

ANNUAL REPORT 2007

Edited by Sela Narian and Dralyn Montsier

STATE OF THE TOWER ADDRESS

Report by Dralyn Montsier, Keeper of the Chronicles

This year had a great impact on the Tower and its members. Robert Jordan, the one we view as Creator, died this year. The Tower mourned with his family and the greater *Wheel of Time* community, and we spent a lot of time remembering and reminiscing about Jordan, his series, and what we have been given as a result of his writings. The administration also saw some upheaval with two new Departments and at least five new Directors. As usual, it was a year of change.

CHANGES AFFECTING OUR MEMBERSHIP

A new rank has been created. Some of our Citizens simply do not have a desire to enter the Tower, which is fine. However, those members are not the same as someone who has been here three weeks. Often those members have been here months, or sometimes years. To recognize that those members are longer-standing members, we have created the rank of Resident Citizen. Citizens who have been here for six months will be given this title and will gain access to the Apartments, a new forum for Resident Citizens and Senior Members. The test for Accepted and Soldiers wishing to become Senior Members will change. Currently the questions are pulled from the series and are more difficult or obscure questions. However, the administration feels that at this point, having a second test based upon the series is redundant, and the membership would be better served by a test based upon our community. Therefore, the test for Senior Membership will be based upon our community's rules and history.

One of the larger service changes the Tower experienced this year was the switch to Google for our email provider. Our previous provider was ineffective and inefficient, and emails were lost as often as they were received. This switch will hopefully provide our members and administrators with a better continuity of service, and it will give us access to some of the Google suite of products, such as Google calendar and Google documents.

CHANGES AFFECTING OUR ADMINISTRATION

In our continuing quest to make the administration as efficient and effective as possible, two new Departments were created this year. The Department of Membership Services became the Department of Community Development, with those aspects of the Department that focus on offline services become the new Department of Real Life Services. The Department of Community Development also gained two sub-areas with managers - Online Services and General Services. The hope is that the managers will allow the Director the time and space to continue to focus on growing our current services and developing new ones without getting bogged down in the minutiae of the different service areas. The other new Department is the Department of Moderators, which will focus on ensuring our moderation of the more public forums, such as General and Mundane, is fair and consistent. Also, the Department of Information Technology has been renamed to simply the Department of Technology.

With the retirement of the Tower Voice, the way Site Announcements is moderated was changed. From now on, only Executives can start new topics, and they will also moderate the forum. Anyone with an account on the forums can post in the forum, but new posts can only be created by Directors, the Keeper, and the Amyrlin.

With the increased numbers of Junior Members, the work load for the Mistress of Novices and the Captain of the Guard has also increased. To lessen their burden and provide our Junior Members with administrators who can focus on them, those two positions are being split. The Mistress of Novices will remain and will administrate the novices, while the Mistress of Accepted will be created and will focus on the Accepted. The Captain of the

Guard will split into the Captain of Recruits and the Captain of Soldiers, and each will watch the male Junior Members of which he is a captain. We feel that this change will be a very beneficial one for our Junior Members.

ADMINISTRATIVE PROJECTS

One of the projects that has been on the radar of the administration for a while is a set of documents that details life at the Tower - what to do if you want to join as a Citizen, what the Hall looks for with regards to raisings, how to get involved in the administration, details about our online and real life events, and everything between. After a couple of years of work, the main set of documents has been released. This will be a huge boon to both long-standing and new members alike, providing one place for comprehensive, accurate information. This will be a project that is on-going, as any changes will need to be reflected. The Library received a complete overhaul in 2007, shifting formats from a custom-coded website that required a lot of manual upkeep to the now ubiquitous Wiki format. This new format will make things easier, both for those entering articles and for those searching our Library. We think this change will be hugely beneficial to the Library and its users.

The Tar Valon Times also received an update, switching from an email mailed out monthly to a website housed on our servers. We are hopeful that this will allow our reporters a broader set of tools to use for articles and will also allow the TVT to reach a wider audience. One new project involves replacing our current flash map of Tar Valon with an avatar-based real-time chat, similar to an MMO. We hope that this will offer a new, more dynamic way for our members to interact with each other.

The administration has decided to offer a scholarship of \$150 to members. There will be one scholarship awarded in the North American summer. Any undergraduate in any country is eligible, and the winner will be chosen by the Hall in a blind-read of their essays.

The administration has decided to institute a system that will make our local events more cohesive. This system is based upon the idea that each region of our world can be divided based upon population centers with an ambassador overseeing. Our hope is that this will allow for more interest in our local events plus more coordination and promotion. See the Section about the Department of Real Life Services for more information.

LOOKING FORWARD

There are several things that will be examined and worked on over the next year. Work on the Who's Who will begin. Annual reviews of Executives and administrators will begin. The Servants of All system will be developed. We shall continue to examine our systems to make sure everything is working efficiently. And, as with the rest of the fan community, we shall remember Robert Jordan and anticipate the conclusion of the series.

DEPARTMENT OF ADMINISTRATION

Report by Dralyn Montsier, Keeper of the Chronicles

Director of Administration: Arisaema Draconis

This past year did not see much activity in the Department of Administration. Eniara Kisharad retired as Treasurer and was replaced by Tinnlin Fundon. Gracienda al'Vonde replaced Jaimes al'Nor as our Financial Advisor. With the new position of Personal Assistant to the Amyrlin Seat, the Executive Assistant position changed to become the Executive Assistant to the Keeper of the Chronicles, and as such that position changed from the Department of Administration to the Executive Branch.

The Department made progress towards incorporating but did not complete that in 2007.

We hope to have that completed in 2008.

Once again, we had difficulties with getting accurate numbers for our Treasury. At this point, we are exploring the idea of hiring an accountant to keep an accurate account. If we manage to get numbers for 2007, we will edit this report.

DEPARTMENT OF MEMBERSHIP

Report by Vivianna L'antreau, Director of Membership

2007 was a wonderful year of growth and assessment in the Department of Membership. We have now seen a full year of Accepted and Soldiers moving through the Guesting system to choose their Community Groups, and it is proving to be an effective tool. When the process was originally devised, the newly raised Soldier/Accepted was required to guest with 2 groups simultaneously for 10 weeks before they were allowed to declare their decision to aspire to one specific group. At the annual Administrative meeting it was decided to adjust this time frame slightly so that now Accepted/Soldiers are able to declare a decision if they so choose after only 6 weeks, which is halfway through their minimum time at that rank. We still find, however, that both men and women are taking the time that each individual finds necessary to make that decision with some choosing to immediately aspire at the 6 week mark, while others spend far longer exploring the different options. The Guesting system has also tightened the bonds in the Community as we raise more individuals who have experienced how different groups interact beyond the group they are eventually raised into. It's been an exciting process!

Another topic of discussion at the Administrative Meeting was how we might more effectively administer the Garrison and Hall of Novices. As of this time last year, we had nearly 130 female Junior Members and almost 80 males. When you think that our largest Ajah/Company leaders had less than 40 members at the same time, it puts the size of the job for the Mistress of Novices and the (then) Captain of the Guard in a bit of perspective! To lighten the load on these administrators, each group of Junior Members (Novices, Recruits, Soldiers and Accepted) were divided up and given their own leader who could focus more on a smaller group of individuals. In the Hall of Novices, then, we have the Mistress of Novices who welcomes women into the Tower and is the administrator for Novices, and the Mistress of Accepted who continues to guide the women once they are raised to Accepted. In the Garrison we likewise have a Captain of Recruits who serves as the administrator for those men who have been raised into the Tower as Recruits, and the Captain of Soldiers who administers those who have been raised to the rank of Soldier. The changes went through in July, with Alena Mysena staying in her position as Mistress of Novices, and Valadilene Aldieb being chosen as the first Mistress of Accepted. For the men, Jaim al'Bearach also remained as the new Captain of Recruits, and Doneavan al'Keavin was chosen to become the first Captain of Soldiers.

2007 also saw the creation of a new title rank for our Citizens. As the years progress, we are finding that there is a population among Citizens who are staying at that rank for a longer period of time without applying for Tower membership. Some of these individuals have been members here for more 3 or 4 years and have chosen to remain in the city. To reflect this, the title of 'Resident Citizen' was created for those Citizens who have been members for 6 months or longer. In addition, they are given access to a forum called the Apartments which only they and Senior Members can see. This is a small acknowledgement and privilege for those who do not have the time or inclination to join the Tower with its greater expectations of activity and participation.

2008 will see the Membership Department evaluating the first year of the new positions within the Hall of Novices and the Garrison, as well as the Resident Citizen group. It will see us striving to be ever more effective leaders for our members, and keeping TarValon.Net a fun, friendly and welcoming Community to participate in!

Graphs located

at: <http://s55.photobucket.com/albums/g140/musickris/Annual%20Report%202007/> pw blues

DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT

Report by Darim Pelegro, Director of Community Development

Several major shifts occurred in this department this year, altering it fundamentally and for the better. First was that our department split in two, leaving the former Department of Membership Services and the new Department of Real Life Services standing, taking with it many of our old duties, including planning events, sending out baby bundles and operating the Servant of All competition. Secondly, to help with the still high volume of services we offered, the General Services and Online Services Managers were instated to assist the Director in the execution of their duties for the benefit of members.

Perhaps the most important change has been our transformation from a service-based institution to a community-based one, changing from the Department of Membership Services into the Department of Community Development. No longer were we a catch-all for a lot of the services our site provided to the members that simply didn't fit anywhere, but now we have a collective goal in the execution of those responsibilities: to better the community, bringing members of all ranks and affiliations together in new, interesting and meaningful ways. I cannot express how important this change has been to the activities, appointments and discussions regarding our department and the community.

Our staff is of one mind and goal: to make TarValon.Net better for everyone.

While our name and goal make have changed, we still provide a number of the services that we did in the past. I think in total, nothing was cut from our repertoire. As 2006 was ending and we were moving into the spring, we found that a lot of what we were doing was stagnating or just plain not happening. We have revitalized nearly everything that we had been doing in the past, reshaped others and we continue to think of new ways to improve on what we have already laid down.

ONLINE SERVICES AREA

The Online Services Area has been led capably by Madelaine Vitalia throughout the year, since its inception during the first quarter.

Our events have been revamped and rethought and reprogrammed a number of times to better the impact that they have on our members. Ilissa al'Nari has served as Online Events Coordinator all year, aided ably by her staff. She has worked diligently to see that events go off smoothly and as successes. In all, we officially celebrated Bel Tine, Sunday, Shaoman and the Feast of Lights in the year 2007. Members sent each other gift baskets, dressed up their avatars and competed against one another in games of creativity, skill and knowledge. The decision was made to split the position of Mistress of Games, held ably by Triste al'Rotture for so long, after she resigned. We separated the duties in half between a new Radio Programmer and a new Chat Activities Coordinator. Valorian Edoras took over our Radio Programming after we changed the radio from being music-centric, due to the need to ensure that we did not have copyrighted music being played during our radio broadcast. With the aid of a talented staff, he has instead chosen to produce a podcast which addresses issues and topics pertinent to members, including featuring our musical members' talents, movie reviews and editorial commentaries. The program can be found at TarValonRadio.Net. Qamra Daielin was instated as Chat Activities Coordinator and she has worked to set up a games bot in our IRC channel #oldewardrandhen, which will be able to provide multiple means of entertainment to members.

The new position of Visual Resource Coordinator was created to take over for those duties that the Curator of Art maintained which involved our cafepress.com online store, namely the acquiring of designs for collateral materials for our real life and online events. Sasha Melrai has served ably in this capacity.

Goals for the future of the Online Services Area include increased organization in our Events staff and the programming and execution of those events, including coordination with the other services in the Area, including Radio Programming and Chat Activities and services in the General Services Area, to create a universal experience for members during festival weeks and other online events throughout the year.

GENERAL SERVICES AREA

I would like to thank Miriette Kasabian for her able leadership as Manager of General Services. Yelenia Hylraren took up the position since Miriette's retirement from the Department and has done a wonderful job.

This year we saw the creation of a new Guild in the form of the Professors' Guild and the continued development of activities and functions of the guilds themselves. We went through several changes in leadership for several of the guilds but I thank all members who have volunteered to serve in this capacity and to take on the challenges of it in the past and the future. While challenging, we continue to strive to make the guilds a nurturing location for members to make worthwhile relationships with one another through shared interest. Our New Member Services Coordinator, Saminda Meltacia has worked diligently and admirably throughout the year. As one of the first faces new members meet when they join the site, I thank her for her dedication. She has done a lot to ensure members who join get vital information early on in their time with us here at TarValon.net. Saminda has been ably assisted by Ninya Evoneigh, who has worked hard to make sure we have plenty of avatars for new members to choose from and that the artists who make those avatars are properly contacted and recognized for the service they provide us.

The Museum of Art continues to be down but considerable efforts are being made by Kasia Baredeen, our Curator, to iron out our technical issues with the functionality of the website. Our hope is that members will be able to upload art from profiles they log into personally, to ease the process.

The future for General Services includes the development of the new Recognitions Coordinator position and how it can serve both the community but the administration as well as in its ability to bring members together. We will continue to strive to bring meaningful activities to the Guilds and information and usability our other services.

OUR FUTURE

Community Development will continue to change and evolve as the needs and interests of the membership shift. Our objective is and always will be to serve and see to the enjoyment of all members as best we can. We want to ensure that all members have equal access to multiple opportunities to get to know one another and form meaningful bonds that will last hopefully as long as they are members and well beyond.

CURRENT STAFF AS OF THE END OF 2007

Darim Pelegro, Director* community@tarvalon.net

Madelaine Vitalia, Manager, Online Services onlineservices@tarvalon.net

Yelenia Hylraren, Manager, General Services* generalservices@tarvalon.net

Online Services:

Ilissa al'Nari, Online Events Coordinator onlineevents@tarvalon.net

Qamra Daielin, Chat Activities Coordinator chatactivities@tarvalon.net

Sasha Melrai, Visual Resource Lead visualresources@tarvalon.net

Valorian Edoras, Radio Programmer radio@tarvalon.net

Badria Aidan, Online Events Staff

Cinnamin Draconna, Online Events Staff

Ilverin Matriam, Online Events Staff

Marrow Rahien, Online Events Staff

Miriya ay'Anne, Online Events Staff

Morrighan Aelthyn, Online Events Staff

Sela Narian, Online Events Staff

Sonea Ilandred, Online Events Staff

Tinnlin Fundon, Online Events Staff

Mara Jade t'Bayana, Radio Programming Staff*

Neisa Alibrylla, Radio Programming Staff*
Rollyn Montagorae, Radio Programming Staff

General Services:

Adina al'Mari, Gleemen's Guildmaster gleemanguild@tarvalon.net
Azrael Latifer, Martial Guildmaster martialguild@tarvalon.net
Bridonna Desini, Tailors' Guildmaster tailorguild@tarvalon.net
Celinda al'Velis, Healers' Guildmaster healerguild@tarvalon.net
Elbereth Gailbridhil, Professors' Guildmaster professorguild@tarvalon.net
Kasia Baredeen, Curator of Art museum@tarvalon.net
Marra Madore, Innkeepers' Guildmaster innkeeperguild@tarvalon.net
Ninya Evoneigh, Assistant to the New Member Services Coordinator*
Saminda Meltacia, New Member Services Coordinator* avatars@tarvalon.net
Sasha Melrai, Artisans' Guildmaster artisanguild@tarvalon.net

ADDITIONAL STAFF THAT SERVED DURING 2007:

Kariada Kunai, Director of Membership Services
Miriette Kasabian, Manager, General Services

Ban al'Seen, Innkeeper's Guildmaster
Caia Sedai, Tailors' Guildmaster
Josef al'March, Curator of Art, Artisan's Guildmaster
Kheldin Korlan, Gleemen's Guildmaster
Leora Oldessroth, Innkeepers' Guildmaster
Sidar Crand, Martial Guildmaster
Sindra Bell, Artisan's Guildmaster
Triste al'Tree, Mistress of Games
Anduin Spartin, Online Events Staff
Miridyth al'Landerin, Online Events Staff
Shyana al'Veara, Online Events Staff
Sienna Hanon, Radio Programming Staff
Jalen te'Kreg, DJ for Tar Valon Radio

* Also during the year 2007: Darim Pelegro served as the Assistant to the Director of Membership Services and as General Services Manager. Yelenia Hylraren currently serves as Assistant to the Online Events Coordinator and served as Tailors' Guildmaster. Neisa Alibrylla and Mara Jade t'Bayana also served as DJs for Tar Valon Radio during our pre-podcast days. Ninya Evoneigh and Saminda Meltacia also served terms as a part of the Online Events Staff.

DEPARTMENT OF REAL LIFE SERVICES

Report by Muirenn Lina Alianin, Director of Real Life Services

CREATING A NEW DEPARTMENT

The restructuring of the Department of Membership Services into services areas initially included an area for Real Life Services as well as Online Services and General Services. Once we were into that transition, it was quickly determined that the service area focusing on our real life aspects was simply too large and needed its own Department, so we created this new Department. It will focus on planning and executing our real life events, our philanthropy, and our baby bundles for members.

EVENTS

One of the major changes for our Real Life Events is that events will be chosen from bids that are submitted to the administration. These bids will be solicited a year in advance. We believe this process will allow us to travel to locations that are of greater interest, and hopefully the larger pool of people planning will give us locations that are better suited for our groups.

Our anniversary party was held in Denver, Colorado, USA. Our summer European event was held in Driebergen, the Netherlands from August 10-12, hosted by Elyna al'Tzoran and Val a'Shain. Fall Ball was a cruise out of Ensenada, Mexico, on October 12-15. The Tower also had a presence at Dragon*Con.

There have been several instances where the Tower has lost money on events because of people signing up for events, then backing out at the last minute after not having paid. As a result, the administration will now develop and institute a system of waiting lists and due dates for payments to minimize the impact such happenings have on our events and their budgets. In a similar vein, members paying for events tickets by Paypal will have to include the cost that Paypal charges in their ticket price.

Combat marshals will now need to take a safety briefing from our Head Marshall before they are allowed to officiate our tournament events.

One of the Department's tasks will be to develop a better system for the organization and promotion of our Local Events. The administration will divide our world into regions based upon population segments of the Tower and give those regions names from the series. There will be an ambassador for each region who will be responsible for moderating their region's forum and for promoting events that occur in their region, as well as providing continuity and experience in terms of planning such events.

PHILANTHROPY

A system for the Servants of All program is being developed. It will include a point system, with annual winners in Individual, Group, and Local areas.

The Tower also participated in Ziggurat*Con, along with Tor. Along with a monetary donation, the Tower also sent the following items:

6 Magic the Gathering Core Games sets

1 package of Munchkin dice

1 package of Munchkin Blender

1 box of Munchkin

1 box of Munchkin Bites

1 box of MechWarrior Booster pack

1 Shadowrun 4th Edition book

2 Vampire the Requiem books

1 box of Vampire the Requiem dice

1 Werewolf the Forsaken book

1 GURPS Banestorm book

1 GURPS Rogues book

1 GURPS Uplift 2nd Edition book

1 GURPS Rifts Index Vol. 1 and 2

3 packages of d10 dice

7 packages of dice sets

3 packages of Magic booster sets with dice

10 sets of assorted dice

1 leatherbound, deluxe edition of *Knife of Dreams*, signed by Robert Jordan

3 book sets, each including *The Shadow Rising*, *The Fires of Heaven*, and *Lord of Chaos*

2 paperbacks of *The Shadow Rising*

2 paperbacks of *The Path of Daggers*

2 paperbacks of *Knife of Dreams*

1 hardback of *Crossroads of Twilight*

1 hardback of *New Spring*

1 hardback of *Fires of Heaven*

3 copies of *The Wheel of Time* soundtrack

STAFF CHANGEOVER

Muirenn was Director for this Department.

Ne'Mireth t'Simoua retired as the American Mistress of Revels and was replaced by Serinia Edoras.

Maran Damastes retired as one of the co-Mistresses of Revels in Europe, and Maidelyn continued as the sole Mistress of Revels for that region.

Doneavan was our Head Marshal.

Tinnlin Fundon became the Philanthropy Coordinator.

DEPARTMENT OF MODERATORS

Report by Melana al'Cairera, Director of Moderators

CREATING A NEW DEPARTMENT

While this department was only created at the beginning of November of 2007, the idea it is resulting from had been under discussion several times already. What would usually prompt such discussion, was both a need recognized by the administration to ensure a uniform moderating of the forums, and moderators without a department asking for a forum where they would be able to discuss issues more easily with one another. Until November 2007, however, moderators for the forums now part of the Department of Moderators had to make do without an administrative forum or a department.

The IRC operators, on the other hand, had a forum. It was a part of the Department of Technology, and the forum was used partly for technical issues and partly for issues caused by members. It was a forum concentrating 100% on IRC administration – but while it worked well enough, the IRC operators didn't really belong in the Department of Technology.

And so it was decided that instead of creating only a forum for the moderators where they would work directly under the Keeper like they had done till that point, a new Department would be created for them – and the IRC operators. While the Department was up and running already on November 1st, it took another three weeks to find the new Director.

THE FORUMS AND THEIR MODERATORS: CHANGES

Most of the forums within the department are very different and as such require different abilities and services from their moderators. The two that are biggest and most frequently used by the general membership, General and Mundane World, are also the ones where least moderator actions are needed. In return, they require a keen eye, and a lot of reading. In another forum, Ask the Aes Sedai, new and older members may ask questions about the site and community, which requires for its moderators to know a lot about how the community works, including decent knowledge regarding our rules and guidelines.

Technology and Media requires moderators that are up to date on subjects that fall into these categories, and they also need to be on constant lookout for illegal links which might easily pop up in that kind of area. Last, there is the Current Events forum – easily the most heavily moderated forum in the community. Many controversial issues are discussed in this forum, with the participants having a variety of backgrounds and opinions.

Until recently, most of these moderator positions were closely tied up with other administrative duties – this changed in September 2007, with the hiring of moderators for Ask the Aes Sedai, General and Mundane World.

In Current Events, on the other hand, it had eventually become custom to rotate the moderators every six months – where hiring was based on who might serve best, not which positions were held.

So one of the first changes that has been implemented with the new department, is to make all moderator positions within the department rotate like the ones in Current Events, unless the moderator position comes with an administrative position. So far, the only forum

affected by this, has been Technology and Media; the full effect of the change will be noticeable in June 2008.

CHAT AND OPERATORS: CHANGES

We currently have three official chatrooms. #wheel is the main channel for general discussion, and is also the one with the most operators. #oldewarderandhen is primarily for games and any activities that might occur. #wanderingwoman is the only adult chatroom, with an age-limit of 18+.

The Department of Moderators currently has 27 operators. Like with the moderator positions, operating our chatrooms used to be connected to other administrative duties. Later, we involved people who weren't already part of the administration, and today, our operators are a fair mix of regular members and administrators.

The biggest change for the operators, have been to move from the Department of Technology and to the Department of Moderators. With the creation of the new department, an old position was also re-created; Mistress of Chat. It was offered to Miriya ay'Anne who promptly accepted as she had been doing the job for a while already in staff capacity. The position has changed a bit from what it originally was, and of course, it is now a position in a different department than before, - duties include managing operators, logs, technical aspects and anything else that the Director or operators might need assistance with.

Chat statistics - <http://www.graphicalmishaps.com/tvstats/index.html>

OUR FUTURE

Being such a new department, we have a lot of areas to work on and improve. We come up with new ideas on how to do things, and as we go, we find that some things work and some things don't, so we keep the best and move on. There is one aim with every review we do and every change we implement though - to get better. Our job is to ensure that everyone feels safe and is treated fairly and equally, whether it be in chat or in the forums, and through that hopefully give them a positive experience that will make them want to return again and again.

STAFF AT THE END OF 2007

Melana al'Cairera, Director moderators@tarvalon.net

Moderators

Ask the Aes Sedai

Leora Oldessroth
Raevyn Tsornin
Saminda Meltacia

General

Aria Beraht
Jalen te'Kreg
Ilissa al'Nari

Mundane World

Aryawnah Federov
Calypsa al'Nicolai
Ilissa al'Nari

Current Events ce@tarvalon.net

Jalen te'Kreg*
Miridyth al'Landerin***
Sasha Melrai
Warren Peace Payne****
Neisa Alibrylla**
Oryn Riker**
Yveva Orer**

Technology and Media

Dee ar'Emm
Xaviara Al'Nady

Emp Orer**
Sienna Hanon**
Operators
#wheel
Dralyn Montsier keeper@tarvalon.net
Miriya ay'Anne chat@tarvalon.net
al'Cary Mandoragon
Aquila Rael
Darim Pelegro
Defen Estrator
Deoan Kakarot
Ilissa al'Nari
Jeryn Lekar
Karassa Souladrin
Madelaine Vitalia
Mara Jade t'Bayana
Melisande Arneil
Mellyn al'Baya
Morni Stowers
Murasaki al'Aevon
Ninya Evoneigh
Qamra Daielin
Randle al'Ren
Sela Narian
Toral t'Simoua Delvar
Vivianna L'antreau
William Cambrae
Yelenia Hylraren
#oldewarderandhen
Dralyn Montsier keeper@tarvalon.net
Miriya ay'Anne chat@tarvalon.net
Defen Estrator
Karassa Souladrin
Mara Jade t'Bayana
Ninya Evoneigh
Qamra Daielin
Sela Narian
Vivianna L'antreau
Voice: Jalen te'Kreg
#wanderingwoman
Dralyn Montsier keeper@tarvalon.net
Miriya ay'Anne chat@tarvalon.net
Aquila Rael
Defen Estrator
Karassa Souladrin
Mara Jade t'Bayana
Melisande Arneil
Mellyn al'Baya
Ninya Evoneigh
Qamra Daielin
Sela Narian
Tian el'Nvidia
Vivianna L'antreau

- * Stepped in sometime during the last six months of December 2007, was not one of the original CE moderators
- ** Moderators for CE and T&M who started their moderator term during the last weeks of December 2007.
- *** Was moderator in 2007, continued in 2008
- **** Stepped down during 2007

DEPARTMENT OF TECHNOLOGY

Report by Zhareen din Narelle, Director of Technology

DEPARTMENT OVERVIEW

The Department of Technology experienced a myriad of changes during the calendar year, including a complete restructure of staffing, services supported and project management. Technology experienced several staffing changes in 2007 with several key figures retiring from long-standing service to the community: Lyoness t'Morsin as Director, Karassa Souladrin as Master of the Watch and Yenie Angtar as Mistress of Chat. With Zhareen din Narelle stepping in as Director, it afforded an excellent opportunity to restructure the job descriptions and staffing for the department.

The position of Master of the Watch was filled by Melana al'Cairera who oversaw the management of the message boards and handled technical support issues. Defen Estrator was hired as a Systems Administrator, responsible for handling the technical aspects of server management and support. Miriya ay'Anne stepped into the role of Assistant Mistress of Chat, overseeing Chat Operators and IRC technology management.

In response to the creation of the Department of Moderators, now headed by Melana al'Cairera, it was decided that the Director of Moderators would have the rank of a PHPBB administrator. She would manage the creation of forums, usergroups and moderators while leaving all technical aspects of PHPBB management and support with the Director of Technology.

With a nod to the Ages, Defen Estrator was promoted to the Master of the Watch and the position was returned to that of a security and system administrator handling high-level technical issues with our services. And finally Valorian Edoras has reprised his role as an application and Flash developer.

PROJECTS & SERVICES

Servers

Tar Valon had a very challenging and busy year. Our service providers for both websites, tarvalon.net (TV) and tarvalonforums.net (TVF) were migrated to new hosts to address outstanding technical problems. The migration of both sites was nearly seamless on all accounts due to the hard work of our Technology team. All services are monitored daily to proactively diagnose potential problems.

Applications

We continue to offer support with numerous applications hosted on our servers including: two Wiki installations, the Calendar, Google Mail Hosting, PHPBB forums, B2Evolution, Gallery2 and the myriad of custom scripts that run our website. Revisions were made to several areas of the website including: Robert Jordan memorial themes and guestbook, party registration forms, annual surveys, membership tests, blogs and whatever other custom requests arise.

Support

Based upon the statistics for the last six months of 2007, support@tarvalon.net received over a hundred inquiries in the following categories: Account Activation, General Support Requests, Name Changes and Password Reset. These statistics do not account for support requests posted in Ask the Aes Sedai, PM's or MSN support requests for staff members.

FUTURE PROJECTS & PLANNING

In 2008, we look forward to completing the hiring process of new developers that will allow us to push forward on several new projects to streamline membership management. We hope to address the development and testing of the inevitable migration to PHPBB3 in the latter half of the year.

CURRENT STAFF - 2007

Zhareen din Narelle, Director
Defen Estrator, Master of the Watch
Miriya ay'Anne, Mistress of Chat
Valorian Edoras, Developer

STAFF CHANGES - 2007

Defen Estrator, Systems Administrator
James Davion, Assistant Master of the Watch
Karassa Souladrin, System Administrator, Master of the Watch
Lyoness al'Thorn t' Morsin, Director
Melana al'Cairera, Master of the Watch
Miriya ay'Anne, Chat Assistant
Zhareen din Narelle, System Administrator, Director

DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNICATIONS

Report by Sela Narian, Director of Communications

The Department of Communications experienced many changes in 2007. With the acquisition of a new Director of Communications in February, many policies and procedures were changed. One of the most demonstrable changes in 2007 was the enlargement of the staff from five staff members at the beginning of the year to twenty-four members by the end of the year.

New staff was a significant concentration throughout the year. The majority of these staff members were reporters for the Tar Valon Times, the community newsletter. Another position which remained in the department was the Eyes and Ears, who had the role of searching out fandom news around the internet to use in our General News on the main page. There were also many new positions instituted this year. Webcomic artists were added to the staff of the Tar Valon Times, as well as a Statistician, who gave various statistical reports of our community.

The Director decided to hire new staff members twice a year, in March and in September. In addition, it was determined that all staff members of the Tar Valon Times would reapply each term, with the exception of a few reporters, who were given the new title of Lead Reporters. These Lead Reporters were given a sort of tenure, based upon their effective past performance, and would not have to reapply.

To oversee the growing staff members for the Tar Valon Times, the Department gained an Admin position, called the Publications Staff Manager. By default, the one in this position was also made the Assistant Manager of the Tar Valon Times. This role has worked successfully, and has been a large help to the Director in organizational effort.

Another exciting addition to the staff was the Senior Member Interviewer, who conducted over 100 interviews with Senior Members on the site this year, to be put into a database in the coming year. These interviews will be accessible by all members, and will hopefully give members an opening to talk to Senior Members with similar interests. This will be helpful to Citizens searching for common ground with Senior Members so that they might eventually gain sponsors. It will also hopefully assist the Junior Members of the Tower as they become more acquainted with the different groups, so they might have another perspective on the members within these groups. The Senior Member Interviews will be released in early 2008. Archivists were also hired, for the purpose of entering past issues of the Tar Valon Times into a new database. Unfortunately, their work was put on hold until the new year of 2008, as the Director worked to find an optimal application for the database. We are confident that

the archivists will be a huge help in the coming year as the entire history of the Tar Valon Times throughout all the years of its publication is entered into an accessible, searchable database for members, organized by categories acting as data tags.

The Tar Valon Times itself evolved from a text-based newsletter posted in the forums and/or sent by email, into a website of its own. The Department received considerably positive feedback for this new format.

The newsletter was put on hold near the end of the year as a new database was planned and organized, to make the Tar Valon Times more streamlined and up-to-date technologically as compares to other modern newsletters. These changes will give the same benefits as mentioned for the archives above; they will make the Tar Valon Times searchable, and readers will be able to find specific subjects from current and past issues simply by selecting a category from the list of data tags (for example, anything to do with 'Fundraising' or 'White Ajah' or even any member's name who has ever been mentioned/featured in a Tar Valon Times article). In addition, the new system will offer xml and rss feeds to members wishing to access the Tar Valon Times in their own feed reader. It will also allow readers to leave a comment on an individual article if they so wish. All in all, many exciting changes were planned and considerable time was spent this past year on realizing the improved format of the Tar Valon Times. This new format should be active some time in the early part of the coming year.

With the Keeper overseeing, the Director also took part in writing and editing the Membership Manuals which were released this year. The main principle of the Department of Communications is to help members stay informed about the community, and the Membership Manuals help facilitate this on a functional level. With this in mind, a number of manuals were organized and written by the Director, and she had an editing hand on the majority of the manuals. In addition, she helped set up the groundwork for the Administrative Manuals, which will help Administrators and staff members better comprehend their roles and obligations in their assigned positions. The bulk of the Administrative Manuals are planned to be written in the coming year, now that the task of the Membership Manuals is essentially finished.

All in all, 2007 saw a lot of change and expansion in the Department of Communications. The year saw experimentation with different methods, both organizational and production-based. Some of these methods worked, and others were fun to try, but ultimately not lasting. The Director is confident that, with many foundations laid in 2007, the year 2008 will allow these efforts to come to fruition and help the site as a whole to be more informed about itself.

DEPARTMENT OF RESEARCH

Report by Ismene Gillandred, Director of Research

PROJECTS COMPLETED

We are a busy and very productive department. The major project this year has been to create short, easy to write articles on a wide variety of topics, called stubs. In many cases, it's better to have a short article than no article at all. We have already started expanding a few of these into longer entries, and that will remain an on-going project. 50 short articles have been added to the library since September, 2007. This has also been a nice way to break-in new staff members, on shorter, easier to tackle projects. The wiki has had over 500 edits and new articles in December 2007 alone. In addition to the stubs project, other projects of note include a complete list of all Inns mentioned in the series, a translation of the Old Tongue dictionary into Polish, as well as completing the chapter summaries.

CURRENT STATE OF THE LIBRARY

The library currently has well over 3,000 articles. The main page has been viewed over 74,000 times since the creation of the wiki. The most popular material in the library, by far, are the category summaries, with over 30,000 views since the wiki's inception. Second to that the book summaries and chapter summaries have gotten nearly 5,000 views.

CURRENT STATE OF THE CLASSROOMS

This year, the classrooms hosted 33 different classes on various WoT topics.

NEW AND CURRENT STAFF

2007 saw a large shift in staff in the Department of Research. Atarah Sedai stepped down as Director, and Ismene Gillandred, the former Historian took her place. Kariada Kunai was selected as our new Historian. When Jundna retired as our "Classroom Assistant" the position was renamed "Headmistress" and Sephrenia Noita was selected to fill that role. The Assistant to the Director, Kyria d'Oreyne also chose this time to step down, and Elia Sedai is now in that position.

Thirteen new Staff Researchers were hired in November, more than doubling the size of the Research Team:

Aavyn Eirion

Alghar Khan

Asalyn al' Morin

Aslani Del Vardarin

Badger Whitehead

Brienen Ruthegar

Caerwyn Jolan

De'bann Maia

Evelyn Tai'ashandar

Gidgidoni

Isarma Maracanda

Melina Tashir

Shayleean De' Altarata

They joined the existing team: Calypsa, Cariyad, Kerna, Laia, Melisande, Myriam, Ninya, Rinwyn, Sa'areah, Skye, Toral and Tyeslan. Atarah and Kyria also decided to remain in the department as Researchers when they stepped down from their Director and Assistant to the Director positions respectively.

FUTURE PLANNING

One of the main goals I have for the library is to create a more relaxed, innovative work culture amongst our researchers. For the past several years, the goal of the library has been polished perfection, with a lot of very close attention paid to member contributions. The result of this meticulousness has been an outstanding library, with better, more well written, more accurate articles than any other WoT resource out there. The content in our book, chapter and character summaries in particular are some of our library's greatest strengths. However, there are still some rather significant gaps of basic WoT information. With a commitment to the values of Web 2.0; especially, collaborative work, user driven ideas, the wisdom of crowds, and a belief that we are greater than the sum of our parts we expect to be able to increase the library's content even further.