supers as fascist tools of the oppressors in America. His re-election victories have been narrow affairs, however, as Garcia's confrontational style has made him fairly ineffective in Congress.

Rep. Cassandra Knight: A Democrat who has represented downtown San Angelo in the House of Representatives since 1984. Knight, who is African American, fights to retain and expand the numerous federal programs aiding the people of San Angelo. Her proudest achievements include establishing federally funded preschools in the city's poorest neighborhoods and winning a federal grant for an AIDS hospice in Midtown. Knight underwent surgery and chemotherapy for breast cancer in 1995 and, though the cancer has not recurred, is reportedly considering retiring at the end of her current term.

Rep. Robert N. Welch: A Republican who represents the Lakeview area. A Vietnam veteran and ex-police officer elected in the 1994 Republican sweep of Congress, Welch has a strong anti-crime platform. He has helped San Angelo area law enforcement agencies win several federal grants. Welch also applauds the actions of crime-fighting supers, and has proposed creating a federal agency composed of supers to battle crime on a national scale.

Welch does not know that he fathered a child while in Vietnam. An outcast in Vietnam, his son, Tam "Tommy" Pak, was sent to the U.S. in the 1980s by his mother. After running away from several foster homes, Pak ended up in San Angelo, where he has fallen in with an Asian gang. Neither Pak nor Welch are aware of their relationship.

I heard that Congresswoman Knight is thinking about retiring. I hope she doesn't but I'd certainly understand. She's done a lot for this community. Unlike those supers, Ms. Knight really cares about the people.

- Steve Bradford, 42, unemployed

LOCAL POLITICIANS

Joseph Fong: A key player on the local Republican Central Committee. Fong, a chief fund-raiser for the party, is friendly with most of the Republican politicians in San Angelo and is well-known in the political community despite his never having held elective office. He owns Fong Realty, one of the larger commercial real estate brokerages in San Angelo, and serves on the city Economic Development Commission.

Nathan Hardesty: A political pro who runs a top-notch consulting firm responsible for numerous successful local, state and national campaigns. Hardesty, who is the brother-in-law of developer Benjamin Morgan, has an excellent reputation in the field, though disgruntled foes of his clients claim that he engages in dirty politics.

Hardesty & Associates most recently made headlines by guiding political outsider Erik Bates to an upset victory in the 1995 special election to replace the late Supervisor Rod Weber. Deputy DA Roger Feist has hired Hardesty to manage his upcoming campaign for the district attorney's post.

Randolph McAlpine: A longtime city councilman who lost his seat to Emily Carver in 1996. Despite his loss at the polls, McAlpine remains a political powerbroker in San Angelo. He now operates largely behind the scenes, lobbying his former colleagues on behalf of his friends and business interests.

McAlpine has made a fortune in the rental housing market, but most of his properties are run-down and neglected. He owns hundreds of homes and apartments in Brenton, Lemon Terrace, Rancho Madera and the downtown, mostly rented to newly arrived Russian and Southeast Asian immigrants who rarely complain to the authorities about substandard housing.

One of the biggest slumlords in the city, McAlpine conceals his real estate holdings by assigning them to various property management firms under his covert control.

Lois Rosenwald: A retired teacher and former San Angelo City Council member who serves on the local Democratic Central Committee. Rosenwald has proven adept at mediating squabbles within the party and bringing oft-contentious special interest factions together to deliver solid support for local Democratic candidates.

POLITICAL ACTIVISTS

Sergei Alexandrov: A Russian-American who has been thrust into the role of spokesman for the growing community of Russian and Ukrainian immigrants in San Angelo. Alexandrov, who came to the United States in the 1970s, has worked his way up to the No. 2 spot in the county Health and Human Assistance Department. In his spare time, he assists newcomers from Ukraine and Russia with finding housing, jobs and government services. He also occasionally speaks out on issues affecting Russian and Ukrainian immigrants.

Mary Anne Battaglia: A San Angelo homemaker and founder of STOP, or Supers Trashing Our Peace. Battaglia argues that the frequent public battles between supers are desensitizing young people to violence. She also says that intense media coverage of supers-related violence sends the wrong message to impressionable children.

STOP has attracted a modest following in San Angelo, and Battaglia has appeared on several talk shows and newscasts to present the organization's case.

Jeremiah Trent: A low-powered metahuman and founder of the Paranormal Defense League. A member of the wealthy Trent family, Jeremiah was disowned by his father and now has little to do with the rest of the family. A house painter by trade, he uses his minor stretching powers to eliminate the need for scaffolds and ladders.

As president of the PDL, Trent speaks out against prejudice, mostly on behalf of low-powered metahumans and supers who have been deformed by their transformation. A shoestring budget and paltry membership roster limit the political clout of the league, however.

Jose Villalobos: A founder and leader of the San Angelo Concilio, an organization formed to promote and protect the rights of Latinos. Villalobos helped organize the Concilio in the 1960s, and continues to be an influential leader of the group.

The Concilio came into prominence in 1970, when it won a court case against San Angelo County for discriminatory hiring practices against Latinos. Along with protecting civil rights, the Concilio also promotes Latino culture through traditional festivals, dances, musical performances and other events in the city.

Life in San Angelo

THE PROFESSIONAL WORLD

Professionals make up a key component of San Angelo commerce. Countless banks, stock brokerages, ad agencies, publishers and law firms can be found in the city, especially in the high-energy downtown district.

So the heroes captured some bad guy. Big deal. The electro-magnetic pulses fritzed out half the computers in my office. Who's going to pay for that?

- Kevin Wong, 36, administrative assistant

BANKING AND FINANCE

Banks, stock brokerages and other high-finance ventures flourish in San Angelo. Along with hundreds of bank branches and credit unions, the city is home to the corporate headquarters of several financial institutions.

San Angelo financiers are trying to strengthen their presence in the international financial scene, which continues to be dominated in the Pacific Rim by San Francisco and Los Angeles. The Golden City has become home to the corporate computing centers of numerous West Coast banks, however, due to its relative safety from earthquakes.

PROSPECTOR BANK

Founded by San Angelo pioneer Jeremiah Bannon in 1865, Prospector Bank is now the largest locally owned financial institution in the city.

The bank has an estimated \$1.9 billion in assets, with \$1.6 billion in deposits and \$1.2 billion in net loans. Prospector Bank has a 2.4 percent share of the city's banking market.

Its headquarters, the Prospector Bank Building, is one of the tallest buildings in San Angelo. The consumer-oriented bank also has branches throughout Northern California, and a corporate computing center in Arroyo Verde.

OTHER FINANCIAL INSTITUTIONS

Hundreds of banks, credit unions and other institutions operate in San Angelo, ranging from small investment banks with a select clientele to consumer-oriented outfits with branches scattered all over the metropolis.

First Bank of Chinatown: A small bank founded in the 1940s in Chinatown, the First Bank of Chinatown has a primarily Asian clientele. In addition to consumer services, the bank invests in Asian-owned business ventures, particularly in and around Chinatown. (For more information, see *The Dragon's Gate*.)

Delta Financial Bank: Delta Financial Bank is an investment bank providing start-up capital for new businesses, loans for existing firms and other business-oriented financial services.

The bank, which has its headquarters in downtown San Angelo, has helped finance much of the development and growth of the city in the past 20 years.

Golden City Credit Union: One of the largest credit unions in San Angelo, the Golden City Credit Union has a dozen branches scattered through the city. The credit union encourages membership by public employee unions, so many teachers, peace officers and other civil servants bank here.

It was just another day.

The customers were polite, my line was moving well. I was just about to close my teller's window for my lunch break when it happened.

There was some kind of a commotion at the front door and Charlie, our security guard, went over to check it out. Someone screamed, and Charlie flew across the lobby into a wall. He fell on the floor, all loose, like rag doll—I thought he was dead.

Then Chain jumped into the lobby, shouting and swinging that titanium chain around. He ordered all the customers down on the floor, and told us to fill a bag with cash.

I was so scared, I was shaking, but Chain didn't even look at me. Just moved on to the next teller. When he had all the cash, he jumped out the plate glass windows into the street, and then over the buildings across the way.

The police came and took Charlie away in an ambulance. He had to retire, later. I was so relieved when I heard that some hero had captured Chain a few months later.

The deputy DA said I might testify against him, but it turned out they didn't need me.

He got 20 years at Gaviota Island. I wish it had been more. I still have nightmares about that day.

- Gloria Roosevelt, 36, bank teller

FINANCIERS AND MONEY MEN

Donald Croft: A top financier in the city who specializes in hostile takeovers. Croft, known as "The General" for his philosophy of business as war, captured and liquidated a number of San Angelo companies in the merger-crazed 1980s. Hundreds of people who lost jobs in Croft's highly profitable takeovers still harbor ill feelings toward him.

An economic slump cut into the pool of cash available for such schemes, slowing Croft's acquisitions in recent years, but he remains a much-feared power player on the financial scene.

He is a partner in Croft, Hardy and Moskowitz Inc. A fierce rivalry exists between Croft and Alastair McDermott.

Alastair McDermott: A prominent San Angelo investment broker. A native of Scotland, McDermott earned a fortune in the stock market at a young age. Now middle-aged, he is still considered one of the "whiz kids" of the city's financial scene.

In 1986, the late hero Alloy saved his infant son from a band of kidnappers. Since then, McDermott has strongly supported supers in the city. He also helps fund the Faraday Memorial Clinic, which provides medical care for paranormals.

He is the founder and president of Highland Securities, based in the Twilight Tower. McDermott and fellow financier Donald Croft are professional rivals who make no secret of their dislike for each other.

Arthur Wu Tan: President of the First Bank of Chinatown and a highly influential community leader in Chinatown. A visible, active figure in the Asian community, Tan has also become known in civic affairs for his efforts to promote and protect Chinatown.

Xavier Trent: The head of the oldest stock brokerage in San Angelo and a member of one of the city's wealthiest families. Under his restrained, conservative management, Trent's brokerage firm continues to earn steady, if unspectacular, returns for its clients.

Trent, who moves in the city's top social circles, is a member of the Order of the Knights Templar. His younger brother, Jeremiah Trent, heads the Paranormal Defense League but is a black sheep in the family.

CAMPAIGN TIP

Most PCs rarely even step into a bank, except when some villain is robbing one. But the financial scene can provide GMs with some intriguing adventure ideas, particularly for those ubiquitous fabulously wealthy PCs. Poor investments, embezzlement or other problems could throw that fortune into disarray, requiring the attention of the PC. People seeking handouts or peddling investment schemes will be a nearly constant annoyance.

Or a rival could attempt a hostile takeover of a PC-owned company, possibly turning to spying, industrial sabotage or other nefarious methods to mount an overpowering attack. In fact, the takeover scheme could be engineered by a villainous foe, who may or may not be aware of the PC's involvement in the company.

At the other end of the financial scale, destitute or poor PCs could find themselves in hot water with a local bank or credit union. Imagine the reaction of a hero whose car gets repossessed! Even middle-class PCs can face financial difficulties, such as paying credit card bills or student loans. A villain could use such pressures to attempt to corrupt a heroic PC.

The enemies of the heroes can get involved in the financial world in other ways as well. Organized crime and other large-scale criminal operations often require the assistance of shady money men to launder their ill-gotten gains. Any investigation of such an organization will most likely require PCs to delve into the financial scene.

Karyn Weiss: An independent broker who has become well-known in San Angelo for her daily stock market updates on radio station KGTT. Weiss also performs with the Argyles, an amateur a cappella and barbershop singing group popular at farmer's markets and other small community events.

In 1996, Weiss learned that she has HIV, the AIDS virus, possibly contracted from her philandering ex-husband before their divorce. She is considering going public with her diagnosis, but worries about the repercussions to her professional and personal life.

Another 14-hour day—tax season, you know?—and I'm on my way to my car, except the street's all blocked off. Cops and TV crews are everywhere, a PART squad van pulls up. I hadn't heard a thing. Turned out some super was holed up in a flophouse up the street.

What do you think I did? I went home, of course. I was exhausted, and I had another long day ahead of me. Tax season, remember?

— Robert Fujisaki, 52, accountant

INVESTIGATIONS AND SECURITY

Private investigators and security firms are an active, if often low-key, component of the city's professional scene. They frequently interact with the legal and financial worlds as well.



Illustration by Stan Cook

TAYLOR MACKENZIE

Private investigator

A newcomer to the private investigations scene, Taylor Mackenzie recently opened her own office after working with Abel Giantino for several years.

Her father, Davis Mackenzie, was a prominent San Angelo attorney convicted of taking bribes 20 years ago. Evidence found in his office proved that Davis Mackenzie had accepted a bribe from an unknown source to throw a case, apparently using the ill-gotten funds to pay for expensive life-saving surgery needed by his only child, Taylor.

His legal partner, Michael Bailey, testified against Mackenzie in exchange for a reduced prison sentence. Convicted, disbarred and disgraced, Mackenzie killed himself on the eve of his sentencing hearing. His wife, heartbroken, died a few years later.

Fulfilling a promise made to her father, Abel Giantino looked after Taylor Mackenzie and helped her get started in the private investigations field after she finished college. Mackenzie believes that her father was corrupted and betrayed by powerful San Angelo developer Benjamin Morgan. She is secretly investigating Morgan, who is aware of Mackenzie's inquiries but has yet taken no action as he considers her no threat.

Mackenzie is building a modest reputation as a skilled investigator, but so far most of her cases have been low-paying ones involving divorces, custody disputes and missing people. An aging office building in a seedy part of downtown houses her cramped office.

Few people expect a young woman to be a private detective, and Mackenzie often takes advantage of this when conducting a surveillance operation or tailing a subject.

She takes Aikido lessons for self-defense purposes and knows how to use a handgun, though she does not often carry one.

Mackenzie, 27, has long blond hair, which she often braids, and blue eyes. She stands 5'7" and has an athletic build. Mackenzie runs several miles each morning. She is single and has no brothers or sisters.

Life in San Angelo

Taylor Mackenzie, Private Investigator: PL 4; Init +2 (+2 Dex); Defense 13 (+1 base, +2 Dex); Spd 30 ft; Atk +3 melee (+1S, punch), +4 ranged (+3L, pistol); SV Dmg +5 (+5 armor), Fort +0, REF +2, Will +1; Str 12, Dex 15, Con 11, INT 12, Wis 13, Cha 12. *Feats:* Assessment, Contacts, Talented (Gather Information and Search). *Skills:* Disable Device +2, Drive +3, Gather Information +7, Hide +3, Intimidation +3, Knowledge (Benjamin Morgan) +2, Knowledge (bureaucracy) +2, Profession (private investigator) +6, Search +7, Spot +5. *Equipment:* notepad, pen, miniature tape recorder, pager, cell phone, and body armor (+5), and access to a 10mm semi-automatic pistol (+3 lethal damage) but seldom carries it.

Taylor Mackenzie, Private Investigator

STR 5, REF 6, HLT 5, PRE 5, INT 5, WIL 5
DEF 16,INI 6,MOV 11,TGH 4,LIF 20

Disadvantages: Enemy (watched by Benjamin Morgan) [-5], Psych Disad (blames self for father's death) [-2], Psych Disad (driven to investigate Benjamin Morgan) [-2]

Advantages: Ally (law enforcement contacts) [2], Ally (street contacts) [2], Attributes (+2 MOV, already figured in) [10], Perk (concealed weapons permit) [2], Perk (licensed private investigator) [2]

Skills: Area Knowledge (San Angelo) +3, Awareness +4, Bureaucracy +4, Computers (use) +3, Conversation +4, Criminology +1, Deduction +4, Disguise +1, Driving +4, Firearms +4, Intrigue +3, Intuition +3, Knowledge (Benjamin Morgan) +1, Lockpicking +1, Professional (private investigator) +3, Research +4, Shadowing +3, Society +2 (Streetwise +2), Stealth +4, Surveillance +2, Swimming +2, Trading +4, Unarmed Combat (Aikido) +4, Writing +3 (news articles +2).

Equipment: Notepad, pen, miniature tape recorder, pager, cell phone, and body armor (AV: 16, Loc: 6-13). She has access to a 10mm semi-automatic pistol but seldom carries it.

OTHER PRIVATE INVESTIGATORS

Abel Giantino: A veteran private investigator considered the dean of his field in San Angelo. He often contemplates retiring, and has even quit for a few months at times, but Giantino cannot break away from the shadowy, seductive world of investigations.

Giantino has taken many newcomers to the field under his wing, and trained most of the private investigators in San Angelo. His most recent apprentice was Taylor Mackenzie, for whom Giantino feels an almost fatherly affection.

A highly skilled investigator, Giantino has scores of contacts in San Angelo, everywhere from the mayor's office to the scum of the streets. People all over the city owe him favors, and he knows most of the secrets of the metropolis.

Nonetheless, Giantino prefers to remain on the sidelines of the behind-the-scenes power struggles of San Angelo, content to use his contacts and knowledge only to solve his own cases.

An attractive Victorian home converted into commercial space houses his Midtown office.

Paul Wolf: A former police officer who is believed to have resigned from the San Angelo Police Department under threat of indictment in a corruption case. Wolf has an extensive network of street contacts and informants built up over years of police work. He is skilled at surveillance, and also relies on less-than-legal strat-

egies, such as breaking and entering, shunned by more reputable investigators.

Rumor has it that Wolf will work for almost anyone, including organized crime figures. He has occasionally been employed by defense attorney Anders Drake. His office is found in a run-down part of the downtown.

Wolf is a member of the secretive Order of the Knights Templar.

It's not finding them that's hard, or even necessarily finding out who they are. It's doing it without being noticed. Now that's the challenge.

- William Tory, private investigator

CAMPAIGN TIP

In the real world, private investigation jobs mostly involve a lot of tedious footwork, like poring through stacks of paperwork or spending hours in a cramped, smelly car waiting for a surveillance target to show up.

But in superhero games and the four-color comics, the private investigations scene is filled with intrigue and danger, providing an excellent background for a DNPC or Secret ID, not to mention all kinds of fodder for adventures.

A P.I. could enlist the help of the heroes after finding out something better left alone. Villains, organized crime bosses or even the government could be after him. Or, if the gumshoe has already been silenced, her notes could lead the heroes through an investigation to rescue her from kidnappers or unmask her killer.

On the other hand, a private eye could be a major hindrance to the PCs. Paul Wolf or some other unsavory investigator could be hired to research a PC's Secret ID, get incriminating photos for a blackmail scheme or probe the hero base's security systems for a future attack. If the PCs figure out they are being investigated, they still have decipher who is behind it all and what the investigator plans to do with the information.

In fact, the discovery of a P.I. snooping around could be the prologue to a full-scale adventure.

Hiring a private investigator to check out the PCs is an excellent strategy for criminal masterminds and clever Hunteds, in particular. Let a PC hero find out from a private detective that his oldest enemy now knows his Secret ID, and watch a tired old Disadvantage come back to life.

BAIL BONDS AND BOUNTY HUNTING

Eli Hirsch: Owner of the largest bail bonds firm in San Angelo, with offices located across the street from the main jail downtown. For a 10 percent fee and collateral, Hirsch will post bail for arrestees. He refuses clients that he feels might flee, preferring to avoid the problem of seizing collateral in return for his forfeited bail. After the birth of his first grandchild, Hirsch also began refusing business from accused child abusers.

A kind, grandfatherly man, Hirsch excels at comforting the distraught relatives and loved ones of arrestees, but his gentle manner belies a hard-nosed attitude toward bail-jumpers.

Dallas Jackson: A bounty hunter based in San Angelo. A freelance operator, he has worked with most of the bail bondsmen in the city, including Eli Hirsch, at various times. For a sufficient fee, normally a percentage of the forfeited bail, Jackson will travel

anywhere in the United States in search of a bail-jumper. He is an expert at finding fugitives, and though he carries a pistol Jackson prefers to land his quarry without violence.

LICENSE TO CARRY CONCEALED PISTOL, REVOLVER OR OTHER FIREARM WITHIN THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA			
ISSUED BY:		DATE OF ISSUE: 6/28/96	
AGENCY: SAN ANGELO CO SHERIFF			
NAME OF LICENSEE: DALLAS JACKSON			
RESIDENCE ADDR: 2389 PAWNEE RD			
CITY: LA VISTA		COUNTY: SAN ANGELO	
BUSINESS ADDR: 2432 WAYNE ST SAN ANGELO			
OCCUPATION: SKIP TRACER			
BIRTHDATE: 4/5/42 HGT: 5'11" WGT: 220 EYES: BRO HAIR: BRO			
REASON FOR DESIRING LICENSE: SELF PROTECTION			
MANUF	SN	CAL	MOD
BERETTA	2264	40	96
DESCR OF WEAPON(S):			

SECURITY FIRMS

The police and sheriff's departments may respond once a crime takes place, but when business owners want to stop criminals in the first place they often turn to private security.

Security guards receive some training in self-defense and firearms if they are armed, but their main job is to observe and report incidents to police, not to try to make arrests themselves. Nonetheless, their very presence helps ward off would-be criminals in many cases.

Old West Security: A top private-security company in the county, Old West Security provides armed and unarmed guards for banks, construction sites, private parties and almost any other need. Its personnel, seen all over the city, wear a gray uniform top and black slacks.

Security Concepts Inc.: The San Angelo firm of Security Concepts Inc. has a national reputation for its high-tech, state-of-the-art approach to personal security. The agency provides bodyguards, equipment and advice on protective strategies to celebrities, the ultra-rich and other high-profile targets.

Bodyguards provided by the firm are typically highly trained and well-equipped with the latest communications equipment, protective gear and weaponry. All are prepared to sacrifice their lives, if necessary, for the person they are assigned to protect.

CAMPAIGN TIP

GMs can use Daniel Kearney and his company to involve PCs in adventures. Perhaps one of the firm's clients is being stalked by a superpowered admirer or has become a target of supervillains, and requires some PC assistance.

On the other hand, a PC hero team might itself become a client of Security Concepts Inc., seeking equipment and advice on securing its base, for example.

In addition, Kearney and Security Concepts Inc. are always interested in innovative strategies in personal security. The firm might be interested in hiring a super or two as bodyguards, possibly providing employment for some PCs.



Illustration by Bryce Nakagawa

The president of Security Concepts Inc., Daniel Kearney, served in the Secret Service and later as a private bodyguard for several Hollywood celebrities before founding the firm. The company also has a branch office in the Southern California city of Angel Beach.

Wainright Armored Cars: A locally owned company, Wainright Armored Cars provides armored car services to San Angelo banks and other businesses. Equipped with heavy armor and bullet-proof glass, the company's trucks are staffed by experienced, well-trained armed guards. The last robbery of a Wainright Armored Cars vehicle took place in the late 1980s.

THE LEGAL SCENE

The city has a thriving legal community and a strong bar association numbering thousands of members. The practice of law attracts a diverse crowd, from those seeking lucrative corporate jobs to reform-minded champions of the underdog. Attorneys of all stripes can be found in San Angelo, including a handful suspected of less than ethical behavior.

MADISON, FAIRCHILD & ASSOCIATES

One of the top law firms in San Angelo, Madison, Fairchild & Associates has a sizable staff representing nearly all legal specialties.

Its tax attorneys match wits with the IRS, while civil attorneys handle cases ranging from product liability to feuding neighbors. And criminal law attorneys affiliated with the office have sat at the defense table in countless high-profile trials.

Madison, Fairchild & Associates was founded in 1938 by attorneys Roger Madison and Rex Fairchild. The now-elderly Roger Madison still serves as senior partner, but spends most of his time meeting with top clients and advising partners on cases. Meg Fairchild, the daughter of the late co-founder of the firm, has risen to become a senior partner in her own right.

Life in San Angelo

CAMPAIGN TIP

Conflicts between supers are spectacularly hazardous for bystanders, not to mention being hard on the scenery. Normals injured during a super-battle could sue the heroes and/or villains involved for medical costs and punitive damages. Likewise, citizens whose property is damaged could also seek compensation in court. The Welles Law Firm, in particular, will be quite interested in pursuing a civil case against supers.

GMs are advised to use these stories sparingly, however. It's not much fun for players, and not appropriate to the genre, to force PCs to constantly defend their actions in court. But a suit could be used to force negligent or careless PCs to face the consequences of their acts.

In fact, a court case against the PCs could be the work of a villainous foe who seeks to embarrass the heroes, or maybe just tie them up in court while he implements his master plan. The claims in the suit might be bogus, witnesses bribed, and so on. A particularly fiendish enemy might try to win an injunction prohibiting the PCs from operating as heroes until the case is resolved, or seek a court order forcing the PCs to stay 100 yards away from the villain—making it difficult for them to foil his plans.



The firm occupies a sumptuous suite of offices high in the San Angelo Corporate Center in City Center.

OTHER LAW FIRMS

California Legal Services: A not-for-profit firm, California Legal Services offers free or low-cost legal advice and assistance to the poor, particularly in fair housing issues. This agency has filed a number of lawsuits against property owners and local government for failing to provide quality affordable housing. Wesley Hale works for this agency.

Graham, Drake & Wagner: One of the top criminal defense practices in San Angelo, the law firm of Graham, Drake & Wagner handles many of the highest-profile cases in the city.

Of late, the firm has taken an interest in cases involving superhuman defendants. Partner Anders Drake has been quite successful at winning acquittals, or at least reduced sentences, for his superpowered clients.

In fact, Graham, Drake & Wagner often represents indigent or destitute supers for free, trading the loss in legal fees for the publicity value of such cases.

TOP 10 LAW FIRMS

1. (Reserved for PCs or GM-created firm)
2. Madison, Fairchild & Associates (general law)
3. Davis & Weber (corporate law)
4. Graham, Drake & Wagner (criminal law)
5. (Reserved for PCs or GM-created firm)
6. Welles Law Firm (personal injury)
7. Ortiz, D'Angelo & Associates (family law)
8. Golden City Law Offices (personal injury)
9. Law Firm of Joseph Hanrahan (probate & estate law)
10. (Reserved for PCs or GM-created firm)

Source: *Business Chronicle*

Welles Law Firm: The Welles Law Firm is actually a chain of storefront law offices that floods local airwaves with commercials aimed at people injured in accidents. Other San Angelo attorneys dislike this firm, which is owned by attorney Oscar Welles.

Recent cases taken by the firm include a burglar who fell through a store skylight and a woman who crashed her car into a bulldozer after disregarding a flagman at a road repair site.

CAMPAIGN TIP

The law firm of Graham, Drake & Wagner can be a useful tool for GMs to free up captured villains for use in later adventures. Its attorneys can get clients out on bail, arrange plea bargains or even win acquittals for imprisoned foes. After all, everyone can't break out of jail.

GMs should exercise restraint in using Graham, Drake & Wagner to spring villains, however. If the players begin to feel that captured foes are being set free willy-nilly, they may become discouraged or decide to put enemies out of commission permanently—in either case, not a pretty picture for campaign longevity.

PROMINENT ATTORNEYS

Leia Birch: A young attorney on her way up. Birch handles civil litigation, particularly cases of corporate negligence that result in injury to customers or employees. In 1995, Birch won a \$10 million judgment against an Eclipse Industries subsidiary for workers injured in a chemical spill. The conglomerate's high-powered legal team has appealed the case.

Birch is an avid scuba diver who often vacations in the Caribbean and other diving hot spots.

Anders Drake: A well-known criminal defense attorney who specializes in cases involving superhumans. An elegant, dignified man, Drake has never been known to lose his composure. He has an encyclopedic knowledge of criminal law, and often manages to have cases against his clients dismissed due to technicalities. Some police and prosecutors attribute Drake's record to judicial corruption, however. He is a partner in the firm of Graham, Drake & Wagner.

Meg Fairchild: A prominent attorney with the city's top law firm, Morgan, Fairchild & Associates. Daughter of the late co-founder of the firm, Fairchild specializes in corporate law.

Following the death of a childhood friend from AIDS, Fairchild became a tireless fund-raiser for AIDS research and charities. She organizes several benefit concerts, casino nights, high-society balls and other fund-raising events each year.

Fairchild breeds and trains show dogs as a hobby.

Wesley Hale: An attorney with California Legal Services who has won several fair housing suits against the city and county on behalf of his poor or indigent clients. City leaders blame Hale's lawsuits for holding up efforts to redevelop the San Angelo waterfront.

J. Prescott Marr: A former Superior Court judge who resigned under a cloud, though charges of corruption against him were never proven. Now an attorney in private practice, Marr advised the defense team of San Angelo crime boss Arlisson Kalstrom and handles Kalstrom's appeal. He reputedly has other ties to organized crime as well.

Jacqueline Stone: A gutsy human-rights attorney who has launched a campaign against Light of Truth Ministry. Stone represents several families who have lost loved ones to the cult, as well as some dissatisfied former members. Cult attempts to intimidate Stone, including posting fliers in her neighborhood accusing her of religious intolerance, have so far failed to dissuade her.

The challenge of taking on a multi-million-dollar cult is right up Stone's alley. In the past, her solo practice has handled cases involving police brutality, corporate layoffs and the rights of the disabled.

Stone, who is single, recently adopted an orphaned infant from Guatemala.

Lucas Wong: A longtime San Angelo attorney now in semi-retirement. Wong, a famed defense attorney in his day, has become something of a mentor to many idealistic young lawyers with a passion for championing the underdog. His dingy Chinatown office is still the scene of many late-night strategy sessions as he advises his younger colleagues.

THE PUBLISHING SCENE

A number of publishing houses call San Angelo home. Their catalogs contain fiction and non-fiction books of all kinds.

While San Angelo cannot compare with New York City in the publishing world, firms based in the Golden City do have an edge in the narrow, but popular, field of books regarding supers, their adventures and related phenomena.

PUBLISHERS OF NOTE

Gramercy Press: A company that specializes in publishing non-fiction books, particularly biographies and autobiographies, Gramercy Press has printed a few best-selling books by or about local supers, including the memoirs of Golden Age hero *Sky Ranger*.

The editors, fact-checkers, graphic artists and typesetters at Gramercy Press are based in one of the fashionable office buildings surrounding Parker Square in The Wharves.

Inner Light Publishing: A publishing company owned by the cult-like Light of Truth Ministry. The cult obtained the small printing house when the owner converted to its teachings. Posters of the cult master, Adam, soon appeared on the walls and recordings of his teachings played in the offices. Under heavy pressure to join the cult, most employees quit within a few weeks to be replaced by Light of Truth acolytes receiving little or no pay.

Renamed Inner Light Publishing, the firm prints the various texts, fliers, pamphlets and posters required by Light of Truth Ministry. The company is based in Riverfront downtown.

MHM Comics: An independent comic book publisher based in a City Center skyscraper, MHM Comics (The acronym is drawn from the last names of the three founders of the company) prints the licensed *Justice Foundation* comics, as well as other comic books based on the real-world supers of San Angelo.

So you're a collector? I've got a copy of *Justice Foundation* #1 here on the wall, just \$35. If you're looking for a real classic, the 1947 *Life* magazine cover story on the wedding of *Sky Ranger* and *Nightingale* will set you back \$300.

The Paragon mini-series, a classic? What, are you kidding? Go look in the buck-a-book bin. Geez."

- Barney Kipp, 33, comic book shop owner

About half the adventures in MHM Comics books are real, or based on real events. The rest are created by the talented writers who work for the firm, but readers don't seem to mind.

THE RELIGIOUS WORLD

The city of San Angelo has a diverse religious landscape encompassing everything from vast Roman Catholic cathedrals to tiny storefront churches. In between, practically every form of faith can be found—from the oldest traditional religions to the freshest New Age beliefs.

CATHOLIC ARCHDIOCESE OF SAN ANGELO

The activities of the Catholic Church in the region predate San Angelo itself. Spanish priests built the Mission San Angeles in the area in the late 1700s to convert nearby tribes of California Indians, but met with little success. Despite the failure of the mission, the Mexican ranchers who followed kept the Catholic faith alive.

The arrival of mostly Protestant American settlers in the 1800s, not to mention waves of immigrants from around the globe in later years, have diluted the once-supreme influence of the Catholic Church in San Angelo. Nevertheless, Catholicism still ranks as the largest single religion in the city and the influence of the church remains potent.

Originally part of the San Francisco archdiocese, San Angelo gained its own bishop and diocesan offices in the 1880s and became an archdiocese headed by an archbishop in the 20th century.

The archdiocese oversees parishes serving hundreds of thousands of city residents. Scores of charities, schools, missions, associations and other institutions affiliated with the church are also governed by the Catholic Archdiocese of San Angelo.

Archbishop Francis Kelly heads the archdiocese, which is based at St. Kieran's Catholic Church in downtown San Angelo.

SAN ANGELO CHRISTIAN CENTER (G4)

An Assemblies of God church in La Vista, the San Angelo Christian Center has a membership of more than 3,200, making it one of the largest in the region.

The center occupies a lush 65-acre complex, including a private school campus, offices, youth centers and acres of parking. The vast sanctuary itself is a marvel of architectural design. Something is going on at the San Angelo Christian Center almost all the time, whether it be an actual service, a gospel concert, a Christian singles event or an elaborate stage play based on the Bible.

The church, which has a \$6.6 million annual budget, counts several top figures in the local political and business worlds among its members. Rev. Timothy Crandall is the pastor.

OTHER RELIGIOUS INSTITUTIONS OF NOTE

Every form of organized religion is represented in San Angelo, though some churches are larger or better-known than others.

AL QAZAR MOSQUE (E6)

The largest Islamic mosque in San Angelo, the Al Qazar Mosque is named for an 18th century Palestinian military leader. The Midtown mosque, which holds daily prayer services, serves Sunni followers of Islam.

Life in San Angelo

Mohammed Omar-Sidawi is the imam, or prayer leader, of the Al Qazar Mosque.

Mosque leaders are currently trying to persuade Moslems who work at liquor stores to find other jobs, as the consumption of alcoholic beverages is forbidden by the Koran. A special task force has been formed to help find new employment for those who quit their old jobs. An outreach program also tries to combat negative public images of Moslems and Arab Americans as terrorists, particularly stereotypical depictions in films and television.

TEMPLE BETH ISRAEL (E9)

The synagogue with the largest Jewish congregation in San Angelo, Temple Beth Israel is located downtown. The temple follows the reform branch of Judaism and is led by Rabbi Arik Goldberg.

FIRST BAPTIST CHURCH OF SAN ANGELO (C7)

The oldest non-Catholic church in the city, the First Baptist Church of San Angelo was built in 1854 in Poverty Gulch. The white clapboard church is a historic landmark.

MIEN COMMUNITY TEMPLE

A small Buddhist temple in West San Angelo, the Mien Community Temple is chiefly attended by Southeast Asian residents. The temple actively assists newcomers to America, providing translators, help with paperwork, advocacy programs and other aid.

MT. ZION AFRICAN METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH

One of the largest churches in Brenton, Mt. Zion African Methodist Episcopal Church (most people shorten the name to Mt. Zion A.M.E. Church) has made a name for itself for its moving services and famed gospel choir.

The choir, winner of several national awards, travels frequently around the western United States. Rev. Everett Smythe serves as pastor for the predominantly African American church, which features a busy youth program including outreach efforts targeting street gang members.

ST. ANTHONY'S CATHOLIC CHURCH (G7)

The best-attended church in San Angelo, St. Anthony's Catholic Church is located in the North Mission neighborhood.

The church offers three Sunday morning Masses, including two Spanish Masses, as well as services at midnight Saturday and Sunday evening. Practically every Mass is packed, and on holidays the church is filled beyond overflowing.

ST. BASIL'S CATHEDRAL (H9)

A Russian Orthodox church found in the Little Kiev portion of Cathedral Square, St. Basil's is noted for its distinctive architecture. St. Basil's is well-attended by the numerous Ukrainian, Russian and Eastern European immigrants in the neighborhood.

ST. KIERAN'S CATHOLIC CHURCH (C9)

An ornate downtown church, St. Kieran's Catholic Church houses the offices of the archdiocese. Named for an obscure 6th Century Irish saint, the church was built in the early 20th Century but did not become the principal church of the archdiocese until 1972.

When Shrapnel hurt Twister back in '93, the doctors gave him a 50-50 chance to live through the night. I went to St. K's to light a candle for him, and believe me, I wasn't alone. Later, I heard churches all over San Angelo were filled with people that night, praying. And the next day the doctors announced Twister was going to make it. Supers, normals—I figure we're all in this together. We each do our part.

- Claudia Vitelli, 42, travel agent

The closure of the huge Cathedral of St. Mary in Cathedral Square due to earthquake safety fears prompted the archbishop at the time, an austere man who disliked the ostentatious Gothic cathedral, to move his offices to St. Kieran's in the more convenient City Center. When the Cathedral of St. Mary reopened in 1983, the archdiocesan offices remained at St. Kieran's. Most people refer to the church as St. K's.

T'IENT SUN TEMPLE (D11)

A Chinatown landmark, the T'ien Tsun Temple is dedicated to all the Chinese gods. The three-story temple on Canton Street is a favorite with tourists. It was built in 1868.

Other prominent Chinatown temples include the Fu Shen Temple and the Wong Taisin Temple.

REV. JOHN WARDEN

Pastor

Rev. John Warden knelt down to pray. As he had done every day for the past year, first he prayed for the health and safety of his daughter, Emily, somewhere on the streets of San Angelo.

His mind wandered back to their many arguments on the topic of superhumans. Warden had come to realize that supers, with their awesome powers and amazing feats, sowed seeds of confusion in society. Instead of trusting in the Lord, people now trusted heroes to save them.

The supers moved as gods among men, and some were even worshipped as such.

But Emily had argued that supers were no different from anyone else, deserving of love and compassion, not fear. How little he had understood her, Warden thought sadly, misreading her passion for mere teenage defiance.

Finally came the night when, in the heat of another bitter argument, Emily had revealed herself as a superhuman with the power to see and make real the fears of others. She reached out to Warden, but saw only his fear—fear of his own daughter.

Emily fled into the stormy night. Warden followed, wandering the rain-lashed streets for hours, but she had disappeared.

He'd had no contact with her since, though there were occasional news reports on a young girl with fear-inducing powers operating as a free-lance criminal. Fortunately, while his congregation knew that Emily had run away no one knew of her powers.

Warden realized that he had been daydreaming again. No time for that, he told himself, and resumed his prayers. He asked God to bless the rest of his family and help them cope with their fears for Emily. He prayed for the well-being of his congregation. They had stood by him, even when others called him a bigot and a hate-monger. Warden prayed for the wisdom and strength to con-

tinue telling people the truth about superhumans. And, as he'd done every day for the past year, he prayed that Emily might someday come home.

Personality/Motivation: He is very strong-willed, and can be rigid and uncompromising at times. A devout and faithful man, Rev. Warden sincerely believes that superhumans are unwittingly destroying people's faith in God. Superpowers are a temptation from Satan that too few are able to resist, he believes. In this, the heroes are even worse than their criminal counterparts—holding themselves up as examples, as paragons of virtue, because of their incredible abilities.

Warden does not believe that most superhumans are themselves evil, but that they are nonetheless furthering the cause of evil.

Quote: *"America has turned its eyes from the Lord to these superhumans. We've forgotten the First Commandment: Thou shalt have no other gods before Me."*

Powers/Tactics: Rev. John Warden is a skilled public speaker who also has some training in counseling, given his position as a spiritual leader to his flock. He is well-versed in Christianity and the Bible, as well as other major world religions.

Warden is the pastor at the non-denominational Church on the Hill in La Vista, which is attended by many prominent San Angelinos including Benjamin Morgan and Supervisor Jeffrey Daley. Senator Catherine Forbes occasionally visits the church as well.

Appearance: Rev. John Warden, 47, has dark brown hair and brown eyes, with glasses. He stands 6' tall and has a husky build. Warden usually wears business suits; he does not wear clerical collars but almost always has a Bible with him.

Reverend John Warden: PL 2; Init +0 (Dex); Defense 10; Spd 30 ft; Atk +0 melee (+0S, punch); SV Dmg +0, Fort +0, REF +0, Will +2; Str 11, Dex 10, Con 11, INT 12, Wis 15, Cha 16. *Feats:* Unshakable Faith (Christianity). *Skills:* Diplomacy +5, Knowledge (the Bible) +3, Knowledge (counseling) +3, Listen +4, Perform (sermons) +5, Profession (pastor) +5. *Equipment:* Bible, clothing, glasses.

Reverend John Warden

STR 5, REF 4, HLT 5, PRE 7, INT 5, WIL 6
DEF 14, INI 5, MOV 9, TGH 6, LIF 27

Disadvantages: Infamous (anti-supers minister) [-2], Psych Disad (believes supers are marked by Satan) [-2], Psych Disad (seeks reunion with runaway daughter, Emily Warden) [-5]

Advantages: Ally (Benjamin Morgan, congregation, large local group, County Supervisor Jeffrey Daley, other San Angelo churches, all at Conv. level) [8], Ally (Horizon Institute, Senator Catherine Forbes, both at Edge level) [10], Famous (well known pastor, regional figure) [5], Membership: Church on the Hill (MR 8/Pastor, Trivial) [8]

Skills: Acting +5, Area Knowledge (San Angelo) +3, Awareness +3, Bureaucracy +2, Business +2, Computers (use) +2, Conversation +5, Driving +2, History +2, Instruction +4, Knowledge (the Bible) +6, Knowledge (Church on the Hill) +6, Knowledge (counseling) +4, Orate +7, Persuasion +6, Philosophy +3, Poetry +2, Professional (pastor) +4, Psychology +2, Religion +3 (Christianity +4), Society +2 (high society +2), Swimming +2, Writing +2 (sermons +2).

Equipment: Bible, clothing, glasses.



OTHER PROMINENT RELIGIOUS FIGURES

Archbishop Francis Kelly: Head of the Catholic Archdiocese of San Angelo. Kelly has a well-earned reputation for kindness and charity. A beloved local figure, he is an outspoken advocate for the poor and needy in San Angelo. Kelly also supports the city's Latino community. He and Police Chief Jack O'Shea are close friends.

Phuoc Tran: A Buddhist monk at the Mien Community Temple. Tran, born in Laos, acts as a liaison between law enforcement agencies and the Southeast Asian refugee community. A fear of police and poor English inhibit many refugees from even reporting crimes. But police and sheriff's officers are working with Tran to overcome these obstacles.

Tran and Sgt. Duc Lam of the Gang Task Force are also tackling the rising problem of gang activity involving Southeast Asian teens.

Mohammed Omar-Sidawi: The *imam*, or prayer leader, at Al Qazar Mosque in Midtown. Born in the city of Sidon in southern Lebanon, Omar-Sidawi saw firsthand the Israeli invasion and bloody civil wars that tore his nation apart in the early 1980s.

He came to the United States for college, but never fit in with Western lifestyles. Seeking a foundation for his life, he turned to his childhood instruction in Islam. Omar-Sidawi now follows a conservative Islamic path and encourages others to do the same.

Father Nikolai Rodanovich: A Russian Orthodox priest who heads St. Basil's in Cathedral Square. Rodanovich, a native of Ukraine, is a respected and trusted figure in the community. Disputes or other problems are often brought to him for resolution.

Rev. Everett Smythe: The pastor at Mt. Zion African Methodist Episcopal Church in Brenton. Smythe is known for his energetic preaching style, which can make Sunday services an emotional experience for many church members.

He has taken a strong stand against gang and drug activity in Brenton, though Smythe has also been outspoken about his belief that local officials don't care about resolving problems of joblessness, poverty and urban decay in the neighborhood.

His outspokenness on these volatile issues has at times put

Life in San Angelo

Smythe in danger. In 1995, deputies arrested three Prophets street gang members who riddled his church office with bullets in a drive-by shooting. Smythe, who had stepped out for a moment, was unharmed.

In early 1997, a late-night attempt to firebomb his home failed when an alert neighbor woke the family and doused the blaze with a garden hose. No arrests have been made in the incident, but sheriff's investigators suspect that white supremacists were responsible.

LIGHT OF TRUTH MINISTRY

A multi-million-dollar operation based at a commune outside San Angelo, Light of Truth Ministry is regarded by most people as a bizarre, but mostly harmless, cult.

People who have lost loved ones to Light of Truth or been subject to its intimidation tactics hold a different view, however.

Light of Truth teachings blend Eastern philosophies, New Age mysticism and other beliefs as laid out by its master, Adam. Adherents are urged to reject the outside world and contemplate inner truths to help heal a troubled world. Disease, war, famine and other strife represent the symptoms of a spiritual crisis threatening the Earth, according to the sect.

Disciples, who wear white robes, engage in meditation, yoga-like exercises and an array of rituals designed by Adam to purge themselves of outside influences. Once purified, they begin the work of cleansing the world through prayer, fasting and other efforts.

White-robed Light of Truth members are a frequent sight near college campuses, outside bus depots and in other public places, where they pass out pamphlets and preach to passers-by.

Light of Truth is based at a 500-acre commune in rural south San Angelo, where Adam and most cult leaders reside with hundreds of acolytes. Adherents raise crops and livestock at the commune, providing much of the food for cult members.

The ministry also owns numerous faith centers in urban San Angelo. Faith centers are meeting places for initiates and serve as a base for extensive recruiting efforts. The centers are typically adjoined by dormitories where full-time cult members live.

In addition, Light of Truth has a sizable homeless outreach program. Its largest program in San Angelo is based at a mission near the rail yards in Pleasant Grove.

But Light of Truth Ministry is also a multi-million-dollar non-profit business. The cult owns several companies, including a publishing house and a clothing manufacturer that supply Light of Truth members with texts and robes.

The cult has a hierarchical structure. Initiates are part-time members who typically visit faith centers several times a week but continue to live at home and hold outside jobs. Acolytes, on the other hand, are full-time members who have given up life outside the cult. They live at the Light of Truth commune or the faith centers, carrying out the work of the cult.

Acolytes are given a new name, taken from a list of enlightened persons from history. They do not use family names, as Light of Truth teaches that they are now one family.

Faith leaders are experienced cult members who are responsible for the spiritual well-being of initiates and acolytes. They also supervise the various operations of the cult, from its homeless outreach programs to recruitment efforts.

At the top of the hierarchy are the master, Adam, and his coterie of advisers.

CAMPAIGN TIP

Light of Truth Ministry can be an interesting campaign tool for GMs. The cult could begin recruiting supers, possibly forming its own hero team to perform good works and generate positive publicity. Out of the limelight, its supers might be used to intimidate cult foes and protect Light of Truth properties against incursions.

Some Light of Truth super-converts could be former companions or acquaintances of the PCs, or "reformed" ex-enemies, leading to dramatic encounters when the two groups come into conflict.

On the other hand, an embittered former member or angry relative of a Light of Truth acolyte could begin a violent campaign to bring down the cult, possibly requiring the intervention of PCs sympathetic to his cause but unable to condone his actions.

Finally, a really sneaky GM could arrange for a hero's friend or loved one to join the cult, bringing some real moral dilemmas and melodrama to the campaign. Players may find that beating up supervillains is a snap compared to rescuing a loved one from a cult, particularly when the person doesn't want to be rescued at all.



Joining Light of Truth can be quite expensive. Initiates are expected to purchase robes and reading materials from the cult at inflated prices. They also tithe a share of their income to the cult, and must pay additional tithes for the various rituals prescribed by faith leaders. Initiates are constantly pressured to become full members, known as acolytes.

Acolytes must sign all their worldly possessions over to the cult as proof that they reject the outside world. They work for Light of Truth for little or no pay, but are housed and fed by the sect.

Most of the cult's income comes from tithes, particularly the ones given by acolytes. Light of Truth has acquired several businesses signed over by new disciples, not to mention access to the bank accounts of affluent members.

While new Light of Truth members come from all walks of life, recruiters target bright, young people with low self-confidence or feelings of alienation. They are particularly active on college campuses in San Angelo.

Initiation rituals are designed to break down the defenses of recruits, who eat spartan diets and sleep only a few hours a night. The cutting of ties to family and friends slowly makes Light of Truth the only life its disciples know.

Efforts by worried parents and friends to contact acolytes are politely rebuffed by faith leaders, who typically respond that no one by that name belongs to Light of Day—not strictly untrue, since acolytes are given new names.

Government efforts to investigate allegations of brainwashing, force Light of Truth to conform to zoning regulations or audit cult-owned companies are likewise stonewalled.

Foes of the cult are subject to a variety of intimidation tactics, including defamatory leaflets, threatening phone calls and vandalism. Light of Day attorneys are also quick to file lawsuits against outspoken opponents of the ministry as well as government intervention.

Recent Light of Day targets have included attorney Jacqueline Stone, who represents families seeking the return of loved ones

from the cult, and the S.A. *Weekly*, which printed an exposé on the operation. Few readers saw the story, however, as cult members removed the papers from news racks and destroyed them.

ELIJAH

Light of Truth acolyte

Elijah is one of many acolytes of the Light of Truth Ministry. His real name is Simon Turner, changing his name when he joined the cult six months ago.

Simon was a stock broker, working in an office on Wayne Street, in San Angelo's downtown financial district. Every day he would work 10 to 12 hours and return home to his wife, Cynthia, and two children, Stevie and Erin. Years of mounting pressures at work and home became too much for Simon to handle. One night after work he was given a pamphlet from a kind, seemingly happy man in a white robe. "Eternal life. Inner Harmony." The words beckoned to Simon.

He gave up everything, drove to the compound and signed over his bank account to the cult. He denounced every worldly possession and took the name Elijah.

His wife and children, left penniless, have moved in with Cynthia's parents. Her efforts to contact Simon were fruitless, so Cynthia has hired an attorney to try to recover some of their finances from the cult's grasp.

Elijah, Light of Truth Acolyte: PL 1; Init +0 (Dex); Defense 10; Spd 30 ft; Atk +0 melee (+0S, punch); SV Dmg +0, Fort +0, REF +0, Will +0; Str 10, Dex 10, Con 10, INT 11, Wis 10, Cha 10. **Feats:** None. **Skills:** Bluff +2, Diplomacy +2, Innuendo +2, Knowledge (Light of Truth doctrines) +2, Knowledge (Stock market) +2, Profession (cult acolyte) +2, Profession (stock broker) +2. **Equipment:** Acolyte's garb, Truth of Light Ministry brochures.

Elijah, Light of Truth Acolyte

STR 4, REF 4, HLT 5, PRE 4, INT 5, WIL 5
DEF 14,INI 5, MOV 9, TGH 5, LIF 25

Disadvantages: Distinctive Features (white-robed acolyte, easily concealed) [-2], Duty (to Truth of Light cult) [-10], Physical Disad (bad leg, -1 MOV, can't sprint) [-2], Psych Disad (completely loyal to Adam) [-10], Psych Disad (severed ties to "past life") [-2], Psych Disad (driven to recruit and "enlighten" others) [-2]

Advantages: None.

Skills: Animal Handling +3, Area Knowledge (San Angelo) +2, Bureaucracy +3, Computers (programming) +4, Craft (farming) +2, Driving +2, Electronics +1, Fish and Game +2, Gambling +3, Knowledge (Light of Truth doctrines) +4, Knowledge (stock market) +4, Meditation +2, Persuasion +3, Professional (cult acolyte) +3, Professional (stock broker) +4, Religion +1, Riding +3, Swimming +2, Trading +4.

Equipment: Acolyte's garb, Truth of Light Ministry brochures.

OTHER FRINGE RELIGIONS AND CULTS

Although Light of Truth Ministry is the largest fringe group in the San Angelo religious scene, the city is home to a variety of untraditional faiths.

Based on New Age beliefs, occultism or ancient pagan faiths, these groups are small but climbing in popularity. While more traditional religions are quick to label all these groups as cults, actually very few engage in cult-like activities such as brainwashing.

CHURCH OF THE ARMY OF THE LORD

An apocalyptic sect, the Church of the Army of the Lord preaches that supers are the Earthly manifestations of angels and demons sent to herald the coming Armageddon. Sect teachings are based on selected Bible verses, the prophecies of Nostradamus and the revelations of its self-styled messiah, John McBride. Members live on a secluded ranch near the town of Canfield in the foothills near Lake Oro.

The Church of the Army of the Lord does not actively recruit new members, and the sect is actually quite suspicious of outsiders.

The sect raises its own food, produces its own clothing and manufactures most other needed supplies. Sheriff's investigators and federal ATF agents fear the Church of the Army of the Lord may be arming itself for the foretold final conflict between good and evil.

TEMPLE OF ATLANTIS (D3)

New Age mysticism and the paranormal psi powers of its high priestess are at the heart of the Temple of Atlantis.

Founded in 1970 by Marietta Grey, the Midtown temple attracted a small following in the next two decades. Its teachings are based on meditation, dietary restrictions, peaceful living and harmony with nature. Followers are urged to move beyond emotion to a place of serenity.

Grey, who refused any religious title, claimed the rites of the temple were revealed to her by spirits from the lost civilization of Atlantis, who communicated with her via meditative trances. She taught her followers that Atlantis was not destroyed, as legends say, but merely abandoned when its people moved on to a higher state of consciousness. By following the spiritual path set out by the Atlanteans, temple followers believe they too can someday ascend to a higher plane.

In 1986, a sometime temple member named Aurora Whitfield brought her 10-year-old daughter Kirsten to Grey. She told Grey that Kirsten's dreams sometimes came true. Baffled, and a little frightened, Aurora Whitfield turned to Grey for advice.

Grey proclaimed Kirsten a reincarnated Atlantean high priestess. With her mother's permission, Grey raised the child herself—guiding her emotional and spiritual development, while teaching her the inner-most secrets of the Temple of Atlantis.

Grey renamed the youngster Themis, after a titan from Greek myths with the power to foretell the future, but as word of her powers spread outside the temple she became known as Dreamweaver.

As she grew up, Dreamweaver gained new powers, including the ability to enter and influence the dreams of others. Grey taught her to use her powers to help Temple of Atlantis followers find enlightenment, and introduced new ceremonies centering on her abilities.

The changes reinvigorated the Temple of Atlantis, reaffirming the faith of longtime members and bringing in many new followers.

When Grey died of cancer in 1996, Dreamweaver took her place as leader of the Temple of Atlantis. Somewhat shy and naive, she nonetheless believes strongly in Grey's teachings and is committed to carrying on her work.

Local authorities are worried about the potential for brainwashing or other abuse, but no one has ever come forward with a complaint about Dreamweaver or the Temple of Atlantis—not even those who later left the temple.

Life in San Angelo



Illustration by Storm Cook

DREAMWEAVER

New Age mystic

When little Kirsten Whitfield dreamed that her dog, Skipper, had been killed by a car, her mother Aurora told her not to worry—it was just a nightmare.

Two days later, Skipper ran into the street. The oncoming station wagon had no time to brake, and the family buried him in the back yard.

Then it happened again. Kirsten dreamed that her Daddy left. This time she didn't tell her mother, but it still happened a month later.

The strange dreams kept coming, sometimes about people Kirsten knew, other times about national or even international events. Things a 10-year-old girl could never have known or predicted.

In desperation, Aurora took her daughter to meet Marietta Grey, leader of the New Age Temple of Atlantis. After talking to the little girl, Grey prescribed some herbs to help her sleep, sending the two on their way.

But when a dream Kirsten had described to her came true a week later, Grey called the mother and daughter back to the temple.

She explained Kirsten was actually a reincarnated high priestess of Atlantis, an ancient, enlightened civilization that vanished when its people ascended to a higher consciousness. Grey offered to raise the child to understand and prepare for her role as a spiritual guide for the rest of humanity. Confused and frightened, Aurora assented. That was 13 years ago.

Growing up under Grey's tutelage, Kirsten learned that she had a special purpose—to bring others to the enlightenment offered by the teachings of the Temple of Atlantis. She began to welcome her prophetic dreams, even if she could never control them.

But she soon developed other powers that she could control, including the ability to enter and influence the dreams of others.

Grey helped Kirsten learn to use her powers to reveal hidden truths and guide followers on the spiritual path laid out by the Atlanteans—never for coercion or control.

Now a teenager, the girl began to play a public role in Temple of Atlantis ceremonies. Grey renamed her Themis, after a Greek titan with the power of prophecy, but as word of her dream powers spread she became known as Dreamweaver.

The Temple of Atlantis began to grow as new followers flocked to hear the words of wisdom imparted by Dreamweaver.

In the meantime, her mother, Aurora, remarried and moved away from San Angelo. She and Dreamweaver are not especially close.

In 1996, Marietta Grey died of cancer as Dreamweaver had long ago foreseen. The heartbroken young woman vowed to continue spreading her mentor's teachings and realize Grey's goal of bringing enlightenment to a cynical world.

Of late, an amorous paranormal admirer has created problems for Dreamweaver. Riptide, a wanted criminal who envisions himself a scion of lost Atlantis, believes she is the reincarnation of an Atlantean priestess and his true love. Riptide hopes to wed her and become the ruler of a reconstituted Atlantis, despite the fact that she wants nothing to do with him.

Personality/Motivation: Dreamweaver, or Themis as she is known to her close associates, believes totally in the teachings of the Temple of Atlantis.

Her sheltered upbringing—Themis stopped attending public schools after Marietta Grey took her in—has left her somewhat shy and naive, but she is also extremely strong-willed. The amorous attentions of Riptide frighten her somewhat.

The young woman's sole desire is to continue helping others find the enlightenment offered by the Temple of Atlantis.

Quote: *"I know why you've come, and I can help you."*

Powers/Tactics: Dreamweaver has the power to enter and influence the dreams of others. Her powers of telepathy allow her to see dreams, and her mental illusions represent her abilities to change the dreams of others. Her powers have no effect on those who are not dreaming.

Her precognitive dreams are not controlled. They happen of their own accord, though Dreamweaver can always tell the difference between a normal dream and a prophetic one.

Dreamweaver has low defenses and no combat ability. This reflects her upbringing and occupation as a priestess, not a costumed crimefighter.

Appearance: Dreamweaver, 23, has slightly curly shoulder-length brown hair and green eyes. She stands 5'5" and has a slender build. Her clothes are usually casual. For temple services she wears cream-colored robes patterned after classical Greek clothing.

Dreamweaver, New Age Mystic: PL 4; Init +3 (+3 Dex); Defense 13 (+3 Dex); Spd 30 ft; Atk +0 melee (+0S, punch); SV Dmg +2, Fort +2, REF +3, Will +3; Str 10, Dex 16, Con 15, INT 12, Wis 17, Cha 15.

Skills: Diplomacy +5, Knowledge (Atlantean legends) +4, Knowledge (teachings of Temple of Atlantis) +7, Language (Atlantean symbols), Listen +6, Profession (priestess) +5, Sense Motive +6, Spot +4.

Feats: None.

Powers: ESP +4 [Source: Mystical; Flaw: Limit— can only be used while dreaming; Cost: 4 pp], Telepathy +4 [Source: Mystical; Extra: Illusion; Flaw: Limit— can only be used to contact subject in their dreams; Cost: 8 pp].

Equipment: Priestess robes.

Dreamweaver

STR 4, REF 7, HLT 7, PRE 7, INT 5, WIL 9
DEF 17,INI 6, MOV 13, TGH 7, LIF 39

Disadvantages: Dependent(s): Followers) [-5], Enemy (hunted by Riptide, more powerful) [-5], Naïve) [-5], Psych Disad (Believes in the teachings of Atlantean Temple) [-5]

Advantages: Ally (Professor Hendrick) [2], Famous (psychic/New Age priestess, public identity, local figure) [2], Follower (temple acolytes, small group, less powerful) [2]

Skills: Area Knowledge (San Angelo) +3, Astronomy +2, Awareness +3, Concentration +4, Conversation +5, First Aid +3, Instruction +4, Intuition +5, Knowledge (legends of Atlantis) +3, Knowledge (teachings of Temple of Atlantis) +6, Meditation +5, Orate +5, Philosophy +2, Professional (priestess) +5, Religion +4, Symbols (Atlantean) +2.

Powers: *Telepathy*: +12 (can only be used to contact subject in their dreams; requires concentration, user loses REF bonus to DEF; WIL + Telepathy roll total must meet or exceed subject's, WIL + Concentration roll for surface thoughts); *Mental Illusions*: +12 (can only be created in subject's dreams; requires concentration, user loses REF bonus to DEF; WIL + Illusion roll total must meet or exceed subject's WIL + Concentration roll to project illusions into subject's mind); *Clairsentience*: sense sight/smell/hearing, precognition (user cannot consciously control, only usable when sleeping/in dreams).

Equipment: Priestess robes.

THE SCIENTIFIC WORLD

The city of San Angelo has acquired a national reputation as a center of scientific inquiry and high technology. As a result, numerous labs and companies on the leading edge of science, technology and research have located in the metropolis, particularly in the Arroyo Verde area.

The city's two public universities and various hospitals are also heavily involved in scientific research, as are several of the larger corporations in town.

CAMPAIGN TIP

Weird science and incredible inventions are staples of the world of comic books. Most hero teams seem to have at least one scientist, and the bad guys often have their own renegade geniuses on hand.

The world of San Angelo is no exception. These companies and NPCs can be used for all kinds of scenarios in your campaign—some are handy for consultation by the heroes, while others provide aid to their enemies. A few might even be considered enemies in their own right!

THE "BRAIN TRUST"

A remarkable convergence of brilliant minds took place at UC San Angelo in the early 1960s. Several individuals who went on to become leading lights in their chosen fields studied under Hal Revette, himself a famed scientist, at approximately the same time.

Drawn to each other as if by fate, graduate students, undergrads and even a few high-schoolers coalesced into an informal group of junior scientists with Revette as a mentor.

Known around campus as the "Brain Trust," the fractious gang of geniuses debated the fine points of the latest theories, compared notes on their individual research projects, devoured news of fresh scientific advances and even conducted a few clandestine experiments.

In the end, however, the assemblage of gifted minds proved too fragile to survive the inevitable clash of egos. In 1964, a dispute details of which are known only to its members—irrevocably shattered the "Brain Trust."

A number of now-prominent San Angelo professors, scientists, physicians, engineers and researchers are alumni of the informal club. Some are still in contact with their old friends, while others continue to be split by the long-ago incident that drove the union apart.

They include Orion Labs chief Franklin Colt, renegade cyberneticist Dr. Anton Megalo, scientist-hero Savant, supers physician Dr. Philadelphia Ryan and physicist-turned-bag lady Lilith Newmeyer.

HELIX TECHNOLOGIES

Most people consider Helix Technologies a run-of-the-mill medical lab that performs routine DNA testing for local hospitals and law enforcement agencies. They're wrong.

Helix Technologies, based at an Arroyo Verde compound, is actually an ultra-secret operation that has made incredible advances in the fields of cloning and genetic engineering. The lab has already succeeded in creating and cloning at least one "perfect" human being. The company's true purpose has been kept totally secret from the government, other labs and the public at large, however.

Even most Helix Technologies employees and consultants are not aware of the covert experiments conducted by the innermost circle of scientists at the lab.

A Soviet émigré, Vladimir Kaminov, founded Helix Technologies in 1990 with his American-born son, Peter, and daughter-in-law, Anna.

Vladimir had come to the United States in the 1940s, fleeing a Stalinist purge. A gifted geneticist, he had been involved in a failed effort to induce superpowers, like those possessed by the Golden Age heroes of America, in Soviet soldiers.

A mysterious benefactor persuaded Vladimir, who had retired after several decades as a geneticist in the U.S., to begin a study of the possibility of human cloning.

The benefactor provided the Kaminovs with rudimentary plans for the highly advanced technologies required to genetically engineer a human with peak physical and mental abilities, produce clones using the engineered DNA and rapidly mature the newly created individuals.

Hmmm, interesting. It appears your molecular structure involves a type of quantum-phase resonance signature we've never encountered before. What? Oh, nothing to worry about, as long as you stay away from certain types of radiation ...

— Franklin Colt, 53, scientist

Life in San Angelo

The sponsor, who met only with Vladimir Kaminov, also supplied the billions of dollars necessary to create the hyper-advanced technology. Although not even Vladimir knew his true identity, the benefactor was Ren Westlake, a time traveler from the future.

In 1995, the Kaminovs succeeded in producing prototypes of the cloning technology. They successfully created a genetically engineered human clone, named Cameron.

Then disaster struck. A sailing mishap on Lake Oro killed Vladimir, and a few days later a fire destroyed the Helix Technologies labs. Curiously, the prototypes were nowhere to be found amid the rubble, and Cameron's body was never recovered. But all of the notes, designs and other information pertaining to cloning technology were destroyed in the blaze.

Peter and Anna Kaminov have re-established Helix Technologies and have embarked on a crash program to recreate the lost cloning equipment.

The DNA-testing services provided by the firm are just a front, though they are useful in gathering DNA samples for the lab's more secret experiments. Recognizing that someone does not want to see the cloning equipment replicated, the Kaminovs have intensified security. Along with an array of high-tech sensors, Helix Technologies facilities are protected by armed guards.

Westlake, who engineered the death of Vladimir Kaminov and destruction of the labs to ensure he remained the sole possessor of human cloning technology, does not realize the Kaminovs are attempting rebuild the stolen prototypes.

Cameron, who escaped from the labs during the fire, now competes in the underground pit-fighting world as Bloodsport (see **Allies & Enemies**).

ORION LABS

When San Angelinos think of amazing inventions and stunning scientific breakthroughs, they think of Orion Labs.

An Arroyo Verde complex houses the private lab, considered one of the premier centers of scientific inquiry in the nation, and quite possibly the world.

Under chief scientist Franklin Colt, Orion Labs conducts research under contract to other corporations and the government. While these projects often result in breakthroughs, they mostly serve to help finance so-called "pure" research projects in a variety of fields.

Colt believes strongly in serendipitous discoveries, in which investigations into one topic produce unexpected breakthroughs, often in an entirely different field of study. This concept is at the heart of his administrative policy, and Colt often authorizes projects in seemingly unprofitable or unlikely subjects. A healthy percentage of these efforts have paid off for Orion Labs.

A well-known scientist in his own right, Colt founded Orion Labs in 1978 after becoming disillusioned by the emphasis on applied science at other companies.

Now the labs employ scores of scientists in a variety of fields, including physics, atomic theory, chemistry, engineering, electronics, biology, medicine and genetics, to name just a few. Orion Labs also makes heavy use of outside consultants for specific projects.

Along with its scientific pursuits, Orion Labs is also responsible for many of the high-tech gadgets in the world of San Angelo. Many heroes and law enforcement agencies use devices invented at the labs to help even the odds against superhuman criminals.

The labs are also a key source of information and advice, and many a strange device taken off a captured super-criminal has been sent to Orion Labs for analysis.

GM'S OPTION

A PC created by Helix Technologies could be an interesting hero. Perhaps the lab created a second clone after Cameron, has already succeeded in recreating its lost equipment or had secretly hidden duplicates of the original prototypes at another facility.

The PC could have escaped from the labs, or perhaps she was mind-wiped and sent onto the streets of San Angelo to test her abilities. Local authorities might ask the PC hero team to look after the amnesia victim.

OTHER LABS AND RESEARCH FIRMS

A recognized leader in the field of high technology, San Angelo has attracted a number of top companies involved in scientific research and advanced engineering.

BIOGEN SCIENCES

A bio-science firm based in Arroyo Verde, BioGen Sciences has a state-of-the-art genetic engineering lab used primarily for agriculture-related research.

The firm has developed new strains of corn, tomatoes and other crops, boosting their resistance to blight and disease. Other projects involve crafting helpful micro-organisms, such as oil-eating bacteria that can be used to clean spills.

But BioGen Sciences has been the target of protests by critics, who argue that human-engineered organisms could have unforeseen, possibly catastrophic, effects on the world.

CAMPAIGN TIP

Orion Labs is a great resource for GMs and players alike. PC inventors could find employment at the lab, while their less scientifically inclined colleagues could go to Orion Labs for advice on the offbeat problems often encountered by heroes—just how to get to Dimension X to rescue a kidnapped DNPC, for example.

Scientists at Orion Labs are always happy to study a captured gadget or two. On the other hand, a PC could hire the lab to build some of his own gadgetry!

GMs can use Orion Labs to explain some of the high-tech equipment carried by police and military personnel. While the lab doesn't sell equipment to the bad guys, there's no reason why stolen devices couldn't wind up in the wrong hands.

The lab might ask supers with a particularly interesting origin or powers to drop by for an examination.

Finally, experiments gone awry at Orion Labs are always a great adventure possibility—not to mention a chance for PCs to repay the lab for all its past assistance.

CRYODYNAMICS

An Arroyo Verde lab, CryoDynamics researches supercooling technology for industrial and computing uses. The firm also builds and tests prototype systems at its facility.

FUTUREWORKS ROBOTICS

Engineers at FutureWorks Robotics are at the forefront of robotics technology. The Arroyo Verde company fashions robots for specialized uses in various fields, including heavy industry, medicine and warehousing. Designers are also tinkering with a primitive artificial intelligence in hopes of someday creating sophisticated self-programming robots.

MERIDIAN ENGINEERING (H4)

Designs for ultra-secret spy satellites are the forte of Meridian Engineering. Housed in a non-descript La Vista office park, the firm produces plans for sophisticated orbital satellites able to take photos so precise that a license plate can be read. Other satellites are designed to pick up radio transmissions, detect nuclear testing or perform other covert tasks.

All of the company's work is done under contract to various departments of the federal government, and nearly all employees have security clearances.

NEW FRONTIERS INC.

A prime player in the field of advanced micro-circuitry, the New Frontiers Inc. labs of Arroyo Verde are busy designing the next generation of electronics.

Chemists, engineers and other experts at the labs are forever experimenting with new ways to shrink the size and cost of electronic components, particularly computer chips. Micro-circuitry technology created by New Frontiers Inc. is typically licensed to other companies for integration into advanced electronic devices.

RADIANT CONCEPTS

Lasers and laser technology drive Radiant Concepts, a small but respected lab in Arroyo Verde. High-tech factories and hospital operating rooms are just two places where the company's precision lasers can be found.

Radiant Concepts is considered a leader in the burgeoning field of laser technology, due in no small part to the advances made by its research team, headed by Holly Tamura.

REN WESTLAKE

Time traveler

On the run, hunted by his own soldiers. Branded a war criminal, for God's sake! And all General Ren Westlake had tried to do was save the Earth.

In the year 2063, Westlake led a military coup that attempted to impose an authoritarian world government on the squabbling nations of a nightmarish world.

Beset by famines, plagues, endless wars, rampant pollution and out-of-control population growth, the world was on the edge of total collapse. Westlake hoped to pull it back from the brink by seizing control, then implementing the harsh measures necessary to preserve humanity. Even though some considered his plans heartless, even inhuman, Westlake knew drastic methods were needed.



Illustration by Steve Bryant

But the coup failed, not least because his colleagues were more interested in boosting their personal power than in safeguarding Earth, and Westlake went from a world dictator to the most-hunted fugitive on the planet in a single night.

Then he got a second chance.

Westlake discovered what appeared to be a prototype time portal in some abandoned laboratory he'd broken into as a hiding spot. The device had been damaged, but Westlake used his technical skills to jury-rig the equipment. As his pursuers closed in, he stepped through the portal—and emerged in the San Angelo of 1988.

Westlake was too late to save the Earth of 2063. Conditions had slid too far before he'd even been born. He could see that now.

This time, he'd make sure things went differently. But in order to change the course of the future, Westlake needed power. And in the 1980s, money was power.

Wagering on sporting events, investing in key stocks, executing precisely timed criminal heists—Westlake quietly nurtured an expanding, but invisible, financial empire.

As he explored the world of the 1980s, Westlake discovered signs that another time traveler had preceded him. A few inventions before their time, a few changes from the history Westlake recalled—mostly having to do with humanitarian causes. Still, it couldn't hurt to be cautious. So Westlake stayed undercover, making sure to remain safely anonymous.

As his resources grew, Westlake began to implement the next step in his strategy—increasing his military power. He became the shadowy sponsor of numerous hyper-advanced technology projects, such as the cloning experiments at Helix Technologies.

Drawing on his knowledge of 21st century technology, Westlake provided rudimentary plans for the weapons, vehicles and other equipment he desired—often supplying the crucial information needed to make the technological leaps required.

Westlake is nearly ready to launch the third stage of his strategy, creation of a small but potent secret military force employing hyper-advanced technology.

Life in San Angelo

Personality/Motivation: Ren Westlake has a goal: nothing less than saving the Earth. And the only way to save the world is to unify its bickering, short-sighted peoples under a strong leader. A leader willing to rule with an iron fist, to make the hard choices. Someone who won't be held back from decisive action by sentiment or wishy-washy humanitarian ideals. Someone willing to go to any extreme and make any sacrifice to ensure the future of the human race.

In short, someone like Ren Westlake.

Westlake is deeply committed to saving the Earth from itself, though his vision of a totalitarian world government may fall short of others' ideas of a utopian future.

But Westlake has seen at least one of the alternatives, and it's not something he'd like to see again.

Quote: *"My time is coming."*

Powers/Tactics: Ren Westlake is a normal human, with no superpowers. His elite military training and access to high-tech weapons make him a dangerous foe in combat, however.

Westlake typically wears a suit of extra-light body armor and carries a plasma pistol, though his best defense is his careful planning, which should make it unnecessary for him to ever engage in direct combat.

He has naturally acute hearing, which has helped Westlake get out of more than one close call.

Appearance: Ren Westlake, 50, has close-cropped white hair and pale blue eyes. He stands 5'10" and has a stocky, muscular build. Westlake keeps in excellent physical shape with daily workouts. He has a distinct military bearing and a commanding presence.

Ren Westlake: PL 6; Init +1 (Dex); Defense 18 (+3 base, +2 Dex); Spd 30 ft.; Atk +6 melee (+2S, punch), +7 ranged; SV Dmg +4, Fort +2, REF +3, Will +4; Str 14, Dex 17, Con 15, INT 17, Wis 15, Cha 15. **Feats:** Independent Income, Iron Will, Leadership, Point Blank Shot, Power Attack, Toughness, Wealth +2. **Skills:** Acrobatics +4, Computers +6, Disable Device +4, Hide +4, Knowledge (21st century technology) +5, Knowledge (bureaucracy) +4, Knowledge (future events) +7, Knowledge (scuba diving) +5, Knowledge (stock market) +5, Knowledge (tactics) +6, Language (German; native is English), Language (Japanese), Listen +4, Move Silently +4, Pilot +5, Profession (military general) +7, Search +5, Spot +5. **Equipment:** Casual clothes, futuristic military uniform (normally kept in closet at home).

Ren Westlake

STR 6, REF 7, HLT 6, PRE 6, INT 7, WIL 6
DEF 17,INI 7,MOV 13,TGH 6,LIF 30

Disadvantages: Distinctive Features (military bearing, easily concealed) [-2], Enemy (hunted by Averell Pendleton) [-5], Psych Disad (expects total obedience) [-5], Psych Disad (megalomaniac) [-10], Psych Disad (merciless and ruthless) [-5], Secret (time traveler from the future) [-2]

Advantages: Advanced [5], Eidetic Memory [5], Wealthy (filthy rich) [10]

Skills: Acrobatics +1 (Breakfall +2), Area Knowledge (San Angelo) +4, Bureaucracy +4, Computers (programming) +5, Demolitions +3, Driving +4, Electronics +1 (energy weaponsmith +2), Firearms +6, Gambling +3, Heavy Weapons +4, Interrogation +1, Knowledge (21st century technology) +3, Knowledge (future events) +4,

(Continued)

Ren Westlake Continued

Knowledge (military) +3, Knowledge (scuba diving) +4, Knowledge (stock market) +4, Language (German; native is English) +3, Language (Japanese) +3, Mechanic +1, Melee Weapons +6, Operate Electronics +4, Para +2 (Parachutes +2), Persuasion +4, Piloting +4, Professional (military general) +5, Society +2 (Military +2, Streetwise +2), Stealth +4, Strategy +5, Swimming +4, Tactics +5, Throwing +6, Unarmed Combat (Commando fighting) +5.

Equipment: Casual clothes, futuristic military uniform (normally kept in closet at home).

OTHER INVENTORS & SCIENTISTS OF NOTE

Brian Card: An engineer at Meridian Engineering who helped design several top-secret spy satellites. Card sold information on the projects to agents of the Soviet Union during the late 1970s and early 1980s.

The collapse of the USSR brought an end to the arrangement, but Card now lives in mortal fear that his indiscretions will someday be revealed.

Franklin Colt: A top scientist and head of Orion Labs. An African American man who grew up in Brenton and attended UC San Angelo, he is one of the most respected scientists in the world.

As president of Orion Labs, Colt still makes time for his own research projects and has participated in most of the major breakthroughs achieved by the private lab.

Colt founded the lab in 1978 after becoming discouraged at the scant opportunities for "pure" research at top corporations. Every project had a budget, usually small, and a schedule, usually tight. He longed to undertake projects that interested him without having to produce an immediate, profitable application.

Using royalties from his earlier inventions, Colt established Orion Labs as a center of both applied and pure scientific inquiry. The innovative approach has paid off with a number of important breakthroughs in several fields.

His full name is Benjamin Franklin Colt, but he prefers to just go by his middle name.

Peter Kaminov: The highly intelligent, driven head of Helix Technologies, a focus of advanced cloning and genetic engineering techniques.

Kaminov is totally focused on the potential for creating genetically engineered human clones. He has never even considered the ethical or societal implications of such efforts, and laws prohibiting human cloning are of no concern to Kaminov.

He also lacks any regard for the clones that might be created by such a process—to Kaminov, they are merely experimental subjects, not human beings in their own right. Kaminov is consumed by the how, not the why or even the if, of his studies.

Holly Tamura: Chief of research at Radiant Concepts. A brilliant young scientist, Tamura has helped make several discoveries in the field of laser technology that have given the company a solid edge over its competitors. Industrial cutting lasers are her specialty.

Tamura, who is Japanese American, has a strong interest in her heritage. She belongs to several cultural societies and has twice visited Japan to seek out long-lost relatives.

THE SOCIAL SCENE

Like any city, San Angelo is home to all kinds of clubs and other organizations. There are even a few secret societies in the Golden City.

CLUBS & ORGANIZATIONS

Various clubs and organizations are an important part of the San Angelo social scene. Societies based on the ethnic or national background of members are common in San Angelo, with German and Greek organizations being the most prominent. These clubs host an array of social and cultural events throughout the year.

Service clubs, mostly local chapters of well-known national or even international organizations, are also popular among San Angelinos, as are lodges and fraternal orders.

In addition, veterans organizations are fairly strong in the city, with members including a number of Vietnam and Persian Gulf veterans, though most members are aging World War II or Korean War vets.

ARGONAUT SOCIETY (D3)

A 1930s-era club of explorers, daredevils and other adventurers, the Argonaut Society was founded by explorer Tyler North in 1928. North took the name from the Greek myth of the quest of Jason and his heroic friends for the Golden Fleece.

The private Midtown club building featured a dining room, lounge and trophy hall. Members included WWI pilot "Ace" Braddock, archaeologist Professor Simon Morrow, Arctic explorer Dakota Ross and big-game hunter Rock Cody. Howard Shaw, the heir of railroad magnate Leland Shaw, also belonged to the club and sponsored many of its expeditions.

The exploits of the Argonaut Society electrified San Angelo and the nation during the bleak years of the Depression, but the club began to fade after the disappearance of Tyler North in 1939. North had led an expedition to investigate reports of a mysterious lost valley of prehistoric creatures, but never returned. The advent of World War II soon eclipsed the club.

The few surviving members of the Argonaut Society, now all long since retired, still meet occasionally at the club, found in the now "yupified" Piper Glen neighborhood. The club's trophy hall, home to rare and unusual artifacts from all over the globe, is sometimes visited by scholars from San Angelo universities.

OTHER CLUBS & ORGANIZATIONS

Most clubs in San Angelo are fairly mundane, organized either to help the community or bring together people interested in a particular hobby. A few organizations stand out from the crowd, however.

SKYWATCH

An association of San Angelo UFO buffs, Skywatch meets once a month at a local hotel. Members keep track of reports of UFO sightings, encounters with extraterrestrials and other odd phenomena. Many claim to have personally seen alien spacecraft. The club also publishes a free monthly newsletter on UFO phenomena.

Skywatch adherents are convinced that the government is covering up evidence of UFOs, and claim the military is hiding a recovered alien ship at Forgan Air Force Base.

SECRET SOCIETIES

The city is also home to a few secret societies, who try to keep their membership, activities, and sometimes even existence, quiet.

CAMPAIGN TIP

The Cyber Underground can be a useful resource for PCs who lack computer-related skills. The notion of cracking a villain's computer network might appeal to some of its members, more for the challenge than any altruistic reasons.

Of course, dealing with a paranoid, obsessive bunch of teenage techno-nerds can try the patience of even the most understanding of heroes. PCs working with the Cyber Underground will also have to deal with the complications of teen life—school, parents and so on. Imagine finding out that your ace hacker can't help you because she's been grounded for a month!

On the other hand, a villain could turn the tables on the heroes by enlisting the Cyber Underground in an effort to attack their base computer system, possibly erasing files, planting viruses or compromising security systems. These kinds of destructive acts will not appeal to most Cyber Underground hackers, but a persuasive villain could probably find at least one teenager willing to do his dirty work.

THE CYBER UNDERGROUND

Despite its sinister name, the Cyber Underground is really just a club of teenage hackers based in San Angelo. Even though the oldest members are in their early 20s, the underground has amassed an impressive pool of computer expertise.

Cyber Underground tactics vary from person to person, from secretly inserting a program that collects passwords into a target computer system to the low-tech approach of going through a firm's trash bins in search of discarded notes and computer manuals.

Other underground members are so-called "phone phreaks," adept at navigating through telephone company computers to get free service, obtain extra lines, change phone numbers or play practical jokes on enemies.

The capabilities of the Cyber Underground, particularly the potential for stealing financial data or crashing computers controlling vital functions like the city power grid, are of considerable concern to San Angelo authorities.

But club activities have so far been confined to minor computer break-ins and low-grade mischief, like redesigning the San Angelo city web page with nude pictures and obscenities.

Most Cyber Underground members subscribe to a loose hacker "code of ethics," which proscribes erasing files, planting viruses or committing other destructive acts. The challenge of breaking into encrypted files, coupled with a general feeling that cyberspace should be a place for the free exchange of information, motivates the Cyber Underground.

Members normally communicate via their computers, and in fact most have never met face-to-face. They go by pseudonymous "screen names," often drawn from cyberpunk science fiction novels.

The Cyber Underground prides itself on being the "elite of the elite" among hackers. In order to join, prospective members must hack into one of several highly secure computers into which data on contacting the underground has been secretly planted.

Life in San Angelo

ORDER OF THE KNIGHTS TEMPLAR

A secretive fraternal society, the Order of the Knights Templar claims to trace its history back to a historic order of knighthood active during the Crusades.

The Order of the Poor Knights of Christ and the Temple of Solomon began sometime in the early 1100s. By the 13th century, the order had grown powerful enough to essentially ignore the edicts of various European monarchs. But in 1306 King Philip IV of France, who owed debts to the order, convinced Pope Clement V to order the arrest of all templars in France.

Many knights templar were tried and condemned as heretics, and the order was officially dissolved in 1312. Some believe the order merely went underground, however, and conspiracy buffs say it continues to secretly influence world events even today.

In 1925, financier Andreas Hunt and some friends founded the Order of the Knights Templar in San Angelo. Hunt, who claimed to be an actual descendant of a templar, set up elaborate rituals for initiating new members and conducting meetings.

Members vow never to reveal the existence of the order, nor its membership, but are taught various hand signals and phrases by which they can recognize one another. Hooded velvet robes are worn for baroque ceremonies lit by flickering candles.

The newly formed Order of the Knights Templar built a nondescript meeting hall in Cathedral Square, which is still used today.

While the modern order continues to follow all the customs and traditions laid down by Hunt, it now exists mainly as an ultra-secret lodge for bored executives and bureaucrats. They meet monthly at the hall, and occasionally hold feasts on certain historic dates.

The order has attracted people from all walks of life. Among its members are financier Xavier Trent, private investigator Paul Wolf, a police captain and an assistant to the mayor, as well as numerous attorneys, doctors, corporate executives and a few blue-collar workers.

You oughta check out the Justice Foundation website! It has bios of everyone on the team, a diagram of the Turbojet, all kinds of stuff. And you can send e-mail to them, too!

I sent one to Azteca about how on page 9 of Justice Foundation #28 he says that Dementia might be behind the illusionary giant robots attacking their base when back in #5 Savant told the team that Dementia disoriented her victims with chaotic, incoherent illusions.

He hasn't sent me a reply yet, though. Think I should e-mail him again?

- Nathan Weingartner, 14, student

THE STREET SCENE

The gritty world of the streets stands in direct contrast to the glittering high society scene. Life on the street can be hard, even with the aid of shelters, meals programs and other charitable endeavors. Even so, San Angelo seems to have more than its share of homeless.

While an accurate count of the homeless has never been made, they live in virtually every part of the city. The highest concentrations of homeless people are found downtown, particularly in City Center and the Armory, and in Pleasant Grove.

POVERTY AND HOMELESSNESS

Many of those on the streets suffer from mental illness, alcoholism or drug addiction. Others were forced into homelessness by insurmountable hardships. And a handful actually prefer a life in the open air, without rules or responsibilities.

A high percentage of the city's homeless population has lived in San Angelo for several years. Others are highly mobile, traveling around the state and nation by hopping freight trains or hitchhiking. They rarely stay in town longer than a few months.

Cars, working or not, are used as shelter, as are bridges, underpasses, doorways and almost anywhere else that a person can stay dry and maybe even warm. In the summer, times are easier and many homeless people build crude camps along the brushy riverbanks.

Camping on the river is illegal, however, and police occasionally sweep the riverbanks to dismantle the unsightly, unsanitary camps. Mostly this just chases the homeless to some other part of the riverfront, to be rousted again a few months later.

Seedy motels and dilapidated downtown residency hotels provide a respite from the streets, and government assistance provides a few people with enough income for long-term stays, though they often have to rely on soup kitchens and food banks for meals.

Panhandling and recycling are key sources of income for the city's homeless, and a few hold down low-paying, temporary jobs, such as day work at construction sites. Government aid, whether disability checks, food stamps or other help, supports others, but the money seems to run out faster every month.

Teenage runaways, sometimes fleeing abuse, are another component of the street scene. Runaways tend to band together, relying on prostitution and panhandling to support themselves. They sometimes break into abandoned buildings for shelter, or build camps in underpasses or other out-of-the-way spots. Many runaway youths frequent the University Commons neighborhood, where they blend in with the college-age crowd.

Runaways and other homeless people prefer to avoid confrontations with authorities, especially law enforcement officers. Crimes are almost never reported, and investigators are rarely able to find witnesses willing to talk. In fact, most street people are averse to volunteering any kind of information, particularly personal data like names or hometowns, and are suspicious of strangers.

ERNIE "TINFOIL" THEILES

Homeless person

Aliens! They're everywhere, pulling the strings of their human puppets, secretly carrying out their conquest of Earth.

But Ernie Theiles knows the truth. And he knows how to block their mind-control powers. Just put some tinfoil in your cap, see? It deflects the telepathic emanations, protecting your mind from alien domination. So what if everyone laughs at you? At least you're safe.

It all started 20 years ago in college. That was when Ernie began to see the truth. Class lectures, chess tournaments, homework ... those things just didn't seem important anymore. He holed up in his apartment, reading his tattered science fiction books until one day it hit him—an extraterrestrial influence was at work in the college! Soon he could see the signs of mind control in his professors, his fellow students, even the dean when she expelled him.

Sure, his parents forced Ernie to see a psychiatrist, who mumbled something about mental illness and medication. But Ernie could

see the truth—the doctor and his parents had been co-opted by the aliens. The pills were really a slow-acting poison. So Ernie left, and he's been on his own ever since.

Life on the streets isn't so bad. Oh, it can be hungry and cold, but there are food banks and shelters. Ernie's kid brother Baxter is a judge now, and he sometimes comes by with some money or clothes. He tries to get Ernie to come live with him, but the only way Ernie can track the progress of the alien invasion is to stay on the streets, just another invisible street person. He's even gotten pretty good at following the alien pawns around without being noticed.

Ernie Theiles knows the truth. And isn't that what's really important?

Ernie "Tinfoil" Theiles: PL 2; Init +0 (Dex); Defense 10; Spd 30 ft; Atk +0 melee (+0S, punch); SV Dmg +1, Fort +1, REF +0, Will +1; Str 10, Dex 10, Con 12, INT 15, Wis 13, Cha 10. Feats: Indomitable Will. Skills: Bluff +3, Drive +1, Gather Information +4, Hide +2, Knowledge (alien symbols) +4, Knowledge (chess) +5, Knowledge (films and books about aliens) +5, Listen +3, Profession (homeless/street person) +6, Search +5, Spot +3. Weaknesses: Quirk—obsessed with alien invasion. Equipment: Ragged clothes, knit cap (lined with tinfoil), coat, sleeping bag.

Ernie "Tinfoil" Theiles

STR 4, REF 4, HLT 5, PRE 4, INT 7, WIL 4
DEF 14, INI 6, MOV 9, TGH 4, LIF 23

Disadvantages: Distinctive Features (homeless man with tinfoil-lined cap, concealable) [2], Infamous (crazy homeless man, local figure) [-2], Poverty [-5], Psych Disad (fears alien mind control) [-5], Psych Disad (obsessed with alien invasion) [-10]

Advantages: Ally (Judge Baxter Theiles, brother) [5], Ally (various street people) [2], Eidetic Memory [5]

Skills: Area Knowledge (San Angelo) +3, Astronomy +1, Awareness +4, Driving +2, Intrigue +1, Knowledge (Chess) +6, Knowledge (films and books about aliens) +6, Knowledge (San Angelo street scene) +3, Professional (homeless/street person) +2, Shadowing +3, Symbols (Alien) +2.

Equipment: Ragged clothes, knit cap (lined with tinfoil), coat, sleeping bag.

Hey, I figger if he can afford all them colorful outfits, he can spare some change for a vet'r'an. So I asks him, I says, 'Hey, got some spare change?' And he says, real embarrassed, 'Uh, I don't carry a wallet. No pockets.' Bad tailoring, if ya ask me.
— Harvey Waltrip, 44, panhandler

OTHER STREET PEOPLE

"Keychain" Boland: A homeless Armory man considered something of a character by charity workers. He carries a huge ring of discarded keys, and is perpetually on the lookout for new additions to his collection. He is harmless unless someone tries to take his keys away.

No one has ever been able to learn the reason for his obsession with keys, and Boland seems to have no interest in finding the locks that his hundreds of keys fit. He has had several run-ins



Illustration by Storm Cook

with city police, who consider his key ring a potential weapon, but usually ends up back on the streets within a few days due to the vagaries of prosecuting a mentally ill person.

Christopher Jarrett: The 17-year-old de-facto leader of a band of teenage runaways who roam back and forth between University Commons and City Center. Jarrett, who fled a foster home in Arizona, watches out for his fellow runaways and tries to organize their activities to ensure they have food, shelter and other necessities.

Although he projects an air of cool confidence, Jarrett is sometimes overwhelmed by his unsought leadership role. His band of teen runaways includes Emily Warden, also known as the superpowered criminal Phobia.

Alberto Morales: A thug who is greatly feared by fellow street people. Morales, who boasts that he has killed five men, routinely extorts and robs other homeless people for money to feed his methamphetamine addiction. A strong, ruthless man, he has brutally beaten several people, including Ernie "Tinfoil" Theiles. Morales has been barred from most shelters and kitchens due to his violent, erratic behavior.

Lilith Newmeyer: A disheveled woman who pushes a rattling, rusting shopping cart filled with her belongings around City Center as she mumbles arcane formulas to herself. Few people know that Newmeyer was once a UC San Angelo physics professor who reportedly worked for the U.S. government on top-secret projects before a slow spiral into mental illness drove her to abandon her job, friends and family for a life on the streets.

CHARITIES AND SHELTERS

A number of charitable organizations serve the poor, hungry and homeless in San Angelo. Some provide basic necessities, like food and shelter, while others offer university scholarships and other aid to help people pull themselves out of poverty.

Life in San Angelo

CAMPAIGN TIP

The street scene can provide seeds for some compelling adventures and memorable NPCs, offering GMs an opportunity to set stories against the backdrop of a pressing social issue in the tradition of many four-color comics.

The anonymous, faceless hordes of street people are easy prey for criminals, not to mention mad scientists in search of experimental subjects. The PCs could hear rumors of disappearances or other strange goings-on that are being ignored by authorities.

Homeless people are often well-informed about the people, places and news of the street scene—keeping on top of things can be a matter of survival! Street-level PCs, in particular, might want to develop contacts among the homeless. Often overlooked, and with plenty of time on their hands, homeless NPCs can be particularly good at surveillance work. A PC might even pose as a street person to conduct undercover work, though such a disguise is unlikely to fool the truly homeless.

Many homeless people once held respectable jobs, with families, homes and other responsibilities before addiction, illness or misfortune drove them to the streets. Perhaps the heroes need a crucial piece of information from a former attorney, scientist or other important personage who has disappeared into the street scene.

Or the PC could have a homeless DNPC—imagine the difficulty of trying to help a friend or relative who is unable to cope with a “normal” life. For a twist, the GM could arrange for the PCs themselves to become homeless—perhaps they are on the run from the law after being framed by a villainous enemy.

GOLDEN RULE (E9)

An ecumenical charity dedicated to serving the poor and homeless of San Angelo, the Armory-based charity feeds thousands of people six days a week.

Golden Rule also runs a shelter for families and a school for homeless children at its compound. Money from 100-plus churches, the United Way and private donations funds the sizable operation.

The lunchtime crowds at Golden Rule are one of the chief complaints of Armory-area residents, who believe the charity attracts an undue concentration of homeless people to the area. Disputes with the city over permits and building code violations are another sore point.

KITCHENS AND SHELTERS

Many San Angelo charities seek to aid the city's large population of homeless and needy people, though their efforts do not always come without criticism.

N Street Shelter (E10): The N Street Shelter is a county-run facility in the Armory neighborhood downtown. Drafty, crowded and noisy, the shelter badly needs repairs and expansion.

Full Gospel Mission (D8): An overnight downtown shelter for the homeless, the Full Gospel Mission also offers an evening meal six days a week, but diners must first listen to an evangelical sermon.

A coalition of San Angelo churches supports the mission. Several other similar missions are also found in the Armory and Pleasant Grove.

Jobz Inc. (E10): A hiring hall, Jobz Inc. is located in a Riverfront warehouse downtown. Companies pay the operation a fee to fill temporary day-labor jobs. Every day, hundreds of poor and indigent people flock to the hall in hopes of securing a day's work, but most leave empty-handed.

Lawn-maintenance firms are a chief client of Jobz Inc., but short-term, labor-intensive jobs of all kinds are available—everything from demolishing houses to sweeping parking lots.

Light of Charity Mission: The Light of Charity Mission is an offshoot of Light of Truth Ministry, which many San Angelo residents consider a cult. The mission, located in Pleasant Grove, provides an evening meal, showers, a clothing locker and an overnight shelter for homeless people.

Staffed by white-robed acolytes from Light of Truth Ministry, the mission serves as both a public relations tool and a recruiting station for the cult.

St. Lawrence Dining Hall (D11): St. Lawrence Dining Hall is a kitchen providing a hot meal every night for hundreds of homeless and destitute people in the downtown. Charitable donations and money from the Catholic Church finance the program.

San Angelo Food Bank: A volunteer effort, the San Angelo Food Bank distributes donated foodstuffs to the needy citywide.

The operation conducts several canned food drives each year, and uses cash donations to purchase additional food at discount rates from local supermarkets. Boxes and bags of food are handed out each week at various distribution points around the city.

The food bank, one of San Angelo's oldest and best-known charities, was founded by Father Paul Stuart, a Catholic priest.

POLL RESULTS:

Are social services agencies unfairly concentrated in downtown San Angelo?

Downtown Residents

Yes	74%
No	18%
Undecided	8%

Suburban Residents

Yes	21%
No	68%
Undecided	11%

— San Angelo Clarion

OTHER CHARITIES

All the major national charities familiar to Americans are well-represented in San Angelo, providing everything from disaster relief to funds for cancer research. But the city is also home to a number of local charitable organizations, which likewise cater to a variety of needs.

David Hernandez Memorial Fund: Named for the first Latino sheriff's deputy in San Angelo County, who was killed in the 1980s shortly before his scheduled retirement, the David Hernandez Memorial Fund assists spouses and children of local peace officers killed in the line of duty.

An annual charity golf tournament at La Vista Public Golf Course raises money for the fund.

Percival Cooper Children's Home: The Percival Cooper Children's Home is a charitable organization that runs a home for

children who have been orphaned or abandoned. One of the city's first charities, it was established in 1871 by Percival Cooper, a pioneer lawyer who was himself an orphan.

Sacred Heart Memorial Hospital Auxiliary Guild: Sacred Heart Guild members brighten the days of hospital patients with visits, gifts and occasional entertainment. Volunteers knit caps for every baby born at Sacred Heart Memorial Hospital, arrange clown shows for children in the pediatric wing and spend time with patients or their families. Proceeds from a hospital gift shop and annual fund-raising events help cover the guild's expenses.

Helena Pierpoint Morgan, the wife of developer Benjamin Morgan, serves as president of the Sacred Heart Memorial Hospital Auxiliary Guild. Most other San Angelo hospitals have similar volunteer guilds.

San Angelo Blood Bank: Working in conjunction with area hospitals, the San Angelo Blood Bank publicizes the need for blood donors and holds regular blood drives throughout San Angelo.

A recent series of ads featuring such prominent regular donors as Mayor Alex Martinez, financier Alastair McDermott, Sheriff J.T. Preston, TV personality Parker Bell and hero Lotus of the Justice Foundation proved especially popular.

San Angelo Women's Center: A non-profit organization, the San Angelo Women's Center assists women who are victims of sexual assault or domestic violence. The center, based in La Vista, also provides programs for abused children. Counseling, legal aid, relocation assistance and other help is available.

The center also operates a shelter, called Angel House, for women and children fleeing abusive relationships. The location of the shelter is a tightly guarded secret for security reasons. The hero Corona volunteers at the Center in her Secret ID as attorney Callie Dalton.

Sarah Tanner Foundation: A scholarship fund for medical students from poorer San Angelo neighborhoods, the Sarah Tanner Foundation was started by wealthy retired cardiologist James Tanner and his wife, Amelia. The foundation is named after their daughter, who died of leukemia as a child.

THE WEALTHY SCENE

The gold fields of San Angelo yielded riches to lucky '49er prospectors, and today their descendants continue to seek their fortunes in the city. Real estate, commerce, medicine, law, manufacturing and other pursuits, not nuggets, fuel the dreams of modern-day gold-hunters.

The city boasts a number of millionaires and other wealthy individuals, fueling a small but thriving high society scene.

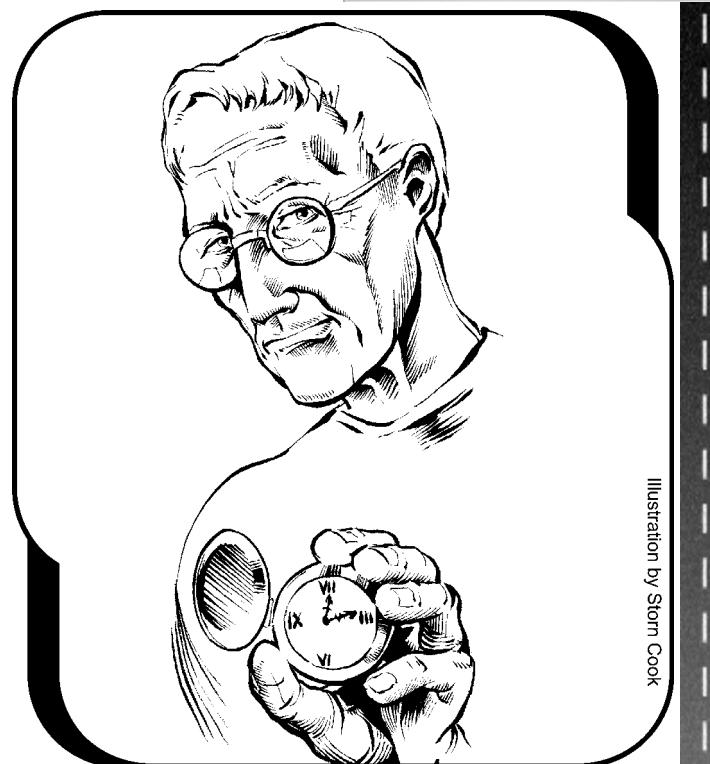
THOMAS CALDECOTT (CLOCKWORK)

Retired arch-criminal

In Golden Age San Angelo, no arch-criminal was more well-known than Clockwork, the Master of Time.

A dashing, daring figure, Clockwork pulled off some of the most audacious robberies of his day. Sometimes he worked with a gang of normal accomplices, other times joining with his fellow superhumans for a particular scheme.

Despite his criminal acts, Clockwork was actually somewhat popular with a segment of the public since he took care to never injure or kill anyone during his exploits. Once, Clockwork even helped police find an ex-accomplice who had murdered a woman in a later crime.



He battled the Liberty Corps several times, and though the heroes managed to foil many of his plots they never succeeded in capturing Clockwork.

But as time went by, the man behind the mask began to feel pangs of guilt. He couldn't fool himself any longer with boasts that his crime spree had never hurt anyone. His jewel heists had bankrupted some stores, while his art thefts had wrecked prized collections.

He had sold family heirlooms, handed down for generations, for pennies on the dollar.

And as time passed, the colorful days of the Golden Age began to wane. A new, harder time was dawning, and Clockwork realized he couldn't expect to go on forever without being forced to injure or kill someone in his crimes.

In 1950, Clockwork retired—he took off the mask and became wealthy investor Thomas Caldecott, putting the proceeds of his criminal career into the stock market.

He met and married his wife of 35 years, Coral, never telling her of his past or powers. The couple had no children, and she passed away in 1985.

Over the years, Caldecott's past has weighed more and more heavily on his mind. Even his sizable charitable donations have failed to assuage his guilt.

He rarely uses his time control powers anymore due to the strain on his heart, but now and again Caldecott performs small, anonymous acts of heroism—slowing a speeding car just long enough for a child to get out of its path, for example.

Caldecott sensed two temporal disruptions after retiring, once in 1966 and again in 1988. The shock of the second disturbance brought on a heart attack. A pacemaker was installed, but Caldecott still suffers from periodic spells of weakness.

Personality/Motivation: Thomas Caldecott is a repentant man. He longs for a way to make up for his Golden Age criminal career, but so far nothing has eased his remorse.

He fears nothing he does will ever be enough to erase the wrongs he committed.

Life in San Angelo

Caldecott's mind is still sharp, though since the death of his wife he has very little social life. Most of his friends have also passed away, and he spends his days walking the streets of a San Angelo very different from the days of the Golden Age—yet, in some ways, not so different after all.

Quote: "There has to be something I can do to help."

Powers/Tactics: Caldecott has the power to control the flow of time. He can speed or slow time for both himself and others. As the criminal Clockwork, he used these powers to escape capture several times by slowing time to a crawl for pursuing heroes while he fled in normal time.

He can also travel through time, though Caldecott has almost never used this power for fear of disrupting the timestream. He does not have a complete understanding of temporal flows, but Caldecott can sense disturbances to the flow of time.

While his time control powers are as strong as ever, Caldecott's aging heart cannot take the strain of extended use of his paranormal abilities. Even a minor use of his powers leaves him weak and shaky. A major expenditure of power, such as traveling through time, could kill him.

His physical attributes are also seriously degraded by age. Even his once-superhuman abilities, such as his agility, are now barely above the human norm.

Appearance: Caldecott, 86, has white hair and beard, with light blue eyes. He wears black-framed glasses. His 5'8" frame is spare, and his facial features are sharp. As Clockwork, he wore a red costume with gold cape, boots, midriff and gloves. He wore a mask, and a golden timepiece design on his chest.

Thomas Caldecott (Clockwork): PL 7; Init +2 (+2 Dex); Defense 16 (+4 Base, +2 Dex); Spd 30 ft; Atk +0 melee (-1S, punch); SV Dmg +0, Fort +0, REF +2, Will +1; Str 8, Dex 14, Con 11, INT 12, Wis 13, Cha 14.

Skills: Bluff +2, Climb +1, Diplomacy +2, Disable Device +1, Disguise +1, Gather Information +2, Hide +2, Knowledge (corporate world) +2, Knowledge (Golden Age supers) +3, Knowledge (Golden Age underworld) +2, Knowledge (stock market) +1, Listen +2, Move Silently +2, Profession (arch criminal) +4, Profession (investor) +2, Repair +2.

Weaknesses: *Susceptible*: when he uses his powers, *Quirk*—repentant.

Feats: Independent Income, Wealth +1.

Powers: Teleportation +7 [Source: Mutation; Flaw: Tiring; Cost: 7 pp], Time Control +7 [Source: Mutation; Stunts: Time Travel; Extras: Area, Selective; Flaw: Tiring; Cost: 58 pp].

Equipment: Casual clothes, pocket watch, family photos (in wallet).

Thomas Caldecott (Clockwork)

STR 2, REF 6, HLT 3, PRE 6, INT 5, WIL 5
DEF 16,INI 6,MOV 9,TGH 4,LIF 19

Disadvantages: Addicted (heart medicine, 1/day to avoid heart attack) [-5], Infamous (Golden Age arch-criminal, obscure local figure) [-2], Physical Disad (heart disease, has pacemaker, restricted activity/stress) [-5], Physical Disad (using his time powers strains his heart, suffers 2d6 Sp/S damage) [-5], Psych Disad (code against killing, absolute) [-10], Psych Disad (repentant) [-5], Senior (60+) [-2], Secret (former arch-criminal) [-5]

(Continued)

Thomas Caldecott (Clockwork) Continued

Advantages: Good Sense of Time [5], Perk (shareholder in major corporations) [2], Wealthy (Well off) [5]

Skills: Appraisal +2, Area Knowledge (San Angelo) +3, Awareness +3, Concentration +3, Cooking +1, Dancing +1, Deduction +2, Disguise +3, Driving +2, Electronics +1 (security systems +2), History (local) +3, Knowledge (corporate world) +1, Knowledge (criminal gang) +3, Knowledge (Golden Age supers) +3, Knowledge (Golden Age underworld) +6, Knowledge (stock market) +3, Lockpicking +4, Persuasion +2 (bribery +2), Professional (arch criminal) +4, Professional (investor) +3, Society +2 (high society +2, streetwise +2), Stealth +4, Swimming +2, Tactics +1, Unarmed Combat (brawling) +3, Use Powers +7.

Powers: Speed Time (2x, INI and allows him 2 actions per turn); Timeslip (teleportation, 50m range, requires one action); Time Travel (extra-dimensional movement, can carry 2x own mass, to any time, requires one action); Detect Temporal Disturbances (requires Awareness roll [TN 15], max sense range 100m).

Equipment: Casual clothes, pocket watch, family photos (in wallet).

CAMPAIGN TIP

The world of the wealthy provides a number of hooks for PC backgrounds and exciting adventures.

Superheroes who are fabulously wealthy in their Secret IDs are a staple of the comics and superhero RPG campaigns. Players who purchase the Perk: Filthy Rich for their character should determine where the PC ranks on the chart of San Angelo's wealthiest people, not to mention the PC's standing in high society.

Even if the heroes aren't wealthy themselves, they are likely to interact with the world of the rich at some point. Wealthy individuals are a natural target for criminals, though most have the good sense to protect themselves with security systems, bodyguards and other defenses. While these precautions might be adequate for most criminals, supervillains are another matter—one that may require the assistance of the PCs.

But wealthy NPCs can be used for far more in your campaign than crime victims. As people of power and influence, they have access to the top circles of government, business and society. Financial independence has provided some NPCs with the time and resources to pursue interesting or useful hobbies, or to become experts in a particular subject.

PROMINENT WEALTHY PEOPLE

Wealthy individuals still active in their chosen careers are covered under their respective professions.

Veronica and Violet Barnes: Elderly twin sisters who inherited the Barnes department store fortune. The eccentric sisters own a considerable share of Barnes Co. stock, but are not involved in company operations. The twins, who never married, live together in the family mansion in Poverty Gulch. A frequent sight on the social circuit, they are fond of dressing alike.

Kenneth Cameron III: The young heir apparent to the Peregrine Aircraft fortune, considered the most eligible bachelor in San Angelo. While he has made a pretense of learning the family business, Cameron seems content to live the carefree life of a playboy. His father, president of Peregrine Aircraft, has all but given up on him and the two do not get along.

Charles Harrison Moore: A retired attorney with a passion for hunting and sport-fishing. He has hunted all over the world, and typically spends several months out of town each year on hunting expeditions. Moore's mansion on the bluffs of the Del Oro River contains hunting trophies of all kinds, including a handful of now-rare or endangered species such as grizzlies, tigers and rhinos. He also collects hunting rifles of all types, from the most sophisticated new models to vintage muskets dating back to the 1700s.

Helen Payne: A wealthy widow known as an excellent hostess. Her late husband, Howard Payne, owned Pantheon Steel before it fell prey to financier Donald Croft. Elaborate parties at Payne's Brackett Park mansion are a key part of the high society scene. A past president of the San Angelo Historical Society, Payne has a strong interest in preservation efforts in the city. She is being courted by French architect Pierre Duval.

Dakota Ross: An explorer and adventurer of the 1920s-1930s who published a best-selling autobiography in the 1980s. One of the few surviving members of the Argonaut Society in San Angelo, Ross was particularly well known for his daring Arctic and Antarctic expeditions. A cranky, gruff exterior conceals his sharp mind and keen interest in the modern world.

James and Amelia Tanner: A rich African-American couple who administer a small charitable foundation. A retired heart surgeon and medical researcher, James Tanner invented an artificial heart valve that he sold to a major corporation for hundreds of thousands of dollars. Now he and his wife provide scholarships to medical students and grants to local hospitals through the Sarah Tanner Foundation, named after a daughter who died as a child.

Bethany Rhys Waterhouse: A young woman who has risen quickly in the world of high society. She is married to Russell Waterhouse, considered one of the up-and-coming young attorneys at Madison, Fairchild & Associates, the city's top law firm.

Known for her extensive jewelry collection, Bethany also has earned a reputation for her charity work. Her balls and parties on behalf of local causes are becoming very popular among the city's social elite.

Unbeknownst to her husband, Bethany Waterhouse is having an affair with Scott Blake, a dashing ex-test pilot and astronaut who works for Peregrine Aircraft.

LIFESTYLES OF THE RICH AND FAMOUS

A wealth of private clubs and other social hot spots exist to provide a backdrop to the heady high society scene in San Angelo.

CAMPAIGN TIP

Many of the places frequented by the city's social elite are exclusive private clubs. Non-members, even heroes, may have a hard time getting into these places. GMs can use these types of problems to encourage players to invest some points in contacts or favors.

TOP 20 WEALTHIEST SAN ANGELO RESIDENTS

1. (Reserved for PCs or GM-created characters)
2. Aristeides Pappagianis (developer)
3. Thaddeus Long (sports mogul)
4. Xavier Trent (investor)
5. (Reserved for PCs or GM-created characters)
6. Benjamin Morgan (developer)
7. Kenneth Cameron II (president, Peregrine Aircraft)
8. Veronica and Violet Barnes (heiresses)
9. Peter K. Fletcher (newspaper publisher)
10. (Reserved for PCs or GM-created characters)
11. Alastair McDermott (investor) *
12. Donald Croft (investor)
13. C. Fullerton Hughes (CEO, Eclipse Industries)
14. Thomas Caldecott (retired investor) *
15. (Reserved for PCs or GM-created characters)
16. Randolph McAlpine (rental property owner/politician)
17. Ethan Reynolds, a.k.a. Twister (restaurateur) *
18. Tom Fitzsimmons (software designer)
19. Dakota Ross (explorer-author) *
20. (Reserved for PCs or GM-created characters)

SKYLINE CLUB (C9)

The Skyline Club is an exclusive private dining club on the top story of the Prospector Bank Building in downtown San Angelo. Only members and their guests are allowed to dine at the restaurant, which serves sumptuous lunches and dinners.

Most of the chief powerbrokers in the city belong to the Skyline Club, which caters solely to the upper crust. It is also considered a key networking spot among the city's business elite.

Members include Anders Drake, Aristeides Pappagianis, Thaddeus Long, Benjamin Morgan, Jeffrey Daley, Xavier Trent, Senator Catherine Forbes and most of the other movers and shakers in the city.

By tradition, the mayor has an honorary membership, but Mayor Martinez rarely visits the club except when entertaining out-of-town business guests.

ROYAL GROVE COUNTRY CLUB

The elite Royal Grove Country Club boasts lavish dining facilities, a championship golf course, an Olympic-sized indoor swimming pool, a riding stable and other amenities. The most prestigious, and expensive, country club in San Angelo.

OTHER PLACES OF NOTE

The city's social elite have their pick of places to hobnob, with numerous country clubs and other attractions scattered around San Angelo.

Ashcroft Riding Stables: A private equestrian club in Lakeview, the Ashcroft Riding Stables cater to the very rich and their children. In addition to an extensive stable, the club offers miles of wooded riding trails, training corrals and a show compound complete with grandstands.

Shows are held at the stables almost every weekend, and regular classes in riding and jumping are available. The club is owned and run by Lady Judith Ashcroft, a British champion of the equestrian circuit.

Castle Heights Country Club: One of the newest country clubs in San Angelo, Castle Heights Country Club has an 18-hole course designed by a retired professional golfer.

Life in San Angelo

A shortage of mature shade trees makes the course blazing hot in summer, however, and early morning tee times are highly coveted.

Central City Racquet Club (D10): A gym and sports complex in the City Center, the Central City Racquet Club is popular with many top executives at nearby corporate headquarters. The pricey club offers racquetball courts, two pools, a gym, steam baths and other attractions. Many business deals take place at the gym. Security at the club, located in a grim part of the City Center, is extremely tight.

La Vista Cabana Club (14): One of the few survivors of the once-plentiful pool clubs of 1950s-era suburban La Vista, the members-only La Vista Cabana Club includes a swimming pool, a diving pool and other swimming-related facilities.

Once considered the "country clubs" of the middle class, cabana clubs are now mostly known for their swim teams and barely register on the social scale.

Oakbridge Country Club: Oakbridge Country Club in La Vista has a well-regarded 18-hole golf course cut by numerous creeks. The 1960s-style clubhouse is undergoing renovation and remodeling work.

The least expensive club in the city, Oakbridge Country Club is considered a good start for would-be social climbers.

San Angelo Yacht Club: An exclusive organization of wealthy sailing fans, the San Angelo Yacht Club holds several outings on Lake Oro and the delta each year.

The organization also sponsors the annual Lake Oro Regatta sailboat races, which are open to non-club members for a slightly higher registration fee.

CAMPAIGN TIP

Wealthy individuals are accustomed to getting what they want, which could pose a problem for the PCs if an NPC decides that what he wants is a superpowered bodyguard ... or if his daughter wants a superpowered boyfriend. Imagine a PC hero being bombarded with candies, flowers, gifts, billboard messages and other entreaties by an ardent suitor.

Or the GM could turn up the heat by making the NPC an outright enemy instead of a mere annoyance. Those contacts and resources make even a non-powered wealthy NPC a serious threat to the heroes. She may not have any superpowers, but she can hire plenty of people who do if she sees the need.

On the other hand, a rich NPC could sponsor a PC hero team to combat the increasing lawlessness in society or fulfill some other purpose—maybe just as a tax write-off! NPCs who might be interested in such a venture are marked with a * on the chart of San Angelo's wealthiest residents.



MEDIA, ENTERTAINMENT AND THE ARTS

San Angelo 1500
Media, Entertainment
and the Arts

MUSEUMS AND LIBRARIES

San Angelo Metropolitan Museum: Hall Avenue at E Street—"The Golden Age" takes a timely look back at the first superhuman heroes of San Angelo. The exhibit spans 1936 to 1950, offering insights into the careers of such early luminaries as Minuteman and the Liberty Corps. Their enemies, from Nazi spies to Clockwork, are also examined. Dioramas, old newspaper clippings and a few artifacts of the era tell the story. While the exhibit touches on some controversies, such as the racist public reaction to the addition of the Japanese-American Silver Samurai to the Liberty Corps following World War II, overall it takes a fond look back at what now seems a simpler age. (Open daily from 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.)

— "On the Town" listings, *Golden City Magazine*

Life's not all work and no play for San Angelo residents, and the city is bursting with entertainment options.

Sports, nightlife, fine dining, the arts and outdoor recreation are just a few possibilities. But residents also need to stay up on the latest news, and that's where the media comes in.

CAMPAIGN TIPS

Plenty of adventure possibilities will present themselves in this chapter, but GMs may also want to keep the human side of the PCs in mind when reading through it, particularly entertainment-related material.

Fighting crime and saving the world all the time can get a little old—an occasional adventure in which the heroes unwind with a trip to the ball game, day at the beach or night at the opera can open up new vistas in your gaming and provide players with a chance to explore another side of their PCs.

The various people, places and activities described in this chapter can also be sprinkled into more standard adventures to help give players the sense their PCs do their heroing in a real, living city.

For example, if one point in the adventure calls for a television report on the villain's latest escapade, consider mentioning which station aired the report, using one of the listed TV reporters or anchors.

THE MEDIA

In order to keep up with life in the big city, people have to stay informed. San Angelo has a host of newspapers, magazines and radio and television stations ready to meet the need.

NEWSPAPERS

The city has a lively newspaper scene, with two large daily papers and a host of smaller competitors and weekly publications.

SAN ANGELO TIMES

The largest daily newspaper in the city, the *San Angelo Times* has been a part of the community since 1902. Founded by Vernon Fletcher, the operation is still dominated by the Fletcher family today, although it is now a corporation with thousands of shareholders and a board of directors.

Peter K. Fletcher, a great-nephew of the founder, is the current publisher.

The *San Angelo Times* is a morning paper, published seven days a week. The Sunday editions are the largest, and usually feature major projects or the start of a series of reports on some pressing local issue.

Each day's paper is a little different, but the core elements include a front section devoted to state, national and international news, a metro section on local news, a sports section, a lifestyles section, a business section and two or more sections of classifieds.

Sections focusing on food, entertainment, gardening, real estate and small businesses typically appear one or two times a week on a regular schedule.

The *San Angelo Times* has a daily circulation of 344,342 and a Sunday circulation of 429,440.

The paper employs 2,080 people in all at its downtown plant. Its newsroom staff of about 60 reporters covers state and local news. The sports, lifestyles and business sections have their own staffs of reporters, and a crew of award-winning photographers snaps the pictures to go with the words. Graphic artists provide snappy-looking maps and charts to liven up the news pages.

International news and photos come in over the Associated Press wire, though the *San Angelo Times* occasionally sends teams overseas for special projects or series.

The paper's editorials tend to be fairly liberal, which angers some conservatives in town. Contrary to complaints from those who disagree with its opinion page, the paper's editors strive to keep bias out of news stories and generally succeed.

Overall, the *San Angelo Times* has a good reputation for accuracy and fairness. Critics claim the paper sometimes plays it safe by not more aggressively pursuing investigative stories, but the *Times* still breaks its share of exposés on scandals and corruption. One recent series detailed the rampant corruption in the San Angelo County building inspector's office, for example.

Competition with the *San Angelo Clarion*, an older but slightly smaller daily paper, is intense. Scoops are celebrated and missed stories cursed as both papers struggle to provide better coverage of the Golden City than their rival.

The *San Angelo Times* has won three Pulitzer Prizes over the years, along with a host of less-famous awards.

Hey Jolene! Dynamo's fighting Phosphorous by Curry Bridge on the river! We just picked it up on the police scanner. Here's some film, get out there! Bill, you go with her. This is for page one, folks! Sherry, get the file on Phosphorous out of the morgue. Now, where's my—hey, has anyone seen my coffee?

— Norm Fowler, 40, city editor

OTHER NEWSPAPERS

At 3 million people and growing, San Angelo is a big newspaper market—far too big for just one paper to satisfy its residents.

The city has a second metro daily, and outlying towns are served by their own daily or multi-weekly newspapers. Still other newspapers focus on various cultural or ethnic sub-groups in the metropolitan area.

In addition to these publications, San Angelo has several weekly newspapers with limited circulation. Normally distributed free at supermarket racks, these neighborhood papers are tiny operations with one or two writers at most. The city also supports numerous weekly or monthly "shoppers," filled entirely with classified ads of all types.

The city also supports a host of monthly specialty publications. Gays, lesbians, parents, singles, computer aficionados and New Age adherents are just as few of the groups targeted by these papers.

Business Chronicle: The weekly *Business Chronicle* reports on the San Angelo business scene—everything from shake-ups at top corporations to innovative small businesses. The paper also prints charts ranking the top companies in a variety of categories.

Chinatown Express: A twice-weekly paper, the *Chinatown Express* focuses on life in the Asian American community, particularly Chinatown.

Written in Chinese, the *Chinatown Express* has a reputation for breaking big stories, particularly those dealing with gangs and organized crime.

The paper was founded by immigrant Hu Chow, who became known as Harvey Chow, in the 1960s. A one-man operation, Chow established the muckraking reputation of the *Chinatown Express*, and his shooting death in a Chinatown restaurant in 1988 is believed to be the work of Chinese organized crime figures irked by his exposés on the tongs.

The death of Chow failed to silence the *Chinatown Express*, however. His daughter, Suzy Chow, took over the paper and continues to operate it much as her father did.

(For more information, see *The Dragon's Gate*.)

Golden City Magazine: The glossy *Golden City Magazine*, published monthly, concentrates on life and lifestyles in San Angelo. Regular stories include interviews with prominent residents, photo spreads on the beautiful homes of the city and fine arts listings.

Marshall Post-Dispatch: A small daily newspaper, the *Marshall Post-Dispatch* keeps residents of Marshall and the surrounding area up-to-date on local happenings. The paper publishes six days a week, skipping Saturdays, and has a circulation of 10,000, rising to 12,000 on Sundays.

San Angelo Clarion: The oldest daily newspaper in the city, the *San Angelo Clarion* was started in 1862 by Angus O'Toole. The paper is now owned by a national newspaper chain.

Like its rival, the slightly larger *San Angelo Times*, the *Clarion* reports on local, state, national and international news. The paper also covers sports, lifestyles, business and entertainment, among other topics.

The paper's opinion pages tend to be slightly conservative, which irks more liberal San Angelo residents. News stories are generally well-balanced and fair, however, in spite of claims of biased reporting by critics of the *Clarion's* editorials.

The *San Angelo Clarion* has a daily circulation of 223,392, rising to 285,410 on Sundays. It has a metro newsroom of 35 hard-working reporters. Sports, lifestyles and business coverage are

handled by separate staffs, and the photo department handles the camera work.

Competition for stories is intense between reporters for the *Clarion* and *Times*, but usually friendly—after deadline, at least.

The newspaper employs 1,342 people in all at its downtown plant. Selena Waters is the general manager of the *San Angelo Clarion*.

S.A. Weekly: The *S.A. Weekly* is an alternative tabloid paper known for its strong progressive leanings, investigative stories, entertainment listings and extensive personal ads section.

The paper takes an irreverent attitude toward just about everything, particularly public officials and civic leaders. Mainstream is something of a dirty word at the *S.A. Weekly*.

While accuracy is still a basic, reporters at the paper make no pretense at objectivity or fairness. Many stories are interlaced with passages on the writer's feelings or past experiences.

The *S.A. Weekly* also takes delight in publishing material that would never see print in traditional papers, such as original poems and short stories. Critics blast the paper as juvenile, raunchy and ultimately silly, but such attacks only bolster its readership.

The paper stages several awards contests each year to boost readership and ad sales, including an annual "Best of San Angelo" poll of readers and a local music awards contest.

Vietnamese Journal: The *Vietnamese Journal* is a paper for Southeast Asian residents of San Angelo. Published weekly on a shoestring budget, the newspaper offers advice on life in America, profiles of prominent Southeast Asian residents and editorials blasting the communist government of Vietnam.

I've seen a lot of things in my day,
but I've never seen anything like the night I covered
the Brenton fire. Twelve people died in that tenement fire.
Burned to a crisp. It was gruesome. And they say it was
arson. Well, no kidding. I mean, every one of the victims
was a member of organized crime.

Funny how everyone else on that floor got out before
the fire started. I'm not naming my source, but somebody
said they all got a call from some guy, telling them to leave
the building.

— Donald Patrick, journalist

MADELEINE SAINTE-MARIE

Newspaper reporter

Madeleine Sainte-Marie covers the supers beat for the *San Angelo Times*. Her editors consider her one of the paper's ace reporters, and readers depend on Sainte-Marie to deliver the latest scoop on superpowered doings in the city.

Born in the Louisiana bayou country near New Orleans, Sainte-Marie grew up in a backwoods Cajun family. Even as a child, she was intensely curious about everything.

Editor of her high school newspaper, Sainte-Marie earned a journalism scholarship to Columbia University in New York. A job covering the police beat at a small-town daily paper in the Midwest launched her career as a professional journalist.

A succession of jobs at progressively bigger and better papers led Sainte-Marie to San Angelo, where she landed the prime supers beat by dint of her hard work and perseverance. An able, skilled reporter, Sainte-Marie excels at putting her interview subjects at ease.

A few people have taken issue with her stories on them, but on balance Sainte-Marie has a good reputation for accuracy and fairness. She's also known for keeping her word to sources.

Off the job, she volunteers for the Big Brothers/Big Sisters program and often spends time with her "little sister," Mai Tien, a Vietnamese American youngster.

Sainte-Marie, 35, has shoulder-length curly black hair and brown eyes. She likes wearing hats, and a battered fedora given to her by an old newspaper colleague is among her favorites.

She speaks with a recognizable Cajun accent. Regular workouts at a local gym help her stay in shape. Single, with no children, Sainte-Marie visits her parents and relatives in Louisiana at least twice a year. Cajun cooking is one of her hobbies.

Medeleine Sainte-Marie (Reporter): PL 3; Init +2 (+2 Dex); Defense 13 (+1 base, +2 Dex); Spd 30 ft.; Atk +0 melee (+0S, punch); SV Dmg +1, Fort +1, REF +2, Will +0; Str 10, Dex 14, Con 13, INT 15, Wis 13, Cha 13. *Feats:* Connected, Fame, Talented (Gather Information and Profession). *Skills:* Craft (cooking) +3, Diplomacy +5, Gather Information +8, Knowledge (Cajun food) +3, Knowledge (Louisiana bayous, New York and San Angelo) +3, Language (French; native is English), Listen +4, Profession (reporter) +8, Sense Motive +5. *Equipment:* Fedora, press pass, notepad and pen, micro-cassette recorder.

Medeleine Sainte-Marie, Reporter

STR 4, REF 6, HLT 5, PRE 5, INT 6, WIL 5

DEF 16, INI 6, MOV 11, TGH 5, LIF 25

Disadvantages: Dependent (Mai Ten) [-2], Distinctive Features (Cajun accent, concealable) [-2], Psych Disad (competitive) [-5], Psych Disad (curious) [-5], Psych Disad (code of ethics) [-5]

Advantages: Ally (contacts in SAPD, Sheriff's Dept., and City Hall, San Angelo street scene, all at Conv. level) [6], Ally (contacts in FBI, Justice Foundation, both at Edge level) [10], Famous (local reporter) [2], Perk (press pass) [2]

Skills: Area Knowledge (Louisiana bayous) +3, Area Knowledge (New York) +3, Area Knowledge (San Angelo) +4, Bureaucracy +4, Computers (use) +4, Conversation +6, Cooking +1 (Cajun food +2), Craft (photography) +4, Criminology +1, Dancing +3, Deduction +4, Driving +2, Knowledge (Cajun foods) +3, Knowledge (newspapers) +3, Knowledge (notable people) +3, Knowledge (San Angelo supers) +4, Knowledge (US supers) +2, Knowledge (world supers) +1, Language (French; native is English) +4, Persuasion +4, Photography +2, Professional (newspaper reporter) +3, Research +3, Society +2 (streetwise +2), Stealth +4, Swimming +2, Writing +2 (news articles +4).

Equipment: Fedora, press pass, notepad and pen, micro-cassette recorder.

OTHER REPORTERS OF NOTE

Jerry Abbot: A veteran columnist for the *San Angelo Clarion*. A throwback to the cigar-puffing, no-nonsense newsmen of the past, Abbot often jabs at politicians, judges and other officials in his column for such faults as waffling on issues or pushing pet projects at public expense. His criticism often hits the mark, and more than



Illustration by Albert Deschesne

one civic leader has quietly dropped a particularly silly proposal after being ridiculed in Abbot's column.

Abbot unfortunately exhibits another legendary trait of early newsmen—he is an alcoholic who spends most of his off-hours at downtown watering holes. His health is not especially good, but Abbot has resisted entreaties to take better care of himself.

Maggie Blaylock: A free-lance photographer with a home in San Angelo. Blaylock regularly travels overseas on assignment for magazines and papers, often placing herself at considerable risk. Her photos focused world attention on the Rwandan civil war in 1994. Blaylock also shot photos of the Tienanmein Square protest in China, the Bosnian war and several African famines. A daring, inventive photojournalist, Blaylock seems destined for a Pulitzer Prize.

Suzy Chow: Owner and chief reporter of the *Chinatown Express*. Chow returned to San Angelo from a job at an East Coast newspaper to take over the paper following the death of her father, Harvey Chow. He was shot to death in 1988 while dining at a Chinatown restaurant in a suspected tong reprisal for his exposés on Chinese organized crime.

Suzy Chow has lived up to her father's reputation as a gutsy reporter determined to root out corruption, prejudice and injustice in Chinatown. The *Chinatown Express* continues to be the authoritative source on news of San Angelo's Asian population.

Bobbie Goldblum: A *San Angelo Times* investigative reporter who works with fellow reporter J.J. McAdams. The duo has landed several major awards for its exposés on public corruption, corporate skullduggery and other wrongdoing.

Goldblum shines at developing sources and finding people willing to talk on the record. She tends to be the more impassioned of the pair, balancing McAdams's cynicism.

J.J. McAdams: Half of a crack investigative duo for the *San Angelo Times*. With his reporting partner, Bobbie Goldblum, McAdams broke the story on the payoff scandal involving the San Angelo County building inspector's office.

Media, Entertainment and the Arts

Adept at negotiating bureaucratic mazes, McAdams specializes in rooting out documents and following money trails. He has a cynical take on life.

McAdams and Goldblum are now investigating rumors that former City Council member and powerbroker Randolph McAlpine is secretly a top slumlord in San Angelo.

Jesse Orozco: A young reporter for the *S.A. Weekly* who writes stories on social injustice in San Angelo, particularly those involving prejudice or bigotry.

Matt Powell: A sports reporter and columnist for the *San Angelo Clarion*. He covers the San Angelo Nuggets basketball team for the paper, but his candid assessments of some players' work ethic and skills have not made him especially popular with the team.

In 1996, player Tate Hall slugged Powell in the San Angelo Sports Complex locker room following publication of a particularly critical column. Hall was fined by the team for the incident, but Powell declined to file criminal charges against the volatile player.

Paul Quigley: A crusading *San Angelo Times* columnist. Quigley, who worked for a Texas paper before coming to San Angelo, writes biting columns on local concerns and controversies.

Quigley tends to champion the underdog in his widely read thrice-weekly columns.

He has taken up several causes over the years, and his latest pet peeve seems to be the potential for civil rights abuses by self-proclaimed heroes, particularly those with superpowers.

D. Jonathan Whittier: Editor of the *San Angelo Clarion*. Whittier came to the paper from a hard-charging East Coast paper, and has infused the newsroom with the same go-get-'em attitude. He is largely responsible for the Clarion's recent circulation gains on the *San Angelo Times*, in spite of his paper's smaller news staff and budget.

RADIO STATIONS

The airwaves of San Angelo are hopping with all kinds of music, call-in shows and all-news stations.

TOP 5 RADIO STATIONS

1. KNDI (news/talk)
2. KXFT (top-40)
3. KRVF (country)
4. KGTT (news/talk)
5. KAOS (alt. rock)

Source: Arbitron™

MAJOR RADIO STATIONS

FM STATIONS

KJAZ ("K-Jazz") 88.5 FM, jazz

KXQD 92.7 FM, public radio

KSDF 94.1 FM, Spanish-language

KAOS ("Chaos 95") 95.3 FM, alternative rock

KVSA 96.5 FM, UC San Angelo, various formats

KMNA 97.9 FM, Christian music

KRVR ("The River") 99.1 FM, country (sister station of KFHA)

KBRZ ("Cool Breeze 100") 100.3, easy listening

KHDV 101.7 FM, oldies

KSWN ("Rock 102") 102.5, rock

CAMPAIGN TIP

The newspaper world presents a vast range of possibilities for inventive GMs and players. Reporters make excellent DNPs, or Secret IDs for heroes. They are also a virtual well of adventure possibilities—reporters are forever sticking their noses where they're not wanted. A reporter investigating a superhuman criminal or an organized crime figure could be kidnapped, causing a friend or relative to seek help from the PCs. Or the reporter herself could come to the heroes for aid, pursued by superpowered thugs hired to silence her.

An ordinary citizen who disagrees with an editorial might be satisfied with writing a letter to the editor. But when Amok decides to respond by demolishing the *San Angelo Clarion* building, the help of the PCs may be needed!

Reporters can also be a chief source of information on the campaign world. A civic-minded reporter might offer free advice or tips to PCs conducting an investigation, while a less helpful newshound might trade information for an exclusive story or gossip on other supers.

Of course, reporters can also pose problems for the PCs. They can discover inconvenient facts about the hero—like his secret identity—blow undercover operations and serve as handy hostages for villains. A crusading columnist might take it into her head to write a series of columns vilifying the PCs, or a corrupt reporter in the pay of the hero's enemies could even begin blackening his reputation with falsified stories.

Enemies of the PCs can find other ways to use newspapers to further their plans. A supervillain could try to trick a reporter into peddling misinformation to deceive the heroes. Or nefarious villains could use innocent-sounding personal ads to communicate with their partners, henchmen or even the PCs!



KLIC ("Klick-103") 103.3 FM, classic rock

KBBO 105.5 FM, hip-hop, rap and R&B

KXFT ("The X-Factor") 106.9 FM, top-40

KQTR ("Country 107") 107.3 FM, country

AM STATIONS

KJSD ("Home of the Miners") 840 AM, sports

KFHA 1250 AM, classic country (sister station of KRVF)

KGTT ("Talk Time") 1440 AM, news/talk

KWIO 1490 AM, big band

KNDI 1560 AM, news/talk

RADIO PERSONALITIES

Dr. Jessica Carpenter: Known as "Dr. Jess," this popular San Angelo psychologist dispenses advice on relationships, parenting and other topics on her afternoon call-in show on KGTT.

Chuck Highsmith: Pilot of "Skywatch 1," a light plane used for radio traffic reports. Highsmith, a retired Air Force pilot, provides San Angelo commuters with up-to-the-minute reports on traffic tie-ups, wrecks, road hazards and other problems. In between peak commute times, Highsmith flies inspection runs along power lines for Western Gas & Electric Co.

Shelley Keyes: A popular DJ on FM radio station KBBO. Keyes keeps the tunes coming for rap, R&B and hip-hop lovers in San Angelo on her late-night show. Many listeners find the Jamaican-born disc jockey's accent irresistible.

Bob Mellon and Tony Spencer: The hit morning-drive team of Bob & Tony on station KXFT. They trade wisecracks, conduct funny interviews, hold wacky contests and once in awhile play some top-40 songs.

"Dingo" Raines: An Australian "shock jock" on AM news/talk station KNDI known for his off-color commentary and outrageous behavior. His often vulgar morning drive-time show has been the target of numerous protests and letter-writing campaigns by offended San Angelinos. Radio executives have defended his top-rated show on free-speech grounds, however. Raines lives for publicity, and is forever dreaming up new ways to get in the public eye. In 1995, police arrested Raines for making a nude skydiving jump from the top of the Twilight Tower.

Roberto de la Torres: A popular DJ on Spanish-language radio station KSDF. Part of the San Angelo radio scene for nearly 10 years, de la Torres remains relatively unknown to non-Spanish speaking residents but is widely respected in the Latino community. His efforts to sway Latino youths from gangs and give them some pride in their heritage have won de la Torres particular praise. He is a personal friend of Mayor Alex Martinez.

TELEVISION STATIONS

The city supports six major broadcast stations, including local affiliates of national commercial networks.

There are four national broadcasting networks in the San Angelo world: the National Broadcasting Network (NBN), American Broadcasting System (ABS), Columbia Broadcasting Network (CBN) and the World Broadcasting System (WBS).

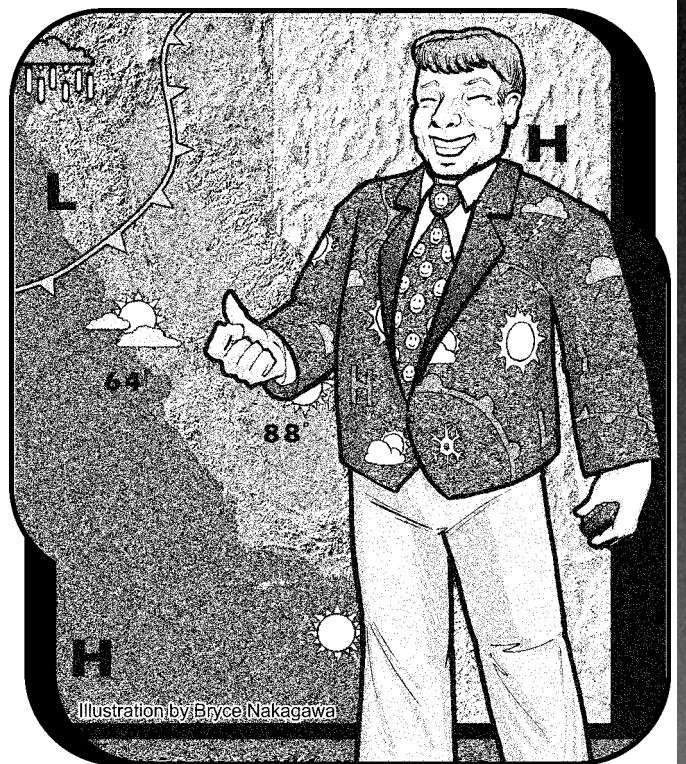
Nearly every household in metropolitan San Angelo is hooked up to a cable system, giving them access to more than 100 channels from all over the nation, including a number of "super-stations." The cable system also provides two public access channels.

TELEVISION REPORTERS AND PERSONALITIES

Parker Bell: The host of a syndicated talk show based in San Angelo. *The Parker Bell Show* has been criticized for its tawdry topics, which tend to focus on cheating spouses, out-of-control kids, and wild disputes between lovers. Bell's cheap theatrics, such as confronting guests with surprise allegations or ambushing them with unexpected guests, are also a target of critics.

But the formula has proven successful, and neither Bell nor her producers seem likely to change the show's format any time soon.

A former Miss San Angelo, Bell has toughened up a lot since her early days as a talk show host. Now she's adept at handling guests and jeering audiences, always keeping things barely on the verge of boiling over and viewers on the edge of their seats.



In San Angelo, her show airs afternoons on TV station KXTY.

Tobi Cantrell: A likable young reporter assigned to do daily "person in the street" interviews for KCTZ. She and her cameraman, Jake Loftus, are a common sight on the streets of San Angelo as they charge about asking ordinary people for their opinions on local happenings.

Cantrell hated the assignment at first, but after nearly a year she's become quite good at picking out willing subjects. She's also conscientious about showing the diversity of the city with her nightly spots.

In addition, always being on the street has helped Cantrell land a few scoops when something interesting has taken place nearby.

Gavin Garfield: The flamboyant weatherman for KABL. Garfield is fond of loud ties and oddball suits. He delivers his forecasts in a booming baritone, and likes to do live reports from some off-beat places around town—once giving the weather in a clown suit while visiting the circus.

A few weeks ago, Garfield struck a child on a bike with his car while driving home from the station late one night. He panicked and drove off. The child was badly hurt and Garfield has not yet worked up the nerve to turn himself in to police.

Guilt and fear of being caught are consuming the once-volatile weatherman, and his KABL associates wrongly suspect Garfield may be ill.

Jake Loftus: A cameraman for KCTZ who accompanies "person on the street" reporter Tobi Cantrell on her daily forays into the streets of San Angelo.

Loftus tries to keep the irrepressible Cantrell out of trouble, like the time she wanted to interview gang members at a Lemon Terrace crack-house about their neighbors' complaints. His nerves are sometimes shot at the end of the day, but Loftus enjoys working with Cantrell.

Tom Longstreet: The respected veteran news anchor of KABL. Longstreet has worked for the station for 20 years, becoming a veritable San Angelo institution.

Media, Entertainment and the Arts

Wally Masterson: An obnoxious late-night talk show host on KWNT. Masterson speaks out on conservative causes, though he's something of an embarrassment to local conservatives.

Mostly his weekly show features Masterson berating some hapless guest before ignoring the person completely and going off on a rant about commie-sympathizing liberals. Most viewers seem to watch it more for entertainment value than any serious discussion of political issues.

In the past, Masterson has come out strongly in favor of vigilantes and non-sanctioned heroes who fight crime in San Angelo.

Darcy Vuong: A news reporter for KSVX who has built a reputation for fairness and accuracy. Vuong also anchors the weekend news for the station.

CAMPAIGN TIP

Supers are a colorful and flashy lot, as well-known to the public as any celebrity. "Dingo" Raines will certainly work them into his "shock jock" routine, engaging in graphic speculation on obscene uses for their powers or inventing vulgar "news stories" about them. He might challenge a female PC to an oil-wrestling match in front of City Hall, or invite a naive PC hero onto his show in order to humiliate him on the air.

The antics of Raines can present a real moral dilemma for PCs—their first impulse will probably be to beat him to a pulp, hardly a heroic action since he's just a normal. But once he latches onto the PCs, Raines will never let up until he senses that his audience is losing interest.

Love 'em or hate 'em, one thing's for sure...

supers are news. People whine and complain about 'em, but if Dynamo makes an appearance at the local laundromat—pow! It makes the evening news.

Personally, I'd rather cover the police beat.

—Marietta Carmine, copy editor

MAJOR LOCAL TV STATIONS

KSVX Channel 4 (NBN affiliate)

KABL Channel 7 (ABS affiliate)

KZNE Channel 9 (Public Television)

KCTZ Channel 11 (CBN affiliate)

KWNT Channel 44 (Independent, WBS affiliate)

KXTY Channel 28 (Independent)

SPORTS

San Angelo may not be the sports capital of the world, but die-hard sports fans can still find plenty of outlets for their passion whether they like to play or merely spectate.

PROFESSIONAL SPORTS TEAMS

The city supports two professional sports teams, along with a semi-pro arena soccer team. Athletes with superhuman powers are not allowed to play in most pro sports leagues, though the

World Federation of Wrestling does feature bouts between supers.

The courts have upheld the ban on supers in pro sports, citing the inherent unbalancing of the game and danger to non-superhuman players, despite claims of discrimination.

San Angelo Miners: The San Angelo Miners pro football team plays in the NFC Western Division of the NFL. Star running back Kellem Jafari helped the team to a 10-6 record in the 1996 season, advancing to the second round of the playoffs before being eliminated.

Home games at the Texxon Golden Dome stadium are extremely popular, and usually sell out early in the season. Sports magnate Thaddeus Long owns the Miners.

Erik Bates, now a county supervisor, played as a wide receiver for the Miners before retiring from football.

San Angelo Nuggets: Local sports mogul Thaddeus Long brought the San Angelo Nuggets basketball team to San Angelo in 1985. The team plays in the NBA.

The struggling Nuggets last made it to the playoffs in 1987, and in 1996 fell just short with a 36-46 record. Fan support for the team is moderate, though the management claims to have sold out every home game since the Nuggets came to San Angelo.

Tate Hall, known for his outrageous antics on and off the court, plays forward for the team.

PRO SPORTS PERSONALITIES OF NOTE

Odysseus Brown: A retired boxing champ who has become something of a neighborhood hero in Brenton. He is a leader in the fight to rescue the area from crime and despair.

Brown, a former middleweight boxer, runs a neighborhood youth center where young people can play sports, work on homework or just hang out in a safe environment. He has gained the respect of local gangs, and they leave the center alone. Brown has even persuaded a few youngsters to leave gang life behind.

Tate Hall: A volatile forward for the San Angelo Nuggets basketball team. Hall plays an aggressive game that draws a lot of fouls, and he's no less temperamental off the court.

In 1996, Hall slugged *San Angelo Clarion* sports writer Matt Powell in the eye during a locker room dispute over a column deriding his shooting skills. He was fined by the team.

Despite his mercurial nature, Hall has proved valuable to the team by keeping foes off-balance and drawing plenty of fans eager to see his next outrageous act.

Kellem Jafari: A top NFL running back who plays for the San Angelo Miners. His feats on the gridiron have sparked occasional rumors that he may be a low-powered metahuman, but Jafari has always rejected such claims.

Thaddeus Long: A San Angelo sports mogul who owns the Miners football team and Nuggets basketball team. Despite his public complaints about financial losses, Long is one of the city's wealthiest people.

Long is now intent on bringing a pro baseball team to San Angelo.

COLLEGE SPORTS

The two universities in San Angelo offer a full slate of collegiate sports, including such mainstays as football, basketball and baseball.

But the universities also support teams in swimming, wrestling, water polo, softball, track and many other sports, including offbeat pursuits like archery and field hockey.

I've got a million-dollar idea, just need a few investors. Here's the short concept—Super-Football! See, all the teams are made up of supers, and we'll make up new rules, you know, for flying, energy blasts, that sort of thing. Maybe you get points for knocking the other ball carrier out or something. Won't that be great? I mean, you'd pay to see that, wouldn't you? And the TV rights ... I can let you get in on the ground floor really cheap, if you act now.

— **Percy Carroll, 42, entrepreneur**

Alumni and student support for college teams is strong, particularly for football and basketball programs. The highlight of each college football season is a cross-town matchup between California State University, San Angelo, and UC San Angelo.

Both university campuses have their own football stadiums, along with a full complement of playing fields, gymnasiums, pools and other sporting facilities.

The city's four community colleges also offer sports programs, which give some athletes more time to develop and catch the eye of university recruiters. Financing for community college teams is always tricky, and the programs mostly stick to traditional sports.

I ran track in college. Coach said I was pretty good, too. I trained so damned hard on that CSU San Angelo track, trying to get that four-minute mile. That was my goal, my dream. Then I heard that some super up in Washington state clocked a four-second mile, and it didn't seem so important anymore. OK, so he couldn't compete in the NCAA, but, hell, I didn't care about the meets and the trophies. I wanted to push my limits, be the best I could be, but when someone can outclass you without even breaking a sweat ... I quit the team a few weeks after that. Coach was really disappointed.

— **Angel Cardoza, 26, ad rep**

RECREATIONAL SPORTS

Interest in recreational adult softball leagues is especially strong in San Angelo, and some have dubbed the city the "softball capital" of the United States.

The city parks department and most parks districts in the county offer a cornucopia of organized leagues for softball enthusiasts in the spring, summer and fall. There are even a few winter leagues, despite the problem of frequent rain-outs.

Despite the high cost of signing up—up to \$200 or more for a team in some leagues—leagues are always full and usually end up turning away a few latecomers. Employee teams are often sponsored by local businesses, and some large San Angelo corporations sponsor several such teams each year.

Organized youth sports are also a big draw in San Angelo. Swimming, baseball, softball, soccer and football are the most prominent, but parents can probably find a league for just about any youth sport. Soccer is particularly popular.

ARENAS, STADIUMS AND COLISEUMS

San Angelo has plenty of sporting facilities for fans hungry for a close-up look at their idols.

San Angelo Sports Complex (H-7): An 18,220-seat arena in the North Mission neighborhood of Eastside, the San Angelo Sports Complex is the home of the San Angelo Nuggets pro basketball team.

The team plays 41 home games each season, attended by 717,500 fans or an average of 17,500 spectators per game. Tickets are available at the box office or through an agency.

The facility also hosts a semi-pro arena soccer team and a few pro hockey matches each year featuring a team from the Bay Area. Championship high school basketball games, especially sectional or state tournaments, are another attraction.

Concerts are held at the San Angelo Sports Complex during the winter months when rainy weather makes the Gold Camp Amphitheater less palatable.

San Angelo Speedway: A quarter-mile track in Devil's Bar, the San Angelo Speedway hosts a dozen or so drag races each year. The speedway, which has grandstand seating for about 2,000 people, has not yet managed to land a championship race.

Texxon Golden Dome: Home of the San Angelo Miners football team, the Texxon Golden Dome stadium in Southport seats 75,000 people. The stadium features a retractable roof.

The Texxon Oil Co. paid team owner Thaddeus Long several million dollars in the late 1980s for the right to put its name on the stadium.

The Miners play eight home games each season, and nearly all the games sell out early in the season. A ticket agent or scalper may be the only choice for tardy fans.

ANNUAL SPORTING EVENTS

Each year, San Angelo hosts several annual sporting events in almost every field of endeavor.

All-City Martial Arts Exhibition: The All-City Martial Arts Exhibition pits contestants from fighting arts schools all over San Angelo against each other.

The competition has several divisions based on the age and experience of participants, but the grand prize goes to competitors in the open division. Superhumans may compete in a special division, but cannot fight in the open division.

The two-day exhibition takes place each fall at the San Angelo Convention Center.

City Park Fishing Derby: A popular summer-time event, the City Park Fishing Derby brings hundreds of youthful anglers to Samuel Brackett City Park in Midtown for a day of fun.

The city parks department stocks the large duck pond at the park with trout, and children sign up for a one-day fishing derby with prizes for the largest catch and various other categories. A sporting goods company in the city donates fishing poles for needy youngsters.

For more serious anglers, various sporting clubs hold fishing derbies and tournaments on the waterways of San Angelo throughout the year. Some contests feature impressive cash prizes for the winners.

David Hernandez Memorial Golf Tournament: The annual David Hernandez Memorial Golf Tournament held each spring at La Vista Public Golf Course benefits a charity aiding families of local peace officers killed in the line of duty. The tournament and charity are named for a veteran sheriff's deputy killed in the 1980s.

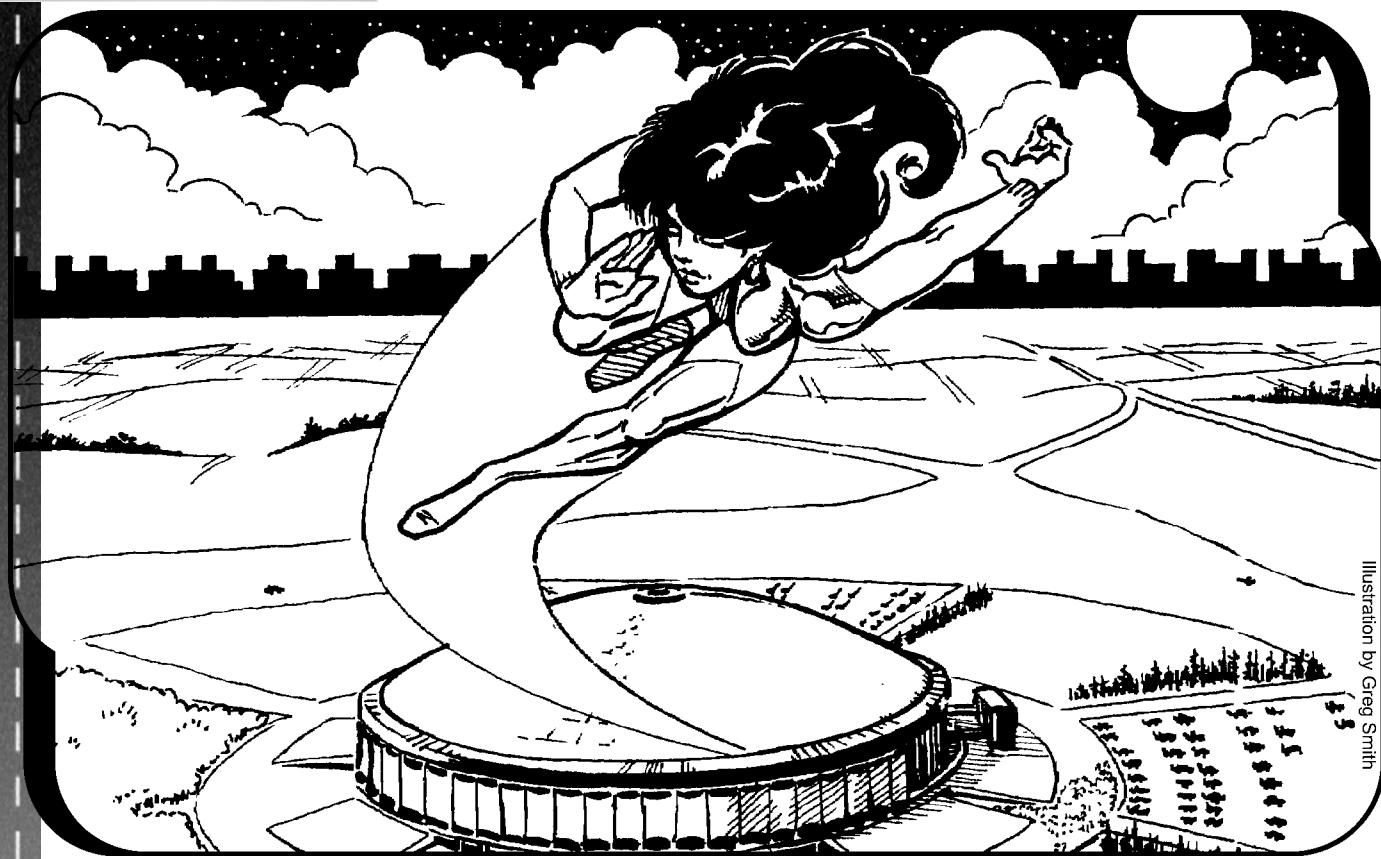


Illustration by Greg Smith

Golden City Triathlon: Thousands of the toughest of the tough compete each year in the Golden City Triathlon, an ironman event with running, bicycling and swimming legs. Men and women compete as teams or as individuals in several age categories.

The highly coveted overall trophies are awarded to the first man and woman to finish the race. The Golden City Triathlon takes place each summer.

Lake Oro Regatta: Local sailing enthusiasts eagerly look forward to the Lake Oro Regatta each spring on the reservoir northeast of San Angelo. The competition features several races held over a three-day span on Memorial Day weekend.

The San Angelo Yacht Club organizes the event and provides the trophy. Non-members of the exclusive club can participate by paying a slightly higher registration fee.

Perry Bradley Baseball Tournament: A youth baseball championship held each fall in San Angelo County, the Perry Bradley Baseball Tournament was named in honor of a local homebuilder and longtime fiscal supporter of youth sports programs in the city.

The Lemon Terrace Tigers, a scrappy Little League team from a tough neighborhood, has captured the trophy for two years running.

RESTAURANTS, BARS AND THE MUSIC SCENE

San Angelo has a thriving nightlife. Fine dining, bar-hopping, dancing and live music are just a few of the options. There's something going on somewhere almost every night of the week, but on weekends the nightlife scene really takes off.

NIGHTCLUBS & BARS

Almost every kind of nightspot can be found in San Angelo, from neighborhood watering holes to huge industrial dance clubs in old warehouses.

All That Jazz: A downtown restaurant and lounge, All That Jazz is one of the classier nightspots in San Angelo. Live jazz bands play at the club on weekends.

Catfish Cantina: A University Commons bar, the Catfish Cantina is mostly known for having the cheapest beer in all metropolitan San Angelo. The bar also offers free, if sometimes stale, popcorn.

Club Calypso: Club Calypso, a downtown nightclub, has an island-themed decor and features weekly live performances by reggae bands.

The 8-Ball: A smoke-filled bar and pool hall in the sleazy Strip neighborhood downtown, The 8-Ball is a favorite hangout for San Angelo's criminal element. Drug deals and other illicit transactions are nearly constant. Police are frequent visitors, and District Attorney Jan Lehman has pledged to close down The 8-Ball using red-light laws.

El Loco Bar: A neighborhood watering hole in Pleasant Grove, the El Loco Bar has been all but taken over by the Flaming Skulls biker gang. A noisy, rowdy and sometimes violent place with an ever-present row of motorcycles in front, the dimly lit bar also has a few pool tables.

Despite, or perhaps because of, its slightly dangerous reputation, the El Loco Bar is fairly popular with some local residents.

Laff Riot: A La Vista comedy club, the Laff Riot features local and nationally known comedians Thursdays through Sundays. Each night usually features three acts, including one headliner.

Old Town Brewery: A microbrewery in Old San Angelo, the Old Town Brewery is a popular stop for tourists and locals alike. Several ales and beers brewed on site are on tap.

The Matrix: The Matrix is a popular nightspot in the Riverfront neighborhood downtown. Found in a huge converted warehouse, the Matrix features an immense dance floor with the hottest dance, industrial and alternative tunes.

Currently one of the top clubs in San Angelo, the Matrix is the place to see and be seen. The "meat market" atmosphere at the club turns some party-goers off, however.

Rio Club: The city's premier gay and lesbian nightclub, the Rio Club downtown is currently the hot spot for dance-serious men and women. Women-only dance nights are held every Sunday.

The Snakepit: An underground nightclub in the sordid Strip neighborhood downtown, the Snakepit caters to young people into the Gothic or vampire scene.

Tropicana: The Tropicana is one of San Angelo's top strip joints. Found in the Strip neighborhood, the darkened club is sometimes used by police detectives to meet contacts and informants.

Zero Hour: A La Vista dance club with an alternative bent, Zero Hour hosts extremely popular 18-and-over nights several times a week.

CAMPAIGN TIP

Even heroes need a night out on the town sometimes! An adventure where the PCs take off their costumes and spend a night bar-hopping could provide some interesting opportunities for character development. Such a gaming session might also be a good way to unwind and re-connect heroes to the normal world after a particularly cosmic adventure.

If the idea of an adventure without combat doesn't have any appeal, these clubs can also be used as settings for more standard adventures. Some popular nightspots have hundreds of patrons, possibly making them attractive targets for hostage-taking schemes. Or maybe the supervillains are only after a particular person in the crowd.



I used to run a bar over in Pleasant Grove ... neighborhood kind of place. Never brought in much money, but it paid the bills.

One day this guy comes in, pulls a gun and says he wants all the money from the register. I tell him sure thing, no problem. Then one of the customers stands up and lets loose with a roar you wouldn't believe—it sounded like a thunderclap. My ears rang for a week.

The robber collapses on the floor, blood pouring out his ears. Turned out it burst both his eardrums. Can you believe that? The customer had been coming to my bar for years, and I never even knew he was a super.

Grateful? Are you kidding? He broke every mirror, window and drinking glass in the place. Cost me \$2,000 to replace it all. I'da rather given the robber the coupl'a C-notes I had in the register.

— Joe Giglione, 51, retired

TOP 10 NEIGHBORHOOD BARS

1. (Reserved for GM or player-characters)
2. Rocky's Bar and Grill (Midtown)
3. Catfish Cantina (University Commons)
4. Old City Tavern (downtown)
5. (Reserved for GM or player-characters)
6. Press Club (Midtown)
7. El Loco Bar (Pleasant Grove)
8. Inkspot (Midtown)
9. Harry's Grill (Eastside)
10. (Reserved for GM or player-characters)

RESTAURANTS

San Angelo boasts restaurants catering to almost every palate, from gourmet dining to authentic ethnic dishes from around the world.

CAMPAIGN TIP

Superheroes need to eat, too—at least most of them do, anyway. These restaurants can be used to bring some local color to adventures to help players feel like their PCs live in a real city. Or GMs can use restaurants as settings for some interesting adventures.

For example, a hero out on a dinner date—probably in his Secret ID—could witness a robbery, kidnapping or other crime at the restaurant. Perhaps one of the organized crime groups in San Angelo has ordered a hit on a fellow diner!

As with nightclubs, some of these restaurants are very crowded and could be the target of hostage-taking efforts—whether by design or as the result of a failed robbery attempt.

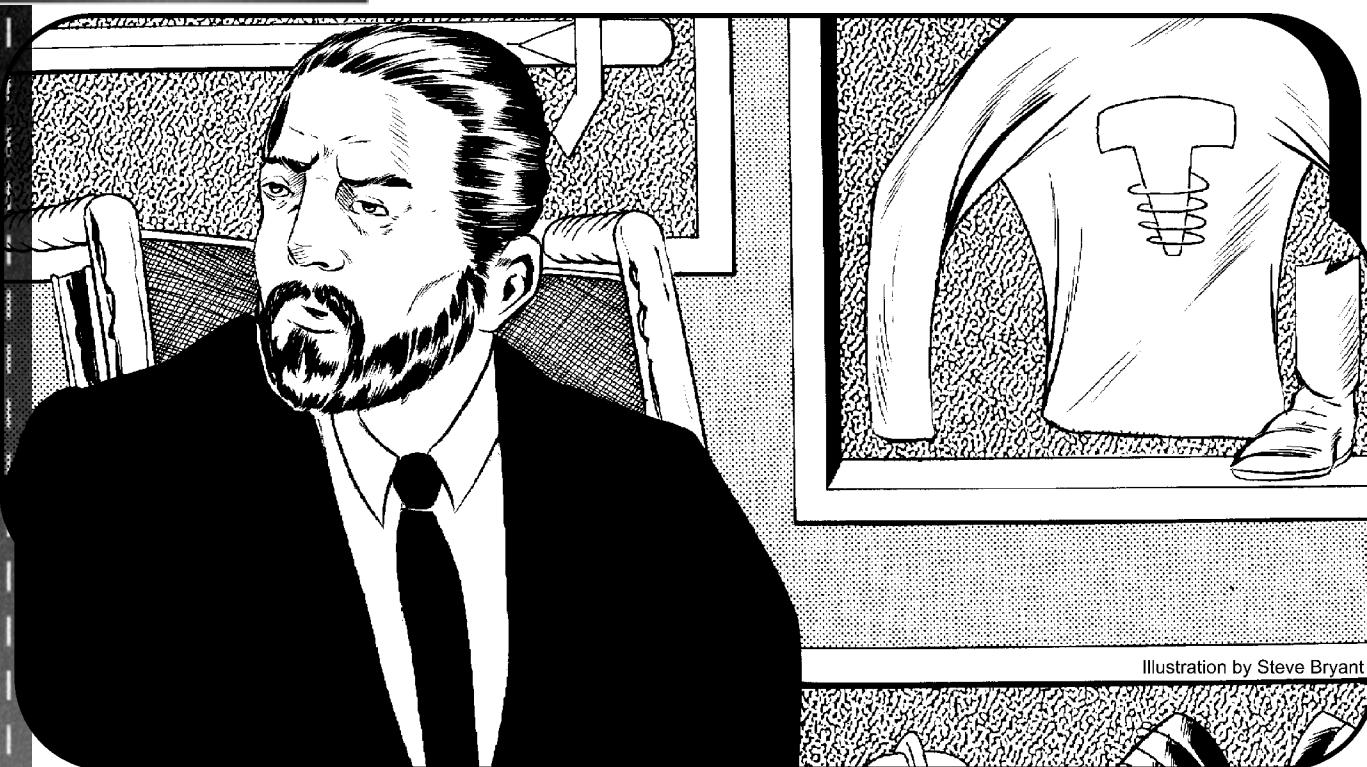


TWISTER'S (B10)

A popular restaurant with a supers theme, Twister's was started by a retired San Angelo hero. Ethan Reynolds, better known as the wind-powered hero Twister until he suffered crippling injuries in a 1993 battle, opened his first restaurant in The Wharves district in 1994. Twister's restaurants feature Tex-Mex cuisine and full bars.

Reynolds has since opened franchises in three other West Coast cities. Every Twister's features one of his old costumes, along with a fascinating collection of supers memorabilia from Golden Age to modern times.

The San Angelo restaurant features the titanium chain carried by the criminal Chain, a costume worn by Golden Age hero Sky Ranger, a steel bar bent by Lotus and a replica of the Minuteman's jet pack, among many other displays. Autographed photos and handprints of supers from across the United States hang on the walls. The Size 36 footprint of East Coast hero Titan is a real attention-getter.



TWISTER

Ethan Reynolds

"You've suffered a serious injury to your spinal cord. I'm afraid you'll never walk again."

Doped up on painkillers, Ethan Reynolds tried to focus on the doctor by his hospital bed. But scenes from the battle with Shrapnel kept playing over and over in his head.

Hurriedly pulling on his Twister costume and flying to City Hall, where Shrapnel had threatened to demolish the building and everyone inside as part of some bad extortion plot.

Using his wind powers to buffet the deranged super and deflect his deadly shards. Then a searing pain in his back and darkness—waking up in a hospital bed.

Crippled! Twister couldn't believe it. These kinds of things weren't supposed to happen to heroes. He'd been one of San Angelo's foremost heroes, starting back in 1985 when he used his powers to save some falling construction workers on his first day in town.

A passing TV news crew caught the dramatic scene on film, and soon the former Texas oilfield worker found himself being called a hero. He kind of liked that.

So he got a costume and began calling himself Texas Twister. Most people left off the Texas part, and after awhile he did, too.

Now, eight years later, he was in a bed at University Medical Center. Some nurse was talking about physical therapy—he could fly! He didn't need any therapy.

But when he tried to summon the winds, nothing happened.

Depression set in, until one day Twister saw a TV spot on the opening of a new celebrity theme restaurant. An idea began to form ...

Soon Twister was feverishly at work, lining up investors, cajoling souvenirs out of his friends in the supers community and devouring books about the restaurant business.

In 1994, he opened the San Angelo Twister's—the first supers theme restaurant, serving up Tex-Mex food and all kinds of supers-related memorabilia.

Since then, Twister has opened three more West Coast restaurants. Franchises across the nation and even the world are in the works.

The active, upbeat Twister keeps a full schedule of business meetings, promotional appearances and drop-in inspections.

His personal assistant, Cybill Daley, helps Twister keep his busy schedule on track. She schedules his appointments, arranges transportation and accompanies him everywhere.

Personality/Motivation: Some people might have become bitter at being paralyzed. Twister likes to say that he's too busy to be bitter.

Since his 1993 injury, he's poured all his energy into his restaurant chain. He does miss his superpowers, the loss of which Twister attributes to some strange side effect of his injuries. Actually, a psychological block related to the trauma of the incident prevents Twister from using his powers.

Being wealthy is a new experience for Twister. He's purchased a fine home and taken care of his relatives back in Texas, but isn't quite sure what to do with the rest of his riches.

The idea of sponsoring a hero team hasn't occurred to Twister, but he probably wouldn't take much persuading.

Quote: *"Welcome to Twister's!"*

Powers/Tactics: Twister controls the winds, allowing him to fly, push objects around and create whirlwinds. By surrounding himself with swirling winds, he can partially deflect attacks.

He can sometimes predict the weather by sensing changes in air pressure.

Twister believes the 1993 injury that paralyzed his legs also robbed him of his powers. In fact, his current inability to use his powers is the result of a psychological block.

Appearance: Twister, 45, has black hair with a short beard, and brown eyes. He has a husky build and uses a wheelchair.

In his days as a hero, Twister wore a white costume with light blue boots, midriff and gloves. He wore a billowing blue cape with a white lining. Twister did not conceal his identity.

Replicas of this costume are located in the lobby of every Twister's restaurant.

Twister (Ethan Reynolds): PL 8; Init +4 (+4 Dex); Defense 14 (+4 Dex); Spd 0 (20 ft w/wheelchair); Atk +6 melee (+1S, punch), +9 ranged (+8S, energy blast); SV Dmg +3, Fort +3, REF +4, Will +1; Str 12, Dex 19, Con 16, INT 13, Wis 12, Cha 15.

Skills: Acrobatics +7, Diplomacy +4, Gather Information +4, Knowledge (food service industry) +4, Listen +3, Profession (restaurateur) +5, Profession (superhero) +5, Spot +3.

Weaknesses: *Quirk:* believes he can't use powers.

Feats: None.

Powers: Telekinesis +8 [Source: Mutation; Extras: Energy Blast, Flight, Force Field, Grapple; Cost: 48 pp], Teleportation +4 [base Spd 20 ft; Source: Mutation; Extras: Extended Teleport +2 (total sprint 320 ft.); Cost: 16 pp].

Equipment: Suit, wheelchair (allows a base Spd of 20 ft.), business cards ("Owner, Twister's").

Twister (Ethan Reynolds)

STR 5, REF 9, HLT 9, PRE 6, INT 4, WIL 4

DEF 19, INI 7, MOV 0, TGH 5, LIF 35

Disadvantages: Dependent (Cybill Daley, personal assistant) [-2], Enemy (hunted by Chain) [-5], Physical Disad (paraplegic, can "Move" with wheelchair) [-5], Psych Disad (altruistic) [-2], Psych Disad (believes he can't use his powers) [-10], Psych Disad (code against killing) [-10],

Advantages: Ally (Councilman Ralph Chan) [2], Famous (Ethan Reynolds, retired hero "Twister" and owner of Twister's restaurant, well known regional figure) [5], Wealthy (well off) [5]

Skills: Accounting +2, Acrobatics +6, Area Knowledge (San Angelo) +3, Awareness +3, Bureaucracy +1, Business +4, Computers (Use) +2, Cooking +1, Driving +2, Knowledge (Food service industry) +3, Knowledge (San Angelo supers) +1, Professional (Restaurateur) +3, Professional (Superhero) +3, Society +2 (streetwise +2), Swimming +2, Writing +2.

Powers: *Wind Gust* (STR 20 telekinesis, can't squeeze or punch/for lifting and moving only); *Whirlwind* (STR 10 telekinesis, area effect: 10m radius, can't squeeze or punch/for lifting and moving only); *Wind-riding* (MOV 25 flight); *Wind Shield* (AV 15 force field); *Detect Air Pressure* (knows precise air pressure and notices changes in pressure with Awareness roll [TN 15]).

Equipment: Suit, wheelchair (allows a base, MOV of 10, Run 20 and Sprint 30), business cards ("Owner, Twister's").

SELECT ITEMS FROM THE TWISTER'S MENU

Appetizers

Nachos Supremo	\$5.95
Paragon Pepper Poppers	\$3.95
Jumbo Gumbo	\$4.95
Rawhide Potato Skins	\$4.25
Pyre Buffalo Wings	\$3.95
Tortilla Chips & Silo Salsa	\$2.95

Entrees

Twister Combo	\$13.95
Justice Combo	\$14.95
Amok Combo	\$16.95
Paragon Children's Combo	\$7.95
Tremblor Taco Plate	\$9.95
Cheetah Chimichanga Plate	\$10.95

Salads

Tatler Taco Salad	\$8.95
Mucho Macho Salad	\$12.95
Shrinker's Shrimp Salad	\$7.95
Caesar Salad	\$7.95

Beverages

Soda (Cola, Diet Cola, Root Beer)	\$1.50
Iced Tea, Coffee	\$1.25
Beer (Domestic Bottle)	\$1.95
Beer (Imported Bottle)	\$2.95
Beer (Draft)	\$3.95
Mixed Drinks	See bar menu

OTHER RESTAURANTS OF NOTE

The San Angelo metropolitan area boasts thousands of restaurants serving every kind of food from around the world.

Ekaterina's: A small restaurant in the Little Kiev portion of Cathedral Square, Ekaterina's serves authentic Ukrainian and Russian dishes. Word of Ekaterina's good cooking is beginning to spread to other parts of the city.

Emerald Palace: A bustling Chinatown landmark, the Emerald Palace is renowned for its Chinese cuisine. Tourists flock to the fine dining spot in droves, and the establishment rates highly in San Angelo guidebooks.

The Emerald Palace has been expanded countless times over the years, creating a haphazard maze of dining rooms, out-of-the-way private rooms, kitchens and storerooms.

I saw Azteca at the Emerald Palace in Chinatown once. He was on a date with that cute new reporter from Channel 4, I guess. But all these people kept coming up to their table, asking for his autograph. They didn't stay for dinner. He walked right by our table on the way out, though.

— Dave Hong, 24, student

The numerous private rooms at the restaurant are sometimes used by the San Angelo underworld, particularly Chinatown tongs, for meetings or other rendezvous. (For more information, see *The Dragon's Gate*.)

Jumping Java: The Jumping Java chain of coffeehouses throughout San Angelo feature indoor and outdoor seating, along with a selection of coffees, sandwiches and snacks.

Two of the busiest Jumping Java franchises are found in the University Commons and College Gardens neighborhoods.

Founded in 1988 by Vietnamese-American businessman Son Vu, Jumping Java is a real success story in the city's business scene.

Las Palomas: A tiny restaurant in a North Mission storefront, Las Palomas is considered one of the best spots for authentic Mexican food in San Angelo.

Falcon Bluff Inn: One of San Angelo's most expensive restaurants, the Falcon Bluff Inn overlooks the picturesque Del Oro River in the exclusive neighborhood of Falcon Bluff. The fine dining spot offers excellent food, live entertainment nightly and a charming bar warmed by a fireplace.

River Princess Riverboat: A paddlewheeler tied up at the fashionable Wharves district of downtown, the River Princess Riverboat boasts its own seafood restaurant.

The spectacular views of the river, particularly when the paddlewheeler makes an occasional cruise to the delta, make up for the somewhat mediocre food. The restaurant frequently also offers dinner entertainment by jazz bands or magic acts.

Rustler's Steakhouse: The Rustler's Steakhouse chain of restaurants serves up traditional American fare with a hefty selection of steaks and roasts. A popular dinner spot for families.

Winthers Catering: Considered the top catering service in San Angelo, Winthers Catering provides sit-down dinners and buffets for almost every kind of function. The business, run by Marian Winthers, is a fixture at high-society parties and charity balls.

OTHER RESTAURATEURS

Andre Rousseau: The French head chef at Falcon Bluff Inn, voted the best chef in San Angelo by Golden City Magazine for several years running. A gregarious man who belies the merciful reputation of French chefs.

Son Vu: A native of Vietnam who became an American citizen in the early 1980s. Vu arrived in the United States virtually penniless after the fall of South Vietnam in 1975. Through hard work, luck and perseverance, Vu opened his own coffeehouse, Jumping Java, in 1988.

Jumping Java has since grown into a multi-million-dollar franchise operation, making Vu one of San Angelo's oft-most cited success stories.

THE LOCAL MUSIC SCENE

San Angelo has a vibrant music scene, with dozens of local bands playing all styles of music. Most of the downtown bars and nightclubs feature live music on weekends. Only a few bands from the city have ever scored record contracts, but San Angelo has started to make a name for itself among music companies as a place to find new talent.

BANDS AND MUSICIANS OF NOTE

Argyles: An amateur a cappella and barbershop group that performs at farmer's markets, street fairs and other small community events.

Bayou Barbecue: A very popular band playing Cajun-inspired world beat music. The band plays few club dates, but often performs at private parties, county fairs and community concerts in San Angelo parks.

Los Vaqueros: A band especially popular with the Latino populace in San Angelo. Los Vaqueros plays modern Mexican music.

Slimer: A punk band formed by four teenagers at Amos Barnes High School. Covers of songs make up most of its playlist, but the band has a few original songs. Most Slimer concerts take place at city teen centers, but the band has started to receive some notice elsewhere.

2-Cool: A comedy rapper who appears at the Laff Riot and other San Angelo comedy clubs.

Zach & Lindsay: A popular jazz duo frequently booked at classier restaurants and clubs in the city.

CONCERTS

Performances by national and even international music stars are another component of the San Angelo music scene. Every major tour plays at least one date in the metropolis.

While several ticket agencies and concert promoters compete for bookings, Gold Camp Concerts ranks as the top promoter in the region. Run by Angelina Compton, the firm handles most of the major tours each year, leaving other promoters to fight over lesser-known bands.

Gold Camp Concerts books everything from the loudest heavy metal bands to nostalgia tours by old-time crooners. Concerts by some rap stars and wilder rock bands occasionally stir minor controversies among more conservative San Angelinos.

The company owns and operates the Gold Camp Amphitheater on the Del Oro River in Pleasant Grove. Built facing the river on 19.5 acres, the amphitheater seats up to 25,000.

Noise from the amphitheater has been an ongoing complaint of nearby neighborhoods for years.

Concerts are also sometimes held at the San Angelo Sports Complex in Eastside, while classical musicians are booked into the San Angelo Center for the Performing Arts in Midtown. In the 1980s, several concerts took place at the Texxon Golden Dome stadium.

BEST BANDS POLL '97

Overall	Bayou Barbecue
Alternative Rock	Naked Eye
Rock	Vertigo
Heavy Metal	Savage
Big Band/Swing	Nelson Saville Orchestra
Country	Dusty and the Boys
Rap	G-Dogg
World Beat	Bayou Barbecue
Bar Band	Roughhouse

Source: S.A. Weekly

THE FINE ARTS AND MUSEUMS

For those with more refined tastes, San Angelo offers a vast array of museums, symphonies, dance troupes, libraries and art galleries.

CLASSICAL MUSIC

The city has a busy classical music scene, with nine symphonies and two opera companies.

The San Angelo Symphony, a 115-piece orchestra, gives 32 classical and 16 pop performances heard by more than 300,000 people annually. Other local orchestras include chamber groups, youth symphonies and a women's philharmonic.

The San Angelo Opera Company puts on half a dozen major productions each year, sticking closely to crowd-pleasing favorites, while the Golden City Opera Association stages several new works during its season.

CLASSICAL MUSICIANS OF NOTE

Tomasz Korytki: The Polish-born conductor of the San Angelo Symphony. Korytki is known as a perfectionist who drives himself as hard as his musicians.

Nanette Starr: The acclaimed lead soprano of the San Angelo Opera Company. Starr has a reputation as a difficult performer with a lofty opinion of her own talent and value to the opera. Nonetheless, her leading roles in the opera's annual productions have vastly increased ticket sales and attendance.

Starr has a professional rivalry with Amelia Tattinger, a newly arrived soprano whom Starr believes was hired to someday replace her as the new star of the opera.

Amelia Tattinger: Second soprano with the San Angelo Opera Company. Recently hired from an East Coast opera house, Tattinger has quickly charmed her new colleagues and audiences. Her arrival has provoked tension with the opera's mercurial lead soprano, Nanette Starr, though.

DRAMA AND DANCE

The metropolis of San Angelo also boasts an active theater and dance scene.

THEATER AND DANCE COMPANIES OF NOTE

Dozens of theater and dance companies are active in San Angelo. Midtown and the Riverfront neighborhood downtown are the centers of the theater and dance scene in the city, where numerous struggling bands of artists strive to put their work before the public.

Folklorico Latino de San Angelo: A dance troupe of youngsters, Folklorico Latino de San Angelo performs traditional Mexican and Spanish dances at cultural festivals, county fairs and other community events.

Based in the North Mission area of Eastside, the crowd-pleasing troupe practices almost every day. It has strict rules about keeping up with schoolwork and staying out of trouble.

San Angelo Ballet: The most prestigious ballet company in the city, the San Angelo Ballet offers roughly 40 performances a year plus an additional eight shows featuring children performing the Nutcracker. The ballet season runs from October to mid-June and attracts up to 120,000 people annually.

The board of directors recently hired Russian ballet star Natalya Petrosian after the embarrassing abrupt departure of former lead dancer Leticia Sadler.

Theatre Tutti: One of several avant-garde theater companies in the artsy Riverfront area downtown, Theatre Tutti stages some of the most offbeat plays and pieces of performance art in the city. While popular with those seeking an outrageous experience, it's definitely not for everyone. 28th Street Theater

The unimaginatively named 28th Street Theater downtown stages all kinds of plays, but tends to stick to traditional comedies and dramas. It is considered one of the city's best bets for dramatic productions, particularly for mainstream audiences.

DANCERS AND THESPIANS OF NOTE

Carline Huston: A popular San Angelo actress who has appeared in numerous local theater productions. She has also done some film and television work, along with a few commercials.

Natalya Petrosian: A Russian ballet star hired as the new lead dancer for the San Angelo Ballet following the acrimonious departure of Leticia Sadler. Petrosian, who speaks very little English, is something of an untried commodity and ballet insiders are quietly concerned about her ability to attract audiences.

Leticia Sadler: The former lead dancer with the San Angelo Ballet who quit at the end of the 1997 season, citing artistic differences. The talk around town is that the ballet board refused Sadler's outrageous salary demands. Sadler now claims to be entertaining offers from famed ballet companies around the U.S.

Jeff Street: A model from San Angelo who has appeared on dozens of magazine covers over the years. Street is trying to break into acting, but so far has only landed a few commercials.

LIBRARIES

There are 138 libraries in the San Angelo metropolitan area, ranging from public library branches to specialized law and medical libraries. Both universities have libraries, which stock rare books and government documents in their collections.

The public library system, jointly funded by the city and county, has 42 branches offering 3.2 million books. Many branches retain microfiche copies of *San Angelo Times* and *San Angelo Clarion* editions dating back to the 1940s. The largest public library in the city is the Central Branch downtown.

An estimated 1.9 million people visited San Angelo public libraries in 1996.

CAMPAIGN TIP

The library can be a great resource for PCs conducting research, and the microfiche files of old newspapers can be useful for looking up information on heroes or villains of the past.

Rare books, some centuries old, kept at libraries can be a good adventure hook for GMs. Perhaps one of the books contains clues to the location of a lost mystical artifact or other powerful item. Villains could steal the book, prompting PCs to investigate its significance. Or maybe the theft attempt fails, and library officials ask the heroes to safeguard the tome.

MUSEUMS

San Angelo has more than 50 museums, large and small. Some are popular destinations for tourists and school classes, while others are rarely open to the public. Many local museums focus on the history of San Angelo, but others cover everything from art to the development of telephones.

MISSION SAN ANGELES (F8)

The Mission San Angeles, founded in 1792 and abandoned in 1828, is now a popular attraction for thousands of tourists and schoolchildren every year.

Fully restored in the 1960s, the mission is operated by the non-profit San Angelo Historical Society. The mission includes a chapel, crafts shops, living quarters and library. Approximately 240,000 people visit the mission every year.

Displays illustrate mission life in the 1700s, and live crafts demonstrations are often given on weekends. The Mission San Angeles is located in Eastside.

OTHER MUSEUMS OF NOTE

The city is home to numerous other museums of all kinds. Several are clustered across from Samuel Brackett City Park in Midtown, forming a kind of "museum row."

Brackett House Museum (C7): A Victorian mansion built by pioneer prospector Samuel Brackett in 1868, the Brackett House Museum in Poverty Gulch is now open to the public. Volunteer docents lead tours of the home on weekends and by appointment.

California State Gold Rush Museum (C8): A state-operated museum in Old San Angelo, the California State Gold Rush Museum focuses on the gold-panning heritage of San Angelo.

Displays cover such facets as gold-panning techniques, life in the mining camps, early businesses, vigilantes, treatment of Native Americans and other minorities, and historic figures. The museum also has a small collection of gold nuggets and flakes.

Chinese Cultural Center (B11): Found in Chinatown, the Chinese Cultural Center focuses on the Chinese experience in San Angelo. Exhibits cover railroad laborers, the birth of Chinatown and the transition to modern times. The center also regularly offers art shows by Chinese artists and hosts traveling exhibits.

In addition, the Chinese Cultural Center provides guided walking tours of historic points in Chinatown on weekends for a small fee. (For more information, see *The Dragon's Gate*.)

San Angelo Metropolitan Museum (C6): The largest in the city, the San Angelo Metropolitan Museum opened 70 years ago and has been expanded several times. More than 1.5 million people visit the museum each year.

The main hall contains permanent exhibits, including a natural history room and an extensive gem exhibit. The hall also features a small planetarium.

The four auxiliary halls are used for traveling or temporary exhibits. A Golden Age retrospective and a display of Meso-American cultural artifacts are two current exhibits.

Security at the museum is tight, especially in rooms housing the gem collection. Along with human guards, the system includes infrared lasers and a variety of motion detectors.

Van Ruyter Museum of Art (C5): Established by Gwendolyn Van Ruyter, an early pharmacist and art lover in Gold Rush-era San Angelo, the Van Ruyter Museum of Art has grown into one of the city's top museums.

Located on Hall Avenue, the museum contains more than 300 works of American art by both local and nationally known artists. Considered one of the finest art collections on the West Coast, it includes some quite valuable paintings and sculptures.

My brother-in-law

Frank used to be a security guard over at the Metropolitan Museum, 'til the Ferret stole one of the world's largest emeralds from the gem display one night while he was on duty. None of the security people even knew it happened until the next day.

It wasn't Frank's fault—who's going to stop the Ferret? But his boss said the museum board of directors insisted that someone be fired. Frank had the least seniority of anyone on the shift, so he got sacked.

— Belinda Woods, 43, travel agent

CAMPAIGN TIP

Museums are a natural setting for four-color comic book happenings. Along with being interesting places for PCs and DNPCs to work, they are full of experts on all kinds of strange things—ready for consultation by baffled heroes.

Items on display at a museum could be targeted for theft by the enemies of the PCs, whether for financial gain or as part of some scheme to increase their power. Perhaps that sword in the Medieval Europe exhibit is actually Excalibur!

Finally, museums sponsor all kinds of archeological and anthropological expeditions around the globe. One of these projects could uncover something really strange, like a crashed alien starship, or get into some other kind of trouble requiring the help of the PCs.

THEATERS AND AUDITORIUMS

A variety of theaters and auditoriums are the showplace for San Angelo's performing arts scene. The largest halls are found downtown, but community halls, school auditoriums and other gathering places are found throughout the city.

HISTORIC SAN ANGELO OPERA HOUSE (C8)

Dating back to the late 1800s, the grandiose Historic San Angelo Opera House is home to the San Angelo Opera Company. Located in Old San Angelo, the immaculately restored opera house features balcony seating along with gilded wall and ceiling decorations.

SAN ANGELO CENTER FOR THE PERFORMING ARTS (C5)

A fine arts palace tucked into the "museum row" opposite Samuel Brackett City Park, the San Angelo Center for the Performing Arts is home to the city's top symphony and ballet troupe.

The modern glass, steel and concrete center features a vast 3,000-seat concert hall for performances by the symphony and ballet. An adjoining, slightly smaller, hall features chamber music, while spring pops concerts are held outdoors across the street in the park.

Receptions are occasionally held in the center's lovely gardens following performances.

Limousines, tuxedoes and evening gowns are the order of the day when the symphony and ballet are in residence.

SAN ANGELO CONVENTION CENTER (E9)

A huge facility, the San Angelo Convention Center features several auditoriums rented for all kinds of occasions. Seasonal musical performances, rallies, company meetings, martial arts exhibitions and gun shows are just a few events held each year at the downtown center.

I'm really proud of this portrait of Alloy. Tricky lighting problem, all those reflective surfaces. Like shooting into a mirror.

— Jamie Bosley, 48, photographer

VISUAL ARTS

The city has a vibrant visual arts scene, with numerous galleries, art shows and public arts projects. Several San Angelo museums are devoted to the arts.

ARTISTS AND ART DEALERS OF NOTE

Sandor Cassidy: An avant-garde sculptor whose creations have gained national attention. He uses discarded appliances, broken TVs and other junk rescued from landfills in his sculptures. Cassidy lives and works in a converted Riverfront warehouse downtown.

Emilio: A former graffiti artist who goes only by his first name. Emilio has painted a few murals sponsored by local government, including the Muro de los Heroes in North Mission. His graffiti-inspired paintings are causing a stir in San Angelo art circles.

The most exciting thing that's ever happened to me? That's hard to say, but I think one of the most exciting things I've done is sculpting Alloy.

He accidentally smashed through the wall of my apartment. I think he was fighting Mauler or somebody. I haven't been able to see since I was six, so...

Anyway, he helped me clean up afterward and asked if there was anything he could do for me. So I asked him to let me sculpt him. He was so nice. Generous, I mean. And his body felt so smooth and, well, metallic. He had the body of a Greek god.

A week later he was dead. Just like that. I still have the statue. Had it bronzed, in fact. I'll always love that statue. I miss him.

— Rosilyn Jackson, 32, sculptor

Kwame Mfume: The owner of an African art store in Midtown. Mfume, a native of Ghana, has a sizable collection of authentic African sculptures, masks and other works at his small shop. He visits Africa several times each year to purchase new selections.

Dr. Joel Majors: A San Angelo podiatrist who sculpts huge stone monument statues as a hobby. The Gold Panner Statue outside City Hall is one of his creations.

PARKS, RECREATION FACILITIES AND OTHER ATTRACTIONS

Outdoor activities are extremely popular in San Angelo. Biking, boating, running, hiking and picnicking are just a few of the recreation options open to city residents.

CAMPAIGN TIP

Parks and other outdoor areas are good places for super-battles—there are usually plenty of normals around for villains to menace, but the property damage bill will probably be lower than that of a fight in the middle of downtown.

REGIONAL PARKS

Fortunately, residents seeking some fun in the sun needn't go far, thanks to the city's network of regional parks, bicycle paths and other attractions. Some of these parks are run by the city, while others are the responsibility of county park districts or even the state.

These are the large parks that draw visitors from all over San Angelo. Neighborhood parks of note are covered under Points of Interest in *A Description of San Angelo*.

LAKE ORO STATE RECREATION AREA

An estimated 3.8 million people visit the Lake Oro State Recreation Area every year, making it one of the most popular state parks in California.

The recreation area surrounds the reservoir, and includes several hundred acres set aside as a wildlife refuge home to several herds of deer. Flocks of migrating geese also visit Lake Oro, and ducks are abundant.

The main public beaches and boat ramps are found near the town of Canfield. The lake is a popular spot for sunning, swimming, boating, fishing and water-skiing.

In addition, the recreation area includes several campgrounds and picnic spots scattered around the lakeshore.

The Lake Oro State Recreation Area is administered by the state. State parks rangers, who are armed peace officers, patrol the lake area in four-wheel drive vehicles, motorboats and Jet Skis.

SAMUEL BRACKETT CITY PARK (C6)

Encompassing nearly 850 acres of lawns, gardens and forests, Samuel Brackett City Park stands out in San Angelo as nearly everyone's favorite park.

A band of greenery between Midtown and the Del Oro River, the park provides residents with a much-needed break from the headaches of city life and is popular with tourists, too.

Established in the early 20th century, Samuel Brackett City Park is named after the pioneer prospector who discovered gold in the Del Oro River.

Along with acres of riparian woodland, the park contains the San Angelo Zoo, botanical gardens, tennis courts, hiking trails, a golf course, lawn-bowling greens and playgrounds. There are several picnic grounds, though visitors can lay a blanket down just about anywhere. Soccer and football fields are also found at the

park, as are archery fields and riding stables. A large duck pond is popular with children and model sailboat enthusiasts.

Samuel Brackett City Park is overseen by the city parks department.

OTHER NOTEWORTHY PARKS

San Angelo contains literally tens of thousands of acres of parkland, giving people in almost every part of the city a chance to get away from it all without going too far from home.

Confluence Point Park (B12): Located on a floodplain where the Del Oro and San Angelo rivers meet, Confluence Point Park is a popular stop for nearby City Center office workers and Chinatown residents. The park features picnic areas, playing fields, playgrounds, a boat ramp and a marina. In the winter and spring, Confluence Point Park is subject to flooding when the rivers rise.

The brushy riverbanks adjacent to the park are popular camping spots for the city's homeless populace, and campers sometimes wander into the park to panhandle despite an ongoing campaign by city park rangers and police officers to keep them away.

Del Oro River Parkway (D2-I2): The Del Oro River Parkway, stretching from Lake Oro to the downtown, is a 30-mile-long system of bicycle paths, parks and nature areas. A popular, beautiful retreat in the midst of the city, the parkway is truly one of the jewels of San Angelo. Crowds of bicyclists, in-line skaters, hikers, joggers and other visitors of all ages can be found on the parkway's paths and trails at all times of year.

La Vista Public Golf Course: One of several public golf courses in San Angelo, the La Vista Public Golf Course is popular with duffers, though it's not considered much of a challenge by experienced golfers.

The links actually feature two 18-hole courses, along with a clubhouse and driving range. Golf carts are available for rent, and the golf pro can be hired for lessons. The course's proximity to a skeet-shooting range sometimes spurs complaints from golfers.

An estimated 180,000 rounds of golf were played on the two courses in 1996.

Other major public golf courses are located in Samuel Brackett City Park in midtown, Pleasant Grove, Rancho Madera and South San Angelo.

San Angelo Zoo (C4): A 45-acre zoo inside Samuel Brackett City Park, the San Angelo Zoo contains more than 600 animals from around the world. Gorillas, lions, bears, elephants, giraffes, rhinos and many other creatures all call the zoo home. Many of the animals are endangered in the wild.

A gorilla rainforest, alligator swamp and Australian outback habitat populated by kangaroos and koalas are among the most popular attractions.

The zoo also contains a wooded breeding facility for rare felines, such as snow leopards and jaguars.

Most exhibits attempt to replicate the natural habitats of the animals, and there are very few old-fashioned cages left at the San Angelo Zoo. Moats or glass windows now separate zoo inhabitants from curious visitors.

On weekdays, the zoo is often filled with busloads of schoolchildren on field trips.

Pam Brandenburg oversees the operation as zookeeper, and a zoo foundation conducts extensive fund-raising efforts to supplement the meager budget provided by the city.

TOP 5 PUBLIC GOLF COURSES

1. Samuel Brackett Municipal Golf Course
2. La Vista Public Golf Course
3. Del Oro Public Golf Course
4. Rancho Madera Public Golf Course
5. Aero Parkway Public Golf Course

You've heard about the talking monkeys over in Samuel Brackett City Park, haven't you? Yeah, a bunch of lab chimps escaped from a top-secret laboratory at Forgan Air Force Base where scientists were doing intelligence-enhancing experiments. The military wanted to use them for infiltration and sabotage missions.

But the chimps got smart enough to break free. Now they live in the park, you know, in the remote areas where hardly anyone ever goes. Some of the animal rights activists know about it, and they bring the monkeys food and medicine.

It's all true, I swear.

— Zach Barrows, 14, student

THEME AND AMUSEMENT PARKS

Amusement parks are almost a requirement for large West Coast cities, and San Angelo is no exception. A private theme park attracts hundreds of thousands of visitors each year.

49ER AMUSEMENT PARK

A 100-acre theme park in Southport, the 49er Amusement Park features more than two dozen Gold Rush-themed rides and other attractions.

Portions of the park claim to recreate an 1800s-era waterfront, a riverside mining camp and a lost gold mine, among others. Costumed prospectors, gold panners, stagecoach robbers, lawmen and a host of other colorful characters walk among park visitors.

Attractions at the park include several roller coasters, the Whitewater Rapids log ride, the Lost Mine Adventure and a special children's area where youngsters can try their hand at gold-panning and other activities. There are also movies, theatrical revues, concerts and video arcades.

The history is often flawed, but most visitors find the 49er Amusement Park great fun.

ANNUAL COMMUNITY EVENTS

Family-oriented community events abound in San Angelo. The largest is the annual county fair, but something's going on somewhere in the region almost every weekend of the year.

SAN ANGELO COUNTY FAIR

The San Angelo County Fair, held at the county fairgrounds in Pleasant Grove one week every August, attracts up to 400,000 visitors annually.

Carnival rides, midway games, livestock exhibitions and other traditional fair fun abound, as do competitions for everything from

pigs to flower arrangements. Entrants can win a prize for just about any craft, hobby or creative outlet they care to pursue.

The county Sheriff's Department provides security for the fair, and typically calls in the reserves to beef up its fairground patrols.

Deputies on foot or on horseback seem to be almost everywhere, particularly after nightfall. But there are usually few problems at the fair as a result, mostly involving drunken or otherwise intoxicated individuals. There is a small, two-cell detention block in the security office, where prisoners are held until a regular Sheriff's patrol can pick up the prisoner for transport to the Main Jail.

OTHER ANNUAL COMMUNITY EVENTS

Almost every one of the communities making up urban San Angelo has some kind of annual event, usually featuring a parade, fun runs and activities in the nearest park.

Holiday celebrations, from Fourth of July fireworks shows to the annual Holiday Parade through downtown each Christmas season, are also popular.

Finally, several outlying towns host annual festivals honoring various foods, such as the ever-popular Garrett's Landing Fish Fry.

Marshall Harvest Festival: Celebrating the agricultural heritage of the region, the Marshall Harvest Festival features such attractions as a farmer's market, food vendors, tractor pulls, petting zoos, sheepdog trials, livestock auctions and carnival rides.

Held in the rural town of Marshall, the fall festival attracted an estimated 150,000 people in 1996.



OVERVIEW

Like every city, San Angelo has a dark side. Crime, gangs and drugs haunt the Golden City no less than other major population centers.

Nearly all San Angelo residents are concerned about crime, but most parts of the city are actually pretty safe. Overall, the city has a moderate crime rate.

Crimes by superhumans may get all the attention, but by far most crimes in San Angelo still involve normals attacking, robbing or stealing from each other.

SAN ANGELO CRIME STATISTICS

A sizable percentage of crimes are never reported to police, making exact estimates of crime rates difficult. These figures are based on FBI Uniform Crime Reports for the San Angelo urban area, which includes city and county jurisdictions.

The chart lists an average annual total for each type of crime, based on San Angelo crime statistics for the past five years.

SAN ANGELO CRIME STATISTICS 1997

Crime	Total	Per Day	Crime Every...
Murder	276	.75	31 hrs.
Rape	1,290	3.5	7 hrs.
Robbery	8,571	23	1 hr.
Assault	13,848	38	40 min.
Violent Crimes	22,695	62	23 min.
Burglary	47,520	130	12 min.
Theft	103,410	283	5 min.
Vehicle Theft	36,000	99	15 min.
Property Crimes	186,930	512	2.8 min.

Source: FBI, Crime Analysis Section

Metro Digest, San Angelo Times

Drive-by shooting kills two

BRENTON—A gang-related shooting incident killed two teenagers on Halcyon Boulevard Tuesday evening. Shots from a passing car killed Jaleel Howard, 17, and Kessie White, 14, in the 7:20 p.m. incident.

Sheriff's investigators identified Howard as a suspected member of the Prophets street gang, but said White was an innocent bystander caught in the spray of bullets as she walked home from visiting a neighbor.

Deputies later found the suspected gunmen inside a South San Angelo crack-house at 11:52 p.m. Two 16-year-olds and a 15-year-old were arrested. All three had been beaten, and are believed to be members of the Nomads street gang.

Neighbors reported seeing a masked figure leaving the crack-house shortly before officers arrived.

THE DRUG SCENE

Illegal drugs aren't hard to find in San Angelo. And, contrary to popular belief, they are probably present in every neighborhood in the metropolis—not just the inner city.

The best place to find drugs is the sordid Strip neighborhood in the downtown, where virtually any kind of drug can be purchased.

The drug of choice is methamphetamine, also known as "crank." One advantage of meth is that no complicated smuggling schemes are required; the drug can be manufactured locally in illicit labs. These labs, set up in rented houses, barns, warehouses or even motel rooms, change locations often in hopes of thwarting narcotics investigators.

Depending on the recipe used, various kinds of methamphet-

CAMPAIGN TIP

Most superheroes are just too tough for your everyday, garden-variety criminal. Nevertheless, an encounter with a robber, mugger or other street thug at the start of a session can accomplish a lot:

- It can remind your players just how powerful their PCs are compared to most people, particularly if the PCs just got the stuffing pounded out of them by some all-powerful villain in the last adventure.
- Saving innocent crime victims can help players get into a heroic mindset.
- The GM can give PCs who tend to get ignored or outclassed against more powerful foes a chance to shine.

No one is immune to crime—not even DNPCs. When some supervillain kidnaps the PC's girlfriend, the solution's easy—beat him up and rescue her. But what's the hero going to do when his dear old Aunt Martha gets mugged? He can't exactly go around beating up every mugger in the city—or can he?



CAMPAIGN TIP

The organized crime scene mostly plays into "dark hero," street-level adventuring, but can play a role in four-color campaigns as well.

Individually, ordinary criminals aren't much of a threat to your average superhero. But an organized crime group might have the resources to invest in some heavy weaponry—even a PC who could care less about some thug with a knife will think twice when the Flaming Skulls bring out a surface-to-air missile!

As mentioned elsewhere, organized crime groups could hire some superhuman help, particularly if the PCs have been causing problems lately. Or the group itself could include a few superhuman members.

Players can use the organized crime world in the backgrounds of their PCs. Perhaps the death of a hero's parents or sibling at the hands of the Chinese tongs motivates the PC. Or the hero might be a reformed ex-gang member.

These groups can make good Hunteds for PCs. When a hero is hunted by the Prophets street gang, the GM has an almost inexhaustible supply of enemies to throw at her. And the PC never has to worry about replacing the Disad, since in all likelihood the Prophets will continue to exist for years—they're never going to get killed or locked up the way a single enemy might.

amine can be created. One of the more popular varieties is called "ice" or "crystal" meth.

The toxic chemicals used to manufacture crank are classed as hazardous wastes, and each year a few explosions take place at makeshift meth labs in San Angelo.

Some outlaw motorcycle gangs are known to be involved in manufacturing and selling methamphetamine, but for the most part meth dealers operate independently.

Cocaine, particularly crack, also plays a key role in the city's drug scene. Crackhouses are not uncommon in Brenton, South San Angelo and Northside neighborhoods. To a lesser extent, they can also be found in parts of the downtown, Pleasant Grove and Rancho Madera.

Street gangs control much of the cocaine traffic in San Angelo. The largest gangs, the Prophets and the Nomads, are the chief competitors in the crack trade.

Heroin, LSD and marijuana appear to be making a comeback, however, particularly among young people. And designer drugs, new synthetic concoctions, are also on the rise.

The tongs and Mexican Mafia are the key players in heroin trafficking. Though some outlaw motorcycle gangs are involved in marijuana sales, most marijuana, LSD and designer drug operations are independent in nature. These drugs are particularly popular near the CSU San Angelo and UC San Angelo campuses.

ORGANIZED CRIME

Gun-toting street gangs. Ancient Chinese tongs. Wild motorcycle-riding outlaws.

These are the faces of organized crime in San Angelo.

Overall, organized crime is not an overwhelming problem in San Angelo. There are no bloody mob wars or drug cartel gun battles. Other than a handful of highly visible street gangs, most criminal organizations in the city prefer to keep a low profile.

Crime bosses in San Angelo also tend to stay out of supers-related affairs, which can attract all kinds of unwanted attention, and generally shy away from employing superhumans.

They may occasionally make use of superpowered individuals, but only when doing so fits into their overall operations.

For example, the Chinese tongs have no interest in sponsoring a heist of high-tech equipment from an Arroyo Verde lab. But a paranormal with a Chinese background may be brought into the tong as an enforcer.

OUTLAW MOTORCYCLE GANGS

A few criminal motorcycle gangs are active in San Angelo. Outlaw bikers are known for their beloved motorcycles, often outlandish clothing and anarchic, violent behavior.

Some motorcycle gangs are national organizations with chapters in various cities. A few travel the country, and others are purely local.

Every outlaw biker gang has a set of "colors," ragged jackets emblazoned with a patch, logo or other distinctive mark. Next to his motorcycle, his colors are an outlaw biker's proudest possession.

Spontaneous violence is a key part of the biker mystique, one that gangs often use to cow bar owners, gas station attendants, waitresses and crime victims.

Some gangs are involved in making and selling methamphetamine. Other common biker gang crimes include sales of other drugs, rape, assault, robbery, extortion, kidnapping, bombing, arson and murder.

FLAMING SKULLS

The largest, most powerful outlaw motorcycle gang in San Angelo, the Flaming Skulls are heavily involved in the city's methamphetamine trade.

Founded in San Angelo in the late 1960s, the Flaming Skulls now have chapters in several West Coast cities. The president of the San Angelo chapter technically outranks all chapter presidents, but in practice rarely asserts this authority.

In San Angelo, the Flaming Skulls have about 50 active members. Nationwide, the gang has an estimated strength of 250. Each summer, all the chapters join together for an annual "run"—a weekend of drunken revelry somewhere in the Sierra Nevada mountains.

The San Angelo chapter has all but taken over the El Loco Bar in Pleasant Grove, which serves as its de facto headquarters. Bikers from other gangs are forbidden to wear their colors in the El Loco, so the Flaming Skulls pretty much have the place to themselves.

The chief criminal enterprise of the Flaming Skulls involves manufacturing and selling methamphetamine, also called "crank" or "ice." The gang cooks up crank in crude labs, often assembled in rented homes, mini-storage units or vacant buildings.

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The Flaming Skulls use each location for only a few days before relocating the labs to avoid law enforcement raids. Only an inner circle knows the exact locations of the labs.

Gang members also perpetrate most of the other crimes common to outlaw biker gangs. The Flaming Skulls and Centurions are technically at war, though things have been calm lately.

The gang colors depict a grinning human skull surrounded by flames. Guy Claymore, known as "Big Guy," is president of the Flaming Skulls.

OTHER OUTLAW MOTORCYCLE GANGS

There are about a half-dozen motorcycle gangs in San Angelo, though a few are so small or rarely active as to be negligible.

Centurions: The Centurions are the second-largest motorcycle gang in San Angelo, and compete fiercely with the Flaming Skulls for methamphetamine markets. The intense rivalry erupts into periodic violence, usually sparking a law enforcement crackdown that cools things off again.

The president, Charlie "Praetor" Fargo, gave the gang its name and Roman motif. The Centurions are considered one of the most cold-blooded biker gangs in San Angelo, ruthlessly killing anyone who gets in their way—even fellow Centurions suspected of informing to police.

The gang has about 35 active members, and is based at a Northside motorcycle shop owned by a friend. It is not part of a national organization. Gang colors show a crested Roman helmet and a Latin motto.

Desperadoes: The Desperadoes are a racially mixed motorcycle gang with a sizable Latino contingent. One of the oldest biker gangs in San Angelo, they are on the decline.

Founded in the mid-1960s, the gang was for a time the largest in San Angelo. But age, jail and family obligations have taken a toll on the Desperadoes. Their ranks now number about 15, making the biker gang almost a non-entity in the organized crime scene.

The current president is Jim "Barbwire" Delgado, and his North Mission welding shop is the closest thing the Desperadoes have to a headquarters. The gang is a local phenomenon.

A pair of crossed six-shooters over a tombstone constitute the gang colors.

Rattlers: A violent gang with a white-supremacist tinge, the Rattlers are one chapter of a national organization based in Idaho.

In the past, the Rattlers fought regularly with the Desperadoes but the war petered out with the decline of the latter gang. Now most conflicts involve the Flaming Skulls, who are also active in Pleasant Grove.

The San Angelo chapter has roughly 30 active members, and is involved in most of the criminal activities typical of motorcycle outlaws. A few area hate crimes are also believed to be the work of the Rattlers.

In 1994, five founding members left the Rattlers to launch a commercial waste removal business. The firm has prospered, winning contracts with several Pleasant Grove corporations. Despite outward appearances, however, the five did not sever their ties with the Rattlers, and a key factor in their success has been the intimidation of competitors by the gang.

Tom "Diamondback" Walters is the current president of the Rattlers. The bikers have taken over a vacant store, which they have fortified and equipped with security cameras, for a headquarters.

Gang colors show a coiled, striking rattlesnake.

MOTORCYCLE GANG MEMBERS OF NOTE

"Fat Frank" DeVille: The legendary founding president of the Flaming Skulls. A tough-talking, head-knocking bear of a man, he led the gang for 15 years until he was convicted of ordering a rival gang leader murdered and sent to California State Prison, Canfield, on a long sentence.

Big Guy heard this rumor the Centurions were gonna fire-bomb the El Loco, so he had a couple of us lug this friggin' M-60 up to the roof. A friggin' machine-gun, man. Put some sandbags around it—looked like something outta the 'Nam or somethin', you know? Rambo! Rat-tat-tat-tat!

We put up some netting so the choppers couldn't see, and we were ready for 'em. 'Cept Cavalier flew over one night, man, with his heat vision. Bent the gun barrel, man, totally. And that was the end of that.

— "Weird Willy" Logan, 32, outlaw biker

Reportedly in failing health from chronic hepatitis, DeVille continues to exert a strong influence over the Flaming Skulls from his prison cell.

Charlie "Praetor" Fargo: The well-read president of the Centurions. Fargo has an extensive knowledge of history, and sometimes fancies his gang as modern-day Roman soldiers.

Beneath the cultured facade and philosophical quotations, Fargo can be extremely cold-hearted. He has ordered the execution of Centurions suspected of informing to police in the past, and is willing to do so again.

The relative lack of education of his outlaw brethren is a continuing source of annoyance to Fargo as it dims their appreciation of his own genius.

Tim "Shorty" Morris: One of the newest members of the Flaming Skulls, Morris got his "colors" just six months ago after a long probationary period in which the gang tested his loyalty and his willingness to commit crimes. Unbeknownst to the Skulls, Morris is actually a deep undercover agent with the federal Drug Enforcement Agency.

He is collecting information on the gang's criminal activities, particularly the manufacture and distribution of methamphetamine, in a joint operation with the county Sheriff's Department.

STREET GANGS

Street gangs are a serious problem in the more desperate neighborhoods of San Angelo. Local law enforcement agencies estimate nearly 50 gangs are active in the city. Most gangs are made up of youths from pre-teen ages to their early 20s.

While blacks and Latinos predominate in many gangs, all San Angelo gangs are racially mixed to some degree. Predominantly black gangs began recruiting youths of other races in the early 1990s, for example, hoping to expand into other neighborhoods. Gang membership is not limited to young men, either; there are several all-female gangs in San Angelo as well.

Most black gangs are affiliated with one of two loosely knit coalitions, the Nomads and the Prophets. Individual gangs, or "sets," of these two frequently take their name from their turf, home street or some nearby landmark.

The Baker Park Prophets and Pope Street Nomads are examples of two gang "sets."

Other street gangs are independent, with no allegiance to any person or organization. These include many Latino and mixed-race gangs.

Most gangs are associated with a particular color. Gang graffiti is always of the chosen color, and members often wear "rags," or bandanas, of their color. Some gangs also use hand signs to communicate.

Criminal activities of street gangs vary widely, but most are centered on drug dealing. The Nomads and Prophets sell cocaine from heavily guarded crackhouses, for example.

Other activities include every kind of property and violent crime. Drive-by shootings are a frequent tactic, though these hits are often so imprecise that innocent bystanders are killed.

Street gangs, which are often heavily armed with assault rifles and other high-powered weaponry, are wantonly violent. Almost anything, even a wrong look, can provoke a shooting.

EXILES

The Exiles are an independent street gang made up entirely of young low-powered meta-humans. Teenage boys and girls of all races are Exiles, who number about 20. Every prospective Exile must have some kind of paranormal ability, though nearly all fall into the category of low-powered metahumans. Several members are runaways.

The Exiles, most of whom take on new names based on their power, are led by Catseye. The gang seems to be most active downtown, but roams the city.

It keeps a very low profile, and most San Angelinos are unaware of the gang's existence. Even city police know little of the Exiles beyond rumors.

While some members of the Exiles are involved in crimes, the gang as a whole does not seem to be involved in any criminal enterprise. The Exiles mostly seem to act in self defense.

Many young Exiles dye their hair garish colors, while others have tattoos or multiple body piercings.

NOMADS

The Nomads are a coalition of mostly black street gangs, comprising one of the largest street gangs in San Angelo. Authorities estimate the gang has 20-25 sets, concentrated in South San Angelo. Nomads sets are also based in Brenton, Northside and parts of Pleasant Grove, however.

Ramsey Hoyle founded the Nomads in 1987 at Vernon Fletcher High School. The gang's color is black. They typically wear at least one article of black clothing.

Crack dealing is the primary activity of the Nomads, and sets of the gang operate several fortified crackhouses in Brenton and Northside neighborhoods.

The Nomads are at war with the Prophets over drug markets, and violence between the gangs is not uncommon. Drive-by shootings take place every few weeks.

PROPHETS

Another coalition of primarily black street gangs, the Prophets are the second-largest street gang in the city.

Roughly 15 to 20 sets are affiliated with the Prophets, primarily in Brenton. The Prophets are also active in South San Angelo, Northside and Pleasant Grove.

The Prophets began in 1989 as a response to the expansion and power of the Nomads. Several independent street gangs in

I used to bang with the Pope Street Nomads down in Brenton. Sold rock, did some business—some drive-by's. Then Mind-Master, he straight-up rushed me at this rock house, yo. Got into my messed-up head and showed me what time it was—showed me I was doing wrong.

I quit bangin' and dealin'. Now I'm taking classes up in S.A.C. Gonna be a teacher one day. You know, helpin' kids and all dat. When I'm not working at that whack burger joint, I do volunteer time over at the homeless shelter.

Some people say what Mind-Master's doin' is messed up. Truth is, he's just straightenin' out the suckers who won't listen to no one else.

— Akinsheyne Johnston, 19, student

Brenton banded together to increase their strength, taking on the name of the largest local gang. Silver is the color of the Prophets.

Like the Nomads, the Prophets engage primarily in cocaine dealing from guarded crackhouses. Property crimes and violence are also tied to the gang, however.

OTHER STREET GANGS

All kinds of gangs are found on the mean streets of San Angelo. Many of them are independent, owing allegiance to no one or no group.

Varrio Mission Boys: A primarily Latino gang based in the North Mission neighborhood of Eastside, the Varrio Mission Boys (VMB) are side players in the heroin trade but are mostly concerned with protecting their turf. Fights with other gangs are fairly frequent, and gunplay is not unknown.

Red is the chosen color of the VMB, considered the largest Latino gang in the city. The hero Azteca of the Justice Foundation was once a Varrio Mission Boy, but left the gang life behind in a "gauntlet" ceremony—his gang brothers beat Azteca bloody as he walked the gauntlet without defending himself. The gang and Azteca have no contact; he is dead to the Varrio Mission Boys.

Skinheads: Several white supremacist skinhead gangs are active in San Angelo, particularly in rural and suburban areas. Authorities suspect the gangs may be working together under some unified leadership, but are not certain of this.

Skinhead gangs have 15 to 20 members, mostly teenagers who have shaven their heads. Many skinheads are heavily tattooed and may wear neo-Nazi symbols.

These gangs are not involved in the drug trade, but criminal activities include hate crimes, beatings, vandalism and terrorism of non-whites.

CATSEYE

Gang Leader

Born with the distinctive eyes of a cat, Dustin Close had a difficult childhood. He endured endless teasing and beatings from his playmates, while adults shied away from him.

Fed up with it all, he began running away as a young teenager. Finally his parents gave up on forcing Dustin to stay home, and now can only hope that he chooses to return on his own someday.

Taking the name Catseye, Dustin began meeting other young people whose paranormal abilities had also made them outcasts. Soon a half-dozen or so teens had joined forces, seeking both companionship and protection from the mean streets of the city.

The San Angelo Underworld



Illustration by Bryce Nakagawa

Catseye named the gang the Exiles, and decreed that only paranormals could join. He is still the leader of the Exiles, even though the gang has since attracted several older teenagers.

Catseye, 15, has blond hair and golden cat-like eyes. He has a strong build, and seems to possess the quick reflexes of a cat. He also has a pierced ear and nose.

Catseye (Exiles gang leader): PL 3; Init +4 (+4 Dex); Defense 17 (+2 base, +4 Dex, +1 Dodge); Spd 30 ft.; Atk +4 melee (+2S, punch), +6 ranged; SV Dmg +1, Fort +1, REF +6, Will +1; Str 14, Dex 18, Con 13, INT 11, Wis 12, Cha 15. **Feats:** Darkvision, Dodge, Evasion, Lightning Reflexes, Power Attack. **Skills:** Acrobatics +2, Bluff +2, Gather Information +1, Hide +2, Listen +3, Move Silently +2, Open Locks +2, Spot +3. **Equipment:** handgun (+3 lethal damage).

Catseye, Exiles gang leader

STR 6, REF 8, HLT 6, PRE 6, INT 4, WIL 4
DEF 18, INI 10, MOV 14, TGH 5, LIF 26

Disadvantages: Distinctive Features (cat's eyes, concealable) [-2], Infamous (leader of Exiles street gang) [-2], Poverty (poor) [-5], Psych Disad (hates prejudice) [-5], Psych Disad (protects paranormals) [-5]

Advantages: Fast Reflexes (+4 INI, +6 Awareness vs. surprise, already figured in) [5], Membership: Exiles youth gang (MR 10/Gang leader, Trivial) [10], Night Vision (infrared vision) [5]

Skills: Acrobatics +6, Area Knowledge (San Angelo) +3, Awareness +3 (vs. surprise +6), Climbing +3, Driving +2, Firearms +2, Intuition +3, Knowledge (San Angelo street scene) +2, Professional (gang leader) +2, Society +2 (streetwise +2), Stealth +6, Unarmed Combat (Karate) +4.

Equipment: Denim jeans and shirt, jacket, pocket change.

OTHER GANG MEMBERS OF NOTE

Obaseki Dutton: Known as "Deadeye" Dutton to his fellow Prophets after a 1992 shooting blinded his left eye. Dutton is one of the gang's most violent members, and a key enforcer. Sheriff's personnel are seeking Dutton in connection with four murders.

Ramsey Hoyle: The founder and head of the Nomads street gang. Now in his mid-20s, Hoyle commands much respect in the gang but doesn't have much real power due to the group's fairly disorganized state.

Jesus Quintana: Leader of the Varrio Mission Boys street gang in North Mission. Quintana, in his early 20s, acts as a protector and father figure to the gang. A smooth-talking wheeler-dealer, he could have been a politician—and still might become one someday.

TONGS

Three tongs, or Chinese organized crime groups, are active in San Angelo. Chinatown, of course, is the focus of their activities.

When Chinese laborers settled in the United States in the 1800s, they brought with them the ancient tradition of triads, or secret societies serving as both protectors and predators. Known as tongs in the U.S., these societies at first acted as a kind of benevolent association, governing and defending the Chinese newcomers in an often hostile land.

But the tongs also controlled crime in Chinatown. In time, this led to conflict over the vast profits generated by the opium trade and illegal gambling.

Bloody clashes, known as "hatchet wars" for the traditional Chinese axes carried by participants, erupted between the tongs. The last hatchet wars took place in the 1920s.

Today, the criminal tongs continue to operate behind the scenes in Chinatown, though each tong also sponsors a public component that appears to be nothing more than a merchant association or other mundane organization. As a result, not all tong members can immediately be classed as criminals.

In addition, the tongs are extremely insular. Only people of Chinese background are permitted to join. Even victims of the tongs are reluctant to deal with outside authorities. The tongs are incredibly difficult for local law enforcement agencies to investigate.

Tongs are led by chairmen, or dragon heads. Other officers include a vice-chairman, an "English secretary" who helps run tong businesses and a "street secretary" who oversees tong soldiers.

All three tongs essentially engage in the same sorts of crimes. Opium sales and illegal gambling are the linchpins of their criminal empires, but the tongs also engage in loansharking, prostitution, protection rackets and murder for hire.

You know Gordon Lai?

Remember what happened to him, hey?

He plotted against the dragon head and got chopped. I hear he got burned up by lightning on a cloudless night. Dragon head, he's protected by the gods, that's true. If you know what's good for you—know your place, don't get greedy.

— Fei "Profitable" Cong, 32, tong member

Each tong has an affiliated street gang, used to help run its criminal enterprises and handle any dirty work that needs to be done. These gangs are usually composed of younger men, but are not exclusively made up of teenagers as are most other street gangs.

In addition to helping with tong affairs, the street gangs are allowed to have their own businesses, such as gambling, robbery and illegal fireworks sales. The tong street gangs are unbelievably violent and utterly careless of bystanders when combat erupts.

WING CHAO

Of the three tongs active in Chinatown, the Wing Chao is clearly the most powerful and most feared.

The tong has approximately 325 criminal members. While the Wing Chao dates back to the earliest days of Chinatown, it came to the fore during the Golden Age.

A man known only as T'ien Lung, Chinese for celestial dragon, directed the rise of the Wing Chao tong to its pre-eminent position during the 1930s and 1940s. T'ien Lung reportedly had the power of ancient Chinese sorcery at his command, with which he foiled several efforts by the Liberty Corps to break the hold of the Wing Chao on Chinatown.

His reign as dragon head of the tong is thought to have ended in the early 1950s. The present dragon head is William Shiyu Yuan, outwardly a respected Chinatown businessman. Yuan's involvement in the tongs has been rumored but never publicly proven.

The Jade Dragons street gang, led by Johnny Lao, is affiliated with the Wing Chao. The gang takes its name from the green banners associated with the tong, and members often wear green sashes or headbands. Numbering 40 or so, the Jade Dragons are embroiled in a mild war with the Wo Fat gang over the fireworks trade.

WILLIAM SHIYU YUAN

Businessman/Tong leader

A respected businessman to the outside world, William Shiyu Yuan is secretly head of the most powerful and most feared tong in Chinatown.

Yuan owns several business chains in San Angelo, including laundromats, dry cleaners and Chinese restaurants. A very wealthy man, Yuan also has some political pull, particularly on issues involving Chinatown. He is a very influential figure in the Asian community.

Few people know that Yuan is also the dragon head of the Wing Chao tong. He has held the position for the past several years, and his grip on the tong is now unquestioned after several early rivals for the position died mysteriously. Wing Chao tong members whisper that some dark force backs Yuan's claim to power.

Only his daughter, Debbie Yuan, has successfully defied the dragon head. She cut her ties to her family and secretly became the hero Lotus after discovering her father's other life. As a member of the Justice Foundation, Lotus has vowed to make up for the injustices inflicted on Chinatown by her family.

Yuan, 48, is a Chinese-American man with black hair and brown eyes. He stands 5'8" tall and has an average build. He typically wears expensive business suits.



Illustration by Stom Cook

William Shiyu Yuan: PL 4; Init +1 (+1 Dex); Defense 11 (+1 Dex); Spd 30 ft; Atk +0 melee (+0S, punch); SV Dmg +0, Fort +0, REF +1, Will +2; Str 10, Dex 12, Con 10, INT 15, Wis 14, Cha 14. **Feats:** Assessment, Connected, Fame, Minions (8 personal guards/ PL1 tong members), Skill Focus (Diplomacy), Wealth +2. **Skills:** Bluff +5, Diplomacy +9, Gather Information +4, Innuendo +5, Intimidation +5, Knowledge (bureaucracy) +5, Language (English, native is Mandarin), Listen +3, Move Silently +3, Profession (businessman) +5, Profession (tong leader) +6, Spot +4. **Equipment:** Suit, briefcase (containing miscellaneous non-incriminating business papers), pager, cell phone, Lexus sedan (w/tinted windows and chauffeur).

William Shiyu Yuan

STR 4, REF 5, HLT 4, PRE 6, INT 6, WIL 6
DEF 15, INI 6, MOV 9, TGH 5, LIF 24

Disadvantages: Dependent (family, less powerful) [-5], Enemy (rival tongs) [-5], Psych Disad (despises outside interference in Chinatown) [-5], Psych Disad (power hungry) [-5], Secret (head of Wing Chao tong) [-10].

Advantages: Membership: Wing Chao tong (MR 10/Dragon Head, Minor) [20], Wealthy (well off) [5]

Skills: Accounting +2, Acting +2, Area Knowledge (Chinatown) +6, Area Knowledge (San Angelo) +3, Awareness +4, Bureaucracy +3, Business +4, Computers (Use) +2, Concentration +3, Cooking (Chinese) +2, Deduction +3, Driving +3, Firearms +4, Gambling +3, History +2, Intrigue +5, Knowledge (local politics) +6, Knowledge (Wing Chao tong) +6, Language (English; native is Mandarin) +4, Melee Weapons +3, Negotiation +4, Persuasion +2 (intimidation +6), Philosophy +2, Politics +4, Professional (businessman) +5, Professional (tong leader) +6, Society +2 (high society +4, streetwise +2), Style +3, Swimming +2, Trading +4, Writing +4.

Equipment: Suit, briefcase (containing miscellaneous non-incriminating business papers), pager, cell phone, Lexus sedan (w/tinted windows and chauffeur).

The San Angelo Underworld

OTHER TONGS

Although the Wing Chao tong dominates Chinatown, two other Chinese organized crime groups are also active in the community. These tongs are forever seeking to shift the balance of power in Chinatown.

Choy Lok On: The Choy Lok On tong has roughly 220 criminal members. Kuang Ma has been the dragon head of the tong for the past 20 years.

The Choy Lok On tong headquarters is decorated with yellow banners, and tong soldiers sometimes wear yellow sashes or other clothing.

The Wo Fat street gang is linked to the Choy Lok On tong. The gang has approximately 30 members, and is involved in a mild war with the Jade Dragons gang over the illegal fireworks trade in Chinatown. Most Wo Fat members know Hung Gar style kung fu.

Bobby Kwan leads the Wo Fat street gang.

Qi Leong: The smallest of the three San Angelo tongs, the Qi Leong has approximately 180 criminal members. Peng Ho, also known as Three-Finger Ho, is the dragon head of the Qi Leong. The tong often uses scarlet banners and clothing.

The Crimson Tigers street gang is affiliated with the tong. Gang members, who number 25 or so, often wear red satin jackets emblazoned with an embroidered tiger. Most know Shao-Lin Tiger style kung fu.

The Crimson Tigers, led by Tao Huang, are exceptionally violent even by tong standards and the Qi Leong must often hold the gang in check. (For more information about the tongs and street gangs of Chinatown, see *The Dragon's Gate: San Angelo's Chinatown*.)

OTHER TONG MEMBERS OF NOTE

Thomas Chang: The "English secretary" of the Choy Lok On tong. Chang feels that dragon head Kuang Ma is too much of a traditionalist, and his insistence on outdated practices are holding back the tong. His efforts to push the tong into the 21st century have been met with anger by Ma, and Chang is now considering eliminating the venerable dragon head.

Peng Ho: A tong veteran who has risen to become dragon head of the Qi Leong tong. He is also called Three-Finger Ho, having lost two fingers on his left hand to a hatchet-wielding assassin. A crafty and devious man, Ho would like to see the Wing Chao tong taken down a few notches.

Johnny Lao: Head of the Jade Dragons street gang, linked to the Wing Chao tong. Lao is well-known in Chinatown for his expertise in Choy Lee Fut style kung fu, which extends to weapons elements with a chain whip and swords.

Kuang Ma: Venerable dragon head of the Choy Lok On tong. Ma is a traditionalist who despises rival tongs for giving up certain ancient tong practices in the name of expediency.

For example, initiations into the Choy Lok On tong are three-day affairs involving several rituals and ceremonies brought over from China. Most other tongs forego the long ceremonies in favor of initiations lasting a day or sometimes just an hour.

While the Choy Lok On certainly takes advantage of modern advances, like firearms and computers, Ma strives to keep the tong true to its heritage. This policy rankles younger members of the tong, but so far none have acted on their belief that the Choy Lok On needs a new leader.

Vietnamese Gangs

A handful of Vietnamese gangs are active in San Angelo. These gangs are organized and operate differently than most other street

gangs. Actually, there are two kinds of criminal gangs dominated by Southeast Asians.

Adult gangs are made up of older men, usually former South Vietnamese military personnel. They are involved in gambling, murder, arson, fraud and extortion.

Youth gangs are made up of a small number of Vietnamese teens. Unlike other street gangs, they generally do not claim a set territory and many do not even have names or colors. Membership is extremely fluid, sometimes changing daily.

Property crimes and home invasion robberies are the forte of young Vietnamese gangs. Most of these gangs are highly mobile, traveling all over the nation, but a few have settled down in particular cities, like San Angelo.

Two major Vietnamese gangs are based in San Angelo, one comprised of adults and the other of youths. Highly mobile youth gangs also occasionally visit the city.

THUNDER KNIGHTS

This Vietnamese youth gang has followed the path taken by other street gangs, settling in one city and claiming a specific turf. The Thunder Knights are trying to move in on Chinatown, long the stronghold of Chinese tongs.

There are about 30 Thunder Knights, led by David Thuong, an intelligent man in his late 20s. Most of the Thunder Knights crash in various motel rooms or apartments, but Thuong lives in an expensive La Vista home.

Extorting Chinatown shopkeepers is the primary criminal activity of the Thunder Knights, but gang members also take part in robberies of businesses and homes. Most of these are done in other cities to confuse investigators and avoid a local police crackdown.

Tensions in Chinatown are rising, particularly with tong-affiliated street gangs, but the reputation of Vietnamese gangs for wild violence has so far stayed the hand of the tongs.

TRUNG BINH DO

The leader of an adult Vietnamese gang, Trung Binh Do is a former colonel in the army of South Vietnam. When Saigon fell, Do came to the U.S., where he soon organized a criminal gang composed of former combat soldiers from Vietnam.

Based in San Angelo, the highly trained gang commits meticulously planned arsons and murders, often for hire.

Do has invested some of his criminal proceeds in the Spy Shop in Rancho Madera.

Vietnamese Gang Members of Note

Tam "Tommy" Pak: A young Amerasian man who has fallen in with the Thunder Knights gang. He mostly hangs around the edges of the gang, since his half-American heritage means that Pak can never become a full member of the Thunder Knights.

Pak was born in Vietnam in 1975 and sent to the United States as a young boy by his mother. He ran away from several foster homes before becoming involved with the gang.

Sgt. Duc Lam of the San Angelo Police Department has befriended Pak, and hopes to steer him out of the gang life before he gets in too deep. Lam worries that Pak, who longs to be accepted by the gang, will be coerced into committing a murder or some other violent crime.

Pak does not know that he is actually the son of Rep. Robert N. Welch, who served in the U.S. military in Vietnam.

ALLIES & ENEMIES

San Angelo 1500 →
Allies & Enemies

Things to Steal:

Orion Labs

1. Ion regulator
2. Pulse capacitor
3. Reverse polarity inhibitor
4. Plasma chamber
5. Molecular sealant
6. Deoxifier

— Author Unknown

This chapter describes a few of the foremost heroes and enemies of San Angelo

ALLIES

As the City of Heroes, San Angelo is home to several do-gooders who fight for truth and justice. Heroes in the city come in all shapes, sizes and power levels.

JUSTICE FOUNDATION

The Justice Foundation hero team was created in 1994 as an offshoot of the San Angelo think tank by the same name. The institution, established by billionaire Averell Pendleton, seeks to uncover the root causes behind war, crime, terrorism, hunger, poverty and other problems. The hero team takes a more direct approach to crime and superhuman violence.

The four founding members of the Justice Foundation team—Corona, Cavalier, Azteca, and Savant—are still active; in 1996 they were joined by a new hero, Lotus. An advanced headquarters compound in downtown San Angelo houses the operation.

The Turbojet, a prototype vertical takeoff and landing passenger plane loaned to the team by Peregrine Aircraft for field testing, provides transportation for the Justice Foundation.

GM'S OPTION

GMs and players new to superhero games may want to consider using the Justice Foundation as the PCs for their game until they're comfortable making their own heroes.



Illustration by Steve Bryant

Allies & Enemies



Illustration by Storm Cook

CORONA

Callie Dalton

Callie Dalton always had a passion for justice. Even as a child, she insisted the villains in her bedtime stories be made to see the error of their ways.

A legal career was a natural step, and after graduating from law school with honors Dalton went to work at one of San Angelo's top legal firms.

While she soon discovered the occasional gaps between justice and the law, Dalton never lost her determination to see right triumph over wrong.

Shortly after going to work at the law firm, Dalton became lost while hiking in the high mountains. Night fell, and Dalton huddled shivering against a rock as a shower of falling stars began. Suddenly there was a bright flash and an explosion!

Rangers checking out the meteor strike the next day found Dalton unconscious at the edge of the blast radius. After a few days in the hospital, she returned to work. But something seemed different, and soon Dalton realized that she could now produce flames from her body, just by concentrating!

The strange energies released by the meteor strike had somehow altered her, transforming her into a superhuman with control over fire and flame.

After learning to control her powers, Dalton became the superhero Corona, carrying her fight against injustice and dedication to helping others to a new arena.

When the non-profit Justice Foundation sought her out to discuss forming a team of superhumans to protect San Angelo, Corona didn't hesitate to volunteer. Her idealism quickly captured the respect of her teammates, and Corona became the leader of the team.

Corona recently purchased a small, quaint home in Midtown with her longtime companion, Tracy Keller. An artist, Keller works for a graphic design firm downtown. She is aware of Dalton's

superhuman alter ego and supportive of her commitment to helping others.

Quote: "Hang on. We're on our way."

Personality: Corona's unshakable conviction that supers must use their powers to benefit humanity forms the guiding spirit of the Justice Foundation hero team.

She is a strong leader, who never hesitates to do the right thing no matter the risk or cost. Corona has earned the respect and trust of her teammates for her able, compassionate leadership.

Fiercely determined, Corona never admits defeat. Her grit has won several battles in which Corona refused to go down despite relentless attacks, giving her fallen friends time to recover and rejoin the fray.

In her limited free time, Corona enjoys playing the viola and spending time with Tracy Keller in their home. They often visit auctions and yard sales together on weekends to hunt up furniture for the house, which they are still decorating.

Powers/Tactics: Corona controls flames so hot they are invisible except as heat distortions, similar to those seen over asphalt on a hot day. Using these flames, she can blast enemies, generate force fields and fly.

Corona's flame powers are generated by separating water molecules into hydrogen and oxygen, the components of rocket fuels. As a result, extensive use of her powers can leave her severely dehydrated, and Corona tries to drink a lot of water prior to any battles.

Cold-based attacks are especially effective against Corona. In combat, Corona tends to hover and pelt foes with flame blasts while directing the tactics of her fellow Justice Foundation heroes via radio.

Appearance: Callie Dalton, 29, stands 5'6" tall, with an athletic build. She has thick red hair and green eyes.

As Corona, she wears a light blue bodysuit, boots and a short red vest. Belts and pouches carry vital equipment, and a small mask conceals her identity.

Campaign Use: Corona is the archetypal four-color hero, committed to doing right and helping others. Her rock-solid belief that superhumans must use their powers to aid others could come off as being hokey, but her determined stand against those who use their powers to bring harm actually could be quite inspiring to the PCs.

Her convictions run true all the way to the very core of her being, and she will never give up in the battle against villainy. She can be beaten, but Corona can never be defeated.

Corona: PL 9; Init +4 (+4 Dex); Defense 18 (+4 base, +4 Dex); Spd 30 ft; Atk +6 melee (+1S, punch), +9 ranged (+10S, energy blast); SV Dmg +4, Fort +4, REF +4, Will +1; Str 12, Dex 18, Con 18, INT 12, Wis 12, Cha 17.

Skills: Bluff +5, Diplomacy +7, Knowledge (bureaucracy) +2, Knowledge (law) +5, Knowledge (tactics) +2, Listen +3, Perform (viola) +4, Profession (attorney) +5, Spot +3, Swim +2.

Feats: Fame, Leadership, Point Blank Shot.

Powers: Energy Control (Fire) +9 [Source: Mutation; Extras: Flight, Force Field; Cost: 36 pp].

Equipment: Costume, radio button/throat mic (Radio hearing [Source: Science; Flaws: Device; Cost: 1 pp]).

Corona

STR 4, REF 8, HLT 8, PRE 7, INT 5, WIL 5

DEF 18,INI 7,MOV 14,TGH 8,LIF 34

Disadvantages: Dependent (Tracy Keller, partner) [-5], Enemy (hunted by Phosphorous, as powerful) [-5], Enemy (hunted by Photon, more powerful) [-10], Physical Disad (dehydrated by using her powers) [-5], Physical Disad (vulnerability, 2x damage from ice or cold attacks) [-5], Psych Disad (altruistic) [-5], Psych Disad (code against killing) [-10], Psych Disad (seeks justice) [-5], Secret (Callie Dalton, real ID) [-5]

Advantages: Attributes (+3 TGH) [15], Famous (Justice Foundation team leader, regionally known) [5], Perk (licensed to practice law) [2], Perk (sanctioned hero/local police powers) [5]

Skills: Area Knowledge (San Angelo) +3, Awareness +3, Bureaucracy +1, Computers (use) +2, Dancing +3, Driving +2, Instrument (viola) +3, Knowledge (law) +4, Orate +5, Persuasion +5, Professional (attorney) +4, Research +2, Swimming +2, Tactics +1, Use Powers +5, Writing +2 (legal documents +2).

Powers: Flame Powers—*Flame Blast* (10d6 B/L, max range 500m); *Force Field* (AV 15, SF/X: flame); *Force Wall* (AV 10, 12m wide/long); *Flight* (MOV 10).

Equipment: Costume, radio (high range radio button/throat mic, inobvious).

AZTECA**Diego Cruz**

Ever since he was a child, Diego Cruz had adored his older brother. Santiago was the leader of the Varrio Mission Boys, the toughest street gang in North Mission. Diego wanted nothing more than to follow his brother into the gang, even though Santiago kept running him off whenever he tried to hang around.

Then a drive-by shooting by a rival gang brought Santiago down. Dying in the street, he ordered the teenage Diego not to avenge him and told him to make something of his life.

Diego didn't listen. After Santiago's funeral, he joined the Varrio Mission Boys. With one of his new gang brothers at the wheel he went on a drive-by to pay back Santiago's killers. Diego missed the shot, though, and when the driver tried to elude a police car he crashed.

A young girl hit by the skidding car was killed. The driver went to jail, and Diego was sentenced to probation. An idealistic black probation officer, Wayne Dozier, tried to turn the angry young man around, teaching him Tae Kwan Do to give him some self-discipline. But Diego wavered between going straight and staying true to the Varrio Mission Boys. During a probation search of one of Diego's homeboys, Dozier was shot and killed.

Diego finally decided to heed the words of his brother, and his mentor. He left the gang life behind, walking a gauntlet of Varrio Mission Boys who beat him brutally. Diego didn't fight back, finally staggering to the end of the gauntlet before collapsing. His gang brothers walked away from him forever.

He had always been the strongest, fastest and most agile kid on the block, but as Diego continued his martial arts training he discovered that he was actually superhuman in some ways. He decided to put his abilities to use helping others, and when a chance to join the newly created Justice Foundation hero team came his way Diego signed on.



Illustration by Storm Cook

He fights under the name Azteca, to honor his Latino heritage, but is also studying at San Angelo City College to become a paramedic. His parents, Armando and Marguerite Cruz, run a corner grocery in North Mission.

Quote: "You looking for trouble? I'll show you trouble."

Personality: Azteca can be impulsive and hot-tempered, though he tries to keep his anger in check. Sometimes he feels that he still must prove to others that he has truly reformed. Azteca is quite proud of his Latino heritage, and wants to be a good role model for young people. In particular, he tries to dissuade teens from getting involved in gangs. He has had no contact with the Varrio Mission Boys; he is dead to the gang.

Powers/Tactics: Azteca has enhanced strength, agility and defenses. He is a skilled martial artist who fights using Tae Kwan Do. He also carries an Aztec sword, known as a maquahuitl, made of wood with a sharpened obsidian edge. Azteca only uses the sword against inanimate objects, in keeping with his code against killing.

In combat, Azteca prefers to fight other martial artists but does not hesitate to take on more powerful foes if necessary. When battling a particularly dangerous enemy, Azteca relies heavily on martial maneuvers that boost his DCV.

Appearance: Diego Cruz, 21, stands 5'11" tall and has a muscular build. He has black hair, brown eyes and a dark complexion. As Azteca, he wears a loose-fitting sleeveless jacket with an Aztec symbol on the back and short black pants.

Campaign Use: Azteca is an example of a former criminal gone straight, a staple of the four-color genre.

His dormant ties to the Varrio Mission Boys could be used to create some interesting adventures. Perhaps Azteca needs the help of his former gang brothers to solve an underworld mystery, leading to a tense, temporary reconciliation. On the other hand, perhaps the Varrio Mission Boys need Azteca's help—a rival street gang could be obtaining high-tech weapons from somewhere.

Allies & Enemies

Azteca: PL 10; Init +5 (+5 Dex); Defense 21 (+6 base, +5 Dex); Spd 30 ft.; Atk +12 melee (+4S, punch; +7L, sword), +13 ranged; SV Dmg +8, Fort +3, REF +7, Will +1; Str 18, Dex 20, Con 16, INT 11, Wis 12, Cha 13.

Skills: Acrobatics +10, Climb +8, Drive +9, Gather Information +5, Jump +8, Knowledge (martial arts world) +3, Knowledge (street gangs) +5, Knowledge (Varrio Mission Boys gang) +2, Language (English; native is Spanish), Listen +4, Repair +3, Spot +6, Taunt +5.

Feats: Accurate Attack, Dodge, Fame, Heroic Surge, Improved Grapple, Lightning Reflexes, Move-by Attack, Power Attack, Sanctioned, Takedown Attack.

Powers: Amazing Save (damage) +5 [Source: Training; Cost: 5 pp], Combat Sense +5 [Source: Training; Cost: 5 pp], Leaping +5 [Flaws: Requires Acrobatics skill check (DC 15); Cost: 5 pp].

Equipment: Maquahuitl (Aztec sword; +3 lethal damage), radio button w/throat-mic (radio hearing).

Azteca

STR 9, REF 10, HLT 8, PRE 5, INT 4, WIL 4

DEF 20, INI 9, MOV 19, TGH 10, LIF 32

Disadvantages: Bad Temper [-2], Dependent (parents, Armando and Marguerite Cruz) [-5], Enemy (hunted by Bloodsport, as powerful) [-5], Enemy (hunted by Photon, more powerful) [-10], Enemy (watched by Varrio Mission Boys, less powerful) [-2], Infamous (impulsive hero, former criminal) [-2], Psych Disad (code against killing) [-10], Psych Disad (enraged by racial slurs) [-5], Psych Disad (feels he must prove himself) [-5], Psych Disad (friendly rivalry with other martial artists) [-2].

Advantages: Attributes (+3 TGH) [15], Famous (public superhero, regionally known) [5], Fast Reflexes (+2, INI and +6 Awareness to avoid surprise, already added in) [2], Hard to Kill (AV 2) [2], Perk (sanctioned hero/local police powers) [5], Physical Adv (+1 STR, for martial arts damage only) [2]

Skills: Acrobatics +6, Area Knowledge (San Angelo) +3, Awareness +3 (vs. surprise +3), Climbing +6, Computers (use) +2, Contortionist +6, Driving +6, Firearms +3, First Aid +3, Knowledge (martial arts world) +3, Knowledge (street gangs) +3, Knowledge (Tae Kwan Do) +3, Knowledge (Varrio Mission Boys gang) +1, Language (English; native is Spanish) +3, Mechanic +3, Melee Weapons +6, Professional (public superhero) +1, Society +2 (streetwise +2), Stealth +7, Swimming +2, Unarmed Combat (Tae Kwan Do) +7.

Powers: Superleap: +10m (18m total, requires Acrobatics skill roll [TN 15]).

Equipment: Maquahuitl (Aztec sword; 3d6 P/L), radio button w/throat-mic.

San Angelo Times

North Mission Teen Killed in Drive-by Shooting

Shots rang out at 10:30 p.m. last night in the North Mission neighborhood. Amidst the chaos and panic Santiago Cruz, 18, lay dead in the street. The third shooting in as many months, many witnesses believe the shooting to be gang-related, although authorities



Illustration by Storm Cook

CAVALIER

Michael Quinn

Lt. Michael Quinn loved being a test pilot for the U.S. Air Force. When it assigned him to Forgan Air Force Base for something called Project: Cavalier, Quinn figured his superiors simply wanted the best pilot in the Air Force to check out some hot new jet fighter.

He didn't see any new jets when he got to the top-secret Sector 10 at the airbase, but Quinn certainly got to see the inside of a lot of laboratories as scientists put him through every test imaginable.

Finally they explained that his brainwaves were the best match for a new cybernetic helmet. But the helmet wasn't for fighters. It was for an ultra-advanced, top-secret battlesuit. Dubbed the Cavalier armor, it was assembled by a huge force of scientists, engineers, technical experts and others for the U.S. Air Force at a cost of billions. General Harold S. Briar, the commander of the project, didn't like assigning a junior officer to test the armor. But Quinn had the best chance of being able to control the suit; the general didn't have much choice.

The first tests were a success, even when Quinn deviated from his assignment to rescue some people trapped in a burning car on Interstate 79. Soon the San Angelo papers were full of reports on a new armored hero. Gen. Briar was furious.

But Dr. Augustus Clay, chief scientist on Project: Cavalier, convinced the general that having Quinn join the superhero community would be a perfect real-world test of the armor's capabilities. Gen. Briar eventually assented, and when the new hero was offered a place on the Justice Foundation hero team he signed off on the idea.

Under strict orders to conceal his Air Force affiliations and the true origin of the armor, Cavalier has told his teammates that he discovered the battlesuit and keeps it working with the help of a friendly engineer whose identity he must protect. In reality, whenever the suit requires repairs or maintenance he returns to Sector 10 at the airbase.

While Cavalier continues to field-test the armor, work has started on the design of a second, more powerful generation of the armor. The final fate of the project remains up in the air, however, with Dr. Clay favoring peaceful applications for the suits and Gen. Briar insisting that the armor be designed for combat.

Quote: "If you thought that was good, watch this."

Personality: Cavalier can be something of a hotshot, which sometimes lands him in trouble. He likes to show off, and doesn't mind taking risks to pull off an especially impressive maneuver. His showboating and occasional disregard for orders creates all kinds of friction with his Air Force superiors, particularly Gen. Briar. But his status as the only pilot qualified to wear the Cavalier armor gives him some "job security."

Cavalier has discovered that he enjoys using the armor to rescue people and fight crime; he personally sides with Dr. Clay in the debate over the best use of the suit but doesn't get much of a say in the dispute.

Most of the scientists and military personnel involved in Project: Cavalier treat him like a test subject—Dr. Clay is the only one who really seems interested in his opinions and ideas. He considers the older scientist something of a mentor.

The need to deceive his Justice Foundation friends about the origin of the armor and his true identity bothers Cavalier, but national security issues are one thing he does take seriously.

Powers/Tactics: Along with excellent defenses, the Cavalier armor can generate bursts of superhot plasma in combat. The suit has a full life-support system, and incorporates some enhanced vision technology, radio systems and a personal flight system.

Feedback circuitry in the suit provides enhanced strength and speed, though the cybernetic helmet is the primary control device for the armor.

A flaw in the electrical damping systems of the armor makes Cavalier vulnerable to electricity-based attacks. Engineers have so far been unable to resolve the problem.

Quinn's role is much like that of a test pilot; while he excels at using the Cavalier armor and has a basic understanding of aeronautics, Quinn doesn't know much about the construction, maintenance or repair of the battlesuit.

Appearance: Michael Quinn, 25, has brown hair and hazel eyes. He stands 5'10" tall and has an athletic build.

The Cavalier armor is an ultra-high-tech, fully enclosed metal alloy battlesuit with plasma generators attached to each arm and jet-powered flight boots. The armor has a light blue hue, with crimson detailing.

Campaign Use: Cavalier is an example of the happy-go-lucky showoff who only seems to get serious when things are really desperate. He can be a good NPC to keep things light in a tough situation.

The highly advanced Cavalier armor will likely be coveted by just about every villain with an interest in high-tech gear. Adventures built around attempts to capture Cavalier and copy his armor—or just flat-out steal it—are a strong possibility.

If the Justice Foundation is being used as an NPC team, the PCs could be called in to help rescue Cavalier from his captors.

The development of a second-generation battlesuit also provides some adventure possibilities, particularly if a bitter scientist or rival test pilot steals the armor to become a superhuman criminal.

Cavalier: PL 11; Init +6 (+2 Dex, +4 Super-Dexterity); Defense 20 (+4 base, +2 Dex, +4 Super-Dexterity); Spd 30 ft.; Atk +8 melee (+6S, punch), +9 ranged (+10S, energy blast); SV Dmg +4 (+10 armor), Fort +2, REF +6, Will +2; Str 14, Dex 14, Con 14, INT 10, Wis 11, Cha 10.

Skills: Knowledge (Cavalier suit) +6, Listen +6, Pilot +7, Profession (military officer/pilot) +6, Repair +6, Search +5, Spot +5.

Feats: Attack Focus (energy blast), Fame, Iron Will, Point Blank Shot, Power Attack, Precise Shot, Toughness.

Powers: Armor +10 [Source: Super-science; Extras: Energy Blast +10, Flight +9, Immunity (critical hits, cold, disease, heat, poison, pressure, suffocation), Super-Dexterity +4, Super-Strength +4; Cost: 60 pp], Radio Hearing [Flaw: Device, Cost: 1 pp]; Sensory Protection +4 [Source: Super-science; Flaws: Limited—only vs. sight-based Dazzle; Cost: 4 pp].

Equipment: Cavalier powered armor suit.

Cavalier

Normal (out of armor):

STR 6, REF 5, HLT 6, PRE 4, INT 4, WIL 4
DEF 15,INI 5,MOV 11,TGH 5,LIF 26

In Powered Armor:

STR 14, REF 9, HLT 6, PRE 8, INT 3, WIL 3
DEF 18,INI 10,MOV 11,TGH 5,LIF 26

Disadvantages: Dependent (Dr. Augustus Clay, scientist, less powerful) [-5], Dependent (family, less powerful) [-2], Distinctive Features (powered armor, concealable) [-5], Duty (to US Air Force) [-5], Enemy (hunted by Photon, more powerful) [-10], Physical Disad (vulnerability, 1½x damage from electrical attacks) [-2], Psych Disad (cocky) [-10], Psych Disad (feels guilty for deceiving teammates) [-2], Secret (Michael Quinn, real ID) [-5]

Advantages: Attributes (+2 TGH) [10], Famous (Justice Foundation hero, regionally known) [5], Perk (sanctioned hero/local police powers) [5].

Skills: Area Knowledge (Forgan Air Force Base) +3, Area Knowledge (San Angelo) +3, Awareness +3, Bureaucracy +1, Computers (use) +2, Driving +2, Electronics +1, Firearms +3, Heavy Weapons +1 (Vehicle weapons +2), Knowledge (Cavalier suit) +1, Knowledge (US Air Force) +3, Melee Weapons +3, Navigation +2, Operate Electronics +3, Para +1 (parachutes +2), Piloting +5, Professional (Air Force pilot) +4, Science (Aeronautics) +1, Society (military) +2, Survival +2, Swimming +3, Tactics +4, Unarmed Combat (Commando training) +2, Use Powers (powered armor) +5.

Powers: Powered Armor—*Super Attributes* (+8 STR/+4 PRE/+4 REF, don't affect derived attributes); *Fast Reflexes* (+4 INI, +6 Awareness vs. surprise); *Plasma Hurling* (10d6 B/L, max 500m); *Jets* (14, MOV flight); *Armor* (AV 15, armored suit); *Life Support* (self-contained breathing, sealed environment); **Polarized Visor**—*Flash Defense* (-5 from flash attacks); **Helmet**—*Radio* (high range internal radio); *Thermal Vision* (Infra-red vision); *Magnification Viewer* (telescopic vision, +4 Awareness to offset range penalties only).

Equipment: Cavalier powered armor suit.

Allies & Enemies



Illustration by Storm Cook

LOTUS

Debbie Yuan

Debbie Yuan couldn't believe it. Her father, respected Chinatown businessman William Shiyu Yuan, was actually the secret dragon head of the fearsome Wing Chao tong.

The organized crime group had held Chinatown in its iron grip since the Golden Age of heroes, when it was led by the sorcerer known only as T'ien Lung, or Celestial Dragon. Debbie found more papers in her father's desk, records of money laundered by the tong, when the door suddenly swung open.

"Debbie! What are you doing in my office?" demanded her father as he entered the room. In a panic, she tried to stuff the papers back into the desk drawer. Her father nodded, shutting the door.

"I see you've discovered my secret, little one," he said, thoughtfully. "I'd hoped to wait until you'd finished college to tell you but destiny has its own design."

"What you're doing is wrong," Debbie burst out. "You're preying on our people."

"No, daughter, we bring order to Chinatown," he replied. "But order costs, and the people must pay. That's fair, isn't it? And with your powers we can eliminate the lesser tongs. When the Wing Chao rules supreme, there will be peace."

"You can't fool me with words, father," Debbie said. "I know about the tongs. About how they kill people, extort money—I won't be part of it."

She ran from the room in tears. Even though she was only 18, just starting college at UC San Angelo, Debbie knew what she had to do. Her family had committed great injustices on the people of Chinatown. As the hero Lotus, she would use her superhuman strength to combat the tongs and atone for her family's wrongs.

Quote: "I know I have the strength to do what's right."

Personality: Lotus feels a strong commitment to protecting the people of Chinatown, particularly against the depredations of the criminal tongs. She strives to make up for the wrongs committed by her father, William Shiyu Yuan, and his Wing Chao tong.

Lotus has cut all contact with her father since discovering his tong links one year ago, but she still meets her mother occasionally when William Yuan is away. She operates under a secret identity to protect her mother and younger siblings from reprisals.

Since joining the Justice Foundation hero team shortly after starting her superhero career in 1996, Lotus has come to trust her teammates. She sometimes works with Savant, conducting experiments or other scientific work at the base laboratory. A vegetarian, Lotus frequently kids Cavalier about his love of hamburgers.

Lotus enjoys being a hero, and finds the whole business of battling crime, stopping vile plots and traveling to exotic locales fascinating. Although she knows when to get serious, her enthusiasm often lifts the team's spirits in a tight spot.

She has continued her classes at UC San Angelo, and is currently undecided between a career in science or acting.

Powers/Tactics: Lotus, a short, petite young woman, has incredible strength, endurance and defenses. She surprises many foes who expect her to be a martial artist or psi talent.

A front-line combatant, Lotus has gone blow-for-blow with some of the toughest supers in San Angelo. Her superstrength also comes in handy for rescuing normals trapped under debris.

Appearance: Debbie Yuan, 19, stands 5'6" tall and has a fairly petite but wiry build. She has straight black hair and brown eyes.

As Lotus, she wears a pale green bodysuit with a lotus symbol on the chest and a mask to protect her identity.

Campaign Use: Lotus is the young, idealistic superhero who still finds the whole idea of being a hero exciting and fun. Her enthusiasm could be used to jazz up more jaded PCs.

Her ties to the Wing Chao tong can certainly be exploited for some strong adventures, especially if Lotus ever has to directly oppose her father. Other possibilities include a scenario requiring Lotus to protect William Shiyu Yuan against tong killers, or one in which he must aid Lotus when another tong marks her for death.

Lotus: PL 10; Init +2 (+2 Dex); Defense 16 (+4 base, +2 Dex); Spd 30 ft.; Atk +10 melee (+13 dmg, punch), +7 ranged; SV Dmg +4, Fort +4, REF +2, Will +1; Str 20, Dex 14, Con 18, INT 14, Wis 12, Cha 18.

Skills: Bluff +6, Diplomacy +6, Knowledge (university) +6, Language (Chinese; native is English), Profession (college student) +8, Science (biochemistry) +8, Spot +2.

Feats: Durability, Fame, Power Attack, Sanctioned, Takedown Attack, Talented (Knowledge [university] and Profession).

Powers: Immovability +5 [Source: Mutation, Cost: 5 pp], Super-Strength +9 [Source: mutation, Extras: Leaping, Protection, Shockwave; Cost: 63 pp].

Equipment: Costume, radio button/throat mic (Radio Hearing [Source: Science; Flaws: Device; Cost: 1 pp]).

STR 24, REF 6, HLT 10, PRE 6, INT 6, WIL 5

DEF 16, INI 6, MOV 16, TGH 23, LIF 40

Disadvantages: Dependent (father, William Shiyu Yuan, less powerful, influential crime boss) [-2], Dependent (family, less powerful) [-5], Enemy (hunted by Photon, more powerful) [-10], Enemy (hunted by tongs, regional group) [-5], Psych Disad (code against killing) [-10], Psych Disad (protects Chinatown) [-2], Psych Disad (hates the tongs) [-5], Psych Disad (vegetarian) [-5], Secret (Debbie Yuan, real ID) [-5].

Advantages: Attributes (+8 TGH) [40], Famous (Justice Foundation hero, regionally known) [5], Perk (sanctioned hero/local police powers) [5].

Skills: Acting +4, Area Knowledge (Chinatown) +3, Area Knowledge (San Angelo) +3, Area Knowledge (UC San Angelo) +3, Awareness +3, Chemistry +2 (biochemistry +2), Computers (use) +3, Driving +2, Knowledge (collegiate scene) +2, Language (Mandarin; native is English) +4, Mathematics +2, Melee Weapons +3, Professional (college student) +3, Research +2, Society +2 (high society +2), Swimming +3, Unarmed Combat (brawling) +6.

Powers: Armor (AV 10, inobvious/inherent damage resistance); Knockback Resistance (-10m); Superleap (+10m, 34m total);

Equipment: Costume, radio (high range radio button/throat mic, inobvious).



Illustration by Storm Cook

SAVANT

Salim Abdul-Jahi

Salim Abdul-Jahi thought back to those early days at UC San Angelo in the mid-1960s. As one of the "Brain Trust," that fractious band of scientific geniuses at the campus, he had first discovered his passion for science.

Under the guidance of Dr. Hal Revette, he had worked side by side with people who would someday become the leading lights of science and technology in San Angelo.

The collision of intellects and egos eventually proved too much, and Abdul-Jahi sadly remembered the final conflict that had driven the "Brain Trust" apart for ever. Even so, the loss had led directly to the most important moment in his life—his discovery of Islam.

He eventually converted to Islam, and even changed his American name to Salim Abdul-Jahi to celebrate his new beginning and newfound pride in his African heritage.

Years passed, and he eventually became a professor at UC San Angelo. A strange explosion claimed the life of his old mentor, Dr. Revette, in 1982, and soon after Abdul-Jahi began to experience strange visions of past events. He could sense the thoughts of people around him, and could even tell when someone he knew was nearby.

And he could always tell when someone was lying to him. Abdul-Jahi concealed his psi powers, even as colorfully clad superhumans burst onto the San Angelo scene, using their new powers to seek justice, fame, wealth, revenge or any of a hundred other goals.

When he heard about the formation of a local hero team to fight for justice in 1994, Abdul-Jahi realized that he had stood on the sidelines long enough. He became a founding member of the Justice Foundation as the hero Savant.

Quote: "You cannot lie to me."

Personality: Dignity and self-discipline are the keys to Savant's personality. He rarely jokes around, even with friends, but despite his reserved manner Savant has come to respect his fellow Justice Foundation team members. He particularly admires Corona's commitment to justice and helping others. Although he chides Azteca about his impulsiveness, in his heart Savant respects the young man for his efforts to straighten out his life.

Savant takes his Islamic beliefs very seriously, praying at the appointed times and taking part in religious holidays. His beliefs are at the core of his patience and self-assurance. His strong sense of personal privacy, and respect for the privacy of others, means that Savant dislikes using his telepathic powers to invade the thoughts of other people. He will only consent to do so in extreme circumstances, and even then must usually be talked into it by his teammates.

Savant is a deep thinker who rarely speaks up unless he has something substantial to add to the conversation. His serious manner, maturity and personal honor make Savant one of the most important members of the Justice Foundation.

Powers/Tactics: Savant has a number of psychic senses, including the abilities to scan for a specific mind, read the thoughts of others and send messages into another's mind. In addition, Savant can attack foes with a punishing bolt of mental energy.

By concentrating deeply, he can sometimes "see" images from the past of a particular place or object. He must handle the object or be physically present in the area, however.

Savant is also a skilled researcher in several fields, and acts as the team scientist.

In combat, Savant avoids physical confrontations and lashes enemies with ego attacks from a safe position as much as possible. His mental powers are actually most useful to the Justice Foundation team in non-combat situations, such as investigations.

Appearance: Savant, 48, stands 6' tall and has a thin build. He has receding black hair, which he keeps very short, and a goatee. His eyes are dark and Savant has a very dark complexion.

Allies & Enemies

He does not wear a superhero costume, preferring to dress in African-style clothing or ordinary street clothes. He often wears a vest over a black shirt and blue jeans.

Savant is diabetic, which limits his diet and requires regular checks of his blood sugar. He relies on insulin injections to help regulate his blood sugar, and could become seriously ill without them.

Campaign Use: Savant is an example of the older, more experienced hero who tempers the sometimes reckless enthusiasm of his younger compatriots.

His retrocognition abilities could be useful to PC heroes investigating an old mystery, or they could result in Savant summoning the PCs for help after stumbling across some secret from the past.

Savant: PL 10; Init +2 (+2 Dex); Defense 12 (+2 Dex); Spd 30 ft.; Atk +6 melee (+0S, punch), +8 ranged, +11 psionics (+10S, mental blast); SV Dmg +3, Fort +3, REF +2, Will +5; Str 10, Dex 14, Con 16, Int 16, Wis 20, Cha 16.

Skills: Bluff +5, Computers +4, Diplomacy +6, Innuendo +12, Knowledge (bureaucracy) +4, Knowledge (African history) +8, Knowledge (Islam) +8, Knowledge (university) +7, Listen +8, Profession (college professor) +8, Science (astronomy) +8, Science (chemistry) +8, Science (physics) +8.

Weaknesses: *Susceptible*: diabetic (requires twice daily insulin injections)

Feats: Detect (Lies), Indomitable Will, Psychic Awareness, Sanctioned.

Powers: Mental Blast +4 [Source: Psionic; Extras: Mental Assault; Cost: 16 pp], Mental Protection +5 [Source: Psionic; Cost: 10 pp], Telepathy +8 [Source: Psionic; Extras: ESP (Flaw: Limited—ESP only to sense minds, no normal senses used), Postcognition (Flaw: Limited—all checks at +5 DC); Cost: 24 pp].

Equipment: Costume w/body armor (+6; Cost: 6 pp), radio button/throat mic (Radio Hearing [Source: Science; Flaws: Device; Cost: 1 pp]), med-pack (contains syringe, insulin and glucometer).

Savant

STR 4, REF 6, HLT 7, PRE 7, INT 7, WIL 9
DEF 16, INI 7, MOV 12, TGH 7, LIF 39

Disadvantages: Addiction (Insulin) [-5], Distinctive Features (wears African clothing, easily concealed) [-2], Enemy (hunted by Photon, more powerful) [-10], Enemy (hunted by Dementia, as powerful) [-2], Impaired Sense (nearsighted, -3 Awareness rolls, correctable) [-2], Physical Disad (diabetic) [-2], Physical Disad (suffers 4d6 Sp/S damage from telepathic contact with injured person) [-5], Psych Disad (altruistic) [-10], Psych Disad (code against killing) [-10], Psych Disad (dislikes reading minds without subject's permission) [-2].

Advantages: Famous (Justice Foundation public hero, regionally known) [5], Perk (sanctioned hero/local police powers) [5]

Skills: Area Knowledge (San Angelo) +3, Area Knowledge (UC San Angelo) +4, Astronomy +4, Bureaucracy +1, Chemistry +4, Computers (programming) +1, Computers (use) +4, Deduction +4, Driving +2, History +1 (Africa +2), Instruction +4, Knowledge (Islam) +5, Persuasion +3, Physics +4, Professional (college professor) +4, Religion

(Continued)

Savant (continued)

+1 (Islam +4), Research +4, Swimming +3, Use Powers +6, Writing +5.

Powers: *Mind Scan* (+8; WIL + Mind Scan vs. target's, WIL + 10+ Range Modifier to locate, requires concentration, no, REF bonus to DEF when using power); *Mental Blast* (4d6 Sp/S, vs. sentient beings only, Mental Armor protects against damage, max range: line of sight); *Telepathy*: +8 (WIL + Telepathy roll total must meet or exceed subject's, WIL + Concentration roll for surface thoughts); *Clairsentience*: sense sight/ hearing, postcognition (no range, requires Concentration skill roll [TN 24], no, REF bonus to DEF when using power); *Detect Lies* (requires, WIL + Use Power skill roll [TN 18]); *Mental Awareness* (can sense use and origin of mental powers used by others); *Mental Armor* (MAV 10 vs. mental powers and attacks).

Equipment: Costume w/body armor (AV 6), radio (high range radio button/throat mic, inobvious), med-pack (contains syringe, insulin and glucometer).

TURBOJET

The Justice Foundation Turbojet is a prototype vertical takeoff and landing passenger jet built by Peregrine Aircraft. The company donated the prototype jet to the team but expects regular reports on any problems or design suggestions.

The jet is well-known to the public as the transportation of the Justice Foundation.

Justice Foundation Turbojet: Siz: Large; Move: 8 (Mode: flight; Tactical Spd: 40 ft.; Travel speed: 256 mph); Hardness: 15; Armor Bonus: 10; Cost: 18; Features: Radio Broadcast, Radio Hearing, Sensors

Justice Foundation Turbojet

STR 16, REF 8, DEF 6, AV 0, Hits 48, MOV 120

Mass: 6.4 tons (-12m knockback)

Size: 8 x 4 meters

Disadvantages: Distinctive Features (Prototype VTOL turbojet, not concealable) [-5], Duty: monitored by Peregrine Aircraft) [-2]

Advantages: Famous (Justice Foundation turbojet, regionally known) [5]

Equipment: Flight jets (combat, MOV 120, max speed 254 mph), Radio (high range transmitter/receiver), Radar (10km range, +20 to offset range penalties for Awareness rolls)

JUSTICE FOUNDATION HEADQUARTERS

The Justice Foundation Headquarters are located in a two-story annex to the think tank's offices in downtown San Angelo. A high stone wall surrounds the compound, which includes a garden, swimming pool and a separate garage for ground vehicles.

The basement contains the power generator, computer mainframe and storage rooms, while the first floor houses offices, a conference room, guest rooms, a kitchen and a lounge. A laboratory complex, communications center and gym are found on the second floor.

The TurboJet hangar, equipped with a roof that opens to accommodate takeoffs and landings, sits on the reinforced roof of the headquarters.

Justice Foundation Headquarters: *Hardness: 15, Features:* Communications, Computer, Fire Prevention System, Gym, Hangar, Infirmary, Laboratory, Living Space, Reinforced Structure, Staff.

Justice Foundation Headquarters

Building Size: 1,000 m² (2 stories of 24x18 meters and a 12x10 meter hangar)

Building Walls: AV 40, Hits 20

Grounds: 4,000 m² (8x80 meter area enclosed in wall with AV 6, Hits 6)

Personnel: 8 security officers

Disadvantages: Distinctive Features (Justice Foundation team base, not concealable) [-10], Enemy (watched by local government) [-2]

Advantages: Famous (superhero team base, regionally known) [5]

Labs/Workstations*: Chemistry +3, Criminology +3, Engineering +3, First Aid +3, Knowledge (Team database) +3, Pharmacology +3, Physician +3.

Equipment: *Base radio* (high range transmit and receive, immobile), *External Sensors* (adds +2 to Awareness and infra-red vision to personnel viewing security monitors)



Illustration by Louis Frank

arming Eastern European immigrants in the community. Not to mention the ever-present hints of supernatural forces at work.

Taking on the costume of a minstrel, Quayle became the Bard—mystic protector of Cathedral Square.

Personality: Brian Quayle often feels that he has gotten in over his head as a hero, particularly since he knows little about the supernatural and magical threats that he sometimes faces. He is also self-conscious about his relative inexperience; when he meets other heroes Brian feels like he's making a fool of himself.

But he's also driven to protect Cathedral Square, where he grew up. He still lives in the old neighborhood, where rents are cheaper, to stretch his meager budget. Outsiders consider Cathedral Square a strange, slightly creepy place; to Brian, it's home. The people of the neighborhood—his landlady Mrs. Hradetsky, old Mr. Popov the grocer and all the rest—had been like a second family since the death of his mother.

His girlfriend, Joanna Donaldson, doesn't know about his nightly activities as the Bard. A fellow UC San Angelo music student, she lives in the University Commons neighborhood.

Quote: *"More ghosts. That's just wonderful. Like I don't have enough to worry about with midterms coming up."*

Powers/Tactics: All of the Bard's powers are based on his flute, which is actually an arcane artifact of tremendous power.

Each tune played on the flute has a particular effect on foes. A discordant one causes injury to listeners, while others can induce feelings of fear, awe or respect. The Bard can entrap listeners with a mesmerizing song, requiring them to make rolls based on their EGO rather than STR to break free. Other powers include the ability to reduce the willpower of listeners, compel enemies to dance and create sound effects. Finally, the Bard recently learned to use the powers of the flute to create a protective shield against magical attacks.

Most of his powers require the Bard to continue playing to maintain the effect, and are useless against anyone unable to hear his music. He must make a music skill roll to properly acti-

SOLO HEROES

The Justice Foundation allies aren't the only heroes in town. San Angelo is also home to several solo heroes who prefer to operate independently.

THE BARD

Brian Quayle

Fifty years ago, a malevolent entity known as the Piper crossed over to San Angelo from his home dimension, intent on some evil plan. Using his magic flute, the Piper mind-controlled the citizens of San Angelo and turned them against the superheroes of the Liberty Corps. Outlawed and on the run, the Liberty Corps finally managed to break the Piper's mystic hold on the people of the city. In a battle in Cathedral Square, the heroes banished the wicked entity to his own dimension.

Unbeknownst to the Liberty Corps, the Piper's magic flute had remained behind when its master was defeated. A passer-by sold the flute to a neighborhood pawn shop, where it gathered dust for the next half-century.

Early in 1997, young college student Brian Quayle found the flute in a forgotten corner of the shop. Always alert to a bargain, he bought the flute for his music classes at UC San Angelo. But Quayle soon discovered that this was no ordinary instrument.

He still hadn't decided what to do with his newfound powers when he heard a scream one evening while walking home from the bus stop. Quayle spotted a woman being attacked by two muggers. Pulling out his flute, he sent the thugs fleeing in terror with a burst of eerie music.

Cathedral Square had been going downhill for years. Street crime was on the rise, and the Organizatsiya had started strong-

Allies & Enemies

vate the powers, modified by a penalty based on the active points of the power.

The flute has many more powers that the Bard has not yet discovered, including the mass mind control abilities used by the Piper.

Appearance: The Bard wears a green medieval-styled costume with red gloves, boots and cowl. He also wears a black domino mask (just to be safe), and a leather belt and "holster" for his flute when not in use.

Campaign Use: The Bard is a reluctant hero whose ambivalence could be used to challenge PCs about their own reasons for putting up with the dangers and inconveniences of the heroic life. GMs can use the Bard as the "voice of reality," perhaps leading PC heroes to re-examine motivations they've come to take for granted.

The Bard hardly qualifies as an expert on the arcane or supernatural, but he may be the only resource available for PC teams without mystic-themed heroes.

On the other hand, his inexperience in magic, particularly with supernatural entities, could land the Bard in trouble requiring the assistance of the PCs.

The Bard: PL 8; Init +2 (+2 Dex); Defense 12 (+2 Dex); Spd 30 ft.; Atk +4 melee (+0S dmg, punch), +6 ranged; SV Dmg +5, Fort +1, REF +2, Will +3; Str 11, Dex 14, Con 12, INT 12, Wis 17, Cha 16.

Skills: Acrobatics +5, Bluff +4, Climb +2, Gather Information +4, Knowledge (Cathedral Square) +5, Knowledge (supernatural) +3, Perform (flute) +12, Profession (college student) +5, Spot +6.

Feats: Power Immunity, Skill Focus (Perform [flute]).

Powers: Force Field +6 [Source: Mystic; Flaws: Requires Perform (flute) skill check (DC 25), Device, Limited—only effective against magic attacks/powers; Cost: 6 pp], Illusion +6 [Source: Mystic; Flaws: Requires (flute) skill check (DC 25), Device, Limited—one sense (sound); Cost: 6 pp], Mental Blast +6 [Source: Mystic; Flaws: Requires (flute) skill check (DC 20), Device; Cost: 6 pp], Mind Control +6 [Source: Mystic; Extras: Mental Link; Flaws: Requires (flute) skill check (DC 25), Device, Limited—only to compel target to dance; Cost: 6 pp], Snare +6 [Source: Mystic; Extras: Area (30 ft. radius); Flaws: Requires (flute) skill check (DC 20), Device; Cost: 12 pp], Super-Charisma +6 [Source: Mystic; Flaws: Requires (flute) skill check (DC 20), Device; Cost: 12 pp].

Equipment: Armored costume (Armor +4 [Source: Science; Cost: 4 pp]), magic flute (see Powers).

Bard

STR 4, REF 5, HLT 5, PRE 7, INT 5, WIL 7

DEF 15,INI 5, MOV 10, TGH 6, LIF 29

Disadvantages: Dependent (Joanna Donaldson) [-2], Dependent (friends in Cathedral Square neighborhood) [-5], Enemy (hunted by the Piper, less powerful) [-2], Poverty (low income) [-2], Psych Disad (ambivalent about heroing career) [-5], Psych Disad (protects Cathedral Square) [-2], Psych Disad (self-conscious about being inexperienced hero) [-5], Secret (Brian Quayle, real ID) [-5].

Advantages: Famous (mystic superhero, local figure) [2], Perfect Pitch (+3 to Singing skill rolls and social skill rolls when voice is important) [2].

(Continued)

Bard (continued)

Skills: Acrobatics +4, Area Knowledge (Cathedral Square neighborhood) +4, Area Knowledge (San Angelo) +4, Awareness +3, Biology +1, Chemistry +1, Computers (use) +2, Driving +2, History +1, Instrument (Flute) +6 (flute magic +6), Knowledge (supernatural) +1, Professional (college student) +2, Research +2, Swimming +2, Use Powers +6.

Powers: **Armored Costume**—Armor (AV 8); **Magic Flute**

(all powers require Instrument (Flute) skill roll [TN Varies] to use, do not work on deaf targets or in extremely noisy surroundings, and are "line of sight")—*Cacophony of Pain* (6d6 Sp/S blast, TN 22); *Piping of Pan*: entangle AV 6, Hits 6 (affects 24m radius, mental power, undetectable by normal senses, entangle takes no damage from attacks, stops hearing sense group, requires continuous flute playing, not usable at range, TN 30); *Sonance of Submission*: +12, PRE (only for fear, awe or respect, bonus reduced by Mental Armor, requires continuous flute playing, TN 18); *Ballad of Bemeaning*: drains 1d6+2, WIL (undetectable by normal senses, drained, WIL returns at rate of 1 point every 2 turns, TN 24); *Dance of the Fay*: +10 mind control (affects all within 20m radius, requires continuous flute playing, not usable at range, only to compel targets to dance, TN 30); WIL + Mind Control roll total must meet or exceed subject's, WIL + Concentration roll to compel subject to dance); *Mimetic Melody*: auditory illusions (affects all within 16m radius, requires continuous flute playing, TN 18; target must make successful Awareness roll [TN 18] or believe illusory sounds); *Wall of Warding*: AV 10 force wall (only protects vs. magical attacks, requires continuous flute playing, TN 22)

Equipment: Costume, magic flute (see Powers, above).

DYNAMO

Jordan Allen

Jordan Allen grew up in the poorest family in the poorest town in backwoods Georgia.

There was never enough money, and the family of six children often went without. When the TV broke, it took three years of saving before the Allens could afford a replacement—a used black-and-white set, at that.

The kids wore each other's hand-me-downs, and it seemed like Jordan's mama spent every evening at the sewing table resizing or patching worn clothes. Classmates from families better off than hers teased Jordan unmercifully about her ragged clothes.

As soon as Jordan graduated from high school, she left that two-bit town for the big city lights of Atlanta. Walking home from her job one night, Jordan was accosted by a knife-wielding mugger.

The young woman was almost as surprised as her attacker when a bolt of lightning erupted from her hands to blast him across the street.

Panicked, Jordan quit her job and went back home, where she confided in her younger brother, Billy. After thinking it over, Billy told Jordan that her powers could make them rich—if she played her cards right.

While Jordan secretly practiced using her lightning powers, Billy designed a costume and name for her: Dynamo. Returning to Atlanta, Dynamo began to perform rescues and other acts of heroism.

Operating under precise instructions from Billy, Dynamo timed her heroic endeavors to attract maximum public attention and TV

time. She always took time out for interviews, appeared at key local charity events and even dated some of Atlanta's most eligible high-profile bachelors.

Soon Dynamo created a sensation wherever she went. That was when Billy approached an Atlanta soft-drink company about the first-ever celebrity endorsement by a super-hero.

The one-commercial deal earned the siblings millions of dollars as newspaper columnists and heroes around the nation erupted in howls of outrage.

Peregrine Aircraft took note of the young Southern hero-celebrity, and when the furor died down the aerospace corporation approached Dynamo about coming to work for the company. Officially, she would be a special consultant on security matters, but her main duty would be public relations—appearing at company events, signing autographs for tour groups, etc.

Billy drove a hard bargain, but in the end Dynamo signed on as Peregrine Aircraft's newest—and probably best-known—employee.

Personality: Growing up poor had a profound effect on Dynamo, and she has privately promised herself that she will never lack for money again.

The hero business is exactly that—a business—to Dynamo. She's interested primarily in the potential for financial gain in any enterprise, and is always on the lookout for new ways to cash in on her super-powers. Her brother, Billy, continues to carefully manage her career.

Heroes motivated primarily by altruism or a search for justice are sometimes offended by Dynamo's mercenary approach to heroing.

She doesn't much care.

Powers/Tactics: Dynamo's powers are based on her control of electricity. She can fire lightning bolts at enemies. In battle, Dynamo surrounds herself with a crackling protective energy field. She flies by generating an electro-magnetic force, and can turn herself into electricity to teleport through power lines, telephone wires, metal girders and other conductive material.

The electrical charge in her body makes Dynamo especially vulnerable to energy drains and metal-based attacks.

Since joining Peregrine Aircraft, Dynamo has learned a little about dealing with a gigantic corporation and proper behavior at high-class company-sponsored events, such as parties at stockholder's meetings.

Quote: "Y'all are trespassin' on Peregrine property. I hope y'all aren't thinkin' of goin' peacefully."

Appearance: Dynamo, 25, has short, fashionably cut blonde hair and blue eyes. She stands 5'8" and has a slim figure, carefully accentuated by her professionally designed costume.

Dynamo wears a light green and yellow costume, with no cape. She does not wear a mask.

When Dynamo uses her powers, her eyes emit a blue glow and a crackling field of electrical discharges surrounds her.

Campaign Use: Dynamo's cynical, selfish attitude toward being a superhero can lead to some interesting philosophical debates with more altruistic PCs.

As an employee-hero, Dynamo's primary interest will be protecting the property and interests of Peregrine Aircraft. This conceivably could bring her into conflict with the PCs—a corrupt executive implicated in illegal arms sales might order Dynamo to stop the PCs from entering corporate property as they investigate his illicit doings, for example.



Illustration by Greg Smith

Dynamo: PL 11; Init +4 (+4 Dex); Defense 17 (+2 base, +4 Dex, +1 Dodge); Spd 30 ft.; Atk +7 melee (+1 dmg, punch), +10 ranged (+10S, energy blast); SV Dmg +4, Fort +4, REF +4, Will +1; Str 13, Dex 18, Con 19, INT 13, Wis 12, Cha 17.

Skills: Bluff +5, Diplomacy +10, Drive +6, Gather Information +8, Intimidate +10, Knowledge (bureaucracy) +6, Knowledge (Georgia) +5, Knowledge (Peregrine Aircraft company) +7, Knowledge (photography) +4, Medicine +4, Move Silently +5, Perform (dance) +4, Profession (corporate superhero) +10, Spot +4.

Feats: Dodge, Fame, Wealth +1

Powers: Energy control (electricity/lightning) +10 [Source: Mutation; Extras: Energy Blast (free Extra, stunning), Flight, Force Field; Cost: 40 pp], Teleportation +8 [base Spd 40 ft.; Source: Mutation; Flaws: Limited—only via conductive material; Cost: 8 pp].

Equipment: Costume, cell phone (corporate; shielded against powers).

Dynamo

STR 4, REF 8, HLT 9, PRE 7, INT 4, WIL 4
DEF 18, INI 6, MOV 15, TGH 4, LIF 35

Disadvantages: Dependent (Billy Allen, brother) [-5], Distinctive Features (Southern accent, concealable) [-2], Duty (to Peregrine Aircraft) [-10], Physical Disad (metal-based attacks cause +3d6 Sp/S damage) [-5], Physical Disad (vulnerability to energy power drains, 2x effect) [-2], Psych Disad (considers heroing a job) [-5], Psych Disad (enjoys using her powers) [-2], Psych Disad (fears being poor) [-5], Psych Disad (professional rivalry with other superheroes) [-5].

(Continued)

Allies & Enemies

Dynamo (continued)

Advantages: Ally (Peregrine Aircraft (Gift) [10], Famous (Corporate hero, public identity, regionally known) [5], Wealthy: Well off) [2]

Skills: Acting +1, Area Knowledge (Georgia) +3, Area Knowledge (San Angelo) +3, Awareness +3, Bureaucracy +1, Computers (use) +2, Dancing +3, Driving +2, First Aid +3, Intuition +3, Knowledge (Peregrine Aircraft company) +3, Orate +1, Persuasion +2 (charm +2), Photography +2, Professional (corporate superhero) +3, Society +3 (streetwise +2), Style +3, Swimming +2, Use Powers +5.

Powers: Lightning Powers—*Energy Blast*: 10d6 B/L; *Force Field*: AV 15; *Flight*: MOV 24; *Teleport*: 40m range (only via conductive material).

Equipment: Costume, cell phone (corporate; shielded against powers).

Man suffers mysterious electrical burns

(Atlanta) Fire Department personnel responded to a report of a man down yesterday evening. Upon arrival, rescuers found the unidentified man laying on the sidewalk with third degree burns on his chest, hands and face. He was treated and taken to Grady Memorial Hospital.

According to one witness, the man was struck by a bolt of lightning. Conflicting statements from another witness indi-

One of the gawking teens bumped into a waitress, and her tray of drinks began to slip.

Moving quicker than thought, Paragon did a handspring off a nearby table to sail over the heads of the elegantly clad donors blocking his path. Landing effortlessly, he snatched the expensive champagne glasses from the air. Not a single glass broke nor a single drop of champagne hit the floor as Paragon returned them to the stunned waitress. He wasn't even breathing hard.

As he smiled and began to sign autographs, the astounded audience erupted in applause.

Of course, it wasn't always so. For years, wealthy heir Robin Fleming suffered from ill health and a frail physique. He used his inheritance to fund research into developing the paragon serum, that would allow anyone to reach their full physical and mental potential.

Eventually, the scientists reported success. Fleming insisted on being the first human test subject, and from the very first injection he could feel the serum beginning to work.

Regular doses of the drug, coupled with an intense training regimen, soon turned Fleming into a perfect human being. Strong, agile, brilliant—now he really did have it all.

But Fleming realized that to use his perfectly-honed abilities solely for his own gain would be wrong. San Angelo needed him. The world needed him.

So he became a hero, fighting crime under the name Paragon according to a perfect strategy to maximize his effectiveness. Soon the underworld came to fear the name Paragon.

He also organized non-profit foundations to fight the root causes of crime, and a Paragon Fan Club to spread his message among young people.

Paragon is one of the most public superheroes in San Angelo, accepting speaking engagements, giving interviews freely and authoring innumerable articles for everything from prestigious scholarly journals to popular newsstand magazines.

There has even been speculation that he might run for political office someday.

Quote: *"Here, let me give you a hand with that."*

Personality: Perfect in every way, Paragon is the apex of courtesy, honor and courage. He always seems to know exactly the right thing to say or do in any situation.

Always self-assured, Paragon has just the right tinge of humility and he knows just when to make a self-deprecating joke to put others at ease.

Actually, his constant perfectness can be a little hard for those around Paragon to take. He knows the answer to every question and the solution to every puzzle. He succeeds at almost everything he tries, seemingly without effort. And he's everything a hero is supposed to be. A lot of people find Paragon perfectly annoying.

Powers/Tactics: Paragon is the Perfect Human. His physical and mental abilities are all at the peak of normal human perfection. Blessed with a photographic memory, Paragon can perform complex equations in his head, read books in a flash and learn new skills almost overnight.

A skillful acrobat and martial artist, he knows several languages and can drive or fly almost any vehicle in the world.

In combat, he fights with flawless tactics. When facing a more powerful foe, he relies on his amazing intellect to exploit their weaknesses or vulnerabilities.

Unbeknownst to the public, Paragon's body has now become addicted to the powerful paragon serum. Without daily injections, he will weaken and eventually die.

PARAGON, THE PERFECT HUMAN

Robin Fleming

The epitome of grace, Paragon walked smoothly through the crowded ballroom. Never taking a wrong step, never hesitating, he moved purposefully toward the head table.

Some of the teenage fans he'd invited to the fund-raising event for his foundation to aid disadvantaged children spotted Paragon, and rushed heedlessly through the crush toward him.



Illustration by Storn Cook

ENEMIES

Appearance: Paragon, 30, stands 6' tall and has a very athletic build. His body is perfectly proportioned, and he is incredibly handsome. Paragon has stylish blond hair and blue eyes.

Campaign Use: Paragon is an example of an NPC hero designed to get under the skin of the PCs. He's annoying to be around, but unlike villains they can't just slug him in the mouth.

Paragon has a lot of skills that most PCs never bother to invest points in, such as languages and transportation familiarities. Perhaps having Paragon show them up with non-combat skills will lead PCs to spend experience points on something other than ever-more powerful attacks.

He can also be used to get the PCs involved in an adventure. For example, Paragon's flawless intellect and faultless assessment of his own capabilities could lead him to call on the PCs for assistance in resolving a particular threat. Of course, he'll expect to be in charge of the joint operation, which could lead to friction.

Paragon: PL 5; Init +4 (+4 Dex); Defense 14 (+4 Dex); Spd 30 ft.; Atk +6 melee (+4S dmg, punch), +6 ranged; SV Dmg +4, Fort +4, REF +4, Will +4; Str 18, Dex 18, Con 18, INT 18, Wis 18, Cha 18. *Feats:* Attractive, Fame, Heroic Surge. *Skills:* Acrobatics +6, Bluff +6 (+9), Climb +6, Concentration +6, Diplomacy +6 (+9), Drive +6, Gather Information +6, Hide +6, Innuendo +6, Knowledge (San Angelo underworld) +5, Knowledge (strategy and tactics) +6, Language (Cantonese; native is English), Language (French), Language (Russian), Language (Spanish), Language (Vietnamese), Medicine +6, Perform (dancing) +6, Pilot +6, Profession (perfect hero) +6, Spot +6, Move Silently +6, Swim +6. *Weaknesses:* Quirk (truly believes he is perfect), Susceptible (requires daily dose of Paragon serum). *Equipment:* The perfect suit (or costume), pen.

Paragon

STR 10, REF 10, HLT 10, PRE 10, INT 10, WIL 10
DEF 20,INI 10, MOV 20, TGH 10, LIF 50

Disadvantages: Addiction (Paragon serum, must take 1/day or suffer 3d6 Sp/S damage) [-5], Dependent (Geoffrey Stafford, aged butler) [-2], Dependent (fan club members, less powerful) [-5], Enemy (hunted by Photon, more powerful) [-5], Enemy (hunted by Bloodsport, as powerful) [-2], Psych Disad (code against killing) [-10], Psych Disad (truly believes he is perfect) [-10].

Advantages: Attractive (+6) [5], Eidetic Memory [5], Famous (perfect, public identity, +9 to social skill rolls and to recognize, nationally known) [10], Physical Disad (+2 STR for damage w/martial arts only) [5], Psych Adv (linguist) [5], Speed Reader [5], Wealthy (well off) [5].

Skills: Acrobatics +6, Acting +4, Area Knowledge (San Angelo) +4, Awareness +4, Climbing +4, Computers (use) +4, Concentration +4, Conversation +4, Cooking +4, Dancing +4, Deduction +4, Driving +4, First Aid +4, Instruction +4, Intrigue +4, Intuition +4, Knowledge (San Angelo underworld) +4, Language (Cantonese; native is English) +4, Language (French) +4, Language (Russian) +4, Language (Spanish) +4, Language (Vietnamese) +4, Melee Weapons +4, Negotiation +4, Orate +4, Persuasion +4 (debate +4), Piloting +4, Professional (hero) +3, Research +4, Society +4, Stealth +4, Strategy +4, Style +4, Swimming +4, Tactics +4, Throwing +4, Unarmed Combat (classic comic book martial arts) +4, Watercraft +4, Writing +4.

Equipment: The perfect suit (or costume), pen.

For every superhuman who chooses to use his powers for good, there seems to be another who takes advantage of his power to satisfy his greed, powerlust or vengeful side. These are just a few of the superhuman criminals active in San Angelo.

AMOK

Warren Voight

"Get outta here, you bums!"

The storekeeper angrily shook his broom at Warren Voight and his companions as they lounged outside his downtown shop, enjoying a bit of sun and some cheap liquor.

"Worthless winos, frightnin' my customers. Get a job!"

Voight began to get annoyed.

"Get off my sidewalk before I call the police on you!"

Something inside him snapped, and a blind fury erupted in Voight. He stood up, snatched the broom from the startled shopkeeper and broke it in half like a toothpick. The merchant ran away in panic, followed by Voight's companions, as he began demolishing the store.

Once Voight had it all—a family, a respectable job, a home in a nice neighborhood. But his hot temper and drinking cost him everything.

Now Voight lives on the streets of San Angelo, just another face in the anonymous crowd of homeless people.

He still has a temper, and a few years ago Voight realized after one of his rages that he had done a lot more this time than bust a few store windows. Wrecked cars and half-destroyed buildings were everywhere.

Voight had somehow developed superstrength and defenses. He didn't really care.

The newspapers dubbed him Amok, and over the years he has gone on several berserk rampages through the city. Police



Illustration by Storm Cook

Allies & Enemies

are looking for him, but when he's not enraged Amok blends into the street scene—one more homeless person among many.

Personality: Amok just wants to be left alone. Period. When people annoy him, he tends to go berserk, smashing through downtown San Angelo in an uncontrollable fury.

Anything can set Amok off—a chatty homeless person, a snotty liquor-store clerk, a religious pamphleteer or city police officers moving vagrants along. Paranormal arch-criminals sometimes try to recruit Amok for their schemes, which also bugs him.

Amok doesn't really want to fight anyone, but when he's annoyed his temper takes hold and he becomes uncontrollable. Afterwards, he's often remorseful about his berserk actions and drinks to forget his horrible rampages.

Powers/Tactics: Amok has incredible strength and defenses, but his paranormal powers have also left him oddly vulnerable to sound-based attacks.

Amok only fights when he's berserk, so his combat tactics are almost non-existent. He attacks anything in front of him at full OCV until it's destroyed, then goes on to the next target.

Amok often attacks cars, buildings and other inanimate objects as normals usually flee at first sight of him. He'll gladly fight supers or anyone else who holds still long enough, though.

Once his anger has been touched off, Amok cuts a random path of destruction through the city until halted by heroes or exhaustion.

Quote: "Stop bothering me!"

Appearance: Amok, 43, is a homeless African American man with black hair and brown eyes. He stands 6' tall and has a muscular build, which he often conceals under an old overcoat. His clothing is typically dirty, smelly and worn-out.

Campaign Use: Amok is very handy for on-the-spot adventures. GMs caught without a prepared adventure can just set him loose on downtown San Angelo for a battle royale with the heroes.

A really clever villain might set Amok on a rampage as a distraction while he pulls off a crime somewhere else in the city. Or Amok can be used to inject some unrelated combat into a long, drawn-out investigation-type adventure.

Amok (Warren Voight): PL 10; Init +3 (+3 Dex); Defense 13 (+3 Dex); Spd 30 ft.; Atk +10 melee (+16 dmg, punch), +8 ranged; SV Dmg +7, Fort +5, REF +3, Will +0; Str 20, Dex 16, Con 20, INT 10, Wis 10, Cha 16.

Skills: Climb +17, Hide +5, Intimidation +9, Knowledge (San Angelo street scene) +2, Search +4, Spot +3, Survival +2.

Weaknesses: Berserker.

Feats: Durability, Infamy, Power Attack, Takedown Attack, Toughness.

Powers: Immovability +10 [Source: Mutation; Cost: 10 pp], Mental Protection +5 [Source: Mutation; Cost: 10 pp], Super-Strength +10 [Source: Mutation; Extras: Leaping, Protection; Cost: 60 pp].

Equipment: Ragged clothes, jacket, expired bus pass, pocket lint.

Amok

STR 28, REF 7, HLT 12, PRE 8, INT 4, WIL 4

DEF 17,INI 6,MOV 13,TGH 16,LIF 44

Disadvantages: Addiction (alcohol) [-5], Bad Temper (berserk when annoyed) [-10], Enemy (hunted by Justice Foundation, as powerful) [-5], Enemy (hunted by police) [-5], Infamous (rampaging berserker, regionally known) [-5], Physical Disad (vulnerable to sonic attacks, takes 2x damage) [-10], Poverty (destitute) [-10], Psych Disad (wants to be left alone) [-10].

Advantages: None.

Skills: Area Knowledge (San Angelo) +3, Awareness +3, Concentration +1, Conversation +1, Driving +1, Instruction +1, Knowledge (San Angelo street scene) +3, Melee Weapons +6, Persuasion +2 (intimidation +4), Society +1 (streetwise +2), Stealth +3, Survival +1 (urban/streets +2), Swimming +2, Throwing +6, Unarmed Combat (brawling) +6.

Powers: Armor: AV 16 (inherent toughness, inobvious effects); Knockback Resistance: -10m; Mental Armor: MAV 10; Power Defense: 5 points (acts as AV to reduce drain and transformation attacks); Superleap: +16m (44m total distance).

Equipment: Ragged clothes, jacket, expired bus pass, pocket lint.

In what can only be described as a super-being gone amok, downtown San Angelo was literally shaken at its very foundations. A large African American man with incredible strength walked through City Center yesterday afternoon, knocking large holes in the sides of buildings and smashing cars as he made his way down Kirby Avenue.

Police responded but their efforts to restrain the man proved fruitless, as officers were tossed about like rag dolls. For possibly the first time ever, San Angelo's finest was on the receiving end of a beating they have so often delivered to others, and by a minority. If not for the tremendous injuries suffered by many of the police, the term poetic justice might seem appropriate.

Luckily for the officers at the scene, the city's favorite team of "supers" arrived and immediately engaged the man in paranormal fisticuffs. A short time after the battle began, however, it ended, as the mysterious hulk of a man disappeared amidst the rubble of a two story office building...

BLOODSPORT

Cameron

As fire engines raced by, sirens blaring, the man tried to remember how he'd ended up walking along this street in Arroyo Verde.

What he was doing there.

Who he was.

He looked up to see a sheriff's deputy approaching. The deputy shined a flashlight in his face, and the man's foot lashed out to knock it from the officer's hand. A flurry of expert punches and kicks left the deputy broken and bleeding on the pavement.

The man wandered off into the night.

A clone created by scientists at Helix Technologies, the synthetic life form code-named Cameron was genetically designed to be a perfect physical specimen.

With strength, agility, resistance and endurance near the apex of normal human ability, he was programmed with martial arts skills while being matured to the physiological age of 20 in the lab's high-tech nutrient vats.

Then a fire broke out at the Arroyo Verde lab. Cameron barely escaped and wandered away, lacking any knowledge of his identity and origin. Since the authorities didn't know of his existence, and could never know, the lab never reported him missing.

The sheriff's department picked Cameron up as a vagrant, and he was sent to a psychiatric hospital for treatment as an amnesiac. But Cameron got tired of the place and escaped. He had only to cripple a couple of security officers to do it.

Eventually, he met some friends who showed him how he could use his phenomenal martial arts skills to make some money. Cameron liked making money.

Now he fights in illegal, underworld pit-fighting competitions, in which two martial artists face off, sometimes with weapons, sometimes not. Spectators make bets on the match, which ends when just one man is left standing. Some matches only end when one man remains alive. Known as Bloodsport, Cameron has never yet lost a match.

That makes his backers happy, and it makes Bloodsport happy, too.

Quote: *"I hear you're pretty good. Let's see if you're good enough to beat me."*

Personality: Bloodsport is virtually a blank slate emotionally and personality-wise. It just wasn't in his encoding. Since escaping from the Helix Technologies lab, he has discovered a few things about himself, though.

He doesn't like being cold or hungry. He doesn't like things that confuse him. He does like having lots of money, which Bloodsport has discovered can keep him warm, well-fed and supplied with all kinds of distractions from confusing thoughts.

But the one thing Bloodsport really likes is fighting. It's the only thing he's any good at, and he's very good.

No one he's fought in the ring has provided much of a challenge, and Bloodsport has started to wonder just how good those heroes using martial arts are compared to him. He's beginning to think that maybe it's time he found out.

Powers/Tactics: Bloodsport fights using the muay thai, or Thai kickboxing, style of martial arts. His heightened physical abilities make him a formidable foe, and the fighting techniques placed into his mind are perfectly honed.

In combat, Bloodsport naturally tries to fight other martial artists. He will try to avoid a direct fight with enemies he is unlikely to be able to harm, such as flying energy projectors. He doesn't



Illustration by Albert Deschesne

mind sneaking up behind a preoccupied mentalist for an easy takedown, however.

While Bloodsport doesn't make a special point of killing his foes, unless they have angered him in some way, he doesn't take much care not to kill them, either.

Appearance: Bloodsport is 6'2 and has an excellent, athletic build. His angular features are accentuated by short blonde hair, which he usually wears in a flat top.

Bloodsport's fighting costume is white and crimson with spiked wristbands and shoulder pieces. While appearing functional, these items are actually made of plastic and painted silver and thus do no extra damage. Bloodsport's backers continue to promise him lethal steel replacements for these "costume weapons."

Campaign Use: Although he's kind of a dim bulb, Bloodsport could make a good rival or hunted for martial arts-themed PCs. He will be interested in testing himself against any hero known for his fighting skills, though Bloodsport knows enough not to take on any truly superpowered foes.

Contact with Bloodsport could put the PCs on the trail of the illicit experiments at Helix Technologies, particularly if a mentalist hero reads his mind and discovers just how little there is in there.

Bloodsport (Cameron): PL 8; Init +8 (+4 Dex, Improved Init.); Defense 14 (+4 Dex); Spd 30 ft.; Atk +8 melee (+3S dmg, punch), +10 ranged; SV Dmg +4, Fort +6, REF +6, Will +1; Str 15, Dex 19, Con 18, INT 13, Wis 12, Cha 15. **Feats:** All-out Attack, Ambidexterity, Assessment, Blind-Fight, Choke Hold, Dodge, Durability, Expertise, Improved Disarm, Improved Grapple, Great Fortitude, Improved Initiative, Infamy, Instant Stand, Lightning Reflexes, Power Attack, Rapid Strike, Takedown Attack. **Skills:** Acrobatics +10, Concentration +3, Intimidation +10, Knowledge (Muay Thai) +6, Knowledge (underworld fighting scene) +6, Move Silently +6, Profession (pit fighter) +6. **Equipment:** Chainmail armor (Armor +8 [Source: Science; Cost: 8 pp]).

Allies & Enemies

Bloodsport

STR 7, REF 8, HLT 8, PRE 6, INT 4, WIL 4
DEF 18, INI 8, MOV 18, TGH 6, LIF 32

Disadvantages: Physical Disad (amnesia) [-10], Infamous (deadly pitfighter, among underworld and pitfighting circles only) [-2], Psych Disad (casual killer) [-10], Psych Disad (likes to fight) [-5], Psych Disad (rivalry with other martial artists) [-5]

Advantages: Ambidexterity (no penalty) [5], Attributes (+2 MOV) [10], Fast Reflexes (+2 INI and +3 Awareness vs. surprise, already figured into stats) [2], Physical Adv (+3 STR, only with martial arts maneuvers) [5].

Skills: Acrobatics +2 (breakfall +4), Area Knowledge (San Angelo) +2, Awareness +2 (vs. surprise +3), Contortionist +5, Driving +2, Flexible Weapons +3, Gambling +1, Knowledge (Muay Thai) +4, Knowledge (street scene) +1, Knowledge (underworld fighting scene) +1, Melee Weapons +5, Persuasion +2 (intimidation +2), Professional (pit fighter) +3, Society +2 (streetwise +2), Stealth +5, Swimming +2, Throwing +5, Unarmed Combat (Muay Thai) +5.

Equipment: Chainmail armor (AV 12)

PHOBIA

Emily Warden

A thunderstorm split the night outside the upscale La Vista home, while inside raged a battle of a different sort.

Emily Warden tried to make her father see that superhumans weren't evil, just human beings who deserved some understanding, some compassion. But Rev. John Warden couldn't be dissuaded, especially not by his teenage daughter.

Her constant arguing and willful defiance only proved his point about supers having a disruptive influence on the spiritual and social well-being of the city, he said.



Illustration by Storm Cook

Emily tried to keep calm as her father patiently explained that the pernicious influence of the flashy, flamboyant superhumans had poisoned her mind. He was treating her like a little child again, just like always.

In a moment of unreasoning anger, Emily let slip the one secret she had kept from her family. She herself was a paranormal, with the superhuman power to sense and make real the fears of others. Emily saw the shock in her father's eyes, and in that instant her uncontrollable fear-sensing powers lanced out.

In one horrifying moment, Emily realized that what her father most feared was...her. Overcome by emotion and grief, she fled into the night, never to know how quickly the momentary burst of fear in her father's heart gave way to concern and love.

A year later, Emily lives on the streets of San Angelo. Still estranged from her parents, she usually stays with a ragtag band of teenage runaways that drifts from University Commons to City Center. She tries to help them find food and shelter, but sometimes panhandling or petty thefts don't bring in enough money—particularly when someone in the band needs medicine or medical care.

When that happens, Emily puts on a mask and becomes Phobia, super-criminal for hire. As Phobia, she has taken part in a handful of crimes in recent months and police are looking for the newly emerged paranormal criminal.

Quote: *"Don't be afraid."*

Personality: While her constant exposure to the inner demons of those around her could have twisted Phobia's personality into sadism or even driven her mad, it has instead gifted her with a profound empathy. Her powers enable Phobia to realize that so many of the harmful and hurtful things that people do stem from their own fears and prejudices. Even so, at times she has to seek some solitude—a chance to escape the unceasing hammering of fearful thoughts plucked from the minds of others.

Phobia cares deeply for her fellow runaways, who have become a kind of surrogate family. For their sake, she is sometimes willing to work as a criminal-for-hire, although she strongly dislikes doing so and especially regrets confronting foes with their fears made real.

Anyone harming or threatening her young companions, however, faces her full, unfettered fury. Phobia will do almost anything to protect her friends.

She also longs to return to her real family, but feels that she cannot so long as her father continues to condemn superhumans as tools of evil. Phobia doesn't hate her father, but believes his bigotry and fear have built an unbreachable wall between them. She has kept her relationship to the well-known reverend secret, to protect her family and his reputation.

Her fellow runaways know her by her "street name," Kitten.

Powers/Tactics: Phobia has the power to sense and manifest the fears of those around her, via a limited form of telepathy and mental illusions. Her telepathy, although restricted in its use, can be fairly effective and can sometimes even root out deep-seated or subconscious fears.

While she can direct a more powerful version of her telepathy against a specific target, her power to sense the fears of others is uncontrolled and always active. As a result, Phobia is continually assailed by the dark thoughts of those around her.

In combat, Phobia tends to try to blend into the crowd and use her powers to confound foes while remaining undetected.

Appearance: Phobia is 5'6" with a body developing from that of a teenager to a young adult. She has short blonde hair and hazel eyes. She most often wears blue jeans and a nylon jacket over half shirt. Phobia is fond of wearing dark make-up and nail polish, as well as costume jewelry.

Campaign Use: Phobia is the archetypal villain with a heart of gold. She only commits crimes to help her fellow runaways, and even then reluctantly.

Her powers also provide players with a chance to explore the inner fears of their PCs—some of the results could be quite interesting and provide new insight into the heroes.

After the PCs encounter Phobia a few times, they may begin to learn more about her tragic background. Eventually they might try to reunite Phobia with her family, which could help her father see past his bias about superhumans and dissuade him from preaching hate.

Along with providing an uplifting way to “defeat” Rev. Warden, this story arc could offer a chance for some dramatic role-playing and a real challenge—persuading a runaway to return home, and convincing her father to accept her superpowers, requires something other than the ability to pound the tar out of some supervillain.

Phobia: PL 5; Init +2 (+2 Dex); Defense 14 (+2 base, +2 Dex); Spd 30 ft.; Atk +2 melee (+0S dmg, punch), +4 ranged; SV Dmg +3, Fort +3, REF +2, Will +3; Str 11, Dex 15, Con 16, INT 13, Wis 16, Cha 15.

Skills: Bluff +6, Climb +3, Gather Information +4, Hide +5, Knowledge (abandoned buildings) +4, Knowledge (downtown) +4, Knowledge (religious scene) +2, Open Lock +4, Search +5, Spot +5.

Feats: Connected (other runaways, Exiles gang members, and charities), Detect (fears)

Powers: Telepathy +5 [Source: Psionic; Extras: Illusion; Flaws: Limited—only to know info/details of target’s fear, Uncontrolled (partial, 2 ranks); Cost: 9 pp].

Equipment: Denim jeans, shirt, jacket, pocket lint, wallet photo of family.

Phobia

STR 4, REF 6, HLT 7, PRE 6, INT 5, WIL 7

DEF 16, INI 6, MOV 12, TGH 6, LIF 35

Disadvantages: Dependent (Reverend John Warden, father) [-5], Enemy (hunted by police, to capture) [-2], Infamous (young criminal for hire, locally known) [-2], Poverty (destitute) [-10], Psych Disad (dislikes using her powers) [-2], Psych Disad (misses her family) [-5], Psych Disad (understanding and compassionate) [-10], Secret (Emily Warden, real ID) [-5]

Advantages: Attributes (+2 DEF) [10], Ally (other runaways, Exiles gang, both at Edge level) [5], Ally (Local charities) [2]

Skills: Area Knowledge (downtown) +3, Area Knowledge (San Angelo) +3, Awareness +3, Climbing +3, Computers (use) +1, Driving +1, Electronics +1, First Aid +1, Knowledge (abandoned buildings) +3, Knowledge (religious scene) +1, Knowledge (San Angelo underworld) +1, Knowledge (street scene) +3, Lockpicking +4, Professional (runaway) +2, Society +2 (streetwise +2), Stealth +4.

Powers: *Telepathy:* +6 (can only be used to detect target’s fears, spontaneous/uncontrollable by user; WIL + Telepathy roll total must meet or exceed subject’s, WIL + Concentration roll); *Mental Illusions:* +6 (only to create illusions of target’s fears; WIL + *Mental Illusion* roll total must meet or exceed subject’s WIL + Concentration roll to project illusions into subject’s mind).

Equipment: Denim jeans, shirt, jacket, pocket lint, wallet photo of family.



Illustration by Albert Deschesne

PHOTON

Stephen Bow

A shark in a business suit. That’s what most people thought of Stephen Bow. As an ambitious junior executive at Eclipse Industries, he quickly climbed the corporate ladder with a speed and rapaciousness that stunned even his most ruthless colleagues.

Nothing was too underhanded for Bow. Potential rivals found their careers ruined by scandalous office rumors or inexplicable disasters in their departments, while Bow hounded underlings mercilessly for results and profits. Anyone who might challenge his rise to power faced an almost immediate pre-emptive strike by Bow, anything from planted evidence of an embezzlement scheme to domestic strife sparked by whispers of an office affair.

The few who hung onto their jobs counted themselves lucky and either quickly found work elsewhere or stayed far away from Bow. Some of his less fortunate victims ended up in prison or penniless, and more than one committed suicide in despair.

In just a few years, he became executive vice president of Eclipse Industries, in a position to take over as CEO from the ailing, aging C. Fullerton Hughes.

When Stephen Bow walked into the lush corporate offices of the globe-spanning conglomerate each day, people tripped over themselves to get out of his path. And that was even before he became a superhuman.

In 1996, Bow visited an Eclipse Industries laboratory for the first demonstration of a prototype solar-powered laser, designed to be launched into orbit to kill enemy spy satellites. Something went wrong, though, and the buildup of solar energy in the device caused a small explosion in the lab.

After being treated by paramedics for a few minor cuts, Bow cut the project’s funding and fired everyone involved.

But a few days later, he discovered that the accident had somehow given him the power to control heat and light. Bow now had the power of the mighty sun itself!

Allies & Enemies

Taking his first vacation in several years, Bow went to a remote area of the Sierras and learned to conceal his newfound powers. After returning to work, he continued to secretly explore and hone his powers while deciding how best to use them in his ambitious schemes. When he deemed himself ready, Bow took the name Photon and prepared to test himself against the self-styled heroes who claimed to protect San Angelo.

In his first public appearance, Photon attempted to free Amok during a court appearance at the San Angelo County Courthouse, but was foiled by the Justice Foundation. He has sworn revenge on the heroes for interfering with his plans. Although his first foray failed, Photon still hopes to assemble a team of the mightiest superhuman criminals in San Angelo as the initial step in his quest for ultimate power.

Quote: *"You dare to interfere with me? Then see just what my power can do to you, little man."*

Personality: Photon is obsessed by power, and the acquisition of power. Only the strong survive, and Photon intends to be the strongest of all.

Since a good deal of his influence flows from his position at Eclipse Industries, Photon rigorously protects his secret identity. Despite the temptation to use his powers to further his corporate ambitions, Photon makes every effort to keep his two identities separate.

He doesn't take defeat lightly, and Photon may well seek vengeance on those who interfere with his plans. Any serious setback, such as his arrest or the revelation of his true identity, will earn heroes Photon's undying enmity.

His dependence on light has given Photon a slight fear of the dark, although he can tolerate darkness for short periods of time.

Powers/Tactics: Photon's powers are based on the sun itself. He has total mastery of heat and light, with numerous attacks based on these effects. Photon can also absorb heat- or light-based energy attacks and generate powerful force fields. In addition, he can transform his body into sunlight, gaining the power to pass through transparent objects such as windows.

His powers recharge only in light. Full daylight restores his END reserve at the normal rate, while lesser degrees of light reduce its REC. The total absence of any light, even artificial lighting or moonlight, prevents his powers from recharging at all and can even kill Photon in time.

Aside from his superhuman abilities, as Stephen Bow he commands the resources of a vast high-tech corporation. Numerous business and political contacts provide him considerable behind-the-scenes influence, which Bow can use to thwart enemies or rivals even without using his superpowers.

Despite his formidable array of powers, Photon realizes that he can still be defeated by a well-coordinated hero team. He intends to found a team of his own, recruiting the most powerful, most dangerous and most feared supers in the world to counter the might of various hero teams that might interfere with his plans.

Appearance: Photon wears a brilliant yellow-white costume with black trim resembling crackling energy. He has a full-face mask.

Campaign Use: Photon is a classic four-color arch-villain. He simply intends to be the most powerful, most respected and most feared superhuman in the world. Along the way, Photon seeks to crush all those who have thwarted him.

Over time, as the PCs foil his schemes again and again, Photon will probably become obsessed with their destruction and will gear most of his efforts toward securing their doom. If Photon's Secret ID is revealed, he will most certainly seek revenge on those responsible.

Initially, however, most adventures involving Photon will likely relate to his efforts to form the mightiest supervillain team around. Along with the obvious, such as trying to break a potential recruit out of jail, Photon's efforts can result in more complicated adventure seeds.

For example, perhaps the villain Fireball offers to join Photon on the condition that the arch-villain help him exact revenge on a past foe. Or Photon could kidnap a top scientist in an effort to augment the power of a weaker potential recruit.

GMs should assemble Photon's villain team gradually over numerous adventures. As the PCs encounter villains, take note of the ones that fare best or gain the respect of the players. A few adventures later, let slip a hint they've been recruited by Photon. In this way, the PCs will eventually confront a truly menacing team comprised of their most dangerous foes. Along with the suspense engendered by the gradual buildup of the team, creating a force of villains known to the PCs through personal experience will result in stronger stories than presenting a pre-generated villain team whose members the PCs have never met.

Photon: PL 15; Init +5 (+5 Dex); Defense 15 (+5 Dex); Spd 30 ft.; Atk +12 melee (+3S, punch), +14 ranged (+12S/L, energy blast); SV Dmg +5, Fort +5, REF +5, Will +3; Str 16, Dex 20, Con 20, INT 15, Wis 16, Cha 20.

Skills: Concentration +6, Diplomacy +10, Drive +6, Forgery +5, Gather Information +9, Hide +9, Innuendo +9, Knowledge (bureaucracy) +7, Knowledge (corporate world) +6, Knowledge (Eclipse Industries) +7, Knowledge (economics) +6, Knowledge (local underworld) +5, Knowledge (politics) +5, Knowledge (skiing) +5, Knowledge (tactics) +6, Language (Japanese; native is English), Medicine +4, Move Silently +7, Professional (corporate executive) +9, Ride +6, Spot +6, Taunt +9.

Weaknesses: *Susceptible:* total darkness.

Feats: Connected (Eclipse Industries and subsidiaries, other local corporations, city council and county board of supervisors), Darkvision (ultraviolet), Infamy, Penetrating Attack (energy blast), Wealth +2.

Powers: Absorption (to Healing) +6 [Source: Mutation; Flaws: One Energy Type (heat); Cost: 6 pp], Alternate Form (light) +3 [Immunity to heat, pressure and suffocation; Source: Mutation; Extras: Flight (free Extra); Cost: 15 pp], Energy Blast (light) +12 [Source: Mutation, Power Stunts: Dual Damage, Penetrating Attack (from feat); Extras: Explosive Blast; Flaws: Limited—does no knockback; Cost: 26 pp], Energy Control (light) +10 [50 ft radius; Source: Mutation; Power Stunts: Force Field +10; Cost: 20 pp], Flight +12 [Spd 60 ft; Source: Mutation, Power Stunts: Super Flight; Cost: 26 pp], Obscure (blinding light) +6 [30 ft radius; Source: Mutation; Cost: 12 pp].

Equipment: As Photon— costume; As Stephen Bow—nice suit, briefcase, pager, corporate car w/chauffeur.

Photon

STR 6, REF 10, HLT 10, PRE 10, INT 7, WIL 7

DEF 20, INI 9, MOV 18, TGH 12, LIF 44

Disadvantages: Enemy (hunted by Justice Foundation, group, as powerful) [-5], Enemy (hunted by police, group, less powerful) [-2], Enemy (hunted by Siren, as powerful) [-5], Infamous (Arch-criminal, nationally known) [-10], Physical Disad (takes damage in total darkness, 2d6 Sp/S per minute) [-5], Physical Disad (takes 1 1/2x damage from darkness attacks) [-2], Psych Disad (fears darkness) [-5], Psych Disad (power-hungry) [-5], Psych Disad (professional rivalry with Pepper Coyle) [-2], Psych Disad (ruthless) [-5], Secret (Stephen Bow, real ID) [-10]

Advantages: Ally (Eclipse Industries and subsidiaries, international corp.) [5], Ally (Other San Angelo corporations, San Angelo City Council, County Board of Supervisors, all at Conv. level) [6], Attributes (+5 TGH) [25], Membership: Eclipse Industries (MR 7/Exec. Vice President, Minor) [14], Night Vision (ultraviolet vision) [5], Perk (passport) [2], Wealthy (well-off) [2]

Skills: Accounting +2, Area Knowledge (Pacific Rim) +3, Area Knowledge (San Angelo) +6, Area Knowledge (state) +3, Awareness +3, Bureaucracy +6, Business +6, Computers (use) +4, Concentration +3, Conversation +6, Deduction +5, Driving +2, Economics +3, Firearms +2, Forgery +2, Intrigue +6, Intuition +3, Knowledge (corporate world) +4, Knowledge (Eclipse Industries) +6, Knowledge (San Angelo underworld) +3, Language (Japanese; native is English) +3, Melee Weapons +4, Operate Electronics +2, Persuasion +6 (Bribery +2), Politics +2, Professional (corporate executive) +6, Riding +4, Society +4 (high society +2, streetwise +2), Sport (skiing) +4, Stealth +6, Strategy +2, Swimming +2, Tactics +5, Trading +6, Use Powers +6, Writing +2.

Powers: Heat and Light Attacks (can use the following powers one at a time and once per turn)–*Energy Blast*: 12d6 P/S (does no knockback); *Energy Blast*: 8d6 P/S (armor piercing/AV halved, does no knockback); *Explosive Blast*: 12d6 B/S, explosive (user suffers 1d6 Sp/S); *Laser Attack*: 15d6 P/I; *Flash*: 2 turns (affects all in 10m radius);

Heat and Light Manipulation (powers can be used separately or simultaneously)–*Flight*: MOV 40; *Force Field*: AV 15 (AV 20 vs energy); *Desolidification* (translucent objects only, can't pass through darkness powers); *Create Light*: Illuminate 16m radius; *Raise Temperature*: Can increase ambient temperature to 120 degrees faren. in 16m radius.

Equipment: As *Photon*—costume; As *Stephen Bow*—nice suit, briefcase, pager, corporate car w/chauffeur.

SIREN**Christina Spiros**

Christina and Maria Spiros were so happy to both find jobs at Allied Chemicals in West San Angelo. The two sisters had been almost inseparable since childhood, and when they moved west to San Angelo in 1994 the duo naturally stuck together.

Working at a factory producing stinky, potentially dangerous chemicals wasn't so great, but at least they could be together. And it gave Christina a way to keep an eye on her kid sister. After all, she had promised their parents that she'd look after Maria.



A few months of scrimping and Christina was even able to buy a piano and continue her voice lessons. She had always loved to sing, and her instructor said she had real talent.

In the blink of an eye, everything fell apart.

One day Christina heard the plant's emergency sirens go off. A major spill in Sector G, said the panicked worker rushing past her toward the decontamination gear. But Sector G was where Maria worked.

Christina rushed to help her sister, pushing her way past the emergency response crews and ignoring the noxious fumes emanating from the tanks of toxic chemicals. She found Maria's limp body near her station and dragged her to safety before collapsing herself.

Christina regained consciousness a few days later, but her sister never has. Three years later, Maria still lies unresponsive in a deep coma. As soon as Christina was well enough, she took her kid sister back to the Midwest and put her in a long-term care facility.

The workers injured in the spill filed suit against Allied Chemicals and its parent company, Eclipse Industries. The attorney handling the lawsuit uncovered evidence that executives at the parent company had forced deep cost-cutting measures on the plant.

When Christina discovered that cuts to safety programs, demanded by Eclipse Industries executive vice president Stephen Bow, had a direct role in the accident that injured Maria, she got so angry she screamed.

Windows shattered. Drinking glasses exploded. Light bulbs popped. Mirrors cracked.

Christina looked around her, stunned. Eventually she realized that exposure to the highly dangerous toxics had altered her body chemistry, endowing her with superhuman sonic powers.

Keeping her newfound powers a secret, Christina clandestinely began to explore their reach and plan her revenge. The money-hungry executives at Allied Chemicals and Eclipse Industries who had caused her sister's injuries were going to pay when Siren came back to town. Especially Stephen Bow.

Allies & Enemies

Quote: "You could ask me to keep quiet ... but it won't do any good."

Personality: Siren has become completely obsessed with avenging the wrong done to her sister, partly because of her own subconscious guilt about not living up to her promise to protect Maria.

Since returning to San Angelo, she spends virtually all her time tracking targets and plotting the next step in her revenge. Siren has decided that any thoughts of a normal life will have to wait until she has fulfilled her vow to bring those who hurt Maria to justice.

Her own experiences at the hands of Eclipse Industries have left Siren with a burning hatred of corporate greed, and she sometimes becomes filled with rage when confronted with examples of unethical or dangerous business practices in the name of profit. She tries not to allow these incidents to distract her from her primary goal, however.

Powers/Tactics: Her exposure to toxic chemicals mutated Siren's body, giving her superhuman speed, agility, endurance and resistance to attacks. Her chief powers involve the manipulation of sound, including several attacks, a deafening screech and a charming song. The commands for her song-based mind control must be verbalized.

Siren has a list of Allied Chemicals and Eclipse Industries executives, compiled from a careful examination of company records obtained by her attorney as part of the suit. She intends to kill every one of them, in the name of justice for her sister.

She carefully researches her targets and plans her attacks to avoid placing herself at undue risk or endangering innocent bystanders.

Siren is primarily interested in exacting revenge on those she deems responsible for Maria's injuries, but she also needs money to pay for her sister's long-term care. As a result, she sometimes takes on jobs as a free-lance mercenary, usually as hired muscle in someone else's criminal enterprise.

Appearance: Siren wears a white full-body costume with a large, black stylized "S" design and black gloves. Her black half-mask exposes her short, jet black hair and the smooth, pale skin of her face. Siren is tall, standing 5'10" normally, and a full 6' in costume.

Campaign Use: When corporate executives begin dropping dead around town, it's bound to catch the attention of PC heroes sooner or later. A careful investigation of the ties between the deceased businessmen could reveal their link to the Allied Chemicals accident in 1994, giving the heroes their first clue in unraveling the mystery.

Adventures involving Siren could create some mixed emotions for PCs; they will likely feel obliged to protect some really unlikeable people from a woman with a legitimate grievance against them. The conflict between their heroic ideals, public image and personal feelings about Siren's quest for vengeance is good fodder for some excellent roleplaying.

Siren is not aware of Stephen Bow's dual identity as the arch-villain Photon. Once he figures out the score, Photon will be out to neutralize the threat posed by Siren. One particularly four-color way to resolve the problem would be for Photon to recruit Siren for his team of ultimate super-villains, where he can keep an eye on her. Of course, if Siren ever discovered Photon's real identity...

Siren: PL 10; Init +5 (+5 Dex); Defense 15 (+5 Dex); Spd 30 ft.; Atk +1 melee (+1S, punch), +5 ranged (+10S, energy blast); SV Dmg +6, Fort +4, REF +5, Will +1; Str 13, Dex 20, Con 18, INT 12, Wis 12, Cha 15.

Skills: Bluff +4, Hide +8, Knowledge (Allied Chemical) +6, Knowledge (bureaucratics) +4, Knowledge (corporate world) +4, Knowledge (Eclipse Industries) +6, Knowledge (Midwest US) +4, Move Silently +7, Perform (mimicry) +4, Perform (ventriloquism) +4, Profession (chemical plant worker) +5.

Feats: Dodge, Toughness

Powers: Energy Blast (sonic) +10 [Stunning; *Source:* Mutation, *Extras:* Explosive Blast (+8 only); *Cost:* 28 pp], Flight +10 [*Source:* Mutation; *Cost:* 20 pp], Mind Control (siren's song) +10 [*Source:* Mutation; *Cost:* 20 pp], Obscure (hearing) +5 [*Source:* Mutation; *Cost:* 10 pp].

Equipment: Costume.

Siren

STR 5, REF 10, HLT 8, PRE 6, INT 4, WIL 4
DEF 20,INI 7, MOV 17, TGH 5, LIF 32

Disadvantages: Dependent (Maria Spiros, comatose sister) [-2], Enemy (hunted by Photon) [-5], Enemy (hunted by police) [-5], Infamous (vengeful killer, extreme, local figure) [-5], Psych Disad (enraged by corporate greed) [-2], Psych Disad (meticulous) [-2], Psych Disad (obsessed with vengeance) [-10], Secret (Christina Spiros, real ID) [-10]

Advantages: None

Skills: Area Knowledge (Midwest US) +3, Area Knowledge (San Angelo) +3, Bureaucracy +1, Computers (use) +2, Dancing +3, Driving +2, Knowledge (corporate world) +1, Knowledge (Allied Chemical) +3, Knowledge (Eclipse Industries) +3, Mimicry +3, Professional (chemical plant worker) +3, Research +1, Stealth +6, Surveillance +2, Ventriloquist +3.

Powers: **Sonic Attacks** (the following powers can be used one at a time)—*Sonic Beam:* 10d6 B/S; *Sonic Explosion:* 8d6 B/S, explosive (can't be used at range, user immune to damage, each time power is used roll 3d6; on 10+ the power cannot be used again until the next session); *Null Sense:* hearing, 3 turns; *Sonic Obedience:* +12 mind control (verbal commands in song WIL + Mind Control roll total must meet or exceed subject's WIL + Concentration roll to control subject); *Sonic Obedience:* +6 mind control (verbal commands, affects all in 8m radius, WIL + Mind Control roll total must meet or exceed subject's WIL + Concentration roll to control subject); *Flight:* MOV 24.

Equipment: Costume.

ORIGINS OF SAN ANGELO

When Mark Arsenault started Gold Rush Games and received a license from Hero Games to publish *Champions* adventures, he used San Angelo as the setting for his first book—*Heroic Adventures, Vol. I*. Then a funny thing happened. Gamers who bought the adventure anthology began asking Mark for more information about San Angelo.

When Patrick Sweeney stumbled across the Gold Rush Games forum online, he discovered a lot of messages from people suggesting a *Champions* book about San Angelo. Although he had never heard of San Angelo and had never written a roleplaying book, Patrick had been interested in breaking into the game-publishing world for a long time. So he sent Mark an e-mail about the prospective San Angelo project.

After reviewing a formal proposal and meeting for lunch, Mark assigned the book to Patrick. He also organized an on-line roundtable of experienced authors to provide suggestions, advice and feedback on the ongoing project.

Nine months, two missed deadlines, one computer crash and a ton of e-mail later, *San Angelo: City of Heroes* was finished.

AUTHOR'S AFTERWORD

Now things get interesting. I've always believed that no matter how much preparation a GM does, a game world isn't complete until players get involved. They invent characters the GM never foresaw, discover connections he never realized and take the campaign in directions he never imagined. The world comes alive.

I think this concept holds true for authors of role-playing games as well. One person, no matter how inventive, can never hope to match the creative output of the hundreds of gamers who will use his adventure, campaign or game.

I'm very proud of *San Angelo: City of Heroes*. But right now it's all still conjecture—just words on a page. It's up to you to make it real; to bring San Angelo to life. And it doesn't bother me that your version of San Angelo will differ from mine, or from that of gamers in the next town over. I have to admit a sneaking admiration for the old "infinite Earths" of DC Comics; sure, it was terrible for continuity, but it was a lot of fun to see alternate versions of my favorite heroes and villains, not to mention alternate histories, places and things.

I can't wait to see all the different ways that people put *San Angelo: City of Heroes* to use; all the infinite San Angelos out there waiting to be born.

Up until now, this has been my book. My world.

Now it's yours.

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* Of particular influence on this book.

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