

THE WRIGHT STUFF



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THE WRIGHT STUFF

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John Troan



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IMAGES - Title Banner

Wright Flyer from NASA/Ames PAO photo archive;
U.S.S. Kitty Hawk (USN CV-63) from navicp.navy.mil;
Constitution class cruiser from
gwu.edu/~rljones/khawk.



IMAGE - Featured Front Page

Spirit of Apollo - 50th Anniversary of Apollo 8 at the Washington National Cathedral. The Washington National Cathedral is seen lit up with space imagery prior to the Smithsonian National Air and Space Museum’s Spirit of Apollo event commemorating the 50th anniversary of Apollo 8, Tuesday, Dec. 11, 2018 in Washington, DC.

<https://www.nasa.gov/image-feature/spirit-of-apollo-50th-anniversary-of-apollo-8-at-the-washington-national-cathedral>

The Center Seat By John Troan

First, a reminder that Garrett Wang (*Voyager's* Harry Kim) will be returning on March 10 for a talk and dinner -- **and everyone reading this is invited**. We'll be holding it at our usual meeting place (Texas Steakhouse on Airport Blvd in Morrisville). Because it'll be a smaller event, reservations are required. (Just e-mail me and include the number of seats, then I'll send out the confirmation e-mail.)

2019 marks a significant year for the *Kitty Hawk* – it's the 30th anniversary of our launch as a shuttlecraft! (Dec 17, 2019, is the actual anniversary date.) As we approach our thirty-year mark, I'm looking back to all that we've done *and* looking forward to all the "possibilities," as Spock would put it.

First and foremost on both "lists" is charity activity, one of the cornerstones of the *Kitty Hawk* and STARFLEET in general. We've started to re-expand our charity activities, and I'd like to add more. We've grown large enough that we can have smaller groups go to many charity events, instead of narrowly concentrating on just a few.

In 2019, we've already got [UNC-TV](#) (from whom I've not yet heard about the Feb/Mar pledge drive, but should soon; plus there's usually three more mini-drives the rest of the year); [Artspllosure](#) (May); another event TBD around the end of May or early June (more on this as those "possibilities" are worked out); a charity/fun event in concert with the [NC Museum of History](#) marking the big anniversary on [July 20th](#) (and everyone knows what the significance of *that* date is, right?); and our annual year-end collections for the [Food Bank](#) and [Toys for Tots](#). We also have a request from Region 1 to collect a donation for the R1 Space Camp scholarship, [as detailed elsewhere in this issue](#).

However, it seems like there's more that can be done. The question is, *What else do we want to do and can do?*

One possibility is to sign up with Artspllosure to staff one of the [First Night](#) locations throughout the day and night. (When we did this in the past, people did shifts for a few hours at a time.) If we choose to do this, we'll need to start planning and making contact with the First Night folks in June, probably right after "Artspllosure" concludes.

Looking ahead at our non-charity activities for 2019....

We'll be scheduling another recording session for the podcast in March or April. We need at least three more people to record voices, and all the parts are fairly small – the perfect way to get your feet wet! If there are more than three people to record, we'll start un-pairing the parts, beginning with ones that haven't been recorded yet. (Overall, there are a LOT of characters in this podcast and we paired up different characters – in separate acts – for a single person to read without anyone talking to themself.)

I'd also like to get started on building the *Kitty Hawk's* chapter handbook. To make it easier to work on, I'm thinking that someone can first draft up a (very) rough outline / table of contents, using another chapter's handbook for ideas... plus think about *What should everyone know, especially new crewmembers? What questions do our new crewmembers have that would be useful to have answers in the handbook?*

After that's done, the individual sections can be split amongst other volunteers to find or write the details. I do see some kind of a "Welcome!" introduction from the CO near the beginning, so I'm already putting that piece on my To Do list. ☺

Our BIG event of the year will be a return to [Raleigh Supercon](#) (Jul 25-28). I've already made contact with them and will be discussing with them what we'd like – and the panels that we plan to host. The *U.S.S. Charon* (the High Point SFI chapter) is planning to join us again, and the new Greensboro chapter (shuttle *U.S.S. Serenity*) is interested in coming, too. We're also likely to have the Klingon banner (from the Klingon court in *Star Trek VI*) as a backdrop for public photo ops if the space layout permits.

(I'm trying to get the same space we had in 2018, which would be perfect for the photo op.)

As part of the order for our space, I'll get the initial (only?) set of Exhibitor badges. (I also need to ask if I can order more if we need them.) These will let the badge holders in for daily set up before the Exhibition Hall opens on Fri-Sun. (Thursday morning's set up is basically wide open to all and badges haven't been checked during the pre-con set up in past years.)

Looking farther ahead (to 2020!), "[STAR TREK: The Cruise IV](#)" just opened up reservations for Mar 1-8, 2020. The guest list is fairly impressive again – and includes several *Voyager* cast members to help mark the 25th anniversary of *Star Trek: Voyager*. One of our crew has already looked into some of the details, including a finance option to pay for it over a few months.

2019 is looking like a busy year – but it should also be a LOT of fun for everyone!

Esse Quam Videri

Comp Ops Report By John Troan

I took advantage of my Christmas vacation and not only caught up on things, but even got a little ahead in prepping new content for [our web site](#) – namely the first parts of Brad's next narrative, "[Final Mission](#)" – which starts with [the introduction and teaser in this issue](#).

I also did some work on the new "LCARS II" look to our web site. This includes the second set of curved shapes and (finally?!) getting the right typeface. The core design will be rolled out site-wide as this issue of the newsletter is published and posted on-line. However, the "content" portion of each page will involve manually editing and proofing each page, so they'll be rolled out in batches. (If I catch a break, it could be one or two large batches to get everything done in short order.)

As a followup from last issue, NASA's [InSight](#) Mars lander is now settling in to its new home – [InSight flexed its \(robotic\) arm](#); [listened to the local winds](#); [placed its first observational instruments](#); and even [took a selfie!](#) The team at NASA's [JPL](#) has [made a Martian rock garden](#) to accurately simulate the terrain around *InSight* and placed its twin (*ForeSight*) in the middle for first practicing every move on Earth before sending commands on to Mars.

NASA's [OSIRIS-REx](#) mission, now in orbit around the asteroid Bennu, [has discovered water on that asteroid](#). What was detected were hydroxyl groups, combinations of hydrogen and oxygen atoms – the same two elements that make water.

Although the [Cassini](#) probe was plunged into Saturn's atmosphere over a year ago, the data returned continues to feed research. One recent discovery made from the data during *Cassini's* final "ultra-close orbits" (going between the planet and the rings) is that [Saturn's rings are likely much younger than previously thought](#). Part of the research into that discovery came from [NASA's Voyager spacecraft](#), which flew by Saturn in the early 1980s.

... and speaking of which, [Voyager 2](#) has [just reached interstellar space](#) after exiting the heliosphere, the region of space around the sun that is protected by the sun's magnetic fields. (It was preceded [into interstellar space by Voyager 1 in 2012](#).) One note in the JPL story is that neither probe has left the influence of the sun's gravity, and they won't reach the Oort cloud for another three hundred years.

In celebration of *Voyager 2's* journey into interstellar space, NASA's JPL has added new posters to [the collection they've already created for the Voyager program](#).

Another recent release from JPL is [their 2019 calender](#). It features a combinations of NASA and JPL historical photos, along with various anniversary dates of JPL's many projects over the decades.

Quartermaster/ Yeoman Report By Larry Cox

Inventory:

1 Polar Camel Kitty Hawk travel mug
\$24.00.

Tee Shirts Full color, all \$20.00;

1 White L,
1 Black L,
2 black XL
1 Red XL

Tee shirt monochrome, \$17.00;

1 Black XL.

Thanks again to all who were able to participate in the food drive for the Food Bank and toys for Toys for Tots. I'll try to start collections again around September.

And thanks to everybody for your donations to the treasury. Suggested donations are \$12.00/year or \$1.00 per month.

Region 1 was not able to offer a Space Camp scholarship last year due to a lack of donations and has announced a renewed effort to raise the funds for this year. Since there's no Region 1 Summit this year, a large auction-driven fund won't be forthcoming. They are therefore asking individuals and chapters to help fill the gap. I'd like to see if the *Kitty Hawk* is willing to step up and help in this effort. The February meeting will offer an opportunity for more discussion and details and as Treasurer I'm willing to try and coordinate any moneys collected for this cause. Following is the Region 1 Facebook posting on this subject:

Region 1: it is a new year and time for a renewed challenge. The Region 1 Space Camp Scholarship came up short of our goal of being able to send someone to camp last year. We currently have \$736.40 in the scholarship fund. This means we need \$463.60 to reach our goal. I know many individuals and chapters have donated in the past

and I'm asking for your continued support as well as for any new donors who are willing to donate. I'm renewing the challenge for each chapter to donate at least \$25.00 for a chapter of 5 that's \$5.00 each member. If a larger chapter could get all of its members to donate that would mean even more but any amount from chapters or individuals will help.

This year with no Region 1 Summit we won't get the usual large donation from the auction so individual and chapter donations are more important than ever. This scholarship provides an amazing opportunity for a young person in our region and the longer it takes to award a scholarship the more likely the cost is to rise again.

We are all fans of a show where humans explore the universe and seek out the unknown. We all would love to see that future. But interest in our own space program especially among young people is waning. If it can't be rekindled then it has no future. And before you ask What Space Program? I remind you right now 6 people orbit the Earth on the International Space Station, a crew of 3 returns to Earth and is replaced by a new crew roughly every 6 months. Unmanned robotic missions in the last year have literally touched the sun, landed on the far side of the moon, and flew by an object further from Earth than ever before in human history. One other robotic mission became the second to leave our solar system. This year Americans should once again launch from American soil and next year we will send the first unmanned Orion capsule on a month long mission around the Moon to prepare it for manned flights. Our Space program is far from dead. If we want to keep youth interested in the program we need to get them excited about Space again. Programs like Space Camp can do that.

The cost of attending, however, can be prohibitive for many. As

much as 1,200 for a week-long program. This Scholarship covers tuition for almost every camp program offered with the exception of Cyber Camp. Yes, the student's family still has to cover travel and some other expenses for items the student may need but we cover the largest expense. But we can't do it without your support. So please dig into your loose change and make a donation for the future.

To Donate to Scholarship Send a check made out to SF-Region One with Space Camp in the Memo Line to:

Barry Jackson
6723 Market Street Ext.
Washington, NC 27889

To donate Via Paypal you can directly send donations to the new space camp Paypal account using the address spacecamp1@gmail.com. At present the donate link on the Region 1 website is not set up to take donations to this account so please send any donations directly.

Science Tidbits By Mohamed Noor

"MUTATIONS" IN STAR TREK AND SCI-FI

We often hear about "mutations" in science-fiction, and in *Trek* in particular. A crew member encounters some external force, whether it's from radiation or moving at "warp 10" (see *Voyager* episode "Threshold," and Tom Paris's transformation into an amphibian), and within days, a visible transformation begins. Aspects of this depiction are reasonable. For example, we get mutations in various cells of our body: e.g., exposure to ultraviolet light can lead to DNA damage (ie, "mutations") that cause skin cancer. Scientists talk about an individual's complete "DNA sequence," but if one obtained the full DNA sequence from cells at the tip of their thumb and from the tip of their big toe, the DNA sequences would NOT be identical due to mutations

that happened during cell division as we develop.

However, mutations are unlikely to cause the fully functional physiological changes one sees in *Star Trek* or other science fiction for many reasons. First, even if multiple cells in a person mutate at once, it's exceedingly unlikely they would all obtain the same specific mutation. Each cell has 2 copies of the full DNA code, each bearing roughly 3.1 billion "letter" elements. Clearly, the odds that the same letter would change from some source of radiation is very, very, very low. This problem may be mitigated slightly if the agent of mutation is a pathogen that directly manipulates the host's DNA, but it definitely would not work for mutations induced by radiation or other environmental inputs. Second, assuming the mutation which arises would be pretty random, there's a high probability that 1) there would be no detectable effect, 2) the cell would just die, or 3) the cell may become cancerous. Third, no matter the source of mutation, any major "transformation" in appearance (shy of "death" of the altered cells) would probably be quite slow. While some cells divide rapidly, some divide once a month or less often. As such, a human body changing to something radically different (e.g., an amphibian) with new organs could never happen over hours or days.

A SLIGHTLY more realistic option for transformation than a change in DNA sequence is a change in which genes are "turned on." We have tens of thousands of genes producing proteins, but they are not all "on" at the same time, varying in how much protein they produce with age or various environmental inputs. Some genes are known to be turned on in response to high temperature, for example, and it's conceivable that some may be turned on in response to something associated with going "warp 10." The catch is that, even if that is true, the transformation must be something which is already encoded on our DNA. In the case of the *Voyager* episode "Threshold," that means we would have to already have the DNA code for becoming that

sort of functional giant amphibian in our bodies presently. This is still quite a stretch – we share genes with amphibians, but we certainly don't have the genes to make a functional giant amphibian – but at least it gets us a bit closer to the sci-fi depictions. Now we just have to determine if that is what happens after radioactive spider bites...

Engineering Report By Brad McDonald

For this report, I'm going to alter my usual commentary on technology, movies & TV, science, the universe and such. This time it's personal and important to me and my family.

In April of 2010, my sisters and I met with the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency. At that time, they informed us that an attempt to identify all missing servicemen of the United States was underway, including our uncle who was lost at Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941.

They took DNA samples from all three of us and made it clear that the identification would probably not occur in our lifetime. At that time, there were still 388 unidentified *U.S.S. Oklahoma* dead and it would take a very long time.

On Saturday, November 17 of this year, we met again with the POW/MIA Agency in Greensboro, to get an update on progress. We were very surprised by what they had to say and the various developments that had occurred since our last meeting.

First of all, Congress made special funds available specifically for the identification of the Pearl Harbor missing. To our amazement, the agency had already identified 200 remains! This was due to great advances in DNA testing, acquiring more equipment, improved equipment, additional personnel and new identification procedures of all types.

The agency presented an incredible program which outlined how they were able to repair damaged DNA, sort out co-mingled remains and

other, somewhat miraculous, feats. Although all of the bodies were originally interred in Hawaii, the investigation is being conducted in Nebraska. A converted Air Force hanger is now a top rated facility. Labs for the POW/MIA agency, as well as police labs and others, are all accredited by a national agency which is located in... Cary, North Carolina!

Our family was given a briefing by a navy commander assigned to my uncle's case. Also, there were scientists from the Nebraska and Hawaiian labs to discuss specifics. At this time, they discussed obtaining further DNA samples from our cousins for paternal DNA. This would help make the identification process progress faster and more accurate and increase the chances of locating my uncle.

Later, during the question and answer session, the leading scientists and staff members explained that, despite what you see on TV and in movies, DNA tests require 55 days to complete and about a third of the 'scientific tests' that you see are the product of writer's imagination. This confuses relatives of missing servicemen. They ask why those methods aren't being used. The scientists have to explain over and over about the 'bogus' science.

Ironically, many of the techniques used by law enforcement came from the POW/MIA Agency and, that the first time DNA was used to identify a person was by the D.O.D in 1991 for a missing serviceman in Viet Nam.

Some of the information given to us seemed like science fiction. Other information was overwhelming, such as how they review 3,000 DNA samples for every 200 identifications made! At any time, there are over 700 sets of remains being processed. This is due to the fact that the agency is looking world-wide for all missing service persons from every conflict the U.S. has been in.

I had finished writing this report when the December 7, 2018, edition of the *News & Observer* featured a story about the identification process concerning the U.S.S. *Oklahoma* missing. The article focused on the reburial process, which follows

identification. Once sailors and marines are positively identified, next of kin are notified for ultimate disposition. Families have the choice of where the remains will be buried and that ranges from hometown cemeteries, the Punchbowl National cemetery in Hawaii or even Arlington, Virginia.

The article focused on six recently identified unknowns and their ultimate disposition with a brief history of the victims and family. It is quite interesting, especially to those of us who are a part of this chapter in U.S. history.

The families of the missing are really pleased with the process and the results. Even if my uncle is never identified, which is a distinct possibility, I'm satisfied knowing the D.O.D. has done their best. Our country is the only one that is looking for their missing and unidentified. That says a lot about our country as a nation. 'Leave no man behind' is the creed by which the U.S. military operates, which is why they spend time and money to search for and identify the missing.

In the meantime, our family will keep our fingers crossed and hope for the best. Time will tell.

**ST:TOS — "Final
Mission"
By Brad McDonald**

This story is a long one and it's had an equally long history.

Many years ago I had an idea for a *Star Trek* adventure. It would take place after the *Enterprise* was decommissioned and the crew members had moved on to other pursuits. I also wanted to update various characters who had been introduced throughout the original series' three-year run, the animated series and the subsequent movies.

When I left the theater after watching *Star Trek: The Undiscovered Country*, I thought that it would be the last one for the original series. I wrote

an outline and placed the story not too distant from the events depicted in *Star Trek VI*. I wanted to show the changes that would occur over that time, how the crew progressed, the Klingon/Federation alliance, but mostly to get the crew back together one more time. The reason for the reuniting would have to be important enough, but I didn't want Earth threatened again. I wanted it to be more personal.

I wrote the story and had a friend type it as she was very quick. About this time, someone suggested I submit it for publication. I made all the necessary arrangements, talked to a copyright lawyer and obtained the correct format needed for both submissions.

Finally, I thought I was ready to send my story to the publishers. Shortly before doing this, *Generations* came out. I had to do a rewrite due to several events depicted in that movie. I finally submitted the story, which was promptly rejected. (I still have the rejection letter.) But the note attached to it was proof that no one actually read it. So I put the whole thing in my old camera bag and stored it in the closet along with boxes of other rejected and incomplete stories.

Recently, I decided to dust off the story and share it with fellow *Star Trek* fans. As it had been some time since I wrote it, I read it again and found that it would need to be reworked once more to accommodate the many changes in subsequent movies. I began updating the story when I remembered the old KISS principle; keep it simple, stupid. The *Trek* universe had changed so much that any alterations would have been very cumbersome and even ridiculous.

At this point, I went back to my original story, which encompasses the original series, the animated series, the first six movies and their novels. By doing this, I could avoid creating situations to 'correct' what had happened in other movies, then 'correct' that to justify what had happened later on. Besides, now that the series has been given a new start, which disregards all that has gone before, what was the point of trying? However, I tried to remain

faithful to the canon, up to the events in *ST VI*.

By the way, I will follow up the story with explanations of my line of thought and references to where I came up with certain items. So before you question my sanity or thought processes or my 'facts', please wait. Most of my facts came from the *Star Trek Encyclopedia*, *Star Trek Concordance*, the movie novelizations, scripts and so on.

So I began to polish the story and type it on my own. (Actually, I used a word processor.) I believe that my story gives a reasonable accounting of what could have happened, say hello to some old friends, meet some new ones, and a couple of farewells. True to the original *Star Trek*, there are a few smiles, a few tears and a few surprises along the way as well.

To set the stage properly then, forget anything after the events of *Star Trek VI*. I hope you enjoy the story as much as I enjoyed writing it. Live long and prosper.

[Editor's note: Final Mission starts with this issue of The Wright Stuff and continues with monthly(!) installments on [our web site](#).]

Prologue

"Personal log of Admiral James T. Kirk. The readiness inspection team has transferred from the *U.S.S. Lyon* to the new starship the *U.S.S. Vikrant*. Admiral Rya, Captain Ramirez, Captain Mani and myself have been impressed with changes made in the Relan Sector, which is adjacent to the Romulan Neutral Zone. All installations, outposts and bases look to be more than ready if the Romulans try anything."

Kirk tapped the console control to stop the log entry and sat back to relax. Looking at the guest quarters he was assigned, he was a bit overwhelmed. The room was more like a luxury hotel than a starship. The honor was probably due to his recent reinstatement as an admiral. He smiled at the thought, it took long enough.

His thoughts were interrupted by the door chime. "Come," he said, then stood to greet the visitor.

The door opened to reveal Admiral Rya, smiling broadly. "Not bad, right, Jim?" He indicated the posh accommodation with a wave of his arm, then examined the room closely. "I may apply for shipboard duty again if this is what I get for quarters."

Kirk countered, "You and I are both permanently grounded, remember? You, because of your age and me, because I can't act my age." He finished on a smile then asked, "What brings you here?"

"Oh, yes! I almost forgot, dinner is served and I know where the guest dining room is." He acted as if it was a major accomplishment, but Kirk knew better.

"You used that extraordinary nose of yours... sir. I know your reputation as a 'chow hound.' Anyway let's go, I'm hungry."

A short walk and a few minutes later, the two senior officers were enjoying a relaxed dinner in a large room, empty but for the two of them and a yeoman acting as hostess, waiter and personal assistant.

Kirk was sitting opposite of Rya. Behind the Andorian was a large viewing port and Kirk caught himself gazing at the star field from time to time. Their conversation ranged from academy days to shipboard duty and even family. It also included the not too infrequent interruptions by the dutiful yeoman, trying to be sure that all was well.

With her last visit, the table was cleared and Kirk assured her that they would no longer need her services. Then Rya began talking about his home world. Kirk half listened as he noticed a strange phenomenon, a distortion in the star field. He searched his memory, where had he seen that before? Then it hit him, the cloaked Klingon Bird of Prey at the Genesis Planet!

"Jim, are you okay?"

The question brought Kirk to his feet just as three Romulan ships de-cloaked, not much more than a stone's throw from the Federation starship.

Turning to see what upset Kirk, Rya began to speak just as the ship's klaxon rang out. That was followed by

an excited voice on the intercom, "All hands to battle stations, red alert, red alert, this is no drill!"

The announcement was followed closely by several heavy impacts and the large ship rocked. Rya struggled to keep his 'sea legs,' "High energy weapons!"

"Yes, but none of those ships fired." Kirk was pointing to the Romulan ships in view. "That means there are even more." Looking at Rya he announced, "I'm going to the bridge, care to join me?"

Without answering, Rya followed Kirk at a trot through the nearby doors. On the way to the bridge, the pair noted several more heavy impacts, resulting in flickering lights and other minor problems. The ship was rocked violently just as they approached the bridge. As they entered the ship's command center, it was barely functional. Half of the people were already dead or injured. Circuits were crackling and the resulting sparks showered several consoles. Captain Blanchard was still in his seat, but injured and bleeding. He turned to relay an order when he caught sight of the two senior officers. "Can you lend a hand? I need a replacement at the science console and a helmsman!"

Immediately, Rya rushed to the science station and Kirk took the few steps to the helmsman post. He was dismayed by what he saw: burned circuits, damaged controls and very few active readouts. As he tried to sort through the mess, the ship took more impacts.

"Engineering, shields!" Blanchard waited for a few beats, then tried again, "Engineering, report!" The lanky Belgian cursed in his native language and was about to repeat the order when a very faint voice responded, "Romulans in engineering, intruder alert –"

Rya turned from the science station viewer to face Blanchard, "Not just engineering. By my readings, they're in auxiliary control, emergency bridge, security and three other sections. They're trying to take control of the ship!"

Kirk turned to face the ship's captain, "We can't let them do that."

This is the newest ship in Starfleet. It holds many secrets, including us..." He left the statement unfinished but the implication was clear.

Nodding in agreement, the injured captain moved in pain, but rapidly to the communications console. "Lieutenant, have you contacted the Lyon yet?"

"No, sir, all signals are being jammed!"

The captain turned to the main viewer just as three more Romulan ships appeared.

The communications officer then announced, "The Romulans are calling for our surrender, sir." The fear in her voice was evident but so was her resolve.

The turbolift doors snapped open to reveal a disheveled Ramirez. "Romulans have taken the secondary hull. It's just a matter of time before they gain control of the ship's computers." As he finished, he leaned on a nearby console for support, nearly breathless.

"That tears it!" Blanchard made his way quickly to the engineering console. "Computer, bring the self-destruct sequence on line. Recognize Blanchard, Yves, Captain."

The computer responded quickly, "Self-destruct sequence on line. Recognize Captain Blanchard, begin destruct sequence by entering code."

The ship was rocked again and now calls could be heard over the intercom from other ship sections announcing the presence of Romulans.

Blanchard rushed through the process, "Computer destruct sequence, alpha, alpha, zed, destruct."

Kirk recognized the generic Starfleet destruct code. Its use was intended for just this type of situation, when the ship's senior officers were unavailable. He leapt to Blanchard's side with Rya close behind.

The engineering console displayed the coded sequence and Blanchard turned to Kirk and Rya. "My senior staff is either dead or captured, I need help!"

"Computer, recognize, Kirk, James, Admiral. Sequence amended

by Flag Officer under emergency condition, alpha, alpha, gamma."

Again the display reflected the command without challenge, recognizing the emergency condition and the presence of intruders.

Rya didn't wait, "Computer, recognize Rya, Calla, Admiral. Amend sequence by Flag Officer under emergency condition, alpha, alpha, delta."

The display added Rya's command.

Blanchard spoke loudly, so there would be no doubt of his intent. "Computer, final sequence, alpha, alpha, destruct alpha."

"Awaiting order for final countdown," the computer announced.

"No countdown, destruct now!" Blanchard turned to Kirk, "Sorry, sir."

Kirk shrugged, "Looks like I won't be able to collect my first paycheck as an admiral."

In the distance, he heard the scuttling charges detonating, but before he felt anything, he was surprised to see, Rya, Ramirez and Blanchard disappear in a transporter beam, then it overtook him as well.

[Continues on the U.S.S. Kitty Hawk web site](#)

***ST:TOS* — "Hades"** By Brad McDonald

PART II - TEASER

FADE IN:

LAST WEEK IN PART ONE

INT. ENTERPRISE – ON KIRK

FITZGERALD (V.O.)

Kirk? Admiral Fitzgerald; I've got a change of orders for you.

KIRK

May I remind the Admiral that we are overdue for a leave...?

FITZGERALD (V.O.)

Sorry, Kirk, it's a high priority and you're in the area. All available information and a

full mission brief is attached to this transmission.

KIRK

May I know where we're going?

FITZGERALD (V.O.)

Absolutely, Captain; you're going to Hades.

CUT TO:

SPOCK

All resources are limited, but particularly water. Total population of the planet is less than that of a single large city on most planets. And the locals are... unfriendly.

MCCOY

(agitated)

So why are we going Jim? What's the attraction?

KIRK

It's simple doctor, they have something we want.

CHEKOV

Such as?

SPOCK

Dilithium crystals and much more.

SCOTT

How much more?

SPOCK

Virtually everything Engineer; pergium, zeinite, tritanium, and murinite just to name a few.

KIRK

There's one more thing. Olin is running out of water.

CHEKOV

So what exactly is our mission?

KIRK

Establish contact, generate trust and let them know the Federation will help, but only with their direction and cooperation.

MCCOY

Not to rain on your parade, Jim, but what if they don't want anything to do with us?

KIRK
Then we have a major problem. Command wants this resolved before we get any time off.

CUT TO:

ANGLE ON MAIN VIEWER

KIRK
Chief of Council Benel. I am Captain James T. Kirk of the starship Enterprise, we represent the United Federation of Planets.

BENEL
State your business, Captain.

KIRK
We are here to discuss the possibility of establishing diplomatic relations and perhaps trade...

BENEL
I will present your proposal to the councils and let you know.

ANGLE ON MAIN VIEWER AND KIRK

BENEL
Captain, our council has decided to give the Federation a test. If you pass, we will begin negotiations. However, if you fail...

KIRK
Of course, we will be glad to—

BENEL
Perhaps you should hear what we have in mind before you accept. You can accept or reject what we call 'The Challenge.' To cross a selected part of our planet. Many of our people do this as part of their acceptance as a true believer... not all pass the test and they are natives.

KIRK
Regardless, we accept.

CUT TO:

KIRK
What about the team?

SPOCK
The team shall consist of the following personnel.

ON VIEWER

We see the image of a dark-haired woman, Montalva.

SPOCK (O.C.)
Lt. Montalva, from the Atacama Desert, driest place on Earth, no rain in 400 years. Her people are the Atacameno, an ancient people who are well suited to desert life.

The image changes to a young Asian man, Udval.

SPOCK (O.C.)
(continuing)
Specialist First Class Udval, a Mongol, nomadic people of the Gobi Desert and a descendant of Genghis and Kublai Khan.

Image changes again to a dark woman, Lingari.

SPOCK (O.C.)
(continuing)
Yeoman Lingari, from the Great Sandy Desert. She is of the Anangu people with the ability to survive under the harshest of conditions.

The image shifts to a young bearded man, Zana.

SPOCK (O.C.)
(continuing)
Ensign Zana, known as 'Bedu,' from the Arabian Desert. His father is Kurd and his mother is Bedouin, both desert people of considerable skills.

The image is of an American native, Coloradas.

SPOCK (O.C.)
Lt. Commander Coloradas, a Chiricahua Apache. His people are known for their ability to find water anywhere and move like the wind in the

Sonoran and Chihuahuan Deserts.

CUT TO:

EXT. OLIN – LATE AFTERNOON – CLEARING

SPOCK
I am called Spock. I am First Officer and will lead the team.

BENEL
I am Council Leader Benel. My advisors: Pilit, Jorvan and Tuvar.

He indicates each in turn.

BENEL
(pointing, continuing)
You will find a marker of size and importance in that direction. It's at the base of the tallest peak in the mountains.

(beat)
My advisors are amused. Anyone can survive given devices. But this is a test without weapons, communications or any technology. Not even your uniforms. We will provide that which is used by our own people.

CUT TO:

SPOCK
Spock to Enterprise.

KIRK (V.O.)
We were beginning to worry.

SPOCK
Unnecessary, however, we will be out of touch for approximately twelve days as communicators are not permitted on the challenge.

CUT TO:

EXT. OLIN – EARLY EVENING – ANGLE ON STONE BUILDING

Spock and team exit building wearing native clothing. They are examining the outfits.

LINGARI
Evidently they require everyone to be dressed in a

similar manner to level the playing field.

CUT TO:

BENEL

This is a quan. It sends out a continuous signal so we can track your progress. Should you decide to quit, simply destroy it. A loss of signal will indicate you wish to concede defeat.

CUT TO:

MONTALVA

What is our strategy, Mr. Spock?

SPOCK

Simple survival, Lieutenant.

CUT TO:

ZANA

An animal carcass was placed in the pond. The water is beyond reclamation. After a number of hours in the Olin sun...

He leaves the statement unfinished.

SPOCK

It would seem our efforts are being sabotaged. Question is, by whom and why?

ACTION IS CONTINUOUS FROM PREVIOUS WEEK'S SCENES

TWO SHOT – SPOCK AND COLORADAS

COLORADAS

Based on what we've found so far, water sources have been spaced at intervals that provide bare minimal survival.

SPOCK

Agreed; we need to locate another water source quickly.

COLORADAS

Then we will need to keep looking, even during the day.

SPOCK

Unfortunately, you are correct.

NEW ANGLE – ON GROUP

MONTALVA

(concerned)

Won't that make the water situation even worse?

UDVAL

Not necessarily, and without water, we won't survive. We don't know how long it will be before we find more.

LINGARI

We're already overdue for water; we don't really have much choice.

ON SPOCK

SPOCK

Regardless of the risk we will proceed. Keep in mind, this may jeopardize our mission as well as our lives.

Off his statement...

FADE OUT.

END OF PART 2 - TEASER

PART II - ACT ONE

FADE IN:

EXT. OLIN – MORNING – DUNE SEA – ZANA and MONTALVA – WIDE ANGLE

They are walking slowly towards each other and meet. Zana carries a spear; both are dirty and suffering from heat with chapped lips and redness.

ZANA

(moving)

I didn't find anything, any luck on your side of the dunes?

MONTALVA

(moving)

No, but I suggest we take a short break at the base of that dune, the leeward side to avoid dust storms, right?

Montalva points to a shaded area as the two meet.

CAMERA FOLLOWS ACTION

ZANA

(moving)

Agreed, there's a bit of shade and I need a rest. Olin is even hotter than home.

At the base of the dune, Zana tests the ground with the spear.

ZANA

(continuing)

At least there's no quicksand!

He smiles at Montalva and the two sit close in the limited shaded space.

TWO SHOT – ZANA AND MONTALVA

MONTALVA

I thought the Arabian Peninsula was the hottest area on Earth.

ZANA

Common misconception, it's only true in some areas.

(beat)

But your home is the driest, right?

ON MONTALVA

MONTALVA

(smiling)

Yes, but not the sort of distinction people celebrate; we certainly don't.

(beat)

I've heard people calling you Bedu, where did that come from?

ON ZANA

He returns the smile and takes a deep breath.

ZANA

I'm half Bedouin and after a few hours at the Academy, I became Bedu.

MONTALVA (O.C.)

And your other half?

ZANA

Kurdish, but somehow that didn't translate into anything else.

TWO SHOT – MONTALVA AND ZANA

She's now interested in Zana and curious.

MONTALVA

You don't mind?

ZANA

No, I actually enjoy it. It sort of defines who I am.

MONTALVA

At least half of who you are.

The two share a brief laugh.

ZANA

Do you have another name?

MONTALVA

No, not really.

She's leading up to something but hesitant.

MONTALVA

(continuing)

Do you think we'll succeed?

ON ZANA

He's cocky and projects confidence to Montalva.

ZANA

Of course, with all of us being experts and Mr. Spock as our leader, how can we fail?

He finishes on a big grin.

ON MONTALVA

MONTALVA

Right, as long we don't find another poisoned water hole.

TWO SHOT – MONTALVA AND ZANA

ZANA

Speaking of which, it's time we resume looking.

The two stand and look around.

MONTALVA

Better split up again. You go north around the dunes, I'll go south and meet later.

ZANA

Count on it! By then, I may have a new name for you!

Montalva smiles broadly.

EXT. SPACE – ENTERPRISE AND OLIN

Enterprise is in orbit.

INT. ENTERPRISE – BRIDGE – ON CHEKOV

He's studying science station viewer, puzzled.

CHEKOV

Captain? I'm getting unusual readings from Olin's surface.

KIRK (O.C.)

How so, Ensign?

CHEKOV

Scans are still... difficult, but it looks like the team is moving and it's mid-morning.

ON KIRK

He's concerned and pulled as well.

KIRK

They're moving during the day? I thought they'd restrict movement to night. That's the first rule of desert survival.

NEW ANGLE

UHURA

Could be they had to push ahead to stay on schedule, regardless of the heat.

SULU

Maybe they couldn't find water and had to keep moving.

CHEKOV

They're moving, but not making very good progress. Must be rough going.

CLOSE ON KIRK

He's very concerned, thoughtful.

KIRK

I'm sure it's no cake walk, Ensign. But if they're in trouble I want to be able to get them out, fast. Let's keep a twenty-four hour watch on them from now on.

CHEKOV (O.C.)

Aye, sir!

DISSOLVE TO:

EXT. OLIN – MID MORNING – ON SPOCK

He's moving slowly, looking under rocks carefully as Lingari approaches in B.G., very tired.

LINGARI

(moving)

Any luck, sir?

Spock stops work and turns to face Lingari.

SPOCK

Unfortunately no, Yeoman; and you?

TWO SHOT SPOCK AND LINGARI

Lingari, now face to face with Spock and apologizes.

LINGARI

Sorry, sir, the dry river bed was just that. I looked in the bends and low areas...

Spock realizes Lingari is discouraged.

SPOCK

I'm sure you did your best, which is why I chose you for that task and this mission.

She brightens a bit, then:

LINGARI

Shall I continue to scout to north, sir?

SPOCK

Affirmative, but remain in sight of a team member.

Lingari moves off slowly as Spock watches, concerned.

DISSOLVE TO:

ON UDVAL – CAMERA FOLLOWS ACTION

Udval is moving cautiously, investigating a trail of animal tracks. He changes angle of view several times to follow the path, concentrating intently.

CLOSE ON UDVAL'S FEET

He steps on a loose rock, loses balance and falls.

AS BEFORE – ON UDVAL –
CAMERA FOLLOWS ACTION

He recovers slowly and reacts to pain as he tries to stand. Failing that, he sits and examines his ankle and removes boot.

CLOSE ON ANKLE

It's swollen and discolored.

ON UDVAL – NEW ANGLE

He tries to stand, it's difficult and sits back down, carefully and slowly, exasperated.

DISSOLVE TO:

ON SPOCK

He's working on a bow when he stops, listens and turns.

SPOCK'S P.O.V.

He sees Coloradas approaching in a hurry.

TWO SHOT – SPOCK AND
COLORADAS

COLORADAS

We've lost contact with Mr. Udval, sir. I thought you should know. I've notified the team and started a search.

SPOCK

Well done, Commander. We need to assist with the search.

CUT TO:

ON UDVAL

He's resting but hears footsteps and pulls a knife.

UDVAL

Lingari? Coloradas?

UDVAL'S P.O.V.

Over the dunes, we see Lingari, Zana and Montalva approaching.

ZANA

(moving, half-serious)

You're not following procedure.

AS BEFORE – ON UDVAL

He's smiling and relieved, returns knife to pocket.

UDVAL

Are you referring to my injury or my failure to stay in sight of the team?

WIDE ANGLE

Lingari moves to assist Udval, concerned.

LINGARI

(moving)

What happened?

UDVAL

(embarrassed)

A stupid mistake. I think my ankle is badly sprained.

Lingari examines Udval's ankle carefully; he reacts.

LINGARI

I'm sorry. Does it hurt much?

He tries to downplay the injury.

UDVAL

Just a little bit. Guess I made the challenge more difficult.

MONTALVA

I'm sure we'll manage.

UDVAL

If necessary, you can leave me behind. I'll understand.

ON MONTALVA

She stops working and becomes adamant.

MONTALVA

I wouldn't and no one else would. Better count on leaving with us!

NEW ANGLE

Spock and Coloradas appear, Spock goes to Udval.

UDVAL

(continuing, pointing)

Sir, I think there may be water, in that direction.

Spock nods, Zana and Lingari go to investigate.

COLORADAS

(to Spock)

As Mr. Udval will require assistance, may I suggest we rotate that duty?

SPOCK

Agreed; please set up a duty schedule, Commander.

COLORADAS

Yes, sir, and I'll convert one of our spears into a crutch.

MONTALVA

(confident)

I've got his ankle immobilized. We can move anytime.

ANOTHER ANGLE

Lingari and Zana return, smiling and excited.

ZANA

(pointing)

We found water! It's just over the adjacent dune.

SPOCK

Commendable work, Mr. Udval. We need to proceed to the water source and rest until nightfall.

Montalva and Coloradas help Udval to his feet and move off; Spock leads. Zana and Lingari pick up the remaining supplies and tools.

TWO SHOT – LINGARI AND ZANA

LINGARI

(moving)

Finding water may mean that our luck is changing.

ZANA

(moving)

Tell that to Udval.

Off his statement...

FADE OUT.

END OF PART 2 - ACT ONE

Upcoming Events

Feb	2	4 p.m. Ship Meeting Texas Steakhouse, Morrisville
	12	6 p.m. Jayne Brook dinner Texas Steakhouse, Morrisville
Mar	TBD	UNC-TV, 6 p.m. UNC-TV Studio, RTP
	2	4 p.m. Ship Meeting Texas Steakhouse, Morrisville
	10	5 p.m. Garrett Wang's talk and dinner Texas Steakhouse, Morrisville
	23	Deadline for next newsletter articles
Apr	6	4 p.m. Ship Meeting Texas Steakhouse, Morrisville

DON'T FORGET TO CHECK YOUR STARFLEET STATUS

THE WRIGHT STUFF
U.S.S. KITTY HAWK
5017 Glen Forest Dr.
RALEIGH NC 27612