

The AVATAR Gazette

May

2009

While The Avatar Gazette is brought to you with the help of many people, from Immortals, Angels, and players, the official Staff is listed below. Feel free to contact any of us with questions, feedback and suggestions! You can also write us at Gazinput@outland.org. We'd love to hear from you!

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A Word From The Publisher

By Cerdwyn

The Avatar Gazette has gone through several incarnations. From it's start back on Farside in 1994 where it had no header and was edited by AsaMaro and Marat to Dizzy's longstanding run as editor; then with Kenji as editor and Darii taking over the reigns as publisher to Ayanna as editor. I became editor and publisher in 2007, Avatar's 12th year of being. Through all this, The Gazette has been an integral part of the life of Avatar.

Once before we talked about moving to the website, but at that time it was not feasible. Now however, it is. I want to announce the person that will make this all possible, the Gazette's newest Editor-in-Chief - Anessa. I also want to welcome all of you to this our newest Gazette - found in both an ascii mailer and a website edition.

I want to be the first to offer 3 cheers for this new endeavor and to welcome all the new contributing staff and columnists.

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AVATAR Focus

By Anessa

The intent of this column is to focus on a single piece of the game we call AVATAR. The subject matter can range from a specific race or class, to an area, or possibly even a player.

One of the first things I told those that volunteered to help with this project, is that there are no rules. Well, ok, there are the usual rules of language, etc., but other than that, everyone is free to come up with ideas, and creative materials. And that includes all you players as well!

My initial thought was to pass on some profound words of wisdom in this first article, but who am I to do that?! So I decided that this first AVATAR Focus column should highlight the Gazette itself. While we have several folks that have helped with this, this really belongs to all of you, the players of AVATAR. And we do want to hear from you!

We have several fun treats in store for you, from the Flashback! column which will feature a Gazette article from the past, to a column written by members of our very own Angel team, aptly entitled "Wings". We also plan to include entertaining puzzles, links to cool and interesting websites, and, well, whatever YOU tell us you'd like to see! Oh yes, I must also warn.. errr.. tell you that you will also find Thoughts From The Dark Side, a blog by our favorite evil Quest Master, Kariya. And yes, the ever popular Recipe Corner returns!

Now of course we couldn't pass up the opportunity to impart some of our vast game knowledge (or vast help file knowledge), so we put together a section of tips, tricks and, well, just some stuff that we thought folks both new and old may find useful. We have our "Ask An Angel" column with a host of Angels just waiting to answer your questions, the "Command of the Month", and room for other tips and tricks we hope you will submit to help out your fellow players!

Also, I must be sure to tell you that you may not see each type of article in every Gazette. While those that volunteered to help with the Gazette may have lots of ideas, this is your newsletter. For example, if we don't have a question for the Angels to answer, there may not be an "Ask An Angel" column in an issue.

To wrap up, I'd like to offer you a challenge or two. As The Gazette will now be published as a newsletter on www.outland.org as well as in the original text based format to the Gazette mailer (see HELP GAZETTE in game), I need a bit of help dressing it up! If you enjoy creating cute little clipart graphics and would like to create something for one of our Gazette articles, send it to me! Please, only send original works to gazinput@outland.org. I'm just looking for small pictures at present. We do plan to host a graphics contest in the near future, where you can really get your creative juices going.

Again, we want to hear from you! This is indeed YOUR Gazette. Send us your favorite recipe, a fun puzzle to challenge your fellow players, tips you'd like to share, or your favorite website link. And don't forget to "Ask An Angel" that burning question you've always wanted to know the answer to.

One last thing, regarding the ASCII format publication. Many have asked why we continue to publish the text based version of The Gazette. After talking this over with some of our sight impaired players, I felt it was important to continue in a format that was easier for them to read. To that end, all non-essential characters will be stripped from the text based version.

Enjoy! - Anessa

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AVATAR Spotlight A conversation with Bedeiah

By Unruhe

The Gazette would like to thank Bedeiah for allowing us to visit with him for a bit, and learn a little more about how the Angel Team is selected.

Bedeiah's Chamber

[Exits: east south]

As you look around the room you see a bunch of portraits on the walls, as you look at them you notice they are the areas of Avatar. The biggest one in the center of the wall is of Nimbus, This is where Bedeiah must watch over the Angels and the Realm. As you take one final look at the portraits, you come to realize they are moving. On the back of the door are a pair of used wings.

(Saintly) Bedeiah is standing here.

(Saintly) (White Aura) Bedeiah's Dog Logo lays on a mat in the corner.

Bedeiah says 'Hello.'

You tip your hat. How gallant.

You say "Lo there. I'll get right to the introductions... ;)"

Bedeiah nods his head solemnly.

You say 'Name, rank, serial nu...er... So let me ask your full name, unless you just go by Bedeiah, all mysterious-like? ;)'

Bedeiah says 'Bedeiah, God, Host Immortal assistant.'

You say 'I wondered what the inspiration for your name was. I call you Bede cause it reminds me of The Venerable Bede. ;)'

Bedeiah says 'Bedeiah is actually means Servant of the Gods.'

You go ooOOooOOooOOoo.

You say 'Excellent.'

Bedeiah says 'Yeah sort of fits...'

You grin.

You ask 'So that's a pretty impressive title you have there. Since we're focusing on all things angelic, can you give me a little run-down of what exactly Host Immortal Assistant entails?'

Bedeiah says 'Well I help Dalthane the Protector run the Host, by helping with interviews and angel activities and issues.'

Bedeiah says 'Biggest subject I take care of is Recruitment.'

You say 'Since that's your forte, what recruiting methods do you use to lure ..er.. entice helpful people into taking that first step?'

Bedeiah says 'Well, we put out notes every once in awhile, asking for people to petition if interested. Other way is if an Angel or Archangel sees a very helpful hero or lord they might suggest them to us.'

You ask 'Does 'help petition' still have all the latest and greatest information on becoming an angel?'

Bedeiah says 'Help Petition does have all the info people need to get started in the petition process. The fastest way to get it going is to email Archangel@outland.org'

You ask 'And once you've found your potential victim... it moves onto the interview process. You mentioned that it's an area you help out with. Are there any pointers you'd like to give to potential angel material to prepare for their interview?'

Bedeiah says 'Well back in the day, when I was first made an angel.. The angel interview mainly was on knowledge of lowmort.'

Bedeiah says 'Things have changed a bit, we still need knowledge but we are looking for knowledge at lowmort and low hero, but mainly a good personality.'

Bedeiah says 'So we want the people to be themselves.'

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AVATAR Spotlight

A conversation with Bedeiah (continued)

You ask 'I remember it was one of the things holding me back years ago, thinking I needed to know the lowmort areas like the back of my hand. I like to help out, but I'm not very...direction oriented, if that makes sense. So it's shifted focus, you could say, onto the desire to help more than just being a living area map. Would that be an accurate assessment?'

Bedeiah says 'Yes, we would like you to know areas, but you can learn that as an angel. knowing where you can find answers is the best thing.'

Bedeiah says 'Angel is now a very big part of PR and we need people to make people feel comfortable enough here to stay and play past the first few levels.'

You say 'And at the risk of cheating, is the Wiki still a good source to turn to for information in a pinch? Or are angels encouraged to think outside the Wiki, so to speak? ;)'

You say 'And I'd have to agree on the PR stage. The more helpful and active the staff is, the more likely it is newcomers will stay for the long haul.'

Bedeiah says 'Anything to help the person succeed, I wouldn't frown on angels using the Wiki and giving the right info.'
You nod solemnly.

You ask 'Now once we have a new Angel to torment, you mentioned angel activities. Is this something you can elaborate on a little bit, to let folks know that we're not all stuffy up here on the cloud?'

Bedeiah says 'Sure, well we require the angels to fly 1/3 of the time they play Avatar.'

Bedeiah says 'But we understand when RL gets in the way of flying, Angels can have fun, and we want them to want to fly.'

You nod solemnly.

You say 'I personally like to collect gory mementos from my CR runs, but I'm not sure if anyone else does the same. All a matter of taste I suppose...'

You say 'Just to skirt on the issue of... well, issues, as you'd mentioned earlier. I thought you might want to touch on some of the issues that angels can lend a hand with (without overstepping any boundaries of course), to make sure Avatar remains a friendly, pleasant environment...'

Bedeiah says 'The Issues we want angels to take part in is, most importantly, helping newbies. When a newbie logs on we want the angels to be active in helping them and explaining the game to them.'

Bedeiah says 'Second one would be knowledge of the mud, for new low heroes and newbies alike.'

You nod solemnly.

Bedeiah says 'Third would be CRs, Thing with CRs is that we ask the angel to help the player walk back to their corpse and explain hints to make CRs easier for the players in the long run.'

You say 'The preferred method, takes longer, but helps the newbie learn the ropes a lot better than being whisked around at the drop of a hat.'

Bedeiah nods his head solemnly.

Bedeiah says 'The more the player does for themselves the more they will learn to do it later on without help.'

You say 'CRs for the most part won't be quite as intimidating to the newcomers, I think, knowing the little tricks like recall set...'

Bedeiah nods his head solemnly.

You ask 'And in closing, is there any other message you'd like to give our readers? Entice the helpful ones into sending their petition, or a tip for the newcomer?'

Bedeiah says 'Being an Angel or not, helpful players are a big part of AVATAR. The community here is so much friendlier and more personable than most other muds.'

Bedeiah says 'I would like the older players to remember how it was when they were new and to look out for the newcomers to the game. To the newcomers, AVATAR is an extensive mud and takes time, but I promise you that if you stick with it, you will find out that AVATAR is a place you can come chat, have fun, hang out for the rest of your life.'

Bedeiah says 'Oh yeah and to Have FUN. This is a game, and should be enjoyable.'

You grin.

You say 'They always come back...'

Bedeiah nods his head solemnly.

You say 'Alrighty, I think that pretty well wraps it up. Thank you for your time...'

Bedeiah nods his head solemnly.

Bedeiah waves happily.

You tip your hat. How gallant.



Poetry Contest Winners

First Place

The Search for Solomon's Treasure

By Dahlia



I sought King Solomon's Treasure, how foolish was I!

The first day I went through a labyrinth and what did I spy
but a scary overseer and a beholder mother's eye

Searching Daido's tomb for more fortune and fame
all I got out of that journey were turquoise manes

I crawled off to Borley's to see what treasures that might bring
But it was so chaotic all I found were random rings

Would I ever find Solomon's treasure, could it get any worse?
I hunted King Ka'plar, his grand serpent hood was cursed!

Sprite cult leaders, mad necromancer in pits, facing a githzerai mage
All I discovered were gloves, belts, and a sprite's ribcage.

Thinking my nose might lead me better, I followed sweet fumes
They took me down a swirling vortex almost to my doom.

Surely a demonic dwarf might hold the key to Solomon's Treasure.
Alas here ends my sad tale. At least I got a mystical stone for good measure.

Second Place

Tips for a new player

By Wiseman

In Avatar, when new you feel a fool
So garner hints and tips from our mudschool
If piled atop each other, by and by
Our helpfiles vast and useful reach the sky
When wand'ring 'bout if you should chance to fall
Your best chance for CR's to use recall
Consider mobs for best chance of success
For if you don't you might well leave a mess
A quaff or three, a scroll or maybe two
For comrades all, your friends and even you
An alt or two it never hurts to make
For spelling up, or diff'rent roles to take
The simplest rule will snuff the shortest fuse-
No matter which the race or class you choose
Don't be a (FOOL), and you will never lose!

Third Place

Untitled

By Setus

The dwarven divide, births this rue:
A holy shrine, split in two
together dine, few brothers do
two halves a heart, beat the same beat
love the first part, and the other, war's feet
mention of peace, is a warable notion
an ant a beast, and a pond an ocean
both hands fists, to abominable consecration
guilty of this, both religious interpretations
no shadows can hide, what sins they commit
or jails too wide, for this civil conflict
every dwarf his duty, and every enemy his crime
from this born is beauty, twists evil sublime
hatred of the others sight, their corners they stay
waring their feudal plight, since 478 fae

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Returning To AVATAR After A Break

By Kenji

In 2003 & 2004, I was an AVATAR junkie. I was single, worked a graveyard schedule and had tons of free time during the day. I honestly played AVATAR somewhere around 20-30 hours a week, much to the dismay of my then-girlfriend. I knew, or at least thought I knew just about every detail of the game.

But in 2005, real life link-killed me. I got a new job, and the training academy took all of my time, and then some. I convinced myself that the leave of absence from AVATAR would be short, only a couple months, and then I would be back to normal. But four months turned into eight months, while I completed my field training, then 12 months while I completed my probation. My wife and I had a baby, which took up even more of my free time.

Before I knew it, that four month leave of absence turned into almost four years! During those four years, I logged in on rare occasion, checked up with friends, and even read a few notes. I would check out the website every once in awhile, but it just wasn't the same.

Recently, my schedule changed a bit, and I realized I had some free time again. With that, I returned back to AVATAR, only to find some huge, and I do mean HUGE changes!

When I left, Berserkers were just coming out, Paladins were still in testing, and there were even still a few Sages running around.

Now, we have Bladedancers, Shadowfists, BCIs, Mindbenders and Stormlords. New areas are in, some of the old areas are gone. Legends are actually in place. Old Imms are long retired, new Imms are people that I used to Angel with years ago. Diplomatic Corps, insignia and imps, oh my!

I was overwhelmed with the new changes. But, a dear old friend sat down with me and told me about most of the changes. And I took a few other steps to catch up. And for those of you who are just coming back, I want to share some pointers with you, too.

1. Start with the HELP NEWS files. HELP NEWS-2007 will bring up all the new changes and features introduced in 2007. Go back as far as you have to.
2. Check HELP files. HELPA, HELPB, HELPC. Spend a little time reading through the list of helpfiles that start with the letter A, B, C, etc. Some of them are unchanged for years. You can probably skip HELPAGE. But, HELPABISHAI PASS might be worth reading if you've been gone a year or two.
3. Ask! If there is any one constant in AVATAR, it's the community. And people love to chat about their favorite game. Get into a good conversation on CHAT or HERO.
4. Read the in-game notes. Especially board 7.
5. Check the website! Read through the forums and postings. While the website has only existed in its current incarnation for the last year or so, there is some solid information.
6. Dust off the old characters. And feel free to create a new character, just to see what the lower levels are like again. There have been lots of good changes there, too.

Don't get overwhelmed just because things have changed. Change is good. No, make that, change is GREAT! Our staff has been hard at work bringing new features to the game, and I think you'll enjoy them all. Dig in!

"WINGS"

Observations from the Cloud



Welcome to the first edition of Wings, the column that brings you news fresh from the Cloud, which is, after all, the best vantage point in all of Midgaard. In this column, you'll hear things new and things historical. You'll learn a little more about your friendly neighborhood Angels, and maybe a little more about this friendly place we all call home, er, Avatar.

The Carnival's In Town!

By Glissade

Just last week, Saude was rescuing a hapless newbie (post-mortem rescue, angel style) and a letter fell out of the newbie's pocket. Well, the newbie logged off and we couldn't remember his name. So we're posting it in the Gazette in the hopes that you can help us out.

Now, delivering mail is tiring business. If you were able to help refresh an Angel with a sweet treat, the angel might feel inclined to give you a special thank you for the assistance. *(Not just any old refreshing candy will do. Angels are known to be partial to new candies that they haven't seen before! This offer valid once per character on the honor system for the month of May.)*

Now, on to the letter:

Dear Mom and Dad,

The carnival was in town today and it was great fun. I went on a donkey ride and he galloped around everything (I didn't know donkeys could gallop that fast).

I got my fortune told and she told me I would defeat a powerful enemy. Well that sure got my confidence up so when a man asked me if I wanted to enter a jousting tourney I had to say yes! The first time, the other knight knocked me clean off my horse, but don't worry mom, it was all for fun. I gave it another try and won! They gave me a badge - I can't wait to get home and show you.

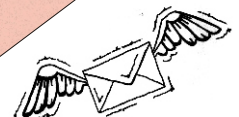
After the jousting I was sure hot and tired, so I spent half of my allowance on drinks and candy. The apples were so sweet I felt instantly refreshed. Some of the drinks made me a little sick to my stomach, but still having something to drink made me feel instantly a little better.

The freak show was really cool, too. I saw a man with throwing knives who could do all kinds of tricks. I sure wouldn't mind getting one of those knives for my birthday, dad... but anyway, you'll be proud of me to hear I didn't just eat, drink and horse (or donkey) around. I met the groundskeeper and he was looking for someone to help clean out the rats. Since I had seen a lot of the carnival on my donkey ride and felt like I knew the tents, I offered to help him. It took me the rest of the day but I finally got the last rat. The groundskeeper said to tell you that you did a fine job raising me!

The carnival was the most fun I've had in a long time. When you come visit, I want to take you back there.

Well I'm off to go adventuring and kill some real goblins. Don't worry, mom, I'll be careful. What's the worst that could happen??

Love, Your son Noobee



Thoughts From The Dark Side

By Kariya

Welcome to the first (of hopefully many) columns by yours truly, Kariya the Dark Fire. When I found out that the Avatar Gazette would once again be reborn, I decided to hop on the band wagon and give you a piece of my mind. Be afraid. Be very afraid.....

So when I sat down to write this piece of prose, I figured I need a catchy title first. But what should it be? I am a sucker for alliteration so 'Kariya's Kolumn' crossed my mind. Or maybe 'Belag's Boy's Blog'? I decided to go with 'Thoughts from the Dark Side' because..well..it sounds smart. It implies I actually have real thoughts, instead of just ramblings (what these things will really be)

Now that the title issue is settled, it's time to properly introduce myself a bit more. I'm Kariya. Have been playing Avatar longer than Avatar exists. If you want to read more about the good old days, go check out some of the older Gazettes. In real life I am Marco, and I live in the Netherlands. You know, that small country in Europe where everything is legal according to some. Which isn't true by the way. Running a red light is against the law here too!

Basically I am not much different on the mud compared to how I am in real life. Well, with the exception of the random kills and flaming sword. And some exaggerated evilness. But I am quite approachable though I might not always appear (too) friendly.. I have both a sick sense and a silly sense of humor.

Ok. The introduction is over. Now to figure out what to write about. Though I will try my best to keep it relevant to the mud, I'll probably end up writing about all sorts of things. The bad (or good) thing is that our editor, Anessa, hasn't told me what my limits are as far as this writing. Can I ramble on and on and on (and on)? Are there taboos and subjects that are off limits? I guess I should try to adhere to our common mudrules as much as possible (read: help language rules, help etiquette)

Obviously it should contain a "The views and opinions stated in this article are personal and do not reflect the official Immortal stance" disclaimer. We don't want people crying out "But Kariya said in his column that it's a good idea to all remort into goblins."

Excellent. Now that we have all of that out of the way, it's time to get ready to write the first real column. I think it will be about the sex life of a socialist clan in a society ravaged wars caused by stagnation and elitism.

Oh wait. That would be off limits? Hrrm...alright. Maybe it's too soon for that. How about "My 'my little pony' collection"? Yeah. I know you'll be dying to read about that in the next issue.

Until then, more blood and souls for the Dark Fire!

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Flashback!



By Kenji

Six years ago, I gurneyed an old part of Avatar, the Avatar Gazette. It was a labor of love, as I put a lot of time into writing the Gazette on a (mostly!) monthly basis, with some help from Darii and several of the staff and players who submitted regular articles. It was tons of fun, and I think most of the players appreciated it. The Gazette provided us an opportunity to read or do something Avatar related during those times you were blocked from getting a Telnet connection, like when I was at work.

But, after a few years, my real life interfered with me writing the Gazette, as well as playing Avatar, sleeping, or anything else that I used to do. But I recently returned to Avatar, and Anessa approached several of us about reviving the Gazette. How could I resist?

One of the semi-regular features we plan on having is to revisit one of the old stories, interviews, or articles that was written years ago, a sort of "snapshot" from the past.

Back in May of 2003, I put together the first issue of the then-new Gazette. There were a couple bits I'd like to revisit from the old days, and show you how things have changed since then. The old edition is in bold Italics.

NEW LORDS

8 Heroes morphed this week. Please congratulate them on their success.

They are in alphabetical order:

Antares, Banerae, BladeTooth, Celea, Elbo, Hallecarrot, Vikarius, and Wolv. Welcome to Lord

Since then, Antares remorted to Berserker, and has risen to hero 999. He still logs in regularly

Banerae rose to lord level 274, but hasn't been seen since November, 2006.

Bladetooth rose to Lord level 47, and logged in on Feb 10, 2009.

Celea remorted to High Elf as an Archer, but hasn't been on since October, 2004.

Elbo rose to lord level 50 as an Ogre Rogue, and last logged in on Feb 10, 2009.

Hallecarrot rose to lord level 103, but hasn't logged on in over a year.

Vikarius only rose to lord level 10, and hasn't been seen in a few months.

Wolv remorted to High Elf, became a Wizard, and still logs in regularly.

I also want to point out that it was in that same edition of the Gazette that we congratulated Calix on joining the Angelic Host. Calix is now an ArchAngel.

New Quest in place! - There is a new ticket quest for a good piece of Hero gear! Look in the park in Midgaard for the Count to start. Thanks go to Jaron for one of the best new quests in the game. It's smooth, not too difficult, and very nicely done!

If no one knows what I'm talking about, it's the Orosca quest. May of 2003 was when the dastardly thief first broke into the Countess Orosca's keep and stole her jewelry. Amazingly, six years later, they still haven't figured out how to keep him out. He still breaks in!

Back in May of 2003, DaWiz was still testing the Lockers on Avatar West. They rolled out a couple months later, and have been tweaked several times since then. And we noted difficulties that Snikt had been having with ComCast, as we had an outage for several days.

Past incarnations of the Gazette were tons of fun. I'm excited about the Gazette coming back to AVATAR, and I hope you are too. Look forward to some great things, including more snapshots from past Gazettes.

Recipe Corner

By Essenceroses and Cleites

We would like to introduce the Recipe Corner, a delectable, delightful, downright delicious section of the Avatar Gazette! Each issue of the Recipe Corner will feature dishes and treats submitted by Avatar players. We want to see everything the cooks and chefs of Avatar have to offer, so please send us your favorite recipes no matter how simple or complicated. For now we want anything and everything you like to make in the kitchen, and we will feature several of these recipes in the next edition of the Recipe Corner. Be on the look out in the future, though, for fun and interesting themes and challenges as well! To submit a recipe either send a personal note (board 2) to Essenceroses and Cleites or an email to gazinput@outland.org with a subject line of 'recipe'. We look forward to hearing from you soon.

To kick things off until we get YOUR recipes, we wanted to share two of our own favorites with you.

Essenceroses' Peanut Butter Cookies

This recipe is great for when children want to help with the cooking.

1 Egg
1 cup Sugar
1 Cup Peanut butter

In a bowl, mix all the ingredient until creamy.
Heat oven to 350 Degrees.

Put the dough on a cookiesheet by rounded doughballs. Take a fork and dip it in sugar, then lightly pressed down on doughballs to put ridges on the cookie.

Put the cookies in the oven and bake for 9 minutes or until lightly brown. Take out of oven and let cool.



And finally, we have a challenge for all the Avatar cooks and chefs out there! Essenceroses was getting ingredients together to make some cookies, but unfortunately she could not find everything she needed. She was able to find some oats, peanut butter, cocoa, and vanilla in her pantry but needs your help collecting the rest of the ingredients. We are looking for a few brave souls to gather the ingredients she does not already have from the recipe, so that she can make her famous No-Bake Cookies!

The first person to find Essenceroses or Cleites online and give them these ingredients will win a special prize as well as everlasting fame! Note that quantity does not matter, only that the ingredients themselves are correct. In the event nobody finds all the ingredients, whoever

Cleites' Favorite Three-Cup Chicken

1/3 cup sesame oil
1/3 cup soy sauce
1/3 cup Chinese rice wine (use dry sherry if you can't find it)
20 thin slices of fresh ginger
20 garlic cloves, smashed
~2 lbs of white or dark chicken meat, cut into bite sized pieces
~3 tbs sugar
~2 cups whole basil leaves (Thai basil is best if you can find it)

1. Heat the sesame oil in a wok or skillet on high heat.
2. Add the garlic and ginger and stir fry for about two minutes
3. Add the chicken and cook until it turns white in color, about five minutes.
4. Pour in the soy sauce, rice wine/sherry, and sugar over the chicken.
5. Stir to combine, bring to a boil, and turn the heat down to low.
6. Cook over low heat until the sauce thickens, probably about half an hour
7. Once sauce is thickened, add the basil and cook for 1-2 minutes on high heat.
8. Serve with steamed rice.

No-Bake Cookies

2 cups sugar
1/2 cup milk
1/4 cup cocoa
1 stick butter
1 teaspoon vanilla
1 cup peanut butter
3 1/2 cups (uncooked) oats

We will post the recipe and cooking instructions in the next issue as well as where all of these ingredients can be found in Avatar.

Ask An Angel

"I'm level 25...Now What?"

By Glissade

It has happened to all of us (longer ago for some than others). You're zooming along humming happily to yourself as you get 150 xp per kobold. But wait, what's this, now suddenly you find yourself grateful to just get 50 or even 25 xp! Here's some things you can do to help your cause:

1. Good weapons are important even for the caster classes (because your mana will run out). The one exception is monks who at level 25 are starting to come into their own with Open Hand and the related skills.

2. Good armor helps a lot, especially if you can enchant it. Take advantage of the fact that you can have multiple characters. Each character adds to your arsenal of abilities to get ahead in the Avatar world. For instance, you can have a buff warrior for going out to get gear. At the same time, play your mage character (equipped by your warrior) until it can get the enchant armor and enchant weapon abilities. Then use your mage to enchant the warrior's gear, so that the warrior can take on tougher mobs and get better gear for the mage.

3. Balancing damage and armor class is important. If you are fighting solo and wearing all tank gear, you may find that it takes too long to kill mobs and you get pounded (unless you are a caster and can kill it before you run out of mana). Balance your need for armor with your need to kill the mob as quickly as possible.

4. Bring quaffs. It's a losing battle if you have to continually flee or die before you can level. Mobs hit much harder now, so you should be prepared with back-up quaffs. You can try to get dewes from the young minotaurs at Paradise Point (100 hp heal each), and you can get holy flasks from the Grand Templar under Mount Durr (sanc quaff). Or if the minotaurs are too big for you, search for treasures and use the proceeds to buy fiery vials from the Apothecary in Midgaard.

5. Group! Sometimes it's hard to find a group at your level depending on the time of day, but you can hang out on 'who group' by typing 'group me' in case someone else shows up. You never know!

Hey it's not all bad...25 is a momentous level. You can now see your armor class as a value (help score). You can now get a sense of spell durations on your affects list (help affect).

In this day and age there are now many ways to get over that 25-30 hump. We've given you a few tips and tricks. They aren't the only way to do it. We challenge you to find your own style, and next time you see a lowmort who's hit the hump, maybe you can share your strategies, too.

Tips and Tricks

Tip: Use a very unique keyword when etching.

The etch command is helpful in more ways than one. First, there is the obvious advantage of having a common keyword for quick gear change aliases. The etch command is also important in cases where quick location of an item(s) is needed. To that end, a unique etch is most helpful. Using a keyword of 'mana' 'tank' or 'hit' does little to help find a lost item when time is of the utmost importance. Owhere or Locate 'mana' can easily bring up 50+ items at any given time, while a Locate on a keyword of 'mymana', for example, will likely bring up just a few.

The AVATAR Gazette

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Command Of The Month

Prepare to be surprised, amazed, nostalgic, or smug, as we review an Avatar command that you may know well or not at all, or even if you knew it, you didn't know it could be used to do THAT. Do you have a personal favorite that you think is the bees knees? Submit it to gazinput@outland.org and if it is featured in a gazette edition you may find yourself paid for your services.

The command of the month for May is: **ABILITIES**

To kick off our inaugural new gazette, we bring you an old yet oft-overlooked command, "abilities." This shy command is often seen lurking around potential new bladedancers and inquisitive melee fighters, but informs healers, casters, and missile-throwers, too.

"Help abilities" will inform you that by typing "abilities" you can review your ability to throw and scattershot projectiles, to wield and balance weapons, to teach others, to lead others, and your ability to surge or augment spells. What you see of course depends on your abilities, so if you haven't tested out this command on alts of different classes and tiers, give it a try. Maybe it will surprise you with a little detail you never knew about one of your alts.

Some favorite uses of "abilities" -- instantly see how heavy a weapon you can wield, or find out how many people you can hold in your group.

"Abilities" doesn't give you any new abilities you didn't already have, but knowing your limits can help you maximize your use of them.

AVATAR Word Search

S	N	I	K	M	E	R	C	K	T	D	M	Z	Y
S	N	I	K	T	S	D	A	L	T	H	A	A	E
S	N	I	K	A	Y	A	N	N	A	D	M	H	V
S	N	I	A	T	S	N	E	K	T	D	M	R	A
S	N	I	R	T	S	N	S	K	T	D	M	I	U
S	N	I	I	P	U	L	S	E	T	D	N	A	D
D	N	N	Y	T	L	N	A	G	T	O	M	Z	Y
A	A	Y	A	T	S	I	R	K	R	D	M	Z	Y
R	N	W	K	S	S	A	N	E	T	D	T	Z	D
I	N	D	I	T	N	O	B	I	T	U	M	Z	I
I	N	R	K	I	B	D	A	L	T	H	A	N	O
S	E	E	O	I	B	N	A	D	R	E	C	K	H
S	N	C	T	T	S	N	A	K	T	D	I	Z	P
S	K	C	U	E	N	D	I	L	L	A	R	Z	I
M	A	L	A	C	L	Y	P	S	E	I	Z	Z	X

Find the Immortal names hidden in the puzzle above

ANESSAAYANNA**CERDWYN**CTIBOR**CUENDILLAR**DAERON**DALTHANE**DARII*
*DAWIZ**DIZZY**ERIS**GRANTOCK**IBN**KARIYA**MALACLYPSE**MERCK**NADRECK**
OBITUM**PLINY**PULSE**RIVIAT**SNIKT**XIPHOID**YEVAUD**ZAHRI**

Puzzle by Ashtaka

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Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
April Birthdays: April 13th: Shadowin, Zahri					1 Jack Parr	2 Dwayne "The Rock" Johnson
3 Sugar Ray Robinson	4 Audrey Hepburn	5 Karl Marx	6 Multi-Day Sigmund Freud	7 Tim Russert	8 Peter Benchley	9 Albert Finney
10 Bono	11 Louis Farrakhan	12 George Carlin	13 Stephen Colbert	14 George Lucas	15 Emmitt Smith	16 Liberace
17-23 ***** Trivia Week - Sponsored by the Quest Team ***** Watch Quest board and Calendar for updates!						
24 Bob Dylan	25 Ralph W. Emmerson	26 John Wayne	27 Wild Bill Hickok	28 Ian Flemming	29 John F. Kennedy	30 Mel Blanc
31 Walt Whitman	Want your birthday listed? Send an in-game note to Birthdays.					

We want YOU!

Send your creative contributions to gazinput@outland.org

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Puzzles!

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