



# MORTEM POST

The National Coordinator's Newsletter

Issue 7, October 2006

The Camarilla, a White Wolf World of Darkness Fan Club

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EDITOR'S COMMENT  
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Hi,

My name is Will Laymance and I'm your new ANC Newsletter. First, I would like to thank Dineh and Wes for giving me such a solid foundation to start from. Simple title, for a job I'm quickly learning is not so simple. I am looking forward to personally soliciting each and every person I know to help make this newsletter the best it can be. I plan on making the National Newsletter work for everyone from top to bottom. If you can provide articles or art, you will likely find many fans among the membership. If you bring copies of the newsletter to your friends and fellow members, you will find a fan in me. I want to grow our national newsletter, and together I know we can accomplish this.

Will Laymance

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### Staff:

Will Laymance ..... Editor and Go Getter  
Dineh Torres ..... Chief Flunky  
Wes Contreras ..... Boss Man  
Submissions: [USNC.Newsletter@gmail.com](mailto:USNC.Newsletter@gmail.com)



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## How to use the Approvals Database

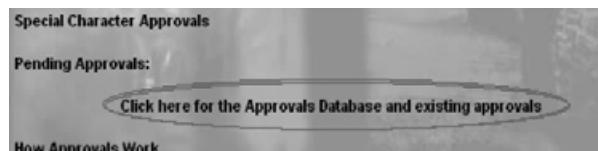
By Glenn Gibeson US2004122461

In the past there have been articles on “How to write a good App” and more recently about how to use the CRD. I would like to take a look at one of the unsung heroes of the Camarilla; the approvals database, often simply referred to as “The DB”. The DB is used to track and record requests made by players to their storyteller chain.

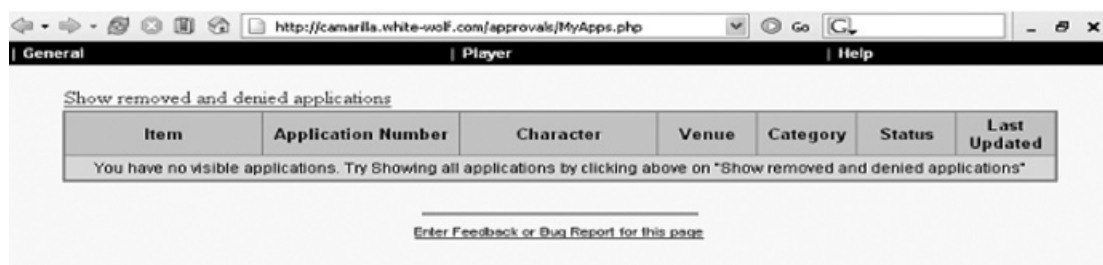
This resource is oft neglected by members new and old alike, who in my observation have a tendency to avoid seeking even simple approvals for their characters because they do not understand the process of putting in the application. With that in mind, this article should provide a basic understanding of how to use the approvals database from a general member perspective. If this is your first time looking at the DB, feel free to open up a web browser and follow along.

You can go directly to the webpage at <http://camarilla.white-wolf.com/approvals>

Or, if you are on the White Wolf homepage already, you can choose Approvals under Club Resources in the left hand column on the screen. This will take you to a page describing how the approvals system works, and a link to the Camarilla approvals addendum. There is a lot of good information here; it is *strongly* suggested that you take a few moments and read this page and the addendum before moving on to the actual database. Once you have read the page get your character sheet ready and click on the link at the top of the page:



If this is your first time on the DB, it should look something like this:



The first thing you will need to do is check your profile to make sure the information is correct. This function can be found under the “General” tab in the upper left hand corner.

The next step is to add your character sheet to the DB; this is why you need to have your character sheet handy. Move to the tab labeled “Player”, and click “Add Character” from the drop down. The process is pretty straight forward, especially if you use one of the many excel based character sheets, you can use the “Copy and Paste” tab to enter your character sheet. If you have your background handy you can add that at the same time, or wait and do that later.

If you are not already using an excel-based character sheet, it is my opinion that your time would be better spent to get an excel sheet and fill it out than to type the information into the DB manually. I personally prefer the sheets by Jennifer Pitts, found here:

<http://sheets.immortal danse.org/>

When you are done filling out the information about your character, click the button at the bottom center labeled, "Enter New Information". You will then be asked assign your character to a Venue Style Sheet (VSS) so that the database will know who your storytellers are. Once entered, you may access and modify your character sheet and background using the, "My Characters" from the same drop down menu, and clicking the, "Modify" button to edit your character.

Things to do before putting in an actual application:

1) It is always good to speak with your VST before you put in the application, so that he/she can give you advice about your application, and help you to understand what the approvals process and local policies.

2) Remember that Camarilla rules addendum? I was not kidding when I said you need to take a look at that. It contains info on the approval level of the special items found in the source material. Don't know that approval level means? The definitions are also in the addendum, so just reading it carefully should fix that.

3) There are a number of good articles dedicated to the art of writing good applications, I suggest you find one and read it to help you understand the process.

You are now ready to enter your first application. Select the "Add application" option from the dropdown menu under the "Player" tab. You will be asked which character the application is for, at this point you have only one, so click the "Submit" button. This will take you to the application page.

Your character sheet, background and ST chain will fill in automatically. Below that you will find the "Justification" section, which contains (in most areas) the infamous 13 questions, as well as instructions from your Storyteller chain. In simple terms; this is where you tell the storytellers what you want and why you think you should get it. Below that you will find the "Mechanics" section, which is used to provide the storytellers with the suggested mechanics of the orbital death lasers you are applying for.

Once your application is complete; click the "Enter New Application" button. A message will be sent to the email address you provided if anything changes on your application, or if there are comments left there by the Storyteller staff so that you have an opportunity to reply.

Most importantly, always remember: Special approvals are a privilege, not a right.

The Camarilla now uses the CRD for numerous membership services. Take a moment to check your CRD profile and make sure the information is correct.

## Conflicts of Interest

The line between being fair and impartial and having a conflict of interest is a very fine one and can often be blurred by other concerns.

As an officer, it is very important to avoid even the appearance of bias in your decisions. Therefore, a good rule to go by is if you are not sure if a conflict of interest exists, treat the situation as though it does. It never hurts to ask the next officer up the chain (i.e., the RC if you are a DC) or a corresponding officer in the opposite chain (i.e., the DC if you are a DST) or even another officer equal to yourself for an opinion as to whether a conflict might exist or appear to exist. This can help give some needed perspective to an issue and allow you to proceed in a manner that is fair to all parties involved.

Everyone knows about the obvious conflicts involving your significant other, longtime friend, family members and the like. When dealing with these individuals, it is always best to assume a conflict exists in all but the most routine of issues.

Another obvious category of people with whom a conflict may exist are those at the opposite end of the spectrum from those listed above (i.e., your ex or

a longtime opponent). It is at least as important, if not more so, to treat these people as though a conflict of interest exists.

Outside these two groups it becomes a gray area and must be treated on a case by case basis. One example would be that as a coordinator you find yourself in a position where you have to suspend a person who portrays a character with whom your character has numerous interactions. This person may not be close to you outside of game, but your character may be affected by their inability to attend game. When this type of situation occurs, it is best to step back and look at the situation from all sides. If you are unable to say one hundred percent that there is no conflict of interest, you should get the opinion of your supervising officer or turn it over to them to handle.

Conflicts of interest can and do occur at all levels of the club and in all types of situations. Some are clear cut and some you may not even be aware of. This is why our system of checks and balances is so important and why it never hurts to ask for advice on how to handle a situation.

by Courtney Hambley, US2002021811



Bryan Gilligan US20040414000

# ARCHIVES

## Important things you might have missed

### New Hires

AAMST Settings/Awakening – Congratulations to Kevin Drugan as the new global ST for the Awakening venue.

EC RST – Many thanks to Jon Herrmann for his last two years as regional storyteller, and congratulations for being elected for two more years to come.

### National Announcements

MST Re-organization – The office of the MST has made some significant changes in an effort to help increase the efficiency of the office. For more information, go to <http://camarilla.white-wolf.com/MST>

New Ordeal Released – Aug 17 – The Venue Ordeal: World of Darkness, has been released to the public. Passing this exam to demonstrate your knowledge of general World of Darkness mechanics will net you 50 general prestige.

Voluntary Prestige Reviews – Any member with prestige awards dating back to June of 2002 or earlier (not counting awards already locked at national) is invited to submit their log through their normal coordinator chain for an entirely voluntary national review. After this review, their totals will be locked in at national, allowing them to list the newly reviewed amount as one line instead of tracking individual line items.

Addendum – The new addendum is up at <http://camarilla.white-wolf.com/rules/>. The major new inclusion is the sanctioning of the Circle of the Crone book.

### Global Announcements

Finding Gaming Clubs – Aug 29 – The club director is collecting information about college and university gaming clubs. Send the name of the group, state, type of club, any website info, and contact info (email and mailing address) to [clubdirector@white-wolf.com](mailto:clubdirector@white-wolf.com) and earn yourself some national prestige!

Bloodlines Contest – Aug 23 – White Wolf has announced that they will accept submissions for full write-ups of bloodlines hinted at in the Requiem book. The best submissions will be published in the upcoming Bloodlines: The Chosen book. The Camarilla may or may not use these bloodlines in their chronicle depending on how well they mesh with any existing approvals for those bloodlines, but this is still a chance to be published!

Changeling in 2007! – White Wolf has announced that the next published genre after Promethean will be Changeling! The current Changeling chronicle will be ending as scheduled, but with a modified setting available to those interested in playing between the end of the current chronicle and the release of the new setting.

A New Vision for Rules – A change is coming to the Camarilla Addendum. This overhaul is designed to help streamline the process of approvals, help clarify mechanics, and shorten the addendum by a significant amount. The exact release date for the New Vision has yet to be set, but it will certainly be something worth investigating.

IC Check-in for ICC – Go to <http://camarilla.white-wolf.com/ICC/>. First, review the Venue Style Sheets, so you know what needs to be done for your characters before you get to the check-in database. Next, follow the links to IC check-in, or go directly to <http://www.atlantacamarilla.com/mycam>.

CRD – Membership Packets – Many membership packets have been shipped. If you haven't received your packet yet, be sure to check your physical address listed in the CRD.

Venue Ordeal WOD – A new ordeal has been released for public consumption. Venue Ordeal: World of Darkness is designed to help members get a solid grasp of the basic WoD rules and the Camarilla Approvals Addendum. Once you have passed the ordeal, you will be awarded 50 general prestige.

## Manners Count

One good example is worth a thousand excuses. It goes for officers even more than it does for the every day member. Just consider these points.

Five tips for resolving interpersonal conflict:

1. The more directly and promptly the conflict is confronted, the better... usually.
2. Be direct and firm about resolving the problem, but be gentle and respect the other party.
3. Err on the side of empathy, warmth, and being connected to the other party.
4. Anyone can learn good conflict resolution skills and techniques. Even you!
5. Good skills and techniques alone are not the answer.

Five things to avoid when working to resolve a conflict:

1. Do not assume that your truth is THE truth. Understand that truth often depends on perspective.
2. Do not insist that other people agree with you. Respectful disagreement does not need to result in conflict.
3. Do not invalidate someone else's experience just because it doesn't agree with yours. Try to understand how it affects them and how it might change your views.
4. Do not blame others for how you feel. Take ownership and responsibility for your feelings.
5. Do not invalidate the other person's feelings. You cannot dictate how they should or should not feel.

Wes Contreras, US2002022038

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## Cammies in Action!!

The Camarilla has always supported charities that collect blood and distribute them to people in need. That sounds all fine and good on paper, but when one is busy at a convention or has a fear of needles or needs to schedule an appointment to donate blood, it is easy to lose the real faces that blood donations help.

Candice Gross is a Camarilla member from West Memphis, Arkansas. On September 8, 2006, her sister, Kristin, was out picking up food for her mother when someone got onto the highway going in the wrong direction and hit her car, head-on, at 65 mph. This was a four car accident. Kristin was rushed to the hospital with open, compound fractures, the kind where the bone sticks out of the skin, of her left heel and left leg, shattered right elbow, three broken ribs, broken right arm, collapsed lung, a hole in her right atrium (a part of her heart), plus internal bleeding. She was rushed into surgery. They fixed her heart and removed her spleen to stop the internal bleeding immediately, but they waited to get her more stable before they got to mend her shattered bones. In the week following the accident, she went through a marathon of surgeries; some days were nearly eight hours of surgery. To date, Kristin has had a total of six surgeries. She has needed at least ten transfusions.

Candice got the word out to family, friends and the Camarilla within days of the accident. So far, 150 units of blood

have been donated in Kristin's name, and more than 100 units of them have come from Camarilla members all over the country.

Today, Kristin is at home recovering, but still requires a lot of help. She is still facing several more surgeries so the need for blood may not be over. Kristin has a rocky road before her through the surgeries, the physical therapy, and just general recovery from this, but her family is there to help. Candice has even moved home to be there for her sister. Also, Kristin's boyfriend, recently asked her to marry him. So the rough times she is going through are tempered by a new fiancé, a shiny ring, and a bright future.

We never seem to forget that this organization is about friendships and role playing, but all too often we forget that this organization is also dedicated to making a difference in the community. What better way to help the Camarilla community then to save the life of a family member of a Cammie. So while we all think, "That could never happen to my family or me", I am sure Candice thought that as well. I hope the next time you get the opportunity to donate blood you take it.

Bekkah Anderson  
US2004041403