



April 17, 2012

Dear Friends and Fellow Players:

I'm afraid I have some sad news. After nearly eight years, unfortunately the time has come when we must close Winster. I'd like to take a moment to review with you where we have been, what we plan to do, and why this is necessary.

I fondly remember that sunny day when my hubby took me to lunch, and together we dreamed up the idea of games where people played with each other, rather than against each other. We thought it might be fun to build a web site based on this notion and see what happened.

Well, let me tell you – running an internet game site is a lot harder than it looks! We started in our garage and after several tries came up with our first game: Chain Gang. It was an instant hit, and quickly grew to thousands of regular players. But soon people wanted more – more games, a way to win prizes, a way to make lists of their friends and invite them to play, greeting cards for special occasions, gifts, memberships with special privileges ... the list goes on and on. So over the years we worked diligently to add new games and features until we built the Winster you know today.

It's hard to imagine now, but back then Facebook was just getting started, and 'social games' didn't even exist! Since then, just about everything you could conjure up has happened at Winster – people have found true love, helped each other through difficult times, reunited with lost relatives, travelled thousands of miles to visit their Winster friends, even held annual reunions with favorite players. I remember enlisting our kids to help mail out the Gold Member mouse pads, and posting a picture on our "About Us" page. Take a look and consider that two of those little sweetie-pies are now in college!

But all good things must come to an end eventually, and Winster is no exception. We simply can't continue to operate the web site in its current form. The resources and effort required to run the servers, distribute prizes, and support our staff are just too much to bear. Can you believe we make all this happen with the help of just six dedicated people? Our hardworking staff was brokenhearted when we told them the news, but I want you to know they are committed to ensuring a smooth conclusion for all our treasured players.

So here's the plan:

Starting with the first day of May, 2012, we will stop charging our Club Winster Members their usual monthly fee. If you are a Member in good standing on that day, you will continue to receive your Membership benefits through the end of May, regardless of your normal charge date. For example, if you would normally pay for your monthly membership on May 15, you can continue to play as a Member through the end of the month without charge.

May 31, 2012 will be the last day that the Winster web site will be available. That will also be the LAST DAY to cash in your points to claim a prize, and also the LAST DAY to enter your Claim Code on the Winster web site to receive your prize. It is VERY IMPORTANT to understand that the web site will no longer be available after that date, and there will be no way for you to request or receive any prizes, or for us to arrange to send you any prizes, after the web site is turned off. So please, to avoid any unpleasant surprises, be sure to collect your prizes as soon as possible!

That said, from now until the end of May, you can continue to play and purchase Day Passes, gifts and hats in the Winster Gift Shop if you wish. We also plan to run a final Charity Challenge, starting in early May, in case you prefer to donate your excess points to a good cause.

I want you to know that it has been an honor and a privilege for all of us at Winster to get to know you and to serve you for all these years. I especially want to thank our hard-working Hosts, who have volunteered their time to make others feel welcome, and also our long-time players for their endless patience during our many growing pains (especially our first Member Marlys, who has played nearly every day since February 17, 2006)! I hope that you have enjoyed our time together as much as I have, and that you find happiness and prosperity in your future endeavors. And always remember the precious lesson we at Winster have learned from this experience – that the best way to live a rich and rewarding life is to help others achieve their chosen goals!

Sincerely,

Winnie Winster
Host, Winster.com