



MEMBERSHIP BULLETIN

December 31, 2008

DIVISION	COMMANDER	DEPARTMENT	% OF GOAL
I	Francis Yestramski	Massachusetts	99.89
II	Dean R. Ascherman	Minnesota	100.74
III	Al Grimmer	Louisiana	100.07
IV	Robert W. Hill	South Dakota	100.21
V	Gary A. Lucus	Wyoming	99.52

Second Life

Not long ago, the DAV unveiled a major initiative when we launched our islands in the internet-based, third dimensional electronic world known as Second Life. And thanks to many of you there has been a lot of public interest in our service to disabled veterans and their families.

It’s easy for some of us who are unfamiliar with new technology to be a little bit intimidated by the Internet. In a cruel twist of irony, some of the older members who have the least computer experience have the most life experience and knowledge to share with their fellow veterans.

With so much of our lives going digital, it’s important we take our message of substance to prospective members and the public and use appropriate tools to educate and inform our audience about the issues we face.

Becoming accustomed to these tools is not as challenging as it might seem. This is especially true of Second Life. With just a little bit of guidance, more and more of our members could be part-timers fulfilling an important mission to impact the virtual and real world!

THE BASICS

According to Wikipedia, “a virtual world is a computer-based simulated environment intended for its users to inhabit and interact via avatars.”

An Avatar is your representation in Second Life. It can be lifelike or fanciful. It can be customized and changed at any time, and you can get special customized skins that are more realistic, or that give you other forms. You can have fun with your online representation or go very simple and basic.

Virtual worlds are simulated environments where people can network, communicate, play games, and even enter fantasy worlds through multiplayer online role-playing games (MMOG). Second Life isn’t the most far out place in the virtual galaxy. While it is a great place for information exchange on any range of topics, it’s especially useful in terms of providing an

outlet for real-life communication, business, education and social tools. Your Avatar will provide a visual reference of social interactions with others.

You will need access to the internet and an e-mail address. If you need an e-mail address, services like Yahoo! (www.yahoo.com), Hotmail (www.hotmail.com), or your internet service provider will provide an account for free.

Before you get started, know that Second Life has some specific software and hardware requirements. Visit <http://secondlife.com>. If your computer doesn't meet these requirements, you may not be able to participate in Second Life effectively.

1. **Visit the Second Life Homepage:** The first step is to visit <http://secondlife.com> with your browser. Once there, click "JOIN NOW" where you will find an online form to complete.
2. **Choose a Name for Your New Avatar:** You don't need to use your real name -- be creative. Choose a first name of your own creation, and a last name from a drop-down list of choices.
3. **Choose from Some Basic Avatar Options:** New users need to choose a basic setup for their new avatar. There are a number of male and female options on the website to choose from. This doesn't have to be your foremost priority right away, as you will be able to modify and create your own avatar later on.
4. **Complete the Registration Form:** Add the required details to the final registration form (name, password, email address etc) and submit. Once completed, you will receive a confirmation email and steps for the activation process. Now you are ready to go! Be sure to remember or write down the user name you select and your password.
5. **Download and install Second Life:** Users need to download and install the Second Life software onto their computer. (About 30MB for Windows users and 62MB for Mac users). You must have this software installed in order to access Second Life.
6. **Log into Second Life and Start Exploring:** That's it! You're ready to start and you don't have to spend a dime to get involved in Second Life. Launch the Second Life software and login. You will arrive on Orientation Island where you will be able to use the resources there to familiarize yourself with the Second Life interface.
7. **Instant Message Us:** To contact us, you can use the Instant Message tools within Second Life. Simply click on the Search button, and under 'people' search for me, Anne Hotshot or Reanae Burnstein. Press the Instant Message button at the bottom of the Profile to send us direct messages.
8. **Now visit DAV:** Visit us at the DAV Welcome Areas at <http://slurl.com/secondlife/DAV/136/12/29> and DAV Members Only <http://slurl.com/secondlife/DAV6/217/253/30> once you are done with Orientation Island. To enter this location, please Instant Message (IM) Reanae Burnstein or Anne

Hotshot with your Membership Number, Last Name and City. Once verified, you will receive a message in Second Life to join the DAV Members group and access the Members Only area of the islands.

SECOND LIFE PRESENCE GETS RAVE REVIEWS

In a recent report, New World Notes reporter Wagner James Au gave a heartwarming account of his experience with the DAV presence in the virtual world.

In his commentary titled “No Better Friend: Veterans’ Support Group Emerges in SL,” he spoke about talking with DAV facilitators when he noticed an avatar in Marine Corps dress blues.

The avatar was known as “Gwill Brickworks” was on the move. The avatar told him he was a veteran of the Gulf War. The veteran had suffered neurological disorders as a result of combat service. The Marine told the reporter he only wore his uniform when he was on “official business” representing a conglomeration of veterans in one of Second Life’s veterans groups.

According to Au, veterans like “Brickworks” work to make other veterans feel comfortable in the virtual world.

"Second Life has a lot to offer vets," Au quoted Brickworks as saying. "It's a great way for folks with post-traumatic stress disorder to interact on their own terms and have control over their surroundings. It also allows for those of us with disabilities to do things that we may not be able to do in real life."

The controlled environment gives them a chance to find a wide variety of their fellow veterans who care and to communicate in a controlled environment.

"Someone you know will understand where you have been," the veteran told Au. "and what you are going through now, and saying, 'Listen, this is kinda driving me nuts' – nine times out of ten, they know what you mean."

COMBAT ERAS: PEACEKEEPERS IN BOSNIA

On this month in 1996, the first convoy of American soldiers entered Bosnia. Their mission was to serve as peacekeepers and prevent violence between Serbs and Muslims.

People in the area formerly known as Yugoslavia faced a weakened communist system at the end of the cold war which encouraged rising nationalist and separatist ideologies. Political control over different ethnic factions led to declarations of independence.

Eventually, in the midst of civil war and claims of ethnic cleansing, more than 15,000 Americans were sent to the region as part of a peacekeeping force. Many more Americans served there through 1998.

Operation Joint Endeavor, as it was titled, marked the first commitment of forces in NATO history and the first shared mission between the American and Russian militaries since World War II.

The service and sacrifice of all veterans is worthy of our recognition and focus. If you meet a veteran who served at any time between 1996 and 1998, thank them for their

contributions and ask them if we can help them. Many of these young men and women continue to serve, but many more have left the active ranks and are eligible for membership in our organization.

If they are eligible, ask them if they wish to join. You'll never know if someone will become a member if you never ask.

RECRUITERS REMINDED TO OBTAIN ALL REQUIRED INFORMATION

It is critical that we obtain and provide complete information on all applicants we recruit. Full dates of birth, dates of service, and complete information for applications is necessary and critical. Recruiters need to ensure that every piece of information required in the application is provided in full.

Ironically for recruiters, one of the most common gaps in the information provided on applicants is the sponsor code that gives recruiters credit for their prospective members. By ensuring that the Membership Department gets all the required information, you expedite your applicant's membership and ensure you get the credit for your efforts!

MEMBER BENEFIT: APPLE COMPUTERS

Apple products are the hottest thing going these days, and your membership in the DAV entitles you to discounts through the Apple Computer Member Purchase Program. Get 10% off on all Apple products, including the powerful and versatile PowerBook; the super fast Power Mac G5; the latest iBook and iMac; the world-famous iPod; and Apple software.

You save on these award-winning products, and become eligible for special quarterly promotions and free standard shipping on all orders over \$50.

Go to <http://www.apple.com/eppstore/DAV> to browse Apple's online store to see what products are available or dial toll-free: 1-800-MY-APPLE (692-7753).

LESSONS IN LEADERSHIP: THE MORE THINGS CHANGE.....

On June 6, 1944, General George Patton wrote his son a letter. "To be a successful soldier, you must know history. Read it objectively... What you must know is how a man reacts. Weapons change but man who uses them changes not at all. To win battles you do not beat weapons ... you beat the ... man. You must read biography and especially autobiography. If you do, you will find that war is simple."

The general's statement is worth examination, especially as we face challenges with new technologies.

Through many generations, the DAV has found a way to maintain and build upon its legacy. Our greatest success and challenges have come in trying times when one or several generations were reaching out to the latest disabled veterans who had just returned from war.

Many of us had great leaders who, through charisma and heartfelt sincerity, inspired us to become the DAV members who we are today. Many of us also encountered stodgy members who were too stuck in their ways and viewed mentorship as a threat to their leadership.

We learn as much or more from bad leaders as we do from those who quietly do everything right.

Second Life is not truly a drastic departure from anything we've done in the past. It's not a gimmick. The use of electronic mail, instant messaging and other technologies does not change our values or threaten our culture.

We have learned over the years that stagnation is ineffective and threatens our viability. These tools improve our efficiency and give us the opportunity to share our passion for the DAV with younger members and ensure they get the help they need.


ANTHONY L. BASKERVILLE
National Membership Director



MEMBERSHIP STANDINGS

As of 12/31/2008

Present Standing	State	Life Member Population	Life Goal	% of Goal	Goal Variance
Division I - Over 35,000 Members					
1	MASSACHUSETTS	30,803	30,837	99.89%	-34
2	CALIFORNIA	69,426	69,679	99.64%	-253
3	NEW YORK	49,366	49,606	99.52%	-240
4	PENNSYLVANIA	34,010	34,263	99.26%	-253
5	OHIO	32,014	32,301	99.11%	-287
6	MICHIGAN	25,622	25,854	99.10%	-232
7	FLORIDA	56,371	56,919	99.04%	-548
8	VIRGINIA	23,138	23,433	98.74%	-295
9	TEXAS	54,459	55,293	98.49%	-834
10	NORTH CAROLINA	29,514	30,040	98.25%	-526
Division Totals		404,723	408,225	99.14%	-3,502
Division II - 18,000 To 34,999 Members					
1	MINNESOTA	16,590	16,468	100.74%	122
2	COLORADO	16,483	16,461	100.13%	22
3	KENTUCKY	17,705	17,774	99.61%	-69
4	WISCONSIN	15,116	15,183	99.56%	-67
5	NEW JERSEY	18,809	18,904	99.50%	-95
6	MARYLAND	13,377	13,468	99.32%	-91
7	INDIANA	14,538	14,639	99.31%	-101
8	MISSOURI	15,929	16,074	99.10%	-145
9	WASHINGTON	17,670	17,843	99.03%	-173
10	OKLAHOMA	15,627	15,786	98.99%	-159
11	ARIZONA	16,509	16,742	98.61%	-233
12	ILLINOIS	17,213	17,461	98.58%	-248
13	TENNESSEE	14,068	14,299	98.38%	-231
14	SOUTH CAROLINA	12,571	12,823	98.03%	-252
15	ALABAMA	14,593	14,935	97.71%	-342
16	GEORGIA	15,962	16,438	97.10%	-476
Division Totals		252,760	255,298	99.01%	-2,538
Division III - 10,000 To 17,999 Members					
1	LOUISIANA	8,785	8,779	100.07%	6
2	CONNECTICUT	8,199	8,205	99.93%	-6
3	NEW MEXICO	9,824	9,864	99.59%	-40
4	ARKANSAS	11,241	11,387	98.72%	-146
5	WEST VIRGINIA	8,038	8,163	98.47%	-125
6	OREGON	7,926	8,069	98.23%	-143
7	PUERTO RICO	6,833	6,995	97.68%	-162
Division Totals		60,846	61,462	99.00%	-616



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As of 12/31/2008

Present Standing	State	Life Member Population	Life Goal	% of Goal	Goal Variance
Division IV - 5,000 To 9,999 Members					
1	SOUTH DAKOTA	4,360	4,351	100.21%	9
2	RHODE ISLAND	4,748	4,749	99.98%	-1
3	IOWA	6,871	6,885	99.80%	-14
4	HAWAII	4,624	4,638	99.70%	-14
5	UTAH	4,536	4,553	99.63%	-17
6	NEVADA	5,269	5,297	99.47%	-28
7	NEW HAMPSHIRE	5,271	5,300	99.45%	-29
8	MONTANA	3,833	3,864	99.20%	-31
9	MAINE	6,835	6,895	99.13%	-60
10	KANSAS	6,774	6,837	99.08%	-63
11	NEBRASKA	6,078	6,141	98.97%	-63
12	NORTH DAKOTA	4,098	4,143	98.91%	-45
13	MISSISSIPPI	5,948	6,020	98.80%	-72
14	IDAHO	4,418	4,483	98.55%	-65
Division Totals		73,663	74,156	99.34%	-493
Division V - Less than 5,000 Members					
1	WYOMING	1,656	1,664	99.52%	-8
2	D C	1,953	1,972	99.04%	-19
3	DELAWARE	2,163	2,188	98.86%	-25
4	VERMONT	2,426	2,464	98.46%	-38
5	ALASKA	2,394	2,432	98.44%	-38
Division Totals		10,592	10,720	98.81%	-128
National Totals		860,771	867,118	99.27%	-6,347