

THE WRIGHT STUFF

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE U.S.S. KITTY HAWK NCC 1659

### A VIEW FROM THE CATBIRD SEAT By J.R. Fisher



Congratulations! Ten years as a ship of the line in STARFLEET. Not all of them make it this far. That says some good things about

the crew of the U.S.S. Kitty Hawk. I would like to thank Elaine and all of the crew who got together to get me those nice gifts: a gift certificate for Raggazi's and a gift card for Barnes & Noble. That was totally unexpected and tremendously appreciated! I have not used either yet, but I will very shortly. I would remind all of you that it is not something I did alone. All ten years, the crew of this ship has come through time and time again to accomplish the agreed upon goals and bring honor to themselves as well as our ship. I thank all of you currently serving on the Kitty Hawk for your time and devotion to duty; and I thank all of your predecessors for their efforts as well.

We did have one guest to show up from the past in the person of Rear Admiral Jack Hopkins. Jack was my first Operations Officer and we knew then that he had a talent for detail and organization which would serve him well in STARFLEET. Jack is a Vice-Regional Coordinator for Region 1 and he is heading up the summit meeting next spring in Greensboro. Really nice to have him come back to help us celebrate our tenth anniversary. Thanks, Jack.

We had a number of items which were offered for bid at our auction. Several brought disappointing prices but many were reasonable. I remind all of you that made your purchases with I.O.U.'s to the Duke jar, to please pay soon; before you forget about your debt.

By the way, a friend of mine in the NRV train club donated a box of Star Trek goodies this past week to be auctioned off at an upcoming meeting or event with the proceeds to go to the Duke jar. Some very interesting items in this box.

Anyway, thanks to all of you who did participate in our celebration and I look forward to many more in the coming years.

Speaking of which; you need to get me a check for ten dollars for each person in your party to reserve a seat at our holiday party on December 17, 2000 at the Kanki! Please do not put this off as we need commitments now in order to reserve the right size room. Remember how great it was last year? Mail your check today!

We did not schedule a crew trip to the fair this year (mainly because I forgot it) so if you thought you were left out, you weren't. Hope everyone who wanted to go got a chance to do so, since the weather was perfect this year.

Next up for the Kitty Hawk is our annual Halloween bash which will be held this year at the Pischke's home. Time 7 p.m. Saturday, October 28th. Elaine says to bring "good food". Costumes are welcome and requested by not required. A map showing you how to get to Larry and Elaine's is included elsewhere in this newsletter. Please come and be on time.

We don't have a lot planned for the rest of this year as ship or fleet activities are concerned until the December 17th dinner. But, we have agreed to do Raleigh First Night again this year as it will provide additional funds for the ship and our charities. This year we will need 2 people from 4 p.m. until 6 p.m., and 4 people from 6 p.m. until midnight. These are minimum numbers of adults. Youth under 16 years of age will be permitted to be roamers but will not count in our required numbers. Of course, we never know what the weather is going to be on New Year's Eve, especially this far out, but we always manage to have fun. Remember the food! Also remember all the great things that are going on downtown. We have been assigned the same tent as in previous years, closest to the Civic Center. Which means we get to hear and see all the stage acts and music, not to mention, the fireworks at midnight. I hope many of you will come down and join us.

Those of you who have reached a plateau in points which would entitle you to a promotion under the Kitty Hawk system, should be pulling your information together if you wish to secure that promotion in January. Non-commissioned officers wishing to become commissioned officers are encouraged to take STARFLEET Academy's OTS course and hopefully, upon completion, take the OCC course. The OTS course gets you to ensign, OCC is required for command rank.

I would remind you that we are already looking to next year in terms of events and outings. The usual would be our helping with the PBS telethon on their first and last Saturday nights. Duke comes along late in May.

As far as our away team trips, we are looking to Charleston, SC, for a weekend tour of the ships, aquarium, and the town itself. A similar trip is on the schedule for Wilmington, NC, for the USS North Carolina, if the ship is ready by then. Both of these trips would be late spring when it is warm enough to stay on the ships.

A trip to Fayetteville has been suggested to visit the new Airborne Museum. This trip can be done anytime as it is a day trip and not dependent on the weather.

Trips to museums are always (Continued on page 7)





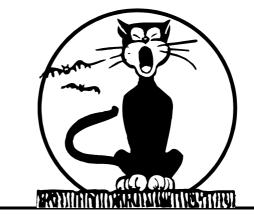
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### THERE'S TRIBBLE IN THE COLLECTIVE By Jeff Cohn

#### Part XI: Pack up your Tribbles in Your Medi-Kit Bag and Smile, Smile, Smile

The door chimed again. Ensign Brett, absorbed in the update of his personal log, decided that whoever it was was not going to give up. "Enter!" Exasperated, he hurriedly narrated one last entry and concluded with an "End Personal Log" as his buddy Nephila strolled in. "Geez Beaker, I've been ringing for 5 minutes, what's so important? You ARE off duty aren't you?" Brett cringed silently at the use of his old Academy nickname. He failed to see the resemblance to the old Televid character. Everyone else seemed to, though, and he knew showing irritation would only encourage them. "Yeah, Neph, but the Commander asked me to maintain a log detailing the behavioral changes we've observed in the tribbles since this whole thing started. I'm the only one on board with a background in behavioral ecology. He thinks it might be useful to compare these tribbles with normal ones. It might give us a clue as to what they might do next. I've been talking with the Commander's old mentor Professor Fisher. He's an expert on tribbles and has some ideas that might help if you're not able to crack the Borg communications processor and shut them down." Now it was Nephila's turn to wince. He'd been working nearly non-stop on hacking the Borg interlink system. Putting them all to sleep, as had been done years earlier by the crew of the *Enterprise* D, should not have been that difficult, but the Borg had updated their security measures. Brett saw the look of hurt and frustration flash across his old friend's face and regretted the cheap comment. Clapping him on the back, Brett tried to make amends. "Let's go down to astrometrics. I hear its like Mars Central Station out there with the Cardassians, Jem H'Adar, and the Borg all trying to take out our little furry friends. Whatever ends up happening, the Commander's plan sure worked. There's no way anyone's going to mount an offensive against Starfleet with all this lunacy going on around us." Nephila brightened a bit, then frowned. "Yeah, Beaker, but none of it will matter if we can't turn them off. We'll just end up overrun with tribbles, just like the bad guys." He shrugged as Brett whapped him playfully on the back of the head, nudging him over to the Astrometrics station

Captain's log Stardate 49289.75. At current velocity, we are two and a half days from Federation space. Two weeks ago this was the front line in the fight against the Dominion, however our sensors are picking up nothing except the huge fleet of tribble vessels. We've received information from several independent sources that the Borg are no longer active in this area of the Quadrant. No sensor contacts have been noted within 10 cubic sectors of the border. Moreover, Starfleet command has informed me that several Jem H'Adar battle fleets have broken off from their engagements and set a course towards the Deep Space 9 station near Bajor. This could be a redeployment with the goal of taking the station and the wormhole nearby. It is, however,

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uncharacteristic of the Jem H'Adar to quit before they've either finished or been totally defeated. Even then... In any event the Cardassians are still causing difficulties, though without substantial support from the Dominion, the Starfleet should be able to maintain the status quo.

Once we reach the Federation border it will be another week to the tribble home world. There are now several thousand cubes, and Satrel informs me that this number will increase geometrically with ships reproducing once every 36 standard hours, assuming they are able to obtain the necessary raw materials. Seeing as this region of space is particularly rich in the required raw materials, this means that 4,304,672,100 ships, by my First Officer's estimate. will enter the Burnham star system in the Pegasus sector. Dr. Fisher has offered to meet us on Burnham IV, the tribble home world, to offer what help he can. I continue to have faith in my crew, and I am confident that we will find a way to deal with this... this mass migration. Captain out.

Benjamin Lawrence completed his rather lengthy log entry with a deep sigh. His Vulcan First Officer approached, and placed a dinner tray before him. Two cheeseburgers, fries, and a cream soda. The replicators actually did a pretty decent job on cream soda. It was one of the few artificial beverages that actually tasted like the real thing. you "Thank Satrel." "Commander," responded the Vulcan, "it has become apparent to me that you have been experi-(Continued on page 7)

## FIRST OFFICER'S LOG By Carey Muse

It was great to see so many familiar and new faces at our recent 10th anniversary bash. Congratulations to J.R. for being our fearless leader and putting up with us for all 10 years. Also, thanks to J.R. and

### SCIENCE REPORT By Elaine Pischke

Happy Halloween, everybody. In science news, we all know by now that the 100<sup>th</sup> mission of the space shuttle finally launched. Other than that, it has been quiet in the science department. We have been busy studying and conducting research, but took a short shore leave to visit the domain of a jolly elf known in these parts as Santa Claus. Younger members of the department were particularly enthralled. Finally, I would like to encourage everyone to come to the Kitty Hawk Halloween Party, October 28, 7:00 p.m. at the Pischke compound. Bring some yummy stuff to share and be sure to wear a costume. Children are welcome.

Jane for allowing us to disrupt their lives once a month with meetings and parties.

I attended both conventions in Durham in September. If you would like a detailed report, please contact me. Two major problems for me with Slanted Fedora were:

- Handicap Access to the stars—there was none. Many conventions, professional and fan run, allow people who are handicap to go to the front of the line no matter where they sit. Many start favor this, too.
- 2. Multiple Stars-I don't

mind this, but the guests need to be in a separate place. There was no where to move in the dealers room, you couldn't look for anything without bumping into somebody.

Don't misunderstand. I enjoyed this con. It was fun to meet new people and add to the autograph collection, all the guests I saw were nice and friendly. These are just a couple of observations I made.

Hope you are making plans to join us for our anniversary/holiday party in December. See you soon.

## MEDICAL REPORT By Amy DeJongh

As procrastination has once again become my closest friend, and I have discovered that Microsoft Word is no longer installed on my home computer— I submit the following for my article:

Recent upgrades on the Chief Medical Officer's computer by her spouse have reduced functions to necessities only (like saving people's lives). Additional utilities were deleted from the programming in sickbay and has not yet been reinstalled by engineering (that's what you get for letting security mess with your hardware!)

With Halloween rapidly approaching, be certain to review safety tips such as:

- 1. Only trick-or-treat in an area and at houses you are familiar with.
- 2. Be sure your mask does not obscure your field of vision.
- 3. Do not eat any loose candy.
- 4. Wear reflective strips and carry flashlights.
- 5. Don't forget to have a great time!
- Be safe, Be happy, Be healthy.

### OPERATION'S REPORT By Larry Pischke

Those of you tuning in for my next hard-hitting installment of "Why Star Trek Sucks" will just have to wait. Such in-depth investigative reporting takes time. Tune in next time. And if I'm lucky, some other old features will be making a comeback. I'm not prepared to say more, for fear of someone trying to hold me to the previous statement. This way, I can slack off a bit more, and no one will be the wiser.

Meanwhile, in the "real world," life continues apace. The year continues to fly by, with Halloween just around the corner. I hope many of you will make it for the party, to be held at the quarters of Elaine and I. It would also be nice of those of you attending to let us know what you would like to bring, so that we can coordinate and supplement the fare accordingly.

### SECURITY REPORT By Spring Brooks

#### THE RISK FACTOR

Because I am an American it appears that I am twice as likely as an English person to suffer an untimely and accidental death. This from *The Book of Risks: Fascinating Facts About the Chances We Take Every Day* by a statistical wonk named Larry Laudan.

It is full of interesting and useful charts, graphs, and factual analyses, mostly to do with coming irremediably a cropper in the United States. Thus, I know that if I take up farm work this year I am three times more likely to lose a limb, and twice as likely to be fatally poisoned, than if I sit here quietly. I now know that my chances of being murdered sometime in the next twelve months are 1 in 11,000; of choking to death 1 in 150,000; of being killed by a dam failure 1 in 10 million; and of being fatally conked on the head by something falling from the sky about 1 in 250 million. Even if I stay indoors, away from windows it appears that there is a 1 in 450,000chance that something will kill me before the day is out. I find that rather alarming.

However, nothing is more galling than the discovery that just by being an American, by standing to attention for "The Star-spangled Banner" and having a baseball cap as a central component of my wardrobe, I am twice as likely to die in a mangled heap than say, Prince Philip or Posh Spice. This is not a just way to decide mortality, if you ask me.

Mr. Laudan does not explain why Americans are twice as dangerous to themselves as Britons (too upset, I daresay), but I have been thinking about it a good deal, as you can imagine, and the answer – very obvious when you reflect for even a moment – is that America is a very dangerous place.

Consider this: Every year in New Hampshire a dozen or more people are killed crashing their cars into moose. Now correct me if I am wrong, but this is a fate unlikely to await anyone in the United Kingdom. Nor, we may safety assume, is anyone there likely to be eaten by a grizzly bear or mountain lion, butted senseless by bison, seized about the ankle by a seriously perturbed rattlesnake, or subjected to an abrupt and startling termination from tornadoes, earthquakes, hurricanes, rock slides, avalanches, flash floods, or paralyzing blizzards -- all occurrences that knock off scores, if not hundreds, of my fellow citizens each year.

Finally, and above all, there is the matter of guns. There are 200 million guns in the United States and we do rather like to pop them off. Each year, 40,000 Americans die from gunshot wounds, the great majority of them by accident. Just to put that in perspective for you, that's a rate of 6.8 gunshot deaths per 100,000 people in America, compared with a decidedly unambitious 0.4 per 100,000 in the United Kingdom.

America is, in short, a pretty risky place. And yet, oddly, we get alarmed by all the wrong ones. Eavesdrop on almost any conversation at Lou's Café in Hanover and the talk will be of cholesterol and sodium levels, mammograms and resting heart rates. Show most Americans an egg yolk and they will recoil in terror, but the most palpable and avoidable risks scarcely faze them.

Forty percent of the people in this country still don't use a seat belt, which I find simply amazing because it costs nothing to buckle up and clearly has the potential to save you from exiting through the windshield like Superman. (Vermont, which is one of the few states to keep careful track of these things, reported that in the first 10 months of 1998, eighty-one people were killed on the state's roads -- and 76 percent of those people were not wearing seat belts.) Even more remarkably, since a spate of recent newspaper reports about young children being killed by airbags in minor crashes, people have been rushing to get their airbags disconnected. Never mind that in every instance the children were killed because they were sitting in front seat, where they should not have been in the first place, and in nearly all cases weren't wearing seat belts. Airbags save thousands of lives, yet many people are having them disabled on the bizarre assumption that they present a danger.

Much the same sort of statistical illogic applies to guns. Forty percent of Americans keep guns in their homes, typically in a drawer beside the bed. The odds that one of those guns will ever be used to shoot a criminal are comfortably under one in a million. The odds that it will be used to shoot a member of the household -generally a child fooling around -are at least twenty times that figure. Yet over 100 million people resolutely ignore this fact, even sometimes threaten to pop you one themselves if you make too noise about it.

But then logic comes into these things. I remember some years ago watching my brother buy a lottery ticket (odds of winning: about 1 in 12 million), then get in his car and fail to buckle up (odds of having a serious accident in any year: 1 in 40). When I pointed out the inconsistency of this, he looked at me for a moment and said: "And what are the odds, do you suppose, that I will drop you four miles short of home?"

Since then, I have kept these thoughts pretty much to myself. Much less risky, you see.

#### Edited from

<u>I'm a Stranger Here Myself</u>: Notes on returning to America after twenty years away, by Bill Bryson, Broadway Books, New York 1999 http://www.bill-bryson.com/

http://www.census.gov/prod/ statistical-abstract-us.html

#### ENGINEERING REPORT By Brad McDonald

Let me start with an apology. Sorry I missed the big party last week. Believe me, I'd much rather had been at the meeting and the celebration. Instead, I had to work. Fourteen hours on Friday, all day Saturday and even more on Sunday. As I explained to J.R, the problem with doing tile and marble is that, no one can walk in your work area. Sadly, this means a lot of weekend and evening work.

On to other topics. As I have complained of beforehand, Star Trek reading is getting very difficult. I recently visited a few local bookstores to get a realistic picture of what is going on. What I found was even more complicated than I had thought. Let me illustrate with a few examples.

The original Star Trek series has the ongoing books, plus the New Earth 1-6 and My Brother's Keeper. Also, some older titles are being reissued. There are other offerings, including the truly bizarre, Star Trek and X-Men! Okay, that gets us started. Now we have the Next Generation. Again, the ongoing book series, then the Double Helix miniseries, the Dominion Wars series and another X-Men tie in. (Somebody please explain the necessity and reasoning behind this!) and the Q Continuum series.

Deep Space Nine has its ongoing book series and then a crossover with Next Gen, the Dominion Wars plus the War of the Prophets mini series. Voyager has its own book series and so far, that's about it. However, in the hardback series (another whole world), and eventually paperback, there have been back stories and prequels to fill in some of the gaps in Voyager crew history .Of course, the Voyager book series has been part of several crossover stories, including Day of Honor and Invasion. There is even the stand alone crossover, Captain's Table.

I suppose the crossover series are the most annoying. The idea of making a story line work in all the various series is just too contrived, too forced and too clever. Once was nice, now its just boring. Too much of a gimmick rather than a means of story telling. And, as if the television series don't provide enough material, there are new series based on new situations and characters. New Frontier and The Best and the Brightest are two such offerings. On top of this, we have the Star Fleet -Year One mini series which is included as a bonus chapter in new books.

Now, after the paperback series, we have the specials. These can be anything like coffee table, megabuck offerings, such as The Art of Star Trek, The Continuing Mission, New Worlds -New Civilizations. Action and the list goes on and on. Also, there are the large or trade size paperbacks and specials. These include the various tech manuals. encyclopedias, chronologies and blueprints. Boy oh boy, the shelves are full! One salesperson admitted to giving up on recommending anything from the Trek world, it was just too complicated and time consuming. But we're not done yet. In another 'brilliant' packaging move, the folks from Trek have decided to package similar television scripts in a single package. From this we get the Scriptbook Series. In a single oversized book, for example, we get a look at Q or Seven of Nine in six or seven stories. However, this does not include

the motion picture script series. Most of the Kirk era film scripts are out and I'm sure more will follow. Of course, this won't interfere with the original TV book adaptations done years ago by James Blish.

Now, after all this, we have another new series, Strange New Worlds. But this one is really different. It's written by fans, not 'professionals'. It's a group of short stories, not one big epic. The real fun part of the whole thing, is they can either be stand alone ideas or pick up on loose threads from other sources. They can be based on any of the four television series and are presented in groupings of each series.

Okay, stand back twenty feet as I'm not responsible for what might hit the fan next. I think the Strange New Worlds are the best stories to hit the market in a long time. Frankly, I'm tired of the same old authors writing stories for the various Trek venues. I'm just bored to tears with the current 12 or so 'apostles'. Just check out the bookstores and look at the writers credits, you'll see what I'm talking about. Not many fresh names among the titles, are Strange New Worlds there? represents the newest in ideas and approaches and not only that, they are good. While I don't always agree with what these writers have to say, they are still giving us a new look at old friends. Check it out, they're already at number three and I believe the series will have a long history. I've always maintained that some fan stories were better than anything I saw from professional, and this proves it. I'll bring a copy of #3 to the next (Continued on page 7)

#### (Continued from page 3)

encing significant levels of emotional stress over the past several days." "It has?" responded Law-"Yes, Commander. rence. As your First Officer, it is my duty to monitor your reactions to the events which confront us, and provide assistance where appropriate. I would like to do so now. You have exhibited signs of irritability, anxiety, depressed mood, agitation ... " "Yes Satrel I get the message." "Commander, I have served with humans for many years. Despite the fact that I am a Vulcan, I have learned how humans react to periods of prolonged emotional duress. Should you care to discuss the issues which concern you, I believe I would like to offer assistance." The Vulcan looked vaguely agitated himself, noted Lawrence with a slight smile. Emotional discussions were discomfiting to members of a species which strives to suppress such responses. Nevertheless, Lawrence appreciated the offer. The Commander grabbed a cheeseburger, and offered some fries to the Vul-"You know Satrel, even can. though Starfleet signed off on

#### (Continued from page 6)

meeting and pass it around. If someone wants to borrow it, fine.

Now, just so you don't think I'm picking on the folks at Paramount, the Star Wars book series is also getting a bit crazy too. Besides the regular series of books based the characters from Episodes 4,5 and 6, there are the following series! Young Jedis, X-Wing~ Tales of Bounty Hunters, Tales of Mos Isley Cantina and the New Jedi Order with two subseries, Agents of Chaos and Dark Tide. Also, Episode I has spawned a series of its own. On top of these are the limited series: Corillian, Lando Calrissian, Han Solo, Black Fleet Crisis, Jedi Academy, Tales from Jabba's Palace, Tales From the Empire,

this plan, I doubt that being responsible for 4 million cyborg tribble-starships devouring entire star systems is going to be looked on favorably at my next Review Board. I must confess to being a bit... concerned. I wasn't planning on creating a new threat to the Federation, merely a distraction to our antagonists that would give us some extra time. I am indeed... anxious that I might be remembered as the one who allowed the entire Quadrant to be eaten by tribbles. This isn't the legacy I was hoping to leave behind." Satrel studied his friend for a moment before re-"Sir. sponding. ...Benjamin. Have you considered this. You were not responsible for the first tribble consuming the contaminated grain. When an opportunity arose to aid Starfleet by distracting the Cardassians you took advantage of it. You are overlooking an important fact. The tribbles are not heading into Federation space because you directed them there. They are motivated by primitive drives to return to their place of origin. As one who has experienced the Pon Farr, I can intelligently inform

Tales from the New Republic and the Bounty Hunter Wars. Of course, Star Wars also has its own share of oversized books, specials, technical manuals, and so on. Half of these books are printed by Bantam and the other half by the new publisher, Lucasbooks. Between Star Wars and Star Trek, there is little room for any other science fiction books, but there are new series on the shelves. Among them, Babylon 5, Battlestar Gallactica, Buffy, the Vampire Slaver, X Files and much more.

So much for the ranting. Thanks for putting up with me again. Hope to see you at the next meeting! Long live and prosper. you that such drives are difficult if not impossible to resist. The tribbles would have fought the Borg, ingested the remains of battle, reproduced, and proceeded on their way had we never attempted to influence them at all. The remaining events have all occurred independently, in no way as a response to anything we have done or failed to do. You have nothing to feel guilty of. On the contrary, you have acted in the finest tradition of Starfleet, placing your ship and crew in harm's way in order to keep Starfleet informed of events of great import." Lawrence looked back and smiled. You're "Thank you my friend. right of course. I'll try to focus less on human feelings of guilt and more on taking some steps to gain control of the situation." Finishing the last cheeseburger, he led the way to the Bridge. There was time to plan, to continue the work. All would be quiet for the next several days, assuming nothing unexpected occurred. Of course, this entire venture had become an exercise in encountering the unexpected.

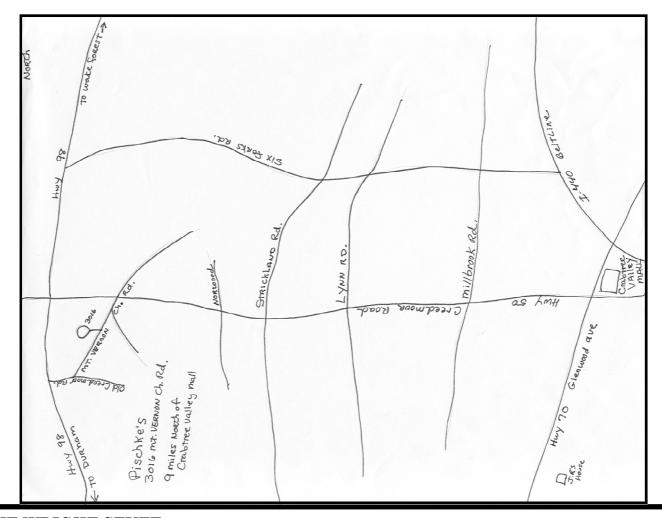
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available and don't forget our discussions regarding a trip to Charlotte by train to visit the IMAX and Discovery Place.

It has been a good year so far; I hope all of you can make the few remaining meetings and events.

As always, you have the Wright Stuff but what you do with it is up to you.

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