

COMSTAR

Newsletter of the U.S.S. Chesapeake Star Trek and Science-Fiction Club

January, 2005



Gamers can now enjoy playing in the Classic *Trek* era on their cell phone.

Star Trek journeys into the cell phone gaming universe

Star Trek fans who enjoy playing games on their wireless devices, rejoice! Jumbuck Entertainment has answered your wishes with two new wireless games, both based in Classic *Star Trek*.

Star Trek—The Birds of Prey and *Star Trek—The Cold Enemy* are for fans and gamers of all ages, each featuring varying strategy, action and skill levels, as well as a blending in of original music and storylines from the Classic *Trek* series.

In *Star Trek—The Birds of Prey*, players engage the U.S.S. *Enterprise* in combat against Klingons and Romulans in a vertical arcade-style shooter. Not only are there deadly enemies, but players must also contend with natural obstacles and dangers such as wormholes and giant planet-based cannons, as well as maneuver through dangerous solar flares.

Star Trek—The Cold Enemy is a platform scrolling adventure game where players take on the role of Chief Engineer Montgomery Scott as the ship has been overrun by Klingons. As Scotty, players race through six levels of action trying to free their trapped fellow crewmates, not only on the ship but also on exotic planet surfaces and menacing underground caverns, all the while taking on all kinds of enemies.

“These are Jumbuck’s best games yet!”

said Adrian Risch, Jumbuck Entertainment CEO. “*Star Trek* is a valuable asset, and to ensure we met the expectations of the legion of fans, we worked in close cooperation with Viacom and fans to get the design right.”

The hard work appears to have paid off. *Birds of Prey* was awarded 8.9 out of a possible 10 by Steve Palley, editor and reviewer at *Wireless Gaming Review*. He described the game as “one of those exceedingly rare media-licensed mobile games that flies in the face of convention. It’s not only a pleasant surprise—it’s a spectacular action game that is easily one of the best shooters on the mobile platform.”

✦ Outtakes and deleted scenes will be highlights of the upcoming *Star Trek: Enterprise* DVDs when they are released in box sets later this year.

The Digital Bits website is reporting from an insider that the multi-disc collections of *Enterprise* episodes will feature rare, unaired footage. The original series “blooper reel,” a collection of outtakes and jokes on the part of the cast, were a highlight of *Trek* conventions for many years.

The first set of *Enterprise* DVDs, currently scheduled to be released in May, will also reportedly include “*Enterprise* Secrets,” which are probably similar to the “Red Shirt Diaries” Easter Eggs on the Classic *Trek* DVDs. ■

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Start out 2005 at the January club meeting!

The next meeting of the U.S.S. Chesapeake *Star Trek* and Science-Fiction Club will be held on Saturday, January 22, at the Laurel, Maryland, home of Starfleet Intelligence Officer Annie White and Chief of Computer Operations John White.

We’ll gather at 5 p.m. at their home to decide what we’ll do for dinner that evening.

At 7 p.m., we’ll begin our monthly club meeting, which will include discussion of upcoming conventions (including Farpoint), find out what fellow club members are up to and get the latest *Star Trek* and other science-fiction news.

Check out the insert with this newsletter for directions. ■

Volume 14, Issue 1

CAPTAIN'S LOG: New voyages of Classic Trek—4

For the past few months, we've been looking at fan films continuing the adventures of Kirk and company in *Star Trek: New Voyages* and another series following the journeys of a different ship set in the Classic *Trek* era, *Starship Exeter*.

It wasn't long before the fan in me asked the inevitable question: "What would happen if these two ships ever teamed up?"

Happily, other online fans have asked this question, and the answer required the crews to jump to another format and get animated!

A really fun site on the World Wide Web is www.startrekanimated.com, which celebrates what is usually called *Star Trek: The Animated Series*, a cartoon produced by Filmation in the 1970s that featured the voices of the original series actors in new adventures of the starship *Enterprise*.

Along with a message board where you can discuss your favorite *TAS* episode, the site has such goodies as versions of characters from other "generations" of *Trek* if they were in the animated show, a place where you can send online greeting cards with images from the cartoon and a way to get your very own animated portrait!

But my favorite part of the site is where some folks have created online comic books in the *TAS* style. The first of these was an adaptation of the most popular episode, "Yesterday," in which Spock uses the Guardian of Forever to go back in time and save his younger self from an early death on Vulcan.

Since then, the online comics have contained new images and new stories, one of which deals with Kang's wife taking a ship to the Great Barrier to try and create Klingons with the incredible powers Gary Mitchell got in "Where No Man Has Gone Before."

Well, one of the comics creators got a look at the *Exeter* film and was inspired to produce "Home Is Not a Place," an online comic that features a young M'Ress (the feline character voiced by Majel Roddenberry) and an adventure she had on her home planet while a member of the *Exeter* crew.

That tale led fan Colin Moore to envision a full-blown crossover featuring both casts in the animated style, which is entitled "For Death or Glory."

While assisting a damaged vessel near the Neutral Zone, the *Enterprise* is attacked by the

Romulans, who claim the Federation has made an unprovoked attack on a science station on their side of the border.

The *Exeter* joins the battle, and after the Romulans retreat, Kirk decides to investigate their claims while Captain Garrovick helps the damaged ship get to a nearby starbase.

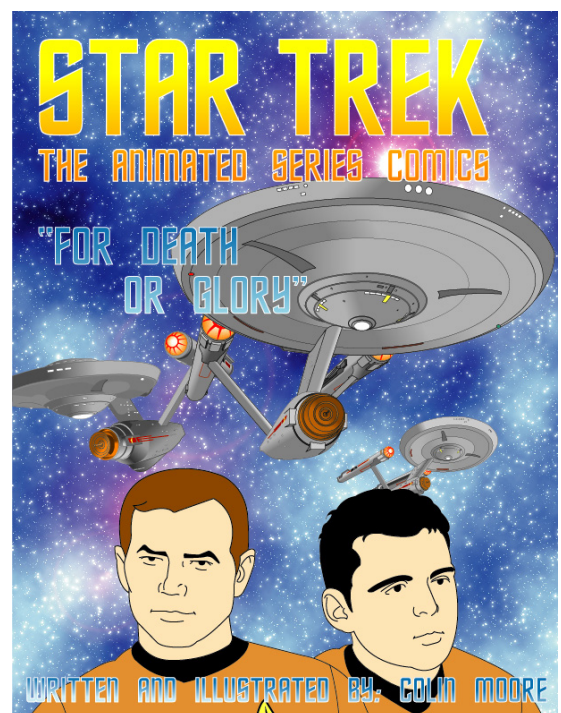
It doesn't take the *Enterprise* long to find out who's at the bottom of this mess, an enemy who has ties to both Kirk and the *Exeter*. (I don't want to give it ALL away, but just think of the scene with fighting music in "The Omega Glory.")

The comic is a bit thin on plot, but it has incredible art and makes brilliant use of continuity from "The Omega Glory" and "The Enterprise Incident," as well as the prefix code introduced in *Star Trek II: The Wrath of Khan*.

Therefore, I heartily recommend everyone check out "For Death or Glory" at the *Star Trek* Animated site, especially the comic book fans in our group.

Finally, I also want to encourage those who are interested in the *New Voyages* fan films to go out and get the latest issue of the *Star Trek Communicator* magazine (#154, with Brent Spiner as Dr. Soong on the cover) for a terrific article on "In Harm's Way," which lets us know work is already underway on the third adventure of Kirk with the Elvis hairdo! ■

Captain Randy Hall



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website: www.usschesapeake.org

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those of the
entire club.

"Star Trek,"
"Star Trek: The Next
Generation," "Star
Trek: Deep Space
Nine," "Star Trek:
Voyager," and "Star
Trek: Enterprise,"
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SCIENCE TREK: What was new in the old year

2004 is done. Gone, but not forgotten yet. So before we get too far ahead in two-double-ought-five, let's take a look back at the science and technology of 2004 and see what they mean for our future. Fortunately, I have a copy of *Time's* November 29, 2004, issue, with the convenient cover story headlined "The Most Amazing Inventions of 2004." Let's get started.

Coming to a dealer near you

The biggest story of the year is the conquest of space by a privately funded spaceship, the eponymous SpaceShipOne, winner of the \$10 million X-Prize for the first non-government venture to launch into space (defined by convention as 62 miles beyond the Earth's surface) and return safely twice in two weeks.

Looking to the rest of the world like a pair of mating insects, SpaceShipOne and its mothership, White Knight (from the mind of aircraft pioneer Burt Rutan and the wallet of Microsoft co-founder Paul Allen) beat 23 other teams.

Like many a brilliant inventor, Rutan borrowed from a completely unrelated field (badminton) to design a spacecraft that, launched as many a test flight before from a mothership (albeit nine miles up), hinged back its wings and returned to Earth like a shuttlecock.

Wheels and waves

The GoCar, a GPS-equipped three-wheeler, lets you tool around San Francisco (future site of Starfleet HQ) at speeds up to Warp 0.00000000000000000000000000000001 (roughly 35 miles per hour).

The Centaur mates a self-balancing Segway to another set of wheels and a cool, non-yellow banana seat. Its future incarnations will be perfect for roving Starfleet explorers or David Hasselhoff in *Baywatch 3000*. Harry Haney's invention is the bastard child of a LST and a snowmobile. Traveling across melting ice planets won't be a problem in your prototype Snow Boat.

Can't go anywhere without your computer? Now you can surf the worldwide waves on Intel's surfboard equipped with a tablet PC. OMG that Gr8t white bit off my leg. :-0.

Finally, there's the water skis for those without friends: Solo Watersports sells an automated water ski boat to pull you across the bay. Just don't ram your \$10,995 Solo into the dude e-mailing his boss about being sick while he's hanging ten.

Barriers and bots, needles and knees

The ultimate use isn't here yet, but Sumitomo Chemical embedded a long-term (five-year) insecticide into a plastic weave. Today, it'll protect kids and families in tropical countries from those nasty malaria-bearing mosquitoes. Tomorrow, it'll protect explorers on distant worlds from alien insects that would infect them with mind- and body-altering pathogens.

No, not the robotic soccer player or mini-butler that will one day lead to Data (go read "Science *Trek*" in the last five *Comstars*), but rather a remote-controlled mini-gun platform. Boldly going where General O'Neill won't.

Hate it when that phlebotomist is practicing acupuncture with your arm? Now Conenhill Biomedics brings you OnTarget, a "vein-contrast-enhancing" tool that takes an infrared picture of your arm and then projects it onto your limb. One day, it'll just be a standard component of a medical tricorder.

New from Iceland is the Rheo Knee, a computer-controlled prosthetic device that provides amputees with a big step up from a wooden peg. Someday, Picard will be implanted with a clockwork heart whose far distant ancestor is the technology behind Rheo Knee—and you thought he was just a Frenchman with a British accent.

Last, final words

I'll give you the item, you come up with the future use for the rest of these 2004 inventions: self-adhesive, strapless goggles; ultraviolet toothbrush sanitizer; oral swab HIV tester; ripeness sensed fruit; temperature-sensitive label ink; seedless cantaloupe-sized watermelon; flame-contained portable camping cooking unit; thermoacoustic refrigerator; earclip speaker with jawbone (non-imbedded) sensor to filter out background noise; clear plastic cover for CDs and DVDs to be left on during play; wall-mounted TV that

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ART CREDITS:
media.wireless.ign.com
startrekanimated.com 1
google.com/images/
3, 4, 5
startrek.com 6
Dynamic Graphics
Insert front
Presentation Task
Force Insert back

REFLECTIONS: The Anti-Trek

It didn't take long for the rumors of a new science-fiction show to make their way around fandom. Harlan Ellison immediately declared *Star Trek* dead and stated that this new series would be like nothing you'd ever seen. Since Harlan said it, the Purists were foaming at the mouth and waiting with baited breath.

I first became aware of Joseph Michael Straczynski back in the late 1980s. He wrote the screenplay column for *Writer's Digest* magazine, a column I read religiously back then. I had written my first screenplay about seven years earlier and had only rediscovered the desire to write with the unveiling of a new *Star Trek*. I wanted to write for television, and I wanted desperately to write for *Star Trek*!

This is where I first heard the initial rumblings of what would come to be Straczynski's baby. He used every opportunity to promote his new idea for a "ground-breaking" science-fiction series.

He lambasted all the science fiction that came before it as juvenile and hokey, all except the original *Star Trek*. He proclaimed that show as holy and the only TV science-fiction series to ever get it right. Not being a COMPLETE idiot, J.M.S. spoke glowingly of the Original Series, showering it with platitudes and placing it upon a television pedestal. He knew where his core audience would be found and just what side his bread was buttered on.

It was 1989, and we were assured that this new series of his would be unrivaled by any science-fiction show then on the air. This intrigued me, especially because *The Next Generation* was going strong at the time, not to mention several other science-fiction programs that it had influenced.

A few years went by, and I heard nothing. Then in the fall of 1992, I started noticing these weird people at every convention, lobbying for this new show, *Babylon 5*. They also assured us that we would be totally knocked out by what we saw and that there would be NOTHING to compare to it. This would prove to be problematic, for their main target audience, as I said, was *Trek* fandom, and the main target of their attacks and excoriations? *Star Trek: The Next Generation*.

"Our intention, quite simply, is to kick their ass," Straczynski told *Cinefantastique*

magazine late in 1992, "visually, dramatically, character-wise and on every possible level. *Babylon 5* will be fresher, a radically different sort of show. We don't have their limitations. They're hamstrung, and we're going to go in there and go nuts."

This was the firing of the first salvo. Soon after, I was being barraged by the likes of Arne Starr (an inker for DC Comics) and Dennis Russell Bailey (co-writer of *The Next Generation* episodes "Tin Man" and "First Contact"), telling me that I would not go back to *Star Trek* after watching *Babylon 5*.

Well, this was a pretty dicey thing to proclaim at a *Star Trek* convention. Well, dicey isn't quite the word. DUMB is probably a better description, and I say this not out of spite, but because of the result. All they did was succeed in alienating a lot of would-be viewers and set expectations so high that they might have been impossible to achieve.

The Purists liked it, but I have yet to meet one who actually watched the show on a regular basis. Their response was always the same: "I don't watch television." I've always wondered how one can endorse a show one has never seen.

The Moderates also liked the show, but it was pretty obvious why. Its trite, melodramatic acting, two-dimensional characters and rather obvious plot lines walked lock-step with the light-headedness and light heart-heartedness of the crap they called literature they were currently reading.

The Warsies were a split group. Half of them liked *Babylon 5*, and the other half did not. The half that embraced it liked it for the same reason the Purists did: It wasn't *Star Trek*. The others didn't like it because it wasn't *Star Wars*. They felt betrayed.

The stage was set, the battleground was cleared. There would be more mud-slinging and plenty of accusations, but not from the *Star Trek* camp. All of the disparaging remarks, the finger-pointing and lies came from J.M.S. and his cronies. *Star Trek* never acknowledged them at all. Of course, this was only fuel for the fire.

Next month: We get into the essence of *Babylon 5*. ■

Conn Officer Lorenzo Heard



J. Michael Straczynski

RANTINGS: Crash landings

After the cancellation of *The Adventures of Superman*, the producers had an idea for a series called *The Adventures of Superpup* for 1958. They decided to put professional midgets in costumes with big ass dog masks and use the same sets as the previous show. Superpup was reporter Bark Bent, working for Editor Perry Bite of the *Daily Bugle*. The villain was Professor Sheepdip, who kidnapped ace reporter Pamela Poodle.

This is not a tequila-induced hallucination of mine. A production company actually filmed this. For anyone who's interested, proof can be found at: <http://davidschutz.tripod.com/superpup.htm>.

Mercifully, this was never made into anything but an unsold pilot. It may have contributed to George Reeves' reported despair.

In a symmetrical case of returning to the drawing board and extremely bad timing, it was decided to revive *Superman* for 1959 just before George Reeves was found dead.

Now, the production company was really left scrambling, so they hit upon the idea of *The Adventures of Superboy* for 1961 starring Johnny Rockwell as Clark Kent/Superboy. The pilot was made and was faithful to the comic book, but it went nowhere. Whether it was too soon after Reeves' death or just the fact that the pilot wasn't any good is open to debate; they had reached the end of the line. But the 104 episodes Reeves made ran in syndication for years and are brought back periodically to this day.

Meanwhile, things had been happening in the comics since the late 1950s. A lot of characters were being revived in new forms from the Golden Age of the '30s and '40s. In the late Silver Age of the 1950s and early '60s, DC had a lot of success. But by the mid-1960s, the world was changing.

DC Comics characters had become stale. DC, it was argued, portrayed a world where white men solved all the problems. Women were for rescuing from the problems that they had gotten themselves into. Minorities had virtually no place in DC's world and then only as petty criminals. And that didn't change until the late '70s.

DC's major competitor, Marvel, was exploding and having great success confronting some of those issues DC ignored, and the young readers could relate to the characters

and the challenges they faced.

The times were changing, and Superman was regarded as unwilling to change with them. Who wanted to read about someone who's so perfect and can solve any problems by sheer might and not get his hair mussed?

On January 12, 1966, a new superhero craze began. ABC premiered the first episode of *Batman*. It was a totally campy show. Everything was played for laughs. It was an immediate success on Wednesday and Thursday nights. And before you could say "faster than a speeding bullet," superheroes were everywhere on TV.

David Newman and Robert Benton decided that the time was right for a musical based on Superman. On March 29, 1966, *It's a Bird. It's a Plane. It's ... Superman* premiered on Broadway. Bob Holiday starred as Clark Kent/Superman.

It achieved a modicum of success but ultimately closed after 129 performances on July 17, 1966. The musical was revived on ABC on television in 1975 for one night, and fortunately, like some bad ideas, was never heard from again.

On September 10, 1966, CBS broadcast the animated *New Adventures of Superman* from Filmation studios. It was a success. Bud Collyer recreated his role from the Fleischer cartoons and radio.

The second and third seasons saw Superman teamed with Aquaman and Batman, respectively, until 1969, when CBS cancelled *Superman et al.* under pressure from Action for Children's Television.

Again, a bunch of irresponsible, self-righteous "do-gooders" blamed Superman and other TV characters for their children's problems rather than accepting responsibility for being lousy parents.

In the 1970s, the only place you could see Superman aside from the comics was as a part of the *Super Friends*, which ran on ABC from 1973 to 1979. Danny Dark voiced Superman in that cartoon.

Super Friends was a great big happy family of members of the Justice League: Superman, Batman and Robin, Aquaman and Wonder Woman. There was little violence and equally little plot. The art was abysmal.

Superman comics in the '70s were also

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COMING EVENTS

FEBRUARY

- February 11-13* Farpoint 2005 at the Marriott Hunt Valley Inn in Hunt Valley, Maryland. Guests will include Jeffrey Combs (Shran on *Enterprise*, Weyoun on *DS9*), Tony Amendola (Bra'tac on *SG-1*), Wayne Pygram (Scorpius on *Farscape*) and David Franklin (Captain Braca on *Farscape*). For more information, check out their website at <http://www.farpointcon.com>.
- February 26* Happy 14th birthday, U.S.S. *Chesapeake*! We'll celebrate at our February club meeting! Stay tuned!

SCIENCE TREK: What was new in the old year (continued)

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turns into a mirror when not in use as a TV; text-messaging crystal chandelier; belt-driven wrist watch; fluorinated ketone—looks like water, pours like water, but doesn't wet like water; and so on and so on and so on.

I'd have to spend a few more months on this topic to cover all the inventions. I hope I've just whet your appetite.

Next month, we'll talk about one more article from this issue of *Time*, provocatively titled "Cosmic Conundrum."

Web Notes:

- <http://www.xprize.org/> (Web site of the [Michael] Ansari X[-files]-prize); and
- <http://what.urlgoeshere.huh>: (I just want to see if Wayne actually edits these Web notes.) ■

Second Officer Phil Margolies

RANTINGS: Crash landings (continued)

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pretty much forgettable due to bad storytelling and uninspired art. Other comic artists were doing great things in the "Age of Relevance," but the "Big Blue Boy Scout" was largely ignored.

But American icons have this habit of roaring back just when you think they're down and out.

Give me my robe, put on my crown; I have immortal longings in me. ■

Officer Peter Chewning

HOLODICTATION: A Ferengi without profit is not a Ferengi at all

There's a lot to be learned from the "Rules of Acquisition." I've always said that if you take out any *Star Trek* references, the Rules of Acquisition can be used in today's business place. One must study these rules and know them inside out if you want to make more profit for you and your family. This has landed right on my front doorstep.

If one does not heed the rules, he will become their servant, and as you know, servants cannot attain great profit. I have ignored the teachings of the Grand Negus and let myself be placed in a position where I am exploited and abused by my debtors.

I want to be on the good end of this deal.

A good student of the Rules should be the one exploiting the people who owe them, a good student should be the abuser, and a good student should be the one making all of the profit that he can. What Ferengi doesn't want to vacation on Risa or even own his own moon? I want these things, and you want these things.

We just entered the new year, a time to reflect on what we've done and to improve ourselves so we can bank all the gold-pressed latinum we can acquire. My New Year's resolution is to study the Rules of Acquisition so I can end the year with much profit and much happiness.

Satisfaction is not guaranteed. ■

Weapons Officer Patrick McBee
Son of C. Dwan

Owner and Proprietor of pMs Enterprises



Rom and Quark