

THE WRIGHT STUFF



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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

Celebrated each year on March 30, National Doctors' Day recognizes the contributions of physicians to individual lives and communities. At NASA, a number of our astronauts also have been physicians. NASA also has flight surgeons, who specialize in caring for our astronauts.

Mae Jemison, the first African American woman in space, was also a physician and flew on Space Shuttle Endeavour's STS-47 mission in 1998. In this image from Jan. 1992, Jemison works at NASA's Kennedy Space Center.

<https://www.nasa.gov/image-feature/celebrating-nasas-astronaut-physicians>

The Center Seat

By John Troan

Following the success of our virtual Anniversary dinner at the end of January, we're going to do another virtual dinner – this time on April 17 at 6pm. Same as before, we'll login to a Zoom meeting and just simply eat & socialize together – no meeting agenda and not even a suggested menu.

The *Kitty Hawk* handbook is still in the works, but the schedule is sliding a bit – which means there's time for eager volunteers to pick up a section or subsection to write. ☺

It's also been suggested that we look into the cheap rental of a movie theater for the group – after we've all had our covid shots – and watch a (*Trek*) movie together. I've been given a contact that covers four different Triangle-area theaters, so there are possibilities.

In checking the STARFLEET database, it looks like everyone with a March or April SFI renewal has had their renewal requests processed. My apologies, again, for anyone that had a short notice and I'm going to try to watch a little better and give 60- and 30-day notices.

Three other items from STARFLEET.... first is that the 2021 International Conference has been pushed back

to 2022 due to covid concerns.

Second is that STARFLEET has now codified No Bullying text into the STARFLEET Membership Handbook's section for Code of Conduct. Our handbook will copy that Code pretty much word-for-word (with proper attribution).

Finally, I've seen a few things mentioned recently that those of us who have to take – or that I've asked to take – the STARFLEET DPP exams will need to take a separate annual refresher (instead of the same exams again). I'll have more on this once it's available.

In a quick Regional update, the new domain is in place – r1.sfi.org – and I've put in a place-holding web page until we add more content. I'm also rebuilding all the mail forwarders and mailing lists.

As we move into the summer and second half of the year, please be on the lookout for volunteer opportunities that we can do after we've gotten vaccinated. I miss being able to get out and look forward to returning to our core mission of community service.

Esse Quam Videri and Stay Safe!

Computer Operations Report

By John Troan

The next installment of [our current narrative](#) has been posted to our [website](#). The rest of the installments will be posted monthly through June, and another narrative is planned to start with the July/August issue of the newsletter.

The biggest NASA news since the last issue is the [successful arrival and landing](#) of [Perseverance](#) on the Martian surface. Not long after landing, one of the main investigative instruments – the Mastcam-Z – [turned in its panoramic view](#) and it wasn't too much longer before [Perseverance made its first motion across the Martian soil](#). In another first, we now have [the first sounds recorded from the Martian surface](#) and [another recording includes the first sounds of the rover's movement](#).

Not to be forgotten, the [Juno](#) probe in orbit around Jupiter has [recently discovered what creates the dawn brightening of the gas giant's auroral oval at each pole](#).

For planned human missions, NASA has [completed testing of an Ares I core stage](#) of the [SLS rocket](#). It looks like a shuttle-era external tank, but is bigger and has its own engines.



Perseverance snaps its first full color photo of Mars

Engineering Report

By Brad McDonald

Lots to talk about, so let's get started.

Scientists are giving one of our 'neighbors' a fair chance at harboring life. Alpha Centauri-a may be a life-supporting planet. It's located in the habitable zone of the star and is roughly the size of Neptune. That translates to about four to five times the size of Earth. Life forms may be somewhat different than those on Earth, but the chances are good.

As part of the [Apollo 14 mission](#), pilot Stuart Roosa carried a selection of tree seeds. On board their command module called the *Kitty Hawk* (!) were hundreds of seeds for redwoods, long needle (loblolly) pine, douglas fir, sweet gum and sycamore trees. Upon return to Earth, it was discovered that the seed canister was compromised and the seeds were thought to be dead. However, they did survive and were sent to California and Mississippi to be germinated and 450 saplings were eventually grown. The saplings were then sent to schools, universities, parks, government facilities and even Brazil. To locate the trees, NASA has set up a '[moon tree](#)' page and every tree is listed.

Elon Musk has stated that the [Starlink Satellite Internet Service](#) will double speeds later this year to 300Mb/s and latency will drop to approximately 20ms. This will tie into the goal to reach most customers by the end of this year and complete global coverage by next year. By the way, latency is the delay of how much time it takes a signal to travel from location to location. The system is intended to serve low density population areas where internet service is limited. It's estimated to cost \$10 billion but profits could be as much as \$30 billion. That translates to ten times the profits of his current rocket business.

Haley Arceneaux, from St. Francisville, La., was selected as one of four civilians who will be part of the [Inspiration4](#) mission in the fourth quarter of 2021. At 29, she will be the youngest person in space, which will beat Sally Ride's record by seven years. However, that's not the only first for her. At the age of 10, she was a patient at St. Jude's Hospital where she received treatment for her cancer, now she works there. During her cancer treatment, she lost her femur bone and so she will be the first person in space with a prosthetic device. Another first for the mission concerns the pilot, Jared Issacman, founder and CEO of Shift4 Payments. He's a pilot with much experience and has flown over 100 air shows as part of the Black Diamond jet demonstration team. He also has a rating to fly both commercial and military aircraft. SpaceX will provide training for the two plus two more people who will be decided by a contest.

NASA has awarded [SpaceX \\$330 million to launch two pieces](#) of [The Gateway Project](#), which is a permanent space station that will be in orbit around the moon. Gateway will be part of the [Artemis program](#). The two Gateway sections will be launched using the SpaceX Heavy Lift rocket. The Artemis program will put humans back on the moon in 2024. Gateway Station is planned to be about 1/6th the [ISS](#). It will have sleeping quarters and a work area. Spacecraft will carry astronauts to the Gateway, then take a lunar lander to the moon. Next in line will be the human landing system, which will take the astronauts to the Gateway station. Things are really moving along. I may yet see people walk on the moon again!

However, the return mission to the moon may not

happen on schedule after all. Budget restraints, delays due to the Covid-19 virus and mismanagement from the former administration have all led to delays. Studies are being conducted to determine the actual problems and possible solutions.

The furthest object in our solar system has been identified and is 140x Earth's orbit. It's a dwarf planet, only 250 miles in diameter and orbits in a very elliptical path, once every 800 years. Until a more permanent name is chosen, it's being called Far Far Out.

While we're talking about remote objects, an ongoing quest for planet X has come to a screeching halt. After reviewing all the existing data gathered so far, much of it was found to be unreliable. Because of this, the search has been put on hold. In fact, planet X may not actually exist after all!

Virgin Galactic has put off its next test flight another three months. The previous tests revealed numerous problems from electromagnetic interference which led to computer problems. The problem caused an engine ignition failure. That system was replaced, but more EMI issues were discovered during the February 13 flight and will take until May to correct. Investors are disappointed as Virgin Galactic shares have fallen. However, the company has already sold 600 seats and future plans call for two more space ports. Also, they are building more ships and seem optimistic about their future.

If you wondered why the parachute on the [Perseverance rover](#) was decorated with random patches of color, well, it wasn't random. It was encoded with a message which was decoded by a number of 'fans.' The first three rings read: Dare Mighty Things. Also encoded were the longitude and latitude of the NASA Center. Included were drawings of previous rovers, DNA, a rocket and a dinosaur. Items such as those are referred to as festooning by NASA people. According to the NASA folks, there are other items yet to be discovered or revealed.

Space rock (231937) 2001 F031 is scheduled to approach Earth on March 21 and will be as close as 1.3 million miles. Not super close, but close enough! The asteroid is very speedy at 77,000 miles an hour, but still had its picture taken March 11 by the Elena Robotic Telescope in Ceccano, Italy.

The space race is everywhere, even in South Africa. The [MeerKAT](#) in South Africa is the largest radio telescope with 64 antennas. It will eventually be part of the [Square Kilometer Array](#) (SKA) which will exceed the capabilities of Hubble. The South African space authority has also launched three cube satellites called 10x10x10's with many more to follow. The 10 is actually ten centimeters and the small satellites will be linked together and will perform basic scientific duties.

Russia and China have agreed to build a joint lunar space station on the moon or in orbit. The facility will be open for use by all nations in order to "foster peaceful exploration and development of outer space." This increases their sharing of technology, weapons and economic ties, not to mention hacking and other cyberthreats. Experts say this is one more reason for establishing the U.S. Space Force.

NASA's [Parker Solar Probe](#), launched in 2018, performed a mission it wasn't designed to do. As part of the probe's flight path, it flew by Venus to use the gravity for acceleration. While 'in the neighborhood' the two optical telescopes captured images of Venus, even though,

technically, they shouldn't have been able to do so. A new capability of the probe was discovered accidentally. It can detect thermal radiation as well as visible light. The probe will eventually study the sun's solar winds and corona until 2025.

A space station, similar to the one featured in *2001: A Space Odyssey*, may actually come to life, sort of. Voyager Station is basically a hotel in space or a communal space station. It will consist of 24 habitable modules, a restaurant, event center and more. It will use a moon-type gravity rather than a full Earth one. Orbital Assembly Company is the group charged with building the station and they will use an automated or robotics system to construct the station. Originally it was called the Von Braun Station, as he proposed such a structure. However, his name was dropped since he worked for Nazi Germany which used slave labor to build his V-2 rockets. It's still a long way before it even begins, so don't make reservations, yet.

A Boeing 777-200, United Flight 328, Denver to Hawaii, had an engine blow up shortly after take off which scattered parts all over Denver suburbs. The exposed engine fire rattled the 241 passengers and the plane had to declare a mayday. However, they landed without incident. Boeing grounded all 777s powered by Pratt and Whitney engines (#4000-112), which was involved in the incident. Two fan blades failed and the FAA has required all 777s receive stepped up or immediate inspections. United is the only U.S. carrier affected, but Japan and South Korea have planes with similar combinations of plane and engine. The previous incident occurred in Japan on December 4, 2020, at Naha Airport in Okinawa and that plane landed safely as well. Just

as I was writing this, another 777 had to make an emergency landing in Moscow after an engine warning light came on. However, that particular 777 was equipped with a different type engine made by GE. Overall, Boeing has built 1600 passenger 777s and 200 cargo versions.

Boeing has other problems as well. Their [Starliner](#) test has been postponed again, by at least another week, past its April 2nd proposed date. That doesn't sound too bad unless you realize the original completion date was in 2007. Starliner has yet to complete a non-crewed mission, far less a crewed one. Considering that NASA paid \$4.2 billion for the Starliner system, it's very discouraging to say the least.

In decidedly Earth-based news, Paramount has announced another new service, Paramount+ 45. It's a new streaming service which will show new movies 45 days after being released to theaters. The new feature will be part of the overall Paramount+ service which replaces CBS All Access. This is another major blow to movie theaters which are already suffering greatly from the Covid outbreak. No word yet on cost or how it will tie into the current service.

While watching the news on CNN, Saturday 2/27, at about 8:35, I was surprised to see a familiar face. George Takei was being interviewed by Pamela Brown. They were discussing a book written by 'our favorite helmsman' titled *They Called Us Enemy*. It's a graphic novel which was written with Justin Eisinger, Steven Scott and illustrated by Harmony Becker. It was originally released in 2019, but it has become topical again due to the recent rise in racism. The book illustrates Takei's experiences as a child during the relocation of Japanese-American citizens during World War II.

StarFleet Book Review

By William Simkiss

Now, the difficulty of doing a book review series is that many readers here will have already read the book I happen to review. Which lowers their interest, sadly. Or may provide them with something to agree with — send all thanks to me through Elaine Pischke — or provide the fun of something to violently disagree with — in case of which, send all those to Captain John Troan... But this newsletter, in honour of his recent 90th birthday — 22 March — let's consider Mr. William Shatner.

Ah, yes! Montreal's William Shatner. The Federation's Captain James Tiberius Kirk. Avid Kentuckian horseman and horse breeder. Hollywood's Maker of *Star Trek* Documentaries. As an actor, Bill Shatner has been the star of SIX television series, 7 *Star Trek* movies — and nearly countless acting credits. And one of those TV series was an adaptation of a book series he wrote! His own *TekWars*. Some folks may not know that he actually has many books to his credit. And so this tribute and review.

When people ask me, "Are there any *Star Trek* books you can recommend?" I always find myself immediately saying, "Yes. William Shatner's *The Return*. But before that, you really have to read the first book, *The Ashes of Eden*. Then I launch into this "promo." Every time. Without fail.

It gives away nothing that the book, *The Return*, was written as a way to get his Starfleet character back on to the screen, with the *Next Generation* cast. And that it begins with the very end of the movie *Star Trek: Generations*. But

this time, it's Ambassador Spock kneeling there at the cairn over his beloved friend and captain's grave. Then witnessing a battle in space — phaser canons of unknown fleets blazing away at each other. Suddenly a tinkling sound is heard, a beam of light enters the rock cairn — and all the stones fall in. The body has been exhumed by a transporter beam! And, no less, by the Borg. The rationale: if they couldn't beat the Federation using Locutus — Jean Luc Picard — then use another human to beat Picard. And the Federation.

And THAT is how it begins! That alone made me turn the pages fast. I truly enjoyed the book, the concept, and the execution. Shatner writes his *Trek* series — ten books in all! — with the help of accomplished writers Garfield Reeves-Stevens and Judith Reeves-Stevens.

The Return includes all the *Next Generation* cast, involved with Kirk in various ways, and does a good job of catching the character of each correctly and enjoyably. There is a good deal of true inventiveness and cleverness in the plot. And, at the end, he goes back to reclaim a love he lost in the previous book, *The Ashes of Eden*.

Very briefly, the first book sets up the rest of the series, with an incredibly enjoyable plot, a wicked pair of villains, and very colorful scenes. In the process of the book, you see the aged captain grow reflective and mature. And gain a true and lasting love. All under a Sword of Damocles like you've never dreamed of before.

But that story is for another day.

ST:TOS - "Only the Good"

By Brad McDonald

ACT FOUR

FADE IN:

(NOTE: ACTION IS CONTINUOUS FROM ACT THREE.)

EXT. SPACE – ENTERPRISE AND KLINGON SHIP

The Klingon ship is moving towards Enterprise.

INT. ENTERPRISE – BRIDGE – ON COMMAND SECTION

Lighting changes to reflect red alert. Sulu is working his weapon's console as Spock watches main viewer

SPOCK

Mr. Sulu, status of the Klingon vessel.

SULU

(off console)

Shields and screens up and all weapon systems armed.

SPOCK

Lt. Uhura, open a channel to that ship now, force it if necessary!

UHURA

Yes, sir!

She works her console for a few beats, then:

UHURA

(continuing)

Mr. Spock, I have Commander Kreln on visual.

ANGLE ON MAIN VIEWER

We see Klingon bridge, Kreln is in center seat, N.D. Klingon crew in B.G., ready for battle.

NEW ANGLE – SPOCK AND MAIN VIEWER

SPOCK

Commander Kreln, I wish to report the loss of your captain—

Kreln cuts Spock off, angry and barely under control.

KRELN

(interrupting)

We know! That is why we attack! We seek revenge on his killers!

ON SPOCK

SPOCK

You are basing your attack on an unwarranted assumption. Your Captain was killed by his own operative, a Miss Para, currently in custody by local authorities.

KRELN (O.C.)

I don't believe you! You lie!

SPOCK

Vulcan's do not lie, however, you may check my facts, if you wish.

ON MAIN VIEWER

We see Kreln signal to N.D. crewperson and speak quietly, then turn back to Spock.

KRELN

We are checking, but if this is an attempt at deception...

He leaves the threat implied. In a few beats the N.D. crewperson motions to Kreln and speaks quietly and his expression changes.

KRELN

(continuing)

We have confirmed what you said, but how do we know you did not conspire with those... people?

ON SPOCK

He reacts to Kreln's distaste for the locals.

SPOCK

Quite simple. You and your crew had the local populace convinced that we were not worthy of trust or an alliance. Why would they do so now?

TWO SHOT – SPOCK AND KRELN'S IMAGE

Kreln is thinking and Spock senses a way to end the confrontation.

SPOCK

I suggest you power down your weapons and we will do the same. You may then transport to the planet and confirm what I have said.

While Kreln considers the proposal, Spock 'lays it on thick'.

SPOCK

(continuing)

I see little reason for either of us to engage in a battle for a people who are unworthy of a 'glorious death.'

Kreln is calming down and nodding in agreement.

KRELN

I shall contact my superiors for further instructions. This communication is ended.

The main viewer goes blank.

BRIDGE – WIDE ANGLE

SPOCK

Mr. Sulu?

SULU
(off console)

They are powering down weapons!

SPOCK
Reciprocate, Mr. Sulu.

SULU
(working)
Aye, sir, weapons are off-line.

CHEKOV
(surprised)
They are lowering shields!

ON UHURA

UHURA
(smiling)
When they arrive, planet-side, they'll be lucky to get out alive!

(beat)
Well done, Mr. Spock, although, I doubt the people on the planet would consider themselves... unworthy.

ON SPOCK

SPOCK
Nor would I, Lieutenant. I was simply pointing out that the Klingon warrior code would not support a battle for a population of 'sheep.' Kor said as much when we were dealing with the Organians.

AS BEFORE – ON UHURA

She decides to have some fun with Spock.

UHURA
I take it that was before the Organians revealed their true nature.

Spock raises an eyebrow.

EXT. DELTA OMICRON V – GOVERNMENT BUILDING – LATE AFTERNOON

INT. COUNCIL CHAMBERS – WIDE ANGLE

Order has been restored. Kirk is speaking to the council chairperson and Bingham is working with alien security.

TWO SHOT – KIRK AND COUNCIL CHAIRPERSON

CHAIRPERSON
You risked your lives to protect us. How can we repay you?

KIRK
All we ask is that you listen to what we have to offer. If you owe anyone, it's your own people. Mr. Barat made our work possible.

CHAIRPERSON
(confused)
How?

Kirk points to concealed panel and smiles.

KIRK

He told us about the secret panel.

Chairperson smiles and shakes head in disbelief.

CHAIRPERSON
Rarely used these days, forgot about it.
(beat)
How were you able to arrange all of this?

ON KIRK

KIRK
Easy, the Klingons wanted to believe they had succeeded. When they saw our ship leave, they were convinced their plan worked. But we would have been in trouble if they scanned our transporter.

CHAIRPERSON (O.C.)
Why?

NEW ANGLE

Bingham has moved close to Kirk.

BINGHAM
They would have realized there were humans mixed with your own people.
(to chairperson)
Your security team wishes to speak to you, sir.

Chairperson moves off and Kirk confronts Bingham.

KIRK
When Kreln aimed his weapon at me, there was a moment—

ON BINGHAM

She nods in acknowledgement and smiles.

BINGHAM
(interrupting)
When you thought I might sacrifice myself to protect you?
(beat)
Me, too... then I realized it would be wrong. No one knows how precious life is more than me.

ON KIRK

He nods in understanding and approval.

KIRK
Agreed, Lieutenant.

EXT. SPACE – ENTERPRISE AND DELTA OMICRON V

Enterprise is in orbit around planet.

INT. ENTERPRISE – KIRK'S DUTY OFFICE – ON KIRK

Kirk is working at computer console when door chime sounds.

KIRK
Come!

NEW ANGLE

Door opens and Bingham enters, uneasy. Kirk picks up on it and becomes friendly, putting her at ease.

KIRK

Come in, Lieutenant, and have a seat, please.

He indicates chair opposite of him. She moves to it, still uneasy and sits.

BINGHAM
(moving)

Thank you, sir. You wanted to see me?

TWO SHOT – KIRK AND BINGHAM

She notices Kirk's active viewer.

BINGHAM

Did I come at a bad time, sir?

KIRK

Not really, just reading a report from Command. Looks like we did fairly well. At least Command and the Federation Council think so.

Bingham relaxes and smiles.

BINGHAM

Really, sir?

KIRK

Looks like the Klingons have left this sector.

BINGHAM
(hopeful)

Permanently?

ON KIRK

KIRK

Maybe not, but it gives us a chance to prove ourselves to the people in this sector. If we get a foothold it will be more difficult for the Klingons to return and set up any colonies.

ON BINGHAM

She smiles in understanding.

BINGHAM

Under the Organian peace treaty, they won't be able to claim this sector right?

AS BEFORE – ON KIRK

He smiles and leans forward.

KIRK

Not only good looks, but smart too.

Kirk changes attitude and direction of conversation.

KIRK
(continuing)

I have your request for leave...

CLOSE ON BINGHAM

BINGHAM

I've decided to go home, sir. I was talking to my friends... asking what they would do with limited time...

KIRK (O.C.)

They know?

BINGHAM

Just asked, hypothetically, but I came up with a list of things to see and do.

TWO SHOT - KIRK AND BINGHAM

KIRK

It's your right to return home, but I was under the impression you considered the Enterprise your home.

BINGHAM
(embarrassed)

Well, sir, yes. But... I wasn't sure if I wanted to... wait for the... inevitable.

(beat)

Is that... unreasonable?

CLOSE ON KIRK

KIRK

No, not at all.

(beat)

Where will you go?

TWO SHOT – KIRK AND BINGHAM

BINGHAM

Hawaii, Everest, Grand Canyon, Galapagos...

KIRK

Sounds great. Wish I could go, too. How will you explain your absence to your friends on the Enterprise?

BINGHAM

I have forty-two days of leave saved up.

(beat)

Sir, I'm not real good with goodbyes. Maybe you could explain... after I leave.

Kirk softens tone and smiles warmly.

KIRK

Count on it... Hannah, isn't it?

BINGHAM

Yes, sir, but I rarely use it.

(beat)

Thank you, sir.

Kirk is surprised by the comment.

KIRK

For what, exactly?

BINGHAM

For... understanding, letting me go on the mission, not trying to... protect me...

ON KIRK

KIRK

I was just letting you... find your way, until you figured out which path you wanted to take.

(beat)

Best of luck.

(beat)

Yeoman Barrows has your travel orders and transportation arrangements.

NEW ANGLE

Bingham stands to leave, Kirk follows suit.

BINGHAM

Thank you again, sir.

She turns to leave, Kirk remains standing as she exits.

KIRK

(to self)

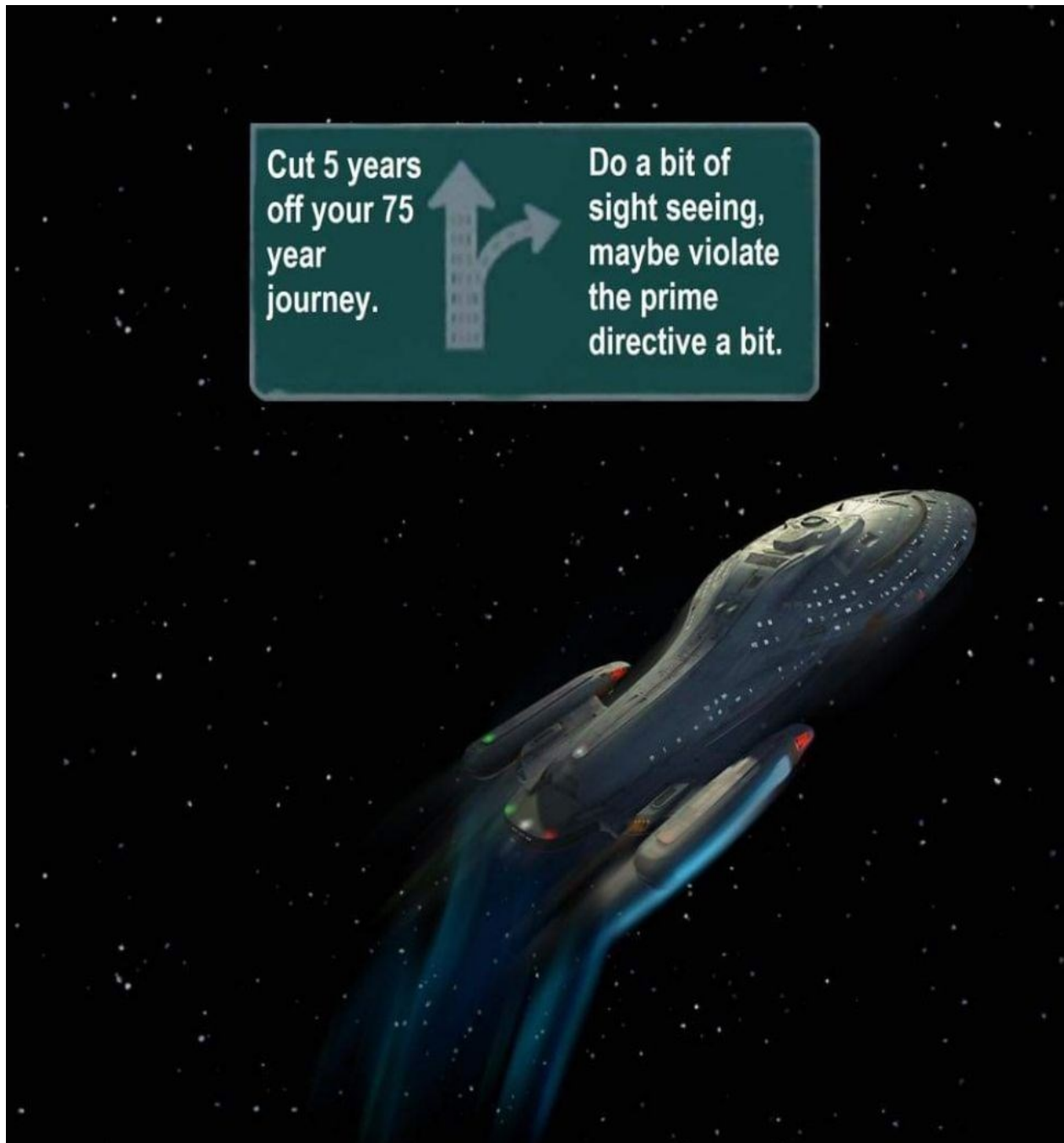
Bones was right, only the good die young...

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT FOUR

THE END

Feeling adventurous, might violate the prime directive later, IDK



Upcoming Events

Apr	3	Meeting on Zoom	4 P.M.
	17	Virtual Dinner on Zoom	6 P.M.
May	1	Meeting on Zoom	4 P.M.
Jun	5	Meeting on Zoom	4 P.M.

DON'T FORGET TO CHECK YOUR STARFLEET STATUS

THE WRIGHT STUFF
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