

The Amazon Basin Community News

January 2007

Hello and welcome to the first ever Amazon Basin Community Newsletter! As you may have noticed, our community of friends playing games has grown enormously over the years! Originally starting with the Diablo 2 guild, the Basin is now comprised of five fully-fledged guilds as well as several non-guild games. Keeping in touch with the goings-on of so many people and guilds can be difficult for anyone who is not a full-time gamer (who could be so lucky!?) and so the Basin Newsletter was created as a way of keeping tabs on our friends and Basin family across the different guilds as well as keeping up-to-date on the latest in our Basin games.

Diablo 2:

Our oldest and largest guild is still going strong after a truly remarkable six and a half year run. The Basin's presence on Battle.net as one of the few places where those looking for fun, cooperative play can find a home has been the key to the guild's continuing success.

Just before the New Year several Basiners who play Ladder games on USWest received an unexpected treat when a Blizzard crackdown on hackers/dupers cleared the Ladder of banned accounts and dead toons, with the result being a surge in Basiner ladder rankings.

For those seeking new Diablo challenges, Brother Laz has released Median 2008, the latest update to his D2 mod. The new version features all new skills, arranged in class-specific skill trees, as well as 10 optional uberbosses and an uberlevel for more advanced players.

The betting pool for how far Heather's hardcore druid, Brother_Francis (loosely based on St. Francis of Assisi), would get came to an end just before the new year with brave Brother_Francis falling to the dreaded lag spike. The winner of the pool is spear of light who guessed Hell Diablo and gets to take home the personalized ethereal demonhide sash prize!

Know any young Quill Rats who want to try out Diablo 2? Well they're in luck, because the D2 guild has just introduced a brand spanking new "Starter Guide to D2," for both the young and young at heart. Check it out for yourself at <http://www.theamazonbasin.com/d2/iqguides/kids.php>

Guildwars:

Since its inception, the Basin's Guildwars guild has been making a name for itself among the many fans of the game as well as in the gaming media. Over the past year ArenaNet has brought two new expansions to the game, first Factions and more recently Nightfall, introducing the Assassin, Ritualist, Paragon, and Dervish character types to the original game. Basiners have been a significant presence on ArenaNet's Top Tester List for the first and second chapters of GW, and it is expected that the yet-to-be-released list for the Nightfall chapter will include some familiar Basin names as well. Basiners are listed in the in-game credits at the end of Nightfall, and their strong beta testing presence has brought very unique rewards to several Basiners who now have NPC's named for them. Ancient 1 has had a named NPC in all three GW chapters and currently has a discussion stub about her on Guild War's Guild Wiki, while brian84 has his own boss. Adventurers would also be wise to avoid the extremely difficult boss "Mage of the Sands," named for our own mageofthesands and found in, where else, but the Nightfall desert.

World of Warcraft

The world's wait for the arrival of Blizzard's first WoW expansion, The Burning Crusade, is over! Even as this newsletter goes to "print," the most hardcore of WoW fans are camped outside their local Fry's, awaiting the stroke of midnight to pick up the new \$39.99 expansion.

But of course who from the Basin is just waiting around for the expansion? The Basin's WoW guild is proud to report that a recent raid on the Molten Core included 32 Basiners and resulted in the defeat of Lucifron and Magmadar. Here the group prepares for their fateful journey into the Core:



In December the Tichondrius and Stormrage crews celebrated the holidays in style with Secret Snata bashes (emphasis on the bashing). Here a fellow Basiner helps phil get into the holiday spirit with a well-aimed snowball, while Grunt Pailhoof shows off his reindeer mount:



On January 6th the Stormrage crew took a nearly full raid into the Molten Core and defeated Lucifron, Magmadar and Gehennas on the first try. This was followed soon after on January 13th by the felling of Onyxia, who went down on the first attempt!

The WoW guild is also pleased to report that JaneLane, Maevis, Stash, and WeeScot have joined the Stormrage team as new guild Officers – congratulations and good luck!

Star Wars: Galaxies:

Sony Online Entertainment is still in the process of revamping the nine professions with a new Expertise system that allows players to choose from an array of specific skills to create much more unique characters. The Bounty Hunter, Jedi, Medic, Smuggler, Spy, Officer, and Commando professions have now been updated to include Expertise, with the results being overall very positive among the fanbase. In particular Medics now have targeted healing skills (hallelujah!) and

have become much more effective in controlling and mitigating combat wounds and both output damage and defensive armor have been greatly increased for Commandos, making them welcome members to any party. As an example of just how far the professions have come, a small party of a Jedi, a Medic, and a Commando (Darc, Mouse, and Erinye respectively) recently emptied the Corellian Corvette in well under the timer limit with no casualties. Darc and Erinye later followed this up by a run through the Death Watch Bunker on Endor that found them quickly on bottom level, but then tragedy struck as Darc's Medic fell to a battle droid, and without the aid of the brave Level 90 healer Erinye's Commando soon followed, ignominiously slain by a mine rat.

In addition to profession changes, SOE has also executed a major revamp of the Imperial and Rebel faction and ranking systems, and system-wide alerts of large scale attacks invite players to join in on either the Imperial or Rebel sides in battles for possession of key galactic holdings, with a new rank point system encouraging active participation in faction battles in order to maintain rank status.

The SW:G gang celebrated the holidays with a special surprise from guild admin Strolan, with the help of SOE: a decoration of the Basin's in-game home on Naboo, the city of Basinia, with a Wookiee Life Tree and other fun tokens of the season!



Next up on the Expertise update are the Traders, and it is hoped by all that changes to the Trader profession will result in a return of the galactic economy boom and a resurgence of interest in the Trading profession.

Hellgate: London

The Basin has not been sitting idly by while eagerly awaiting the release of Hellgate: London from the group previously known as Blizzard North. The Basin's HG:L guild, which last April was awarded Official Fansite status from Flagship Studios, now boasts 446 registered members. TPJ himself is currently ~~swabbing the deck~~ administrating the Basin's newest guild, with the help of Officers Jugulator and Laughing God.

For those interested in checking out the new guild and the game, which is currently in beta testing, you can find early information in the Basin's HGL Wiki:

http://wiki.theamazonbasin.com/index.php/HGL_Main_Page

and in Flagship Studios' very special Amazon Basin Podcast (54MB MP3), in which Ivan sits down with Chris Lambert, Brennan Plunkett, and Pat Harris to answer the 20 questions submitted by Basiners. The Basin's podcast can be found at:

http://www.theamazonbasin.com/hql/basin_hgl_podcast.mp3

Non-Guild Games:

If you haven't visited the Main forums in a while you may be surprised to find an active Basin presence in a number of other games, including Eve, Neverwinter Nights 2, City of Heroes, and Dark Age of Camelot among others.

Hardly in the Dark Ages, DAoC has recently enjoyed a resurgence of interest and there are a number of Basiners once again active in the game. December saw a number of Basiners hitting level 50, including FEF, who became either the last level 50 Mauler of 2006 or the first level 50 Mauler of 2007, depending on your time zone. Other new level 50's were Zing (who with FEF balanced leveling toons with watching the kids!), YugiGiOh, and Glylvyn. Special congratulations also go to Bowa, who finally (how many years was it?) got his first toon to level 50!

New Members:

Hearty Congratulations and Welcome go out to our newest Amazon Basin Members!

Beltine (WoW), Datharaur (D2), Donut (GW), Gravely (WoW), icedragon (WoW), jballzy (WoW), Lev (D2), liafail (D2), phil (WoW), Red-Chaos(H) (D2), Selonimes (WoW), slayer of fools (D2), storm-surfer (D2), thewinout (D2), Tomas (D2), and Wil (GW).

Other News of Note:

Eddietheman Jr. came into the world on December 16, 2006, at 7lbs and 10.7 ounces, and proud father Eddietheman is pleased to report that mom, dad, and baby are all doing well. We are delighted to welcome Eddietheman Jr to the Basin family!

Soon to be the newest member of the Bionic Basin, Zorton is currently preparing for a full knee replacement, scheduled for January 17th. Best wishes go out to Zorton for a speedy recovery and +20 Speed, +20 Agility in the new year!

We're relieved to report that after a long and arduous surgery, with an accompanying clotting scare, Bionic Basiner Rue is now safely back at home with her new shoulder and humerus implants. Even better, with a new 1 GB of RAM for Xmas, she's back in game! Welcome back home, Rue!

Lastly, it is with much sadness that we announce the death of Amazon Basin Member britannic (Ray Haxton). Ray contributed in many ways to the Basin, serving as a D2 channel moderator and forum moderator, but Ray's greatest contribution was being a good friend. He will be missed.

Basin Fundraising

Don't forget! The Basin runs on contributions from its members, and we want to keep our home ad-free in the new year, so if you haven't had a chance to check out the latest in BasinWear, stop by the Basin Store at <http://www.basinwear.com/home.php> and pick out some new goodies for the new year (mousepads anyone?) with the proceeds going toward keeping the lights on! Also, everyone is encouraged to take advantage of the Basin's Amazon.com Associates Program <http://www.theamazonbasin.com/index.php?content=associate> when buying from Amazon.com, since 4% of each purchase you make through out Amazon Associates Program goes back to the Basin.

Newsletter News

Are you interested in being a part of the Amazon Basin Newsletter crew? We're looking for volunteer roving reporters to contribute to future quarterly newsletters (get your own byline!). If you'd like to contribute to the newsletter, please PM Erinye with your interest. We're also always on the lookout for funny chat clips, screenshots, and anecdotes, and personal news that you'd like to share, so if you've got something you think the community at large would enjoy reading about, send it in! (Please note, all submissions should be from publicly-accessible channels or forums!)