

# ISTE SECOND LIFE VOLUNTEER DOCENT SECURITY TRAINING



By Jenny Wakefield / Snowflake Lannock

## Learning activity:

On March 25<sup>th</sup> I attended the ISTE Second Life Volunteer's Docent Security Training Session at ISTE island Skypark : <http://slurl.com/secondlife/ISTE%20Island/130/126/349>

## Learning Outcomes

The learning outcome was specified as follows in the invite: "The program will include an overview of ISTE Docent responsibilities and special powers for providing a friendly, safe, and comfortable experience at ISTE in SL with a focus on understanding and responding to "griefing," as well as security tips, techniques, and tools. The format will include presentations, hands-on practice, role playing, and group discussion."

## How leaning was assessed:

There was no formal way in which the learning was assessed. This session was based on discussion and hands-on use of the available tools and means to deal with griefers on the island. RavenPhoenix Zeno held the workshop which was moderated by Clair Loon. The session definitely had me think more about griefers and how to identify them – to the extent that when I was docenting the following Friday, I went way out of my way to look at profiles and behavior to try identify suspicious people. I did not identify any griefers on Friday. However, Friday was the first day of the Virtual Worlds best practices conference and ISTE is hosting some of the sessions their island. There were so many more people than usual moving around, some fitting the description "noob but in fancy clothes and with no profile." I would therefore say, assessment in this workshop was awareness and self-assessment: Would you be able to recognize a griever if you encountered on?

## What were the discussions/interactions? Other reflections?

The group, consisting of 11 docents and 3 ISTE employees met at the Skypark. Everyone stood in a circle and we started off introducing ourselves. Some used chat, some used voice, depending on comfort level. RavenPhoenix started by reviewing what griefers are. The key words to remember, as she stated it, are "intentionally disturbing or destructing". This can be avatars that show up at events with open mics *intentionally* disturbing presentations,

dropping objects in attempt to *intentionally* disturb, or show up naked *intentionally* to create attention and disturb activities. RavenPhoenix made sure we understood that we had to look for what was intentional as oppose to unintentional and due to lack of knowledge. She told us to approach the avatar that was disturbing, ask in IM if we could help, ask questions politely, ask them to turn off their mics, and inform them of sim policies. If they would not respond – that would be when we would have to take measures, still considering that they might be afk and not aware of our conversation we were initiating with them in IM. She told us to always first look to the possibility that the disrupting person is unaware of being a nuisance to others.

Some ways to identify griefers would be to look in their profiles. If they were born recently, like the same day, wearing fancy outfits, without anything in their profile, few groups if any, and no favorites – that should make us suspicious. But, we'd need to keep in mind that users may create alts, it could be noobs, and so the absence of this should not be taken as a true indicator of it being a griefer. Wearing the ISTE Management group, identifying yourself as an avatar acting as island staff, striking up a conversation with the person, and getting the "feel" for what the person is up to though, was the A-Z according to RavenPhoenix. If the avatar popped (disappeared) as we approached, that should also make us suspicious. RavenPhoeniz asked us to always take names of avatars visiting the sim during our shift, for future reference if needed, and went through the steps on how to do this.

We were asked to always fly across the sim, using the minimap, twice in a shift, because the ISTE sim is a four island sim and the HUD that we are wearing as docents does not catch activity on all four islands. She told us that if we did run into suspicious objects, we should always take a closer look to see if the object in fact was an avatar in disguise. A name would be hovering over the object if it was. Trying to return the object could also be a step to try.

If we did encounter a true griefer and needed to eject an avatar, it was important to ensure that we had a record of our ongoing conversation with the avatar. Saving IM and chat history is crucial for record keeping. Ejecting and banning would always be our last line of defense. If we need to eject an avatar we need to know that this would only send the avatar off to the sim border, making it possible for the avatar to still be on the premises since the island consists of four sims. He or she would only be ejected off the sim we were currently on and would be able to re-enter. Obviously, when banning, it was crucial to have records and reasons for this action. When banning a report would have to be made as the avatar would not be able to come back to the sim. Linde Lab would need this report as would the ISTE island Management. In the case of a ban it is important to have not only the IM to prove the grief but also, if possible, snapshots showing the offense because of the seriousness. As ISTE docents we all have the authority to act on behalf of management. We have superpowers, as RavenPhoenix explained it, but we do need to justify our use of these powers.

All in all, this was a very informative workshop and it had me thinking of the responsibility I have as a docent at ISTE island. So far I have not encountered any unfriendly or grieving avatars during my shifts, and I am glad today that I attended this workshop to get myself thinking about the possibilities of having to face them in the future. Knowing what to do and how to act is half of the effort in doing a job well and correctly. I am glad I attended.



*Claird Look to the very left, Snowflake Lannock in the middle.*