

Grensteiner Ronald James
 Form 5
 February 12, 2010

FORM 5

UNITED STATES SECURITIES AND EXCHANGE COMMISSION
Washington, D.C. 20549

OMB APPROVAL

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Check this box if no longer subject to Section 16. Form 4 or Form 5 obligations may continue. See Instruction 1(b).
 Form 3 Holdings Reported Form 4 Transactions Reported

ANNUAL STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN BENEFICIAL OWNERSHIP OF SECURITIES

Filed pursuant to Section 16(a) of the Securities Exchange Act of 1934, Section 17(a) of the Public Utility Holding Company Act of 1935 or Section 30(h) of the Investment Company Act of 1940

1. Name and Address of Reporting Person *
Grensteiner Ronald James

2. Issuer Name and Ticker or Trading Symbol
AMERICAN EQUITY INVESTMENT LIFE HOLDING CO [AEL]

5. Relationship of Reporting Person(s) to Issuer
 (Check all applicable)
 Director 10% Owner
 Officer (give title below) Other (specify below)
 Vice President

(Last) (First) (Middle)

3. Statement for Issuer's Fiscal Year Ended (Month/Day/Year)
 12/31/2009

6000 WESTOWN PARKWAY
 (Street)

4. If Amendment, Date Original Filed(Month/Day/Year)

6. Individual or Joint/Group Reporting
 (check applicable line)

WEST DES MOINES, IA 50265

Form Filed by One Reporting Person
 Form Filed by More than One Reporting Person

(City) (State) (Zip)

Table I - Non-Derivative Securities Acquired, Disposed of, or Beneficially Owned

| 1. Title of Security (Instr. 3) | 2. Transaction Date (Month/Day/Year) | 2A. Deemed Execution Date, if any (Month/Day/Year) | 3. Transaction Code (Instr. 8) | 4. Securities Acquired (A) or Disposed of (D) (Instr. 3, 4 and 5) | 5. Amount of Securities Beneficially Owned at end of Issuer's Fiscal Year (Instr. 3 and 4) | 6. Ownership Form: Direct (D) or Indirect (I) (Instr. 4) | 7. Nature of Ownership (Instr. 4) |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------------------|--|--------------------------------|---|--|--|-----------------------------------|
| | | | | (A) or (D) Price | | | |
| Common Stock | Â | Â | Â | Â Â Â | 49,589 | D | Â |
| Common Stock | Â | Â | Â | Â Â Â | 1,479 | I | By ESOP (1) |

Reminder: Report on a separate line for each class of securities beneficially owned directly or indirectly.

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SEC 2270 (9-02)

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Table II - Derivative Securities Acquired, Disposed of, or Beneficially Owned
(e.g., puts, calls, warrants, options, convertible securities)

| 1. Title of Derivative Security (Instr. 3) | 2. Conversion or Exercise Price of Derivative Security | 3. Transaction Date (Month/Day/Year) | 3A. Deemed Execution Date, if any (Month/Day/Year) | 4. Transaction Code (Instr. 8) | 5. Number of Derivative Securities Acquired (A) or Disposed of (D) (Instr. 3, 4, and 5) | 6. Date Exercisable and Expiration Date (Month/Day/Year) | | 7. Title and Amount of Underlying Security (Instr. 3 and 4) | | |
|--|--|--------------------------------------|--|--------------------------------|---|--|------------------|---|--------------|----------------------------|
| | | | | | (A) | (D) | Date Exercisable | Expiration Date | Title | Amount or Number of Shares |
| Options - Right to Buy | \$ 7 | Â | Â | Â | Â | Â | 05/08/2012 | 05/08/2019 | Common Stock | 20,000 |
| Options - Right to Buy | \$ 10.85 | Â | Â | Â | Â | Â | 06/11/2011 | 06/11/2018 | Common Stock | 10,000 |
| Options - Right to Buy | \$ 10.77 | Â | Â | Â | Â | Â | 06/30/2005 | 12/31/2014 | Common Stock | 7,500 |
| Options - Right to Buy | \$ 11 | Â | Â | Â | Â | Â | 06/10/2004 | 06/10/2014 | Common Stock | 15,000 |
| Options - Right to Buy | \$ 9 | Â | Â | Â | Â | Â | 12/04/2003 | 12/04/2013 | Common Stock | 15,000 |
| Options - Right to Buy | \$ 9.67 | Â | Â | Â | Â | Â | 12/31/2000 | 12/31/2010 | Common Stock | 30,000 |
| Options - Right to Buy | \$ 9.67 | Â | Â | Â | Â | Â | 05/05/2000 | 05/05/2010 | Common Stock | 15,000 |
| Deferred Compensation | \$ 5.33 | Â | Â | Â | Â | Â | Â ⁽²⁾ | Â ⁽²⁾ | Common Stock | 4,500 |

Reporting Owners

| Reporting Owner Name / Address | Relationships | | | |
|---|---------------|-----------|------------------|-------|
| | Director | 10% Owner | Officer | Other |
| Grensteiner Ronald James 6000 WESTOWN PARKWAY WEST DES MOINES, IA 50265 | Â | Â | Â Vice President | Â |

Signatures

Debra J. Richardson, By Power of Attorney

02/12/2010

__Signature of Reporting Person

Date

Explanation of Responses:

* If the form is filed by more than one reporting person, see Instruction 4(b)(v).

** Intentional misstatements or omissions of facts constitute Federal Criminal Violations. *See* 18 U.S.C. 1001 and 15 U.S.C. 78ff(a).

(1) 472 shares of the total ESOP Ownership reported represent an estimated number for the December 31, 2009 allocation.

(2) Deferred compensation payment is exercisable within 60 days after the occurrence of the earliest of the following events: (i) employee's termination of employment; (ii) a change of control of company; (iii) action of the Board of Directors; (iv) employee's death.

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