

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](mailto:Gazinput@outland.org). We'd love to hear from you!

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June/July Calendar



## AVATAR Focus

### Making A Difference

By Anessa

I'd been stumped for just what to write in this issue of the Avatar Focus, and was tempted to just leave it out and see if anyone would notice. I've been working for several days, as I have the time, on formatting the .PDF version of The Gazette, and am now putting together the June and July calendars. Since we don't have that many folks on our Avatar Birthday List yet, I like to fill in the empty spaces with the birthdays of famous people. As I was working through all those famous names today, I realized what a wide variety of people have had some sort of impact in our lives. On this month's calendars we have Authors, Nobel Prize Winners, Scientists, Politicians, Activists, Athletes and Actors. Some entertain us, others have healed us, and still others have taught us.

I'm a very strong believer in 'making a difference'. When my nephews were young, and we'd go off on our weekend 'adventures', we often found ourselves picnicking at various parks. Some were remote National Forests, others popular and very busy, and almost all were free for us to use. I taught the boys, early on, that it was our duty to leave these beautiful places better off for us having been there. We'd pick up litter left by others, and make sure it all was thrown carefully into the trash before we left. We'd participate in organized beach clean up days as well.

One year, when my youngest nephew was maybe 6 years old, and we'd walked a couple miles from our starting point, he happened across a very large, heavy piece of a tire. It must have been off a semi truck as it was bigger than he was! He dragged that tire all the way back to the collection site, where he was awarded a t-shirt about 5 sizes too big, for collecting the biggest piece of trash. Twenty years later, he still enjoys telling the story of cleaning up the beach and his prize! We'd also get up very early on July 5<sup>th</sup> and walk the local beach, cleaning up all the trash left from fireworks! I am immensely proud to say that they have both grown up into men that greatly respect our environment, and to this day places they visit are left better off for them having been there.

So, by now you are probably wondering just why I'm writing about this, and how it relates to this game called Avatar. My 'focus' for this article is on you, the staff and players of Avatar. I would challenge each of you to make a difference, both here as you play the game, and also in that place we call Real Life.

As with many folks that find themselves playing online games, some here may not be as open with problems they are having, or have the family support group others of us are lucky to have. Others may not be as self confident or as socially outgoing as they'd like to be. This is, after all, where we come to forget our Real Life problems, isn't it?

So, what can you do? This is after all, just a game, right? Answer a newbie's question, give advice in a polite and friendly way, group that low hero that is struggling to level, or just spend some time talking and getting to know someone new. You may never know just how much a friendly word or smile (even if it can't be seen) can do. Yes, even online, you can leave a place better, for having been there.

***If you have a simple story about how someone in Avatar made a difference in your life, even if it's just a one-liner thank you with a short description of what the person did and how it impacted you, we'd love it print it in next month's Gazette. Send it to [gazinput@outland.org](mailto:gazinput@outland.org).***

## AVATAR Parables and Fables -Player Submissions-

In our travels across the realm looking for new material, the Gazette Team has heard countless parables and fables from the inhabitants of our world. These tales are sometimes touching, often horrifying, but each and every one of them teaches us a little something about our world and imparts a lesson for those who are wise enough to see it. What we'd like you to do, dear reader, is to jot down any parables and fables you have been told in your travels across Midgardia (or beyond, you mysterious lords). We will publish the tales in the August issue of the AVATAR Gazette so that everyone can share in them.

If you want to submit a tale, send it to [gazinput@outland.org](mailto:gazinput@outland.org) no later July 21<sup>st</sup>. Your parable/fable can be completely original or adapted from well-known stories to fit in the AVATAR theme. We've decided to include two examples for you to get you started and to give you an idea of the sort of thing we are looking for. Also, rumor has it that the parables and fables submitted for this issue may be 'immortalized' in a special way!

### Vanity and the Elf By Cleites

Many years ago a beautiful elf was traveling through the countryside when she stopped in a particularly peaceful forest. She spent many days dancing and singing among the trees, delighting in the beauty that surrounded her. One day a scruffy kobold passed by carrying a huge pile of potatoes in his weak little arms.

"With all the work and running about you kobolds do, it is no wonder you can't appreciate the beauty of the forest that surrounds you every day of your life," remarked the elf to the kobold.

"The forest might be beautiful to you but it is dangerous to me. I am gathering food for my family for the long winter to come and I suggest that you do the same while there is still time left," replied the kobold.

At this the elf laughed and began to dance again, long into the night. Several months later, as snow fell and the winds howled through the trees, the elf could find no food and began to feel hungry. When she could see starvation looming on the horizon the elf searched out the kobold family and begged food of them. The kobold she had met in the woods said, "We only have enough food for ourselves and none to spare. There is nothing extra to give you and you need to leave now."

With that, the elf wandered back into the forest where she spent the night singing and dancing in the cold. The next morning the kobold she had met earlier found the elf, frozen solid during her life's last dance.

## AVATAR Parables and Fables -Player Submissions- (Continued)

### The Orc and the Centaur by Cleites

One day an orc and a centaur met on the bank of a wide stream. The orc, who could not swim and was in fact quite afraid of water, asked the centaur if he would carry him across the stream on his back. The centaur, knowing the evil reputation of orcs, was at first wary of his potential passenger.

To help assuage his fears, the centaur asked the orc, "How do I know you won't kill me while you are on my back?"

The orc replied honestly enough, "Because if I do, I will fall into the stream and drown."

This answer satisfied the centaur who, being a kind and trusting fellow, was more than willing to help the orc cross the stream if there was no risk to himself.

The pair set out much as a horse and rider would, making quick progress across the stream. Near the midpoint of the passage, the centaur slipped ever so slightly on a slippery stone and the orc struck blindingly fast with his shortsword, opening the centaur's throat with one quick blow. With a shocked look in his eyes, the orc fell with a splash into the stream and began to drown.

As the centaur's consciousness began to fade, he gasped out one word: "Why?"

With his dying breath the orc answered, "It is my nature..."

**And finally, to give you an idea of what to think about for future submissions we have decided to include a calendar of upcoming calls for your work:**

<u>Deadline</u>	<u>Topic</u>
July 21 <sup>st</sup>	AVATAR parables and fables
August 15 <sup>th</sup>	AVATAR-themed ASCII art submissions
September 15 <sup>th</sup>	AVATAR-themed poetry submissions
October 15 <sup>th</sup>	Draw your character! (any medium)



## AVATAR Spotlight

### *A conversation with Zahri*

*The Gazette would like to thank Zahri for letting us visit and get to know her a bit better!*

Zahri's Library

[Exits: up]

Although this room is not as quiet as a true library, there is an air of stillness and quiet contemplation within. Though you might not always realize, there is always someone listening and waiting for you to speak.

If you are not ready to talk yet, take a moment to calm yourself by looking at the various items here: a few bookshelves, an oak table, and a window await your gaze. Hopefully, you will find solace in this little corner of the universe.... just sit down next to me.

(White Aura) Zahri Low Hero xp bonus: board 7, 232 is here.

The Gazette exclaims 'Hi Zahri!'

Zahri says 'yo yo ;)'

The Gazette says 'Thanks for letting me visit with you a bit'

Zahri bows low, with a flourish of her cape.

You smile at her.

The Gazette says 'So, this is going to be very casual, I still have no idea what all I will ask'

Zahri nods her head solemnly.

Zahri grins.

The Gazette asks 'You are one of the more active Immortals, especially when it comes to player involvement, so I thought maybe you'd like to share a bit about yourself?'

The Gazette says 'Maybe some fun things about your rl.. so folks get to know the person behind the sprite'

Zahri says 'Well, I just got my Master's in Library and Information Science, and I currently work the reference desk at an academic library. :)'

The Gazette exclaims 'congratulations!'

Zahri says 'I grew up in a small suburb around Chicago, although I moved to the east coast within the last few years.'

Zahri says 'and I love sports. football, hockey, basketball, baseball.. it's all good.'

Zahri blinks innocently.

The Gazette exclaims 'wow, a big sports fan. I don't see wrestling listed there!'

Zahri asks 'Did you know Monday Night Raw was sold to Donald Trump this week?'

Zahri suddenly tries to act innocent.

The Gazette says 'umm.. no, I did not'



# The AVATAR Gazette

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## AVATAR Spotlight

A conversation with Zahri (continued)

You laugh.

Zahri grins.

The Gazette asks 'So what brought you to AVATAR? And how long ago was that?'

Zahri says 'I found AVATAR after the previous game that I played went pay to play, in February 1998. I was 14 at the time. Let me just say it is quite useful to have a MUD that starts with "A", when looking at the zMUD list of MUDs. ;)'

The Gazette exclaims 'I hadn't thought of that!'

The Gazette asks 'Do you get a chance to play the game much? And if so, what race/class do you enjoy most?'

Zahri says 'Lately I have been trying to play Lord more, although my centaur cleric is quite close to Hero 999 also. But my favorite race/class will always be sprite mage. Even if it dies a lot at Legend..'

The Gazette exclaims 'Ohh, a sprite at legend! Sounds dangerous!'

Zahri exclaims 'Just a bit dangerous yeah... but it's a lot of fun!'

The Gazette says 'awesome'

The Gazette says 'So you do get to play some. That's nice'

The Gazette asks 'When did you become an Immortal?'

Zahri says 'October 2007...I was running a Lord Quest (under my Lord's name). I was logged into Zahri (who was then my builder staff alt), sitting in a secret room above High King Adrial, overlooking his room. It was then and there that I was asked if I wanted to join the Immortal ranks by Kariya. I said yes, and the rest is history. ;)'

The Gazette asks 'Has being an Immortal been everything you expected?'

Zahri says 'Yes. Though I think it is a ton more work than players realize, that's for sure. But it's also a lot of fun and I really enjoy giving back to AVATAR and I am glad I got the chance. :)'

The Gazette says 'Do you have a specific set of responsibilities? '

Zahri says 'I have a lot of different responsibilities. I am still actively involved in building areas, with some side work in mobprogs. I am also the head of Publicity.'

Zahri says 'As publicity, I think it is awesome that so many players take time out of their day to vote for AVATAR! It is so much fun to see who is leading the race each month (currently it is MapCen). I also like to hear about new websites where we might be able to promote AVATAR.'

Zahri says 'I also do a lot of work with new players, as I can. I have designed some helpfiles for players who use screen readers, and I made two tour guides which can take players to different areas by walking. There's one in Stonehall, first floor, and one northwest of Aelmon.'

Zahri says 'I also unofficially designated a buddieset as a place for new players to get extra assistance, although it is also populated by higher characters. The channel is public and you can sometimes see it in my title. To join it, type "buddieset hesperia" at any time (and feel free to bring friends). Note that it is a public channel, so language and similar rules apply at all times. :)'

The Gazette says 'I'll have to check out that channel, sounds fun'

Zahri says 'Please do! It tends to have a lot of players on it during late afternoons, system time.'

The Gazette asks 'Can you pinpoint a favorite, among all the jobs you've taken on?'



# The AVATAR Gazette

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## AVATAR Spotlight

A conversation with Zahri (continued)

Zahri says 'Building areas, definitely. I have been trying to get back into that. I also want to put some cool mobprogs in all of my areas to add flavor :)'

The Gazette says 'The mprogs really are fun, and your tour guides are really helpful to players. I often take new folks to the one near Sol, and pay for their first tour.'

Zahri says 'Yep! Players love them.'

The Gazette asks 'Is it fair to ask what your least favorite job is?'

Zahri says 'Probably disciplining players, but it must be done to keep the game enjoyable for others, and fair as well.'

The Gazette asks 'If you could give one piece of advice to the players, old and new, what would it be?'

Zahri says 'Group someone you wouldn't normally group (especially with the new low hero xp bonus!). Show kindness, and make someone's day. You'll never know what friends you'll find along the way. :)'

The Gazette exclaims 'wonderful advice!'

Zahri smiles happily.

Zahri spins herself around and around and around...

Zahri collapses onto the floor from exhaustion.

The Gazette says 'And, on that note, I think we can bring this to a close'

You giggle in Zahri's presence.

Zahri exclaims 'Thank you for interviewing me! Vote for AVATAR!!!'

The Gazette exclaims 'Thanks a lot, Zahri.. for letting us get to know you better!'



## Immortal Trivia

By Ashtaka

This month, we decided it may be fun for everyone to learn a bit more about the Immortal staff. We asked the Immortals for a few fun facts that players may not know about them, and the responses sparked some interesting conversation! Scattered throughout this issue of The Gazette you will find fun tidbits about those that help run Avatar. Now, for the catch! We aren't telling you which Immortal belongs to which of the facts! We will publish the answers in the next issue of The Gazette.

Which Immortal was married in a Scottish Castle located in the US?

Which Immortal owns a balinese cat?

Which Immortal lived with the brother of a fellow Immortal?

Which Immortal has 2 lizards named after Iliad characters?

Which Immortal is making money selling seashells to tourists?

Fun Facts!

## "WINGS" - Observations from the Cloud

### Angels: Beyond Avatar

By Glissade



Angel, a fusion of Old English "engel" and Old French "angele," both derived from the Latin "angelus" and from the Greek "angelos" meaning messenger. Here is a little bit of history about angels in other realms beyond Midgaard's walls. The information comes from various internet sources, so make what you will of it.

In the Hebrew Bible, the Malach are Messenger Angels. There are also other creatures who serve God, including Irinim (Watchers/High Angels), Cherubim (Mighty Ones), Sarim (Princes), Seraphim (Fiery Ones), Chayyot (Holy Creatures), and Ofanim (Wheels).

A seraph (or seraphim if there are more than one) is one of a class of celestial beings mentioned once in the Hebrew Bible. Later Jewish imagery perceived them as having human form, and in that way they passed into the ranks of Christian angels. In the Christian angelic hierarchy, seraphim represent the highest order, or angelic choir, of angels.

A cherub (or cherubs or cherubim if there are more than one) is a form of angel mentioned several times in the Bible, also sometimes considered the second choir. In modern English "cherub" is usually used to describe "putti," toddler angels in art. I'm not sure how any of our newest angels on Avatar would feel if you called them a putti, though! The biblical prophet Ezekiel describes the cherubim as each having four faces: a lion, an ox, an eagle, and a man; the stature and hands of a man; the feet of a calf; and four wings. Two wings extend upward sustaining the throne of God; while the other two stretch downward and cover the cherubim. Other times they have been described as having baby heads atop a bird's body.

Angelic creatures exist in other beliefs as well. Buddhists have devas, or celestial beings. Hindu minor gods, or devas, referred to as the "shining ones," inhabit the higher astral plane of the divine world. And Asuras are Hinduism's fallen angels, the evil spirits or demons inhabiting the lower astral plane. In Norse mythology there are Valkyries, dark angels of death soaring over battlefields like birds of prey and taking heroes away to Valhalla in the name of Odin. In later Norse mythology, the Valkyries were Odin's Shield-Maidens, virgins with golden hair and snowy arms who would also soar over battlefields. Celtic mythology had Faeries seen as the helpers of mankind.

What about archangels? That might be a tale for another time.

WHICH IMMORTAL PLAYED RUGBY AT TWICKENHAM?

Which Immortal was asked to guard the President of the United States?

**Fun  
Facts!**

Which Immortal plays with trains all day and gets paid for it?

Which Immortal has hiked and skied Tuckerman Ravine in the past 6 months?

Which Immortal was present at the official opening of the Sydney Opera House?

## Blind Mudding

By Loxias

*Editor's note: The more I got to know Loxias, the more curious I was as to just how he managed to play Avatar even though he couldn't see the text. Nearly overwhelmed by the spam when I'm playing my alts, I found it incredible that someone using a screen reader could manage to play so successfully. Finally, my curiosity got the best of me, and soon I was inundating Loxias with questions. When I asked if he was interested in sharing his experience with everyone by writing an article for the Gazette, he quickly agreed. Thanks, Loxias!*

Even though Avatar has help files and features devoted to visually impaired players, I'm still commonly asked how I am able to manage playing. Even on muds I've played in the past, where the blind population was much higher and everybody knew about it, the sighted mudders were still boggled as to how I could keep up. I can tell you right from the start it can be difficult to explain, it's just something I got used to and adapted to from experience, but there are a few general rules and patterns.

First for anyone who might not know and might be wondering how I use the computer in the first place, I use what's called a screen reader. These programs essentially read out loud any text on your computer screen. It generally announces what has been highlighted, but it can be set to read the entire window, or special scripts can make it behave in ways specific to a single program. This brings me to mudding with it: There have been scripts made by people for this program which make some mud clients accessible. Note that the key word here is "some" - most Avatar players who already know of my condition know so because they asked if I was using Zmud, and I don't, because it is one of the clients not supported.

The client I use is called MonkeyTerm. When I was still fairly new to mudding, a fellow blind mudder showed me this client and gave me a set of scripts he himself created. This allowed my screen reader to read each line of text as it appeared, so I could keep current with what was happening. But there's much more than that. As you can imagine, if I just relied on that, I would get terribly backlogged and things would happen faster than the speech could read. The scripts therefore incorporate a number of other features: Speech is stopped when I press the enter key, so each time I enter a command the speech starts again at what's happening right then.

I can also stop the speech at any time with the ctrl key (this is a feature of the screen reader itself). The computer does not announce every letter I type or every key I press like it usually does. This is so that if anything happens while I'm typing, I'll know without having to scroll up, which is very hard to do in times of spam. Speech is sped up for the client, above and beyond my regular speech settings, as I need to know what's happening quickly.

Even with these features it can be tricky to keep up and play in a fast-paced environment. One of the more important things is picking out information I need from information that really isn't relevant. If I'm fighting a mob, for example, things I need to know are who's doing damage, my health, if my spells are casting or failing, the condition of the enemy, stuff like that. Things that aren't really that important are stuff on the infonet channels like Hero and Death, as well as casual conversation on channels.

Another important step is to recognize the patterns of different text lines. I can generally tell what kind of information the line is going to give me by the first couple of words. Thus if I start hearing it say "HERO INFO", I can just hit ctrl to silence it since I know it's just somebody leveling and not directly related to my health. Even if I hear something like "you disintegrate..." I can generally silence it, since I have a good idea of how much damage it's going to do, and the enemy's condition is reported right afterward anyway.

## *Blind Mudding By Loxias (continued)*

However, if the line starts with the name of the mob I'm fighting, it's probably something I need to pay attention to because it's going to tell me if the mob hit me and how hard, if it cast a spell on me, if it tailed me, the like. Even so, in areas I've run several times and I'm comfortable with, I can even skip some of this info, since I know what to expect. Tortugas aren't going to do much to full spells and -1300 AC, and if I randomly start lagging commands in Lake of Tears it's because I've been tailed, etc.

One last useful tool is the use of audio triggers in my client. These are triggered in the client, not the speech program, so even if my speech is a bit behind, if something happens to trigger the audio I'll know. Thus if I set up a sound to play for when I'm below 500 hit points, it'll play as soon as I get to that point regardless of whether or not my speech is still reading from when I had 700. Another useful application of this is for tells and buddychat sends, particularly in the middle of combat. I still can't stop to listen to it because I have to keep myself focused on the fight, but I at least know to scroll up afterwards and know roughly where the message will be.

If you want to know more you're welcome to send me a tell in-game or post a note to me on board 2. There are some things I just can't explain without droning on and on. I'm by no means an excellent mudder either; I still have a lot of areas to improve in, as well as a few things I haven't tried. Leading groups, for example, will likely present a challenge at first, trying to keep up a good pace so groupies don't start complaining that my runs are worth less xp. With all of that said, I do hope I explained everything ok, and I'd like to thank the imms for their continued support and accommodation.

## *Murphy Found in Necropolis*

*By SePadre*

SePadre the shadowfist, Moo the berserker, Daedulus the bodyguard, and Meme the warrior headed to Necropolis to gather gear and experience.

In the beginning things couldn't have gone better, the xp was great and we quickly rid Necropolis of Zahri's ice-blue fires. That was about as far as we got before things started to get crazy.

Our reward for defeating the ice-blue fires was a b11 crown. After that we headed deeper into Necropolis where we encountered Driders, Guardians and... Sorcerers. Meme was quick with cure blind after the group had been flashed. After 2 or 3 bouts of flash a walkin came and killed Meme.

Meme was the only one in the group that could cure blind. Now, sitting deep in Necropolis were a blind Shf, bod, and bzk.

We couldn't gurney Meme due to our blindness so we decided to rest and wait it out. The shf, the tank, however had unrest and could not sleep.

Finally, the flash fell and we prepared to gurney Meme. He was almost done spelling up when another sorcerer walked in and flashed the group again. So we waited... again.

The flash finally fell and we gurnied Meme and moved on with our run, avoiding any more sorcerers.

As spells were about to fall we decided to go get one more crown. We reached the fires and just as the last one was about to die, the shf's racial fly wore off and the group was stuck in a nospell room.

SePadre's racial exhaust expired and the group moved on to claim their prize. Once again, our reward for killing the fires was another b11 crown.

At that point we decided Necropolis was just not the place to be, so we left.

*Editor's note: We'd recommend keeping a set of Griffon Wing Bracers handy! Thanks for the fun story, SePadre!*

## Thoughts From The Dark Side

*By Kariya*

So when I was trying to figure out what to write about for this second edition of the Gazette, I kept getting back to "What does Avatar mean to us?" but the answer really is too complicated.

You see, I really consider Avatar to be "just a game" albeit a game where I've spent 15 years of my life. But no matter how much good and bad I share with my friends on Avatar, in the end it really is a game. Which means that all game-related happenings mean nothing in the real world. Which also means there is nothing that cannot be solved by simply stepping back, taking a break and laugh about it.

Did you just die and lost your gear? It sucks, but life isn't over.  
Are you upset about events or changes..or even simply by the way someone is talking?  
Log off and go do something that will make you feel better.  
Even to the point where if you simply don't like playing anymore, quit for a while.  
There's surely something more important to worry about in your life.

So simply keep in mind that Avatar is a game and don't take it too seriously. That doesn't mean you can just run around on the mud being a jerk because that's what you do when you aren't serious. Try to respect the rules we have and all players you see. You might not like them, or agree with them, but respect them in silence (read: abide the rules, and ignore the players).

And for the record, it's this "It's only a game" theory that makes me not always do the things I was thinking of doing. Are the qps late? It's probably because I wanted a few days without having to worry about IMM duties. Have I not replied to your email? Ooops..that new xbox game or movie got in the way. Was I supposed to do something but it slipped my mind? Sorry..I was trying to have a real life. Just remind me. It might sound like a stupid and naive theory, but it keeps me sane so I'm sticking to it ;)

When life gets really interesting is when I have to deal with someone who is not as laid back as I am. Yeah...Good times...:)

So anyways, I am not going to write about what Avatar means, because....oh wait I just did. This is actually funnier than you realize because I had already thrown out two drafts where I tried to explain my stance, but it got waaay too deep. And now that I had decided to NOT write about it, I wrote it all in one swift blurry minute (or two). See? The moment I didn't take it seriously, it works out.

So..as you might've understood by now, I like this idea where I just write and we'll see where it ends. And let me share some deep dark secret with you. I like feedback. I want to hear it all. Do you enjoy my writings? Do you think I suck? Is there something you want to read about? Let me know. I'll probably forget all about it, or seemingly ignore you for a while (see above) but really, I do care.

You know where to reach me..drop an email to my [outland.org](http://outland.org) address and let me know how you feel about this ;)

Until next time..more blood and souls for the Dark Fire! (And party on, dudes!)

***Kariya***



## Flashback!

By Kenji



One of the things I used to do years ago was "review" the various websites that existed that were devoted to AVATAR. Of course, the list back in 2003 was pretty broad. There were websites devoted to locating players around the world, another one that hosted photos of the players, auction boards, gear websites, directions, and even a lord website that required the old lord password to access its "secrets."

No list of websites back in 2003 would be complete without Aejase, a website run by a player named Khazaad. Aejase was a search engine with just about every item, mob and area listed with relatively detailed statistics. Khazaad was (I believe!) a French player, as much of the code and documentation was in French.

Aejase was more than just a search engine, however. There were message boards, player notes, and other utilities. But the best feature of Aejase was that you could enter specifics you wanted for your character, and Aejase would pump out a list of the best equipment to maximize your statistics. Pretty groovy!

As I read that old review (2003-09-05, if you want to look back), I started wondering why no one else had taken up the Aejase helm. Surely, a large database like Aejase would incur some costs. I remember Khazaad had a link for donations, probably to cover the costs of hosting, providing bandwidth, searching, etc.

But, as any seasoned player will tell you, the nature of AVATAR has changed a bit since then, too. Back in 2003, people were obsessed with statistics. I remember sitting watching while people argued whether their m50 12/12 wield was better than someone else's m49 14/14. To this day, I've never really understood (or cared) about that argument.

Nowadays, while AVATAR is still about running, experience points and leveling, there seems to be less focus on statistics. People are content to equip their characters and go, rather than spend countless hours foddering equipment, just to get a "double-brilled b12 wingding."

The community seems much more about conversation, socializing and having fun. People are much lighter and more enjoyable on channels. Hero chat might as well be called "the locker room," because that is what it reminds me of, the locker room banter at work. (To include the bigger guys shoving little guys into a nearby locker). People are just as likely to be talking about a new movie or the latest video game as they are gear, areas or mobs.

Aejase was a great website, but it also shows how much AVATAR has changed in six years.

ArchAngel Kenji

### Fun Facts!

Which Immortal was a professional Actor for several years?

Which immortal is the parent of a retired immortal's wife?

*Which Immortal won an award in 4th grade for a short story about a dragon that couldn't breathe fire?*

Which Immortal has climbed Mount Fuji?

Which Immortal lived in a dorm overlooking a different chemical factory on each side during High School?

# The AVATAR Gazette

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## Recipe Corner

By Essenceroses and Cleites



With the 4th of July just around the corner, we thought it would be a great idea to ask for your best grill recipes and other delicious summer treats. The response to our request was great and we have a whole slew of recipes to share with you. Hopefully you pick up something here to try out soon, whether for the 4th or not.



### **Cerdwyn's 5 Minute Chocolate Mug Cake**

*For my chocoholic friends, a recipe everyone should know*

The most dangerous cake recipe:  
5 MINUTE CHOCOLATE MUG CAKE

#### **Ingredients:**

- 4 tablespoons flour
- 4 tablespoons sugar
- 2 tablespoons cocoa
- 1 egg
- 3 tablespoons milk
- 3 tablespoons oil
- 3 tablespoons chocolate chips (optional)
- a small splash of vanilla extract
- 1 large coffee mug

Add dry ingredients to mug, and mix well. Add the egg and mix thoroughly. Pour in the milk and oil and mix well. Add the chocolate chips (if using) and vanilla extract, and mix again.

Put your mug in the microwave and cook for 3 minutes at 1000 watts (high). The cake will rise over the top of the mug, but don't be alarmed!

Allow to cool a little, and tip out onto a plate if desired. EAT!  
(this can serve 2 if you want to feel slightly more virtuous).

*And why is this the most dangerous cake recipe in the world? Because now we are all only 5 minutes away from chocolate cake at any time of the day or night! You are going to print this out straight away, aren't you??*

### **Tidnab's Lazy Hamburgers**

*This may very well be the laziest recipe for burgers in history! The ingredients are simple, the preparation almost non-existent, and the results are \*usually\* good.*

#### **Ingredients:**

- 1 pkg of onion soup mix
- 1/2 a head of red cabbage
- 2 lbs of hamburger

Mix the onion soup mix and the hamburger. Coarsely dice the cabbage and add to the hamburger.

I also like a dash or six of jalepeno salt, but not everyone does, so use your best judgment. Grill the burgers and serve with the usual condiments. The cabbage adds a lot of texture, and doesn't seem to alter the flavor significantly. Enjoy!

### **Loxias' Garlic Panini Sandwiches**

#### **Ingredients:**

- 2 slices prepared garlic toast, untoasted
- 2 kinds sliced lunch meat (your choice, my favourites are cajun turkey and roast beef)
- 1-2 slices cheese
- 4-5 slices onion

(Note: amounts vary depending on preference)

1. If you cannot find pre-prepared garlic bread, you can butter and garlic your own bread. Place bread on grill side by side.
2. Arrange lunch meat on one slice of bread. 3 slices of each kind should be fine, but feel free to add more or less as you see fit.
3. Place sliced cheese on top of meat.
4. Place onion on top of cheese.
5. Put the other slice of bread on top to make a sandwich, close lid of grill.
6. Cook for 4-5 minutes or until bread is toasted and cheese is melted, starting with a cold grill.
7. Remove and enjoy.

*Being a sandwich, you can really do whatever you want with it. I've seen people add other things such as roasted red peppers, different kinds of cheese or meat. Great for a hot lunch that doesn't require too much work.*

**\*Editor's note: I don't have a grill but WILL be trying this either in the oven or in a panini press**

# The *AVATAR* Gazette

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## *Anessa's Fruit Pizza*

### **Ingredients:**

1 C Butter  
1 C sugar  
1 Tsp almond flavoring  
1 egg  
Cream above together, then add 1 ¾ C flour and mix thoroughly.

Spray Pizza pan, press dough onto pan and bake at 350 degrees for about 12 minutes.

### **Mix:**

8 oz cream cheese  
1/3 C powdered sugar  
1/2 tsp almond flavoring  
Beat together and spread on cooled crust.

Top with fruit of choice. Mix 1/3 C orange marmalade with 1 tsp water. Spread/drizzle over fruit.

You can decorate this in all sorts of ways. Peeled and sliced Kiwi's are awesome, surrounded by strawberries, grapes, etc. For a Fourth of July theme, use an oblong pan and decorate with blueberries, and rows of strawberries to form an American Flag. Space the fruit out, letting some of the white layer show through. It's yummy and usually a big hit at Fourth of July parties!

And finally, we would like to announce the winner of last month's contest: **Alrin!** Alrin found all of the ingredients Essenceroses needed to make her famous No-Bake Cookies and has been generously rewarded. Now for the recipe...

## *Essenceroses' 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

Mix the sugar and cocoa really well. Add milk and mix well.

Add butter and cook on medium heat. Let the mixture come to a boil and then let it boil for 2 minutes before removing from heat.

Stir in vanilla and mix, add peanut butter...mix well again. Add oats and mix.

Place rounded teaspoons of mixture on wax paper...let cool completely...then eat :)

**Well there you go! We hope you all try out a recipe or two from this month's Recipe Corner, and while you are chomping away we hope you start thinking about what to submit for NEXT month. We are looking for the best comfort food recipes out there, so let us see what you've got by sending your favorites in to [gazinput@outland.org](mailto:gazinput@outland.org) by July 15th. We look forward to it!**

## Ask An Angel

**"When do I see how long my spells will last?"**

**Submitted by Kocho, level 23 Centaur Rogue**

***This Avatarian Life***  
**by Glissade**

As you gain in levels, more and more of the world of Avatar will be revealed. Here are some special milestones that keep lowmort progress interesting. Special thanks to Calanthe who started the newbie guide on the wiki, [http://avatar.melanarchy.info/index.php/Getting\\_Started](http://avatar.melanarchy.info/index.php/Getting_Started), where you can find this information and more.

Level 2: Nchat channel and Title become available; your character saves!

Level 3: Chat channel and Emote available

Level 5: Recall Reset will take you to Sol in Stonehall

Level 10: You can see a numeric value for your alignment on your Score

Level 10: You may freely worship any of the gods available to learn how they affect you

Level 15: You can send socials from afar to another player in your area

Level 15: Recall Reset will take you to Aelmon in Midgaard

Level 15: You see your hitroll and damroll on your Score

Level 19: This is the last level unworshipping is free, starting at 20 it will cost you practices

Level 23: Movement costs start to increase. They will continue to increase as you progress in levels.

Level 25: Herothank becomes available to you

Level 25: If you have practiced Magic Lore you should be able to see the duration of spells cast on you. Without Magic Lore, you will see a general message of how long your spells will last.

Level 25: You see a numeric value for your armor class on Score (lower is better)

Level 35: You can set the room entrance and exit messages

Level 51: Welcome to Hero!

Which Immortal has ever slapped Snikt?

Which Immortal was carded at Red Robin at the Great Lakes UberCon?

Which Immortal had a weekly newspaper column in a large metropolitan(US) newspaper as a sophomore in high school?

Which Immortal has experience fighting with a sword, pike, musket, and cannon?

Which Immortal has lived on both sides (politically speaking) of strictly divided countries?

Which Immortal eradicated Pooh Bear?

**Fun Facts!**

## Tips and Tricks

*By Cleites*

There are countless powerful items scattered across the realm, but unfortunately for the young adventurer many of them require fighting powerful and frightening opponents. That's why the AVATAR Gazette team thought it would be a great idea to share a few of our favorite items that can be safely bought from storekeepers - without risking life and limb

Here are our top five favorites

**Cotton Candy** - A reincarnation of an old favorite, cotton candy gives you a great boost to your moves when you need it most. See Lohlee in the Carnival for this tasty treat, and check out her other sweets while you are there

**Fiery-red vials** - No low level adventurer should be without the healing power that the Alchemist in Midgaard pours into these potions. They might be a bit pricey and a tad heavy, but if you can afford them you should always have a few of these on hand.

**Rowan Wood Branch** - Cheap and long-lasting, the Branch cures painful poisons. Kelsee sells these wonders (along with the disease-curing Light Red Potions), so if you can get to her there is no reason not to buy a few and keep them around for emergencies.

**Purple Potion** - Expensive and heavy (25,000 gold and 50 lbs. a potion!), the purple potion is a rare item in that it grants the regeneration spell. All brutes should buy one from Andromeda in Midgaard and keep it on hand for when they need an extra healing boost.

**Silver Staff** - Are you one of those big, dumb brutes who can't cast spells to save their life... or their groupies'? If so, you may want to talk to Andromeda about buying a Silver Staff. Just learn arcane knowledge and brandish it to cast the area damage spell chain lightning, drawing all those pesky mobs to attack you.

Which Immortal has recently planned how to best accommodate a skull saw in a room already filled with other cut up tools?

Which Immortal has a character named in honor of a class he failed in college?

Which Immortal is the oldest of 8 children?

### Fun Facts!

Which Immortal Spent \$15 Million USD in a single day?

Which Immortal has made and used a dog sled?

## Book Review

### *The Elric of Melnibone series by Michael Moorcock*

*By Kariya*

Have you ever read a book that just turned your world upside down?

I had that when I first read *Elric of Melnibone* by Michael Moorcock. At the time I hadn't read too many fantasy books. Sure, I had read the *Lord of the Rings*, some other Tolkien books and a few other novels left and right. I thought they were fun reads. But when I got a (battered and worn down) copy of *Elric* and opened it I knew this would be different

Before I continue let me give you some background info. Michael Moorcock started writing in the 1960's and wrote several short stories for various magazines which later turned into numerous books

He created the character *Elric* as an answer to/parody on *Conan the Barbarian*. While the latter is a huge muscular barbarian who shuns magic, *Elric* is a magic user, and is the crown prince of a highly developed and cultured, yet decadent empire of inhumans. He is a sickly albino who needs drugs to stay alive. That is until he finds a demonic soul-sucking blade that passes a victim's life force on to him. He loathes having to use this source of energy but he depends on it. He looks down on humans, but is forced to live amongst them, and eventually fights for them against his own race and the Gods. Basically the man is a walking paradox

In the following years Moorcock wrote six books starring *Elric*, and at a later time five more. Interesting detail is that one of the first published stories was actually the END of the saga. People liked the character so much that he decided to go back in time and fill in the missing parts of the story.

As Moorcock wrote more books (not just about *Elric*) he tied everything together and created 'The Eternal Champion'. A being that exists on all worlds of the Multiverse, or simply said, numerous alternate realities. The Champion is destined to fight for whatever grand cause there is to fight for on their world.

*Elric* is one of the aspects of The Champion, although of course he hates the idea that he is simply a pawn on a board. Eventually he agrees to follow the path to his doom, accepting he will never find peace no matter what

So what makes these books stand out from all the other books that are out there?

From the first page you know this is not your ordinary fantasy book. The opening scene describes a ball at the court of Melnibone and the writer goes out of his way to show you how decadent and cruel these people are. Also he makes it clear that *Elric* is not your standard hero, be it Melnibonean or human.

Basically this doesn't stop for the next six books as *Elric* continues his mental and physical struggles. And while some of his actions seem cruel and he often makes the wrong choice, you cannot help but feel sympathy for him.

Add to that the ever expanding world around him (as the Multiverse comes into play) and the destiny of the Eternal Champion and the new questions this brings and you have the ingredients for an epic tale.

The most recent three books, written in this decade, take a whole new direction and manage to tie *Elric* into the history of our own world. As strange as this sounds, it actually works thanks to the complex Multiverse that he has created over the years. And while the older books are straight forward most of the time, these books have a lot of philosophy in them, and are in a league of their own. In a way they tie up the story (or does it start the story? You never know with Moorcock!) and once again left me gasping for air

The character of *Elric* is one of the inspirations for my Kariya character. A creature of evil who finds himself fighting for good & balance. Not to mention the evil sword in his hands>:)

It's no coincidence that on several occasions I have tried to somewhat tie him into the Eternal Champion saga. This is most noticeable in the "Demon Ascension" area I wrote which is as clear a tribute to *Elric* and Michael Moorcock as possible.

If you're interested in reading more about *Elric*, Del Rey publishing is currently reprinting the entire series. Also, maybe your local library or bookstore might have older copies. Enjoy!

## Command Of The Month

### CONFIG +CONDITION

By Glissade

Some days the fighting just clicks and it feels like you could spell up, kill, spell up, kill, lather rinse repeat forever. Unfortunately, your equipment, while generally sturdy, isn't going to last forever without proper maintenance and care. Equipment tends to take a bigger beating when mobs cast attack spells (WARD, REINFORCE, CONSECRATE, and the lord SPIRITLINK are sometimes used to help protect gear).

CONFIG shows you many settings you can use to customize aspects of your character. CONFIG +CONDITION will show you the condition of your gear. You need to have weapon lore practiced to see weapon condition and armor lore to see armor condition (there is no configure for treasure condition). Voila! The condition of your gear will now show up when you look at your inventory or equipment list. CONFIG -CONDITION turns it off if it is too spammy for you.

"Object Quality (98 / 100 hps)" when you identify an item tells you how many hitpoints your item has -- that is, how much damage it can take before it is destroyed forever. HELP CONDITION tells you the stages of deterioration -- from Pristine to Destroyed. Beware, if it gets too shabby the damage might be irreparable. When you see the condition starting to deteriorate, the REPAIR and SMITH command are your friends. With low hp items, smith them early and often.

*Which Immortal slept overnight on the grounds of Nottingham Castle?*

Which Immortal attended college on a bowling scholarship?

Which Immortal won the Lord building Contest in 2007?

WHICH IMMORTAL SOLD THOUSAND DOLLAR MOCCASINS AT RENAISSANCE FAIRS?

**Which Immortal has earned an order of Magellan certificate?**

**Which Immortal was one of two Immortals to live in both hemispheres(N/S) of the world at one point?**

Which Immortal wrote an undergraduate honors thesis on Edgar Allen Poe's works?

WHICH IMMORTAL WAS PAID TO HACK INTO BANKS?

Which Immortal was the only non-hispanic member of a Spanish dance troupe at the age of 6?

**Fun Facts!**

# The AVATAR Gazette

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## Fun Links

By Ashtaka

Periodically the staff of the Gazette will give you a few fun links which you can check out when asleep in the Sanctum. If you have links you'd like to share, email them to [gazinput@outland.org](mailto:gazinput@outland.org).

Ever wanted to know what your attributes and stats would be if you were an AD&D character? This is your chance to find out!

[Http://kevinhaw.com/add\\_quiz.php](http://kevinhaw.com/add_quiz.php)

We've all faced an angry drow in our lives. But maybe we wouldn't be fighting if we could just reach out and talk to them? Now you can thanks to this handy Drow-Common translator.

[Http://www.grey-company.org/Maerdyn/resources/translator/](http://www.grey-company.org/Maerdyn/resources/translator/)

This one is for when you have too much time on your hands. **Warning: Very addictive.**

<http://fantasticcontraption.com/>

## June 2009

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
	1 Marilyn Monroe	2 Shaykes Ponomariov	3 Jefferson Davis	4 Angelina Jolie	5 Bill Moyers	6 AVATAR Multi-Day
7 Karl Urban	8 Frank Lloyd Wright	9 Michael J. Fox	10 Saul Bellow	11 Jacques Cousteau	12 Anne Frank	13 William Butler Yeats
14 Harriet Beecher Stowe	15 Jim Belushi	16 Stan Laurel	17 Joe Piscopo	18 Bedeiah Pumice	19 Moe Howard	20 Errol Flynn
21 Jean-Paul Sartre	22 John Dillinger	23 Edward VIII, King of England	24 Jack Dempsey	25 George Orwell	26 Pearl S. Buck	27 Bob "Captain Kangaroo" Keshan
28 Mel Brooks	29 Slim Pickens	30 DreamShatter				

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Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
			1 Canada Day	2 Vincente Fox	3 George M. Cohan	4 US Independence Day
5 P. T. Barnum	6 AVATAR Multi-Day	7 Ringo Starr	8 Wolfgang Puck	9 Nicola Tesla	10 Ancients	11 John Quinsy Adams
12 Henry David Thoreau	13 Cheech Marin	14 William Hanna	15 Rembrandt Van Rijn	16 Ginger Rogers	17 J. Michael Straczynski	18 Nelson Mandela
19 Lizzie Borden	20 Carlos Santana	21 Ernest Hemingway Parables and fables submissions due	22 Alex Trebek	23 Arthur Treacher	24 Amelia Earhart	25 Maxfield Parrish
26 George Bernard Shaw	27 Triple H	28 Beatrix Potter	29 Benito Mussolini	30 Henry Ford	31 J. K. Rowling	

***We want YOU!***

Send your creative contributions to [gazinput@outland.org](mailto:gazinput@outland.org)

Ask An Angel

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Favorite Recipes \* Stories

\*

Puzzles! \* Tips and Tricks

\*

Favorite websites

\*

Clipart

\*

Ideas for AVATAR Focus and AVATAR Spotlight articles