



SUBSPACE STATIC

Newsletter of the U.S.S. Wernher von Braun

HERE THERE BE DRAGONS!

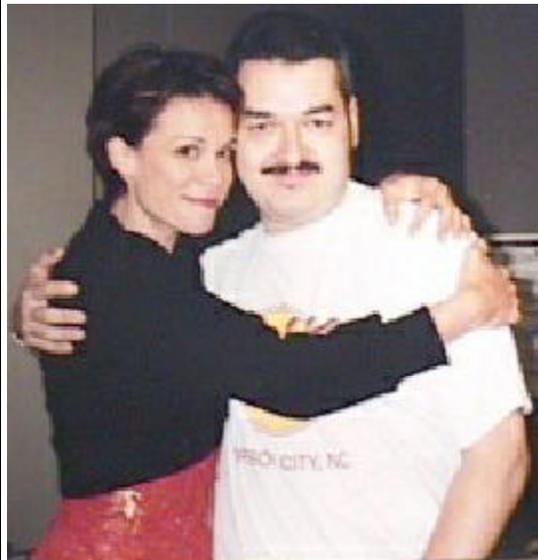
Chase-ing Leeta at Dragon*Con.

Stardate 970626

Arrived approximately 1000 hours. I did not realize until the previous evening when I picked up my ticket and my cool badge that there was nothing much going on until 1 p.m. However, I showed up as I am a member of STARFLEET International and had volunteered to work their table. I guess they did not need my help since I could find no table and no one showed up until well after 1500 hours. I spoke with one of the fellows and he said that he thought that they had the table covered. Anyway, the dealer's room opened up at 1300, so I milled about in there for most of the afternoon.

I managed to acquire several of my autographs today as well. I got Jeremy Bullock (Boba Fett, even though I got a photo in which he was playing a different character in the movie), David Prowse (Darth Vader), Kenny Baker (R2-D2), Peter Mayhew (Chewbacca), Candy Clark, scream queens Brinke Stevens and Tiffany Shepis, and comic book personalities William Tucci (creator of Shi), Jimmy Palmiotti and Joe Quesada (creators of Ash).

*Chase Masterson and Don Daniel.
Photo by Don Daniel.*



Thus begins the saga of John Rhys-Davies. Thursday's installment: He was supposed to arrive Thursday, but did not. I was told that he would be there on Friday.

Stardate 970627

Arrived shortly before 1000 hours for a Chase Masterson / *Star Trek* panel. Alas, the promoter (Archie Waugh) informed us that Chase would not be there as her luggage had taken a side trip to San Francisco (I could understand this as I once had my luggage take a detour to Chicago without me.) and she had little in the way of clothing. Anyway, I caught up with Chase later in the dealer's room. I did not expect her to remember me as I have altered my appearance ever so slightly each time that I have seen her, but she did. (This should not have sur-

Continued: See Dragon*Con on page 25...

In this issue:

New Format

New Reviews

(of the hottest
summer movies)

New Previews

(movies and more)

New Articles

(including a new
continuing article)

New XO

(read all about him)

New Attitude

(couldn't resist)

**Guaranteed Fresh
by the date on label!**

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Assistant Editor: Jim Dykes

Subspace Static
Spring and Summer 1997
Volume 5, Issues 2 and 3

**"Two for the price of one while supplies last," issue or
"I'm really beginning to like jumbo size issues."**

Subspace Static (SS) is the quarterly newsletter of the U.S.S. *Wernher von Braun* (WVB). All opinions expressed herein are those of the author only, and do not necessarily reflect those of the editor, other contributors, WVB, WVB members, STARFLEET, or STARFLEET members. The voices in our head made us do it. See the inside back cover for more fine print information about SS, WVB, STARFLEET and RAM.

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COMMANDING OFFICER



How we've changed, where we stand, and where we're going.

I've come to the conclusion that the only constant in the universe is change. Everything eventually changes. And our ship is no exception.

Change is often times a scary, frightening thing. However, it doesn't have to be. Sure, change brings the great unknown, undiscovered country upon us, but it is also something wonderful. Change gives us the opportunity to branch out in new directions, to try new things, to boldly go where we've never been. (OK, I'll stop with the *Trek* allusions.) Seriously though, change can be a beneficial, good thing.

Our ship has certainly undergone many changes since it's inception. From the very beginning we had a change in the command structure. We had another command change in early 1996 when I assumed command. And we've had numerous changes in the Department Chiefs and the general members. People have gotten interested in us and joined, but then gotten busy, moved away, lost interest, or stayed. That's simply the nature of life and I don't think these changes have been detrimental. Granted, we still haven't returned to our glory days in early 1995 when we had over thirty crewmembers and dozens of projects going on. But we have stabilized our numbers and have perhaps even started to grow again. We've tried new things

and projects. Some have succeeded and some haven't. That too is the nature of life.

Recent life changes have created vacancies throughout the command staff. I thought we were set to get a new, permanent XO, but he got a dream job and left for Shreveport, Louisiana. (Good luck Dustin!) And our long time Medic had to go to where the jobs were in Tennessee. (Good luck Ralph!) Then there's the vacant spots in Engineering and Communications since I've been in Command. Those positions really do deserve to have a full-time, dedicated Department Chief in them, and not someone rarely around or dividing their attentions elsewhere. You and the ship deserve more.

As a result of these recent changes, very little of what the *Wernher von Braun* started out as, is left. Of course, some of the people like Dallas, Kit, Laura, Johnnie, and Anya are still around, but only Dallas remains in his Operations position. We've picked up a lot of new members along the way too. We seem to have a younger contingent of people coming in, so that may mean we need to work on a Cadet Corp or something similar. And with these new people come different ideas and desires.

The *Wernher von Braun* must change to meet these needs in order to survive. After all, the ship serves the needs of

its members and should not ask the members to change to meet the needs of the ship. People have a tendency to get set in their ways. As a result, change is often met with resistance. I'm asking the crew, especially those who have been around longer, to work with the new people coming in. That doesn't mean the needs of the longtime members will be ignored. That does mean whatever the majority decides is what will occur. If that means everything will continue on as always, great. If that means various things will change, then it shall.

New blood can often invigorate a ship. They may be able to offer ideas never thought of before. They may suggest improvements to existing programs. Or they may have a whole new approach to doing things. I admit I too may be reluctant to try something at first, but bear with me, and I

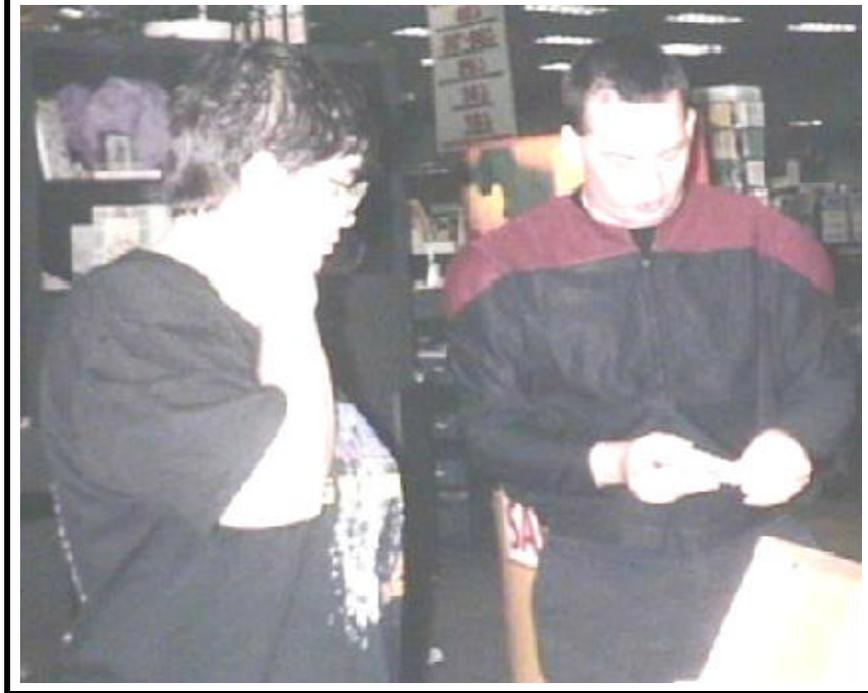


may eventually agree to your viewpoint if approached calmly and civilly. There's an adage that says not to change things if they work, but nothing great was ever discovered that way. If we try something new and it doesn't work, then we'll simply try something else or go back to what we were doing. By using only the best of everything we do, we can achieve some spectacular results.

OK, enough philosophy for one report. Let's get back to the concrete here and now that we have to deal with. The ship is running along smoothly despite the change over in the command staff. As far as I can tell, we are meeting all requirements for chapter status. I've filed our monthly reports as required, usually via E-Mail. Some have been borderline late with the Region, but certainly on time with Fleet Ops. Our numbers remain in the mid-teens, which is over the ten required. This fluctuates frequently and is sometimes difficult to track given the nature of people moving, or paperwork being filed. Even though we always come out with over ten Fleet members, I'd be much happier with more. I hear they're doing another recruiting drive later this year. And now that we have a new XO elected, we've met our CO and XO requirements. Our chapter charter fee has been paid for 1997 as well.

Speaking of XO, I'd like to welcome Russ McNutt to the Executive Officer's position. He will serve as my eyes and ears

Laura Peterson and Richard Trulson at a Books-A-Million recruiting event. Photo by Anya Funderburk.



in Huntsville. Since Ardmore is a long distance call for most people, feel free to call him with any questions or concerns you may have. I'm working with him to familiarize him with the way I and the crew have handled things. Also, if you have any problems or concerns with me, he is the first person you should contact. He has been instructed to and will keep any information confidential. I may ask WHAT was said, but never WHO said it. This will hopefully keep a level of confidentiality and allow great expression of feelings and desires from the crew without the awkwardness or worry of taking problems directly to me. However, please feel free and welcomed to come directly to me if you want for any questions or problems you may have. My phone and door are always open and I am willing to

listen. Both of our contact information can be found elsewhere in this newsletter, usually on the inside of the back cover.

Please pardon the lack of financial report this issue. I forgot to ask Dallas to compile it before he left on vacation. Plus, computer problems have made it a bit difficult as well. Check the Meeting Minutes or the Operations report for more details. A full report will appear in the next issue. Suffice to say, we have over \$100 in the account. However, the ship needs to reimburse me for copying charges of two issues of the *Subspace Static* and postage for mailing *Mission Briefings*. Receipts have been kept to track these approved expenditures. Other than that, I can't think much else that has gone on financially. However, we do need to develop a regu-

larly occurring, planned fund raising event. This is something we've never done and desperately need to do.

Otherwise, various miscellaneous projects are finally coming to a close. After a very busy June, I'm able to channel more energy into the ship and make sure we're meeting our goals and objectives. Name badge design has finally been approved. Now it's just a matter of getting people's information and money to make them. Except for a few minor questions, T-shirts are progressing nicely as well. Both projects should be finished by September.

About the only thing that needs major working on are projects. Remember, while I often times plan projects for the entire ship, it is also the DC responsibility to plan projects for your department. Often times, those projects involve the whole ship since most departments are just the DC. In fact, I'd REALLY like for DC's to take the initiative and plan projects. Just work with the rest of the Command Staff and selecting a time and date, so we don't step on each others toes. And please consider doing any project you may want, even if it doesn't "fit" under your department.

We have our usual monthly meeting, and then our monthly social dinner. Do you wish to continue on with the social dinner? Are they working on their current times and days, or are they starting to conflict with people's schedules more?

While the social dinner is fun, I think we need more and different activities. Ideally I think one social activity a month outside of the social dinner would be best. Lets not forget that community service is an aspect of our ship too. One community service or work type activity a quarter (four per year) seems to be a reasonable goal. I know some highly active chapters have something going on every week, whether it be social, community service, or some combination thereof.

Other than more social and community service activities, I do have a few other projects that I'd like to see completed this year. One is a membership handbook. Granted, we're sorta waiting on determination of promotion policies in order to do the handbook though. And eventually, maybe I'll get around to doing membership certificates, formally known as deck plates. I would also like to do a display or banner to be used at recruiting events, conventions, Fleet

activities, and parades. Our internet world wide web page has been down recently as well. A temporary page as been set-up at <http://www11.web210.com/omni/wvb/> but I would like to rework it and have a more detailed and nicer page in the future.

All these activities and projects require one common thing though: participation. While one or a few people can handle it, the more people involved, greater enjoyment will result for everyone. So if you have an idea, please suggest it. And please consider getting more involved with the ship. The more you get involved, the more you will get out of this organization. Sure, there may be some occasional hassles, problems, and setbacks; but eventually in the end, you will be rewarded with a more enjoyable time, having made many new friends and accomplished great things along the way.

- **FCAPT Richard L. Trulson**

HISTORIAN

Miscellaneous news from the ADC Historian.

[*Editor's note: This was received a while back, but got lost in the never-ending file folder. - Rich*]

Some ashes of the late Gene Roddenberry and others were shot into space in tiny lipstick-size containers. They used a jet mounted rocket.

New things were discovered about the *Titanic*, the largest moving machine. Instead of being ripped apart by an iceberg, they say now that the steel was defective. When it bumped the iceberg, the collision popped rivets out and the cold water caused the steel to fracture. Plus they took samples to see the condition of the steel after being in the ocean for 85 years.

- **CMDR Bill Baker, Jr.**



SCIENCES



Helping to save the planet for a new life.

This quarter has been a relatively quiet one. I did manage to attend a convention in Atlanta(Vulkon) - my convention report appears elsewhere in this newsletter. The crew members voted to go ahead with two Science Department projects as follows:

1) Adopt-a-mile. After much go around with the government agencies, it was decided by the crew that we would pursue this project. After a discussion by the command staff about the sections of highway that we would like to adopt (keep clean), the requisite paperwork will be filed with the appropriate governmental agencies.

2) Recycling. I investigated possible recycling of newspaper, computer paper, and aluminum cans. After discussion with the crew membership, it was decided that we probably would do aluminum can recycling, as it would bring the club the highest potential for income. Further discussion regarding details of this project are pending.

On an astronomical note, I hope that everyone got to see Comet Hale-Bopp in late March or early April and the partial lunar eclipse on March 23. I did and they were memorable sights! I would also like to welcome Russ McNutt to the Sciences Department and the U.S.S. *Wernher von Braun*.

Welcome aboard, Russ! And just a brief reminder; the peak for the Perseid Meteor Showers is coming up on August 11.

I was also glad that I could help out at Panoply. I had a good time in spite of the way that they tend to treat volunteers. At the end of June, I will also be attending DragonCon (I will be filing a convention report for this with Rich sometime in July and will probably be working the STARFLEET table. Hope to see as many of you there who care to attend. I also passed Officers' Training School in the STARFLEET Academy.

I am proud to announce that I am now an uncle. My kid sister just had a baby girl and here are the particulars: Madeline Stone Friedman was born on 3/16/97 at 9:22 A.M. She weighed 7 Lbs., 6.5 oz.

Just got back from seeing her in Atlanta and she is beautiful (OK, so I'm a little biased<grin>). A Star is Born!

**-LT (jg) Don
Daniel**

MIR

Mir Space Station problems explained!

After intensive investigation on both the Soviet and US parts, spokespersons from both space agencies have determined the cause for the accident which has placed the station and its resident personnel in jeopardy. In terse statements at a recent press conference, Soviet and US space agency spokespersons said Thursday, "We have concluded joint investigations concerning this potentially tragic accident and each nation's team, separately, has arrived at identical conclusions for this incident. The accident was caused by one thing and one thing only...

... OBJECTS IN MIR ARE CLOSER THAN THEY APPEAR.

[The previous was received from Blair Learn at Blair@erols.com. He is not the original author. - Rich]



COMMUNICATIONS



Pleasant surprises, past problems, and a look ahead.

Wow! When I started editing the submissions for this issue, I had the feeling that the number of submissions was about the same. However, as I progressed through my E-mail file, I discovered that the amount was up considerably from previous issues. Not only that, I had a wider range of submissions from more people than before. I nearly fainted. I guess begging, bribing, threatening, whining, and pleading with people to finally submit stuff finally worked.

We have a large number of reviews this issue. From movies to conventions, and a little of everything, it's been reviewed. While I don't know if my report last issue on how to write a review had anything to do with this or not, I'm certainly pleased to see them. And they're excellent reviews too, with lots of useful information. Check out Jim's review of *Fifth Element*, or Don's review of *Dragon*Con*.

I'd also like to thank Russ McNutt. He transferred over to our ship and has brought with him his "Trek 411 Collector's Corner" that was published in his former ship's newsletter. Actually, it's still published there in a monthly format. However, since our newsletter is quarterly, I've had to combine several months together. Keep an eye out for this new column article to appear in future issues. Maybe

it will inspire a few people to do an ongoing article of their own as well. Thanks Russ!

Speaking of ongoing things, I've been very pleased to have new people to do a "Spotlight" article on. Next month, I hope to spotlight on some of our new, younger members. The spotlight article is a great way to introduce newer members to the ship, as it provides basic background information on you. All information is strictly voluntary of course. And if we ever run out of new members—perish the thought—then we may revisit some of our existing members.



Also notice that this issue has continued the full-page format of the Anniversary Edition instead of the digest format of previous issues. The full-page format is much easier to work with from a production point of view. While I admit to liking the digest feel and binding format better, the full-page format is just MUCH easier to deal with. However, please give me your feedback on which format you like better. If the crew prefers the digest format, I will switch back to it at the end of the year when we begin Volume 6.

However, here are my reasons for going to the full-page format. First, I can increase the size of the newsletter in increments of two pages instead of four, which is easier to do. Second, there isn't an intermediary step in printing the newsletter to recompile from the layout design to the print design. (This sounds vague and is, but trust me, it's a nerve wrecking step hoping PageMaker doesn't mangle it in the translation.) And finally, I think the full page format allows for greater design freedom and layout options than the digest format. I can change the number of columns and other design features easier. As a result, the newsletter looks much better and is more visually pleasing to the eye.

Speaking of that Anniversary Edition, here's the rest of that long, woeful tell of the problems seeing it finished. "The Official Explanation" details the problems and why it took me so long to finish it. However, once I finished it, Kinko's had problems copying it. I printed the master copies on a high quality glossy paper. According to my paper supplier, this paper provides the absolute highest quality output available to a laser printer. Apparently this is true cause the master prints looked beautiful! So I took them to the copiers on late Saturday night and was going to pick them up Sunday before the meeting. When I got there, the lady said they had problems and they were not ready, but they should be within the hour. My spirits were sunk since I had worked so hard to finally bring the newsletter to you, and problems outside of my control were preventing me from delivering it yet again.

You guys were willing to wait for me to drive back into Huntsville and pick it up. Once I got there, I was disappointed to see that at least two pages in every copy were blurred beyond acceptability. So I had them recopy those two pages, and I would hand collate them in myself. Apparently, the glossy master prints I had used, while providing exceptional masters, were unsuitable to be ran through a copy machine. The toner buildup on the wax hold out feature it has for manual paste up work prevented them from properly feeding the paper

Our Books-A-Million display with Anya's stand-ups, Laura and Rich's T-shirts and memorabilia. Photo by Anya Funderburk.



through the copy machines. As a result, they had to do them by hand or they would have come out blurred. This problem even caused the masters to be smudged.

Thankfully, Kinko's did not charge us for all the manual printing and collating they did, and even gave us a 10% discount off the copying cost for my hassles. For some odd reason, they did not call me to let me know they were having problems with the master prints. If I had know, I could have ran another set of masters down to them prior to the meeting and avoided the whole mess. In any event, I was very happy with the final arrangement given the cost of copying that issue was sky high, never mind all the fancy cover work. The only problem was, it delayed the newsletter getting to you.

And speaking of that cover, it had its own problems as well. Let me tell you about the hassles involved in doing

what I think is an absolutely stunning cover. First, I had to print the color parts on my inkjet printer, which includes the SS logo, the ship's logo, and the three images across the center. On high quality ink jet paper at the highest possible print quality, each page took over five minutes to print. I had no idea it would take that long. The covers were done last, so that's why you didn't get a cover as they were taking so much longer than planned. Once I had a color cover, I laser printed the top banner announcing our winning Region 2 1996 Newsletter of the Year Award and the two "Celebrating" titles. Then I had to laser print the Table of Contents on the back. I could not do any laser printing while waiting on color covers since both printers use the parallel port.

Notice also that toner is black and that some of the words are in gold foil. Once I finished the printing, I had to

use a special heat adhesion process to affix the gold foil over the black toner, to make it look like gold metallic ink. This too was a very time consuming process, as each cover took about five minutes each playing with a hot iron. (Kids, DON'T try this at home.) Once that was done, the two pages had to be hand collated in, a cover added, and the whole thing bound in a clear folder cover. Quite a laborious process to bring you a newsletter, don't you think?

Actually, what DO you think of the Anniversary Edition? I think it was well worth the wait, as there was a tremendous amount of information in there. Sure, some of it was over six months old, but it was information you could still use. And there was new information as well involving upcoming movies and rumors. I also think it was one of the best newsletters from a technical standpoint. Sure, there's at least one spelling or grammar error on every page that slipped by both me and my ADC, but nothing major was wrong, like a mislabeled article or worse. And given that it was a 68 page monstrosity with dozens of pictures and other graphical embellishments, I think it turned out damn good. (Apologies to the younger crowd.)

If any Active member still has not received a copy of the newsletter, please contact me. Or if you do not have a cover for your issue, please let me know that as well. Or, if there were a few pages that are really blurred, let me know the

page numbers and I will make you a special print of just those pages. Both the cover and reprinted pages can be easily inserted into the clear cover binder. Actually, the newsletter was designed so you could add holes and put it in a three-ring binder if you want. And finally, if you want an additional copy, they are available for \$7 each.

Anyway, enough about the last issue. That's in the past, which we've learned from; but it's the future that we have to look forward to. What are my plans? Good question. I don't think there will be any other changes in the *Subspace Static*

Continued: See Communications on page 27...

TREK TAKE OVER

Sure signs that *Star Trek* is taking over your life:

1. Saying "make it so" in casual conversation.
2. Indignation because the periodic table doesn't include dilithium and tritanium.
3. Able to use "variable phase inverter" in a sentence without excessive thought first.
4. More than one pair of Spock ears in junk drawer.
5. Have figured out the stardate system.
6. Sudden urge to wear lots of Lycra.
7. Scanning shelves at local liquor store for synthehol.
8. The *Star Trek* theme becomes background music for your dreams.
9. Major quote sources for thesis are Shakespeare, the *Bible*, and "The Omega Glory."
10. Memorization of the crew's authorization codes.
11. Forgetting that present-day elevators don't have voice interface.
12. Attending a convention wearing non-Terran vestments.
13. Actual serious thoughts about buying that \$300 model of the *Enterprise* from the Franklin Mint.
14. Understanding Klingon.
15. Lecturing any science professor on how transporters work.
16. Playing fizzbin and understanding it.
17. "The Outrageous Okona" seems like a fine piece of writing and dramatic stylistics.
18. Paying rapt attention during those endless special effects sequences in *Star Trek: The Motion Picture*.
19. Inexplicable rock-climbing urges.
20. More than three original episode outlines buried in your drawers.

[*This was received on the internet from Michael Betts at m.a.betts@juno.com - Rich*]

OPERATIONS



Panoply, goodbyes, helping, and participating.

Hailing Frequencies Open

Stardate 9704.28

Well, here it is, Panoply has come and gone, and now what shall we do? There had been some discussion about possibly trying to get us in to work parking for Big Spring Jam. After talking to members of the Huntsville PD Rangers who have worked the Jam, they recommend that we forget the whole idea. According to them, BSJ is a worse fiasco than Panoply is. Well, we will just have to see how things work out.

After this year's Panoply, it is my recommendation that we don't do it again. Each year that we have worked Panoply we have gotten little to no consideration from the people running it, and what consideration we DO get seems to just get less and less each year. It is for this reason that I recommend that we sever our relationship with the Huntsville Arts Council.

I would also like to take this time to say farewell to CAPT Dustin Williams. He is leaving us to work with a new shuttle that has recently formed in Louisiana. As I'm sure you all know, Dustin was one of the founding members of this chapter, and has

gone WELL beyond the call of duty on numerous occasions for the benefit of this chapter and its crew. His absence will be sorrowfully missed and I know that he will be a valuable asset to whatever ship he ends up serving with.

Stardate: 9707.02

OK folks, I have finally managed to get the ship computer back online. I will now be better able to keep up with the membership files and the ships finances than I have been for the last couple of months. (Putting together a new computer is not very easy when you have to scrounge parts off of Packlids).

Well it's 4th of July weekend and this year is half gone now. We really need to get more people involved with the newsletter production as our poor CO tends to get so swamped with other things that he just never seems to have the



time needed to work on the newsletter. According to the ships personnel data base we have the following people in the Communications department: Melissa Burner, Jim Dykes, Tammy Nichols, Richard Trulson, and Dallas Vinson. I know that 2 of the people listed we have only seen once and then never heard from again. But Richard does have both me and Jim who can help with the production of the newsletters.

I know one of the big things that gets Rich behind the newsletter is the fact that nobody else ever seems to send him anything for inclusion and therefore he ends up having to write everything himself in order to fill up the space. Come on folks, you've all sat around to long without participating. I know that the lack of participation at planned events is one of the main reasons that I had seriously thought about leaving. It does not do much for the self-esteem to plan events and functions just to have nobody show up. So come on folks, not that I'm getting tired of reading Richard's articles, but I know he's getting tired of writing the whole thing by himself.

Well, I guess I've rambled on again long enough for another month, so I'll shut up now and close this channel.

Channel Closed

-CMDR Dallas
Vinson

SECURITY



So long, farewell, and goodbye.

Here it is folks my final report. For those who weren't in attendance at the May meeting, I stepped down as XO and Security Chief. I am moving to Region Three to take on a tremendous job. On with the report:

Panoply 97 was nothing short of a disaster. With the rain and other LITTLE discrepancies it was a hardship all its own. I do appreciate all the help I got from the local chapter but in turn I am also pleased we received outside help from the Butler ROTC team. They helped us out a lot last year and did as well this year. They are excited for next year's events as well. I have turned over all contact information for all relevant projects to Richard for future reference.

I'd like to give recognition to Shiloh Huddlestone who was the pick of the litter for the parking crew. She exemplified everything a security officer should. She didn't even complain once. I'd have to admit that's a first for anyone in this business as long as I have been in charge of this present activity. My hat is off to her and I appreciate her help. All I can say is have fun. I know I did despite all the problems.

I do hope Johnnie gets to take over as DC of Security if so I wish her well. I couldn't think of any one better to fill my shoes.

I'd like to thank you guys for making my time serving in Region 2 the best. It will always be my home as well as the WVB. I'd like to thank Richard, Kit, and Dallas for their dedication and determination along with me to keep this vessel afloat. I wish them well in the coming future. I'd also like to thank everyone who has ever been a part of this great vessel. As they are the reason we are still here.

I'd especially like to thank Richard though for believing in me and trying his hardest to get me where I am now. I do believe when one man stakes his own reputation to uplift another, deserves a hug and a grand commendation. To you Richard I leave great thanks and encouragement for a brighter, better future. Keep up the good work and thanks.

To Kit I'd like to thank for sticking around and taking as much pride in the tiny vessel as she did. Even though we had bad times she still kept her head up high. I really say thanks for giving me something to come to once a month and sometimes in between.

To Dallas all I can say is if it weren't for you who knows where our money would be or even our check book for that matter. He has kept the intricate parts of the ship in a way no other could, and I thank you for your part in that as well. Without you as well as others helping we would be lost.

To the general membership I thank for the fun and the determination you guys TRY to show when it comes down to the wire. I thank you for your tireless hours and dedication to projects you so diligently helped me pull off.

Hey Anya, ya sweet girl, all I can say is seeya sweetie, have fun, and keep it up. You'll be okay. Take it easy all. Love ya and good luck!

- CAPT Dustin Williams

Laura's Ad.

TREK 411

COLLECTOR'S CORNER

Trekkin' and collectin': A new, ongoing article.

[I'd like to welcome Russ aboard and introduce his "Trek 411 Collector's Corner" article. Since the USS Guardian's newsletter occurs more frequently than ours, several submissions will be combined together into a single article here. Thanks Russ! - Rich]

Hello STARFLEET fans and friends, this is my first article written in the Rocket City, Huntsville, Alabama. This article will be written jointly for the newsletters of the USS *Guardian* (Brevard County, Florida - my former posting) and the USS *Wernher von Braun* (Huntsville STARFLEET Chapter, my new assignment).

Video fans should be on the lookout for the release of *Star Trek: First Contact* in the video stores. The movie will be available as a rental only for VCR owners for at least the first few months of release. However, if you're a laser disk owner (like me) *First Contact* will be available on laser disk for \$39.95 in the widescreen format.

The Hamilton Collection has released a *Trek* Captain's Collector's Plate, which has portraits of all four *Trek* Captains and their autographs. This plate is available for two payments of \$18.75 plus tax.

The *Star Trek: Communicator Magazine* has released another *Trek* bust. This one is a

realistic bust of Patrick Stewart's unforgettable character: Locutus of Borg. This is a lifelike hand painted bust, which will be available in a limited edition. Get ready to spend some serious money for this one, because we're talking about \$200 to acquire this work.

Well that's about it for now, but please give me a holler if you come across that good *Trek* collectible and I'll be more than happy to mention it in this article. The best way to reach me is via e-mail at russnutt@hiwaay.net . If you don't have e-mail, please contact Richard Trulson of the *von Braun* or Pat O'Brien of the *Guardian*.

"Til next time, keep on Trekkin' and good collectin'".

Hello again
STARFLEET friends and fans.
Once again it's time for our monthly peek into the hallowed universe of the *Trek* Goodies and see what's there.

Good news for video fans, *Star Trek: First Contact* is out in the stores, both on VHS (and Beta) cassettes and laser disks. I love laser disks because the movie is widescreen format, in which, I believe movies should be seen. Cost of the laser disk is \$39.95.

A big thanks to Leslie Shinault, of the USS *Guardian*, for her article, providing the list of the *Star Trek* figures collection. I'm sure Leslie, with a little help from Alan and family, put in some research, as well as checking a few stores, magazine and web sites in order to provide this info for the collectors in the Fleet. Well done Leslie, and family, and keep up the good collecting.

Well I've been looking in the *Communicator Magazine* for some ideas for the article

**"Captain's Tribute" plate.
Scan by Richard L. Trulson**



and I noticed that the *Star Trek* Zero G pen is still in stock. This is an interesting *Trek* curio, because when the pen is not in use for writing, its storage cylinder acts as a little zero-g device, which gives the impression that the pen is floating in mid air. This curio is available from the *Communicator* for around \$39.

A relatively new collectible from the *Communicator* is the *Trek* film cells. These cells are actual pieces of movie film, in a protective package, that contain one scene from the series. Right now, there are at least two sets of these cells available (TOS and TNG). This is for the more serious collector and retails for around \$75.

For the PC crowd: *Star Trek: Generations*, the PC game is now out in the software stores. If you get stumped on the first away mission, you can print out the solution during installation. After that, you'll have to purchase a copy of the strategy guide in order to figure out the other missions. The game sells for \$59.95 and the Strategy Guide sells for \$19.95.

Starfleet Academy will be released in July. This is the PC version of the Nintendo game, and features appearances by Sulu (George Takei) and Chekov (Walter Koenig).

For you chess nuts (no pun intended) who want to try their luck at 3-D chess: The Franklin Mint has issued a TOS and TNG 3-D chess game. You are warned here and now: each piece of each collection sells for around \$35 and is for the

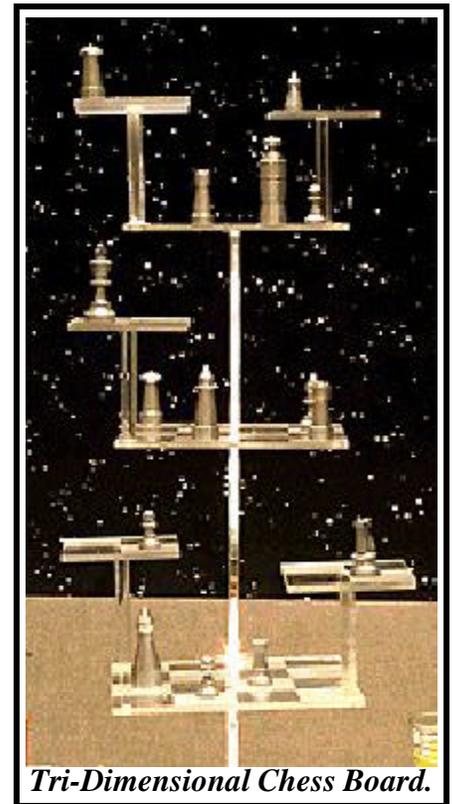
serious collector. A copy of the rules is provided with each set. *Guardian* members should talk to Dawn Smith-Webber, at the *Guardian* meetings, because she has fliers on how to start collecting these sets. *von Braun* members should check the various *Trek* magazines, available at any newsstand, for advertisements on these sets.

That's all I have for now, but keep tuned in for that good collectible and let me know about it. You can phone me at (205) 650-3195; FAX me at (205)650-0173; or e-mail me at russnutt@hiwaay.net.

Until next month, keep on 'Trekkin' and good collectin'.

Hello again
STARFLEET fans, once again it's time for our peek into the exalted word of the *Trek* collectible.

Well, it's time for me to talk to all of you chess nuts again (I just can't get away from that one.) about the *Trek* TOS 3-D Chess Set. At our last meeting of the *von Braun*, on Sunday, July 5, 1997, one of our newest members (sorry about not being able to remember the name at the moment [*The member is Scott Lowery. - Rich*]) brought his set to the meeting. I want to say folks that I was impressed with this fine piece of work. This guy is a serious collector and he is extremely fortunate to have a parent who shares his love of *Trek*. By that I mean that his mom spent some serious, and I



Tri-Dimensional Chess Board.

do mean serious, money (around \$35 per piece) in order to buy this set for his birthday.

The board was laid exactly like the one shown on TOS, and the pieces were of superb quality. A set of rules was included along with a certificate of authenticity from Viacom, the *Star Trek* home company.

The Franklin Mint is still producing the TOS, and TNG, sets for around \$35 per piece. Let me say again that this is for the serious collector, and you're going to part with some bucks if you want this set. *Guardian* members should see Dawn Smith-Webber, at the *Guardian* meetings, because she receives Franklin Mint fliers. *von Braun* members should check the various *Trek*, and other sci-fi magazines, available at any newsstand, for Franklin advertisements.

Starlog Press has introduced TNG vinyl models of your favorite TNG characters. Each kit costs \$50 and are produced by GEOMETRIC Designs. These kits are for the more seasoned model builder and require a lot of time, and plenty of patience, especially when painting the finer details of the model. Check the current issue of *Star Trek: Voyager* magazine for more details and ordering info.

For you book worms: Peter David has published the first two books of his four part series, *Star Trek: The New Frontier*. This series is set in the TNG-DS9 time frame and covers the adventures of the Starship USS *Excalibur*. At the helm is Captain Mackenzie

Calhoun, a maverick officer who moved up through the ranks quickly after the Academy. Serving as the executive officer is Commander Shelby, whom Riker fans probably loved to hate in the TNG episode, "The Best Of Both Worlds" - Parts 1 and 2. Books three and four of this series are due out in August. Also due in August is the next TNG hard-cover novel: *Vulcan's Forge*, with Leonard Nimoy reading the audio version.

For the PC crowd: *Starfleet Academy* has been delayed until Labor Day, 1997. Somehow, I was not surprised to hear this news because *Trek* software has had a history of delays, usually lasting several months. Oh well, we'll just wait and see.

Before I close, I would like to inform everyone, who has not already heard, I am now the new Executive Officer of the USS *Wernher von Braun*, effective as of the July 5, 1997 meeting. I am extremely honored to have been selected for this honor, and I will serve the *von Braun*, and its crew, faithfully and to the best of my ability.

I would like to repeat Captain Trulson's remarks that I will serve as his aide, as well as his eyes and ears here in Huntsville, and the main contact point for bringing crew comments and problems to the Captain. I must also emphasize that all information provided to me in these matters WILL BE HELD IN THE STRICTEST CONFIDENCE, UNLESS YOU GIVE ME DIRECT PERMISSION TO DO OTHERWISE. I cannot emphasize this point too strongly.

That's all for now folks. Let me give you my complete address for getting in touch with me:

Russ McNutt

902 Drake Ave. SE
Huntsville, AL 35802

phone: 205-650-3195

fax: 205-650-0173

e-mail: russnutt@hiwaay.net

Please write, fax, call, or e-mail anytime. Til next time, keep on Trekkin' and good collectin'

-CMDR Russ McNutt

ALIEN CONTACT

Air Force Denies Stories of UFO Crash in Valles Marineris

(MPI) - A spokeshing for Mars Air Force denounced as false rumors that an alien space craft crashed in the desert, outside of Ares Vallis on Friday. Appearing at a press conference today, General Rgrmmry The Lesser, stated that "the object was, in fact, a harmless high-altitude weather balloon, not an alien spacecraft".

The story broke late Friday night when a major stationed at nearby Ares Vallis Air Force Base contacted the Valles Marineris Daily Record with a story about a strange, balloon-shaped object which allegedly came down in the nearby desert, "bouncing" several times before coming to a stop, "deflating in a sudden explosion of alien gases". Minutes later, General Rgrmmry The Lesser contacted the Daily Record telepathically to contradict the earlier report.

General Rgrmmry The Lesser stated that hysterical stories of a detachable vehicle roaming across the Martian desert were blatant fiction, provoked by incidences involving swamp gas. But the general public has been slow to accept the Air Force's explanation of recent events, preferring to speculate on the "other-worldly" nature of the crash debris. Conspiracy theorists have condemned Rgrmmry's statements as evidence of "an obvious government cover-up", pointing out that Mars has no swamps.

REVIEW: *THE LOST WORLD*

**Something survived...
...but should it have?**

I went to see *Lost World: Jurassic Park*, twice even. And I enjoyed it both times, but unfortunately, this isn't going to be a kind review.

The plot, if you call it that, revolves around the premise that a second island existed. This island was actually where most of the dinosaur cloning and raising took place. The one we saw in the first movie was nothing but an amusement park. Since this island was supposedly for pure research, the dinos were allowed to roam freely, and interact with each other hopefully as they would have millions of years ago.

John Hammond's company, Ingen is going bankrupt because of the problems in the first movie. His nephew, Peter Ludlow (Arliss Howard), greedily decides to go to the island, capture various specimens, and take them to a San Diego zoo/park, as his father had originally planned. Hammond, however, wants to make amends for his past wrongs by keeping the island a wildlife preserve to be used in scientific study only.

Sarah Harding (Julianne Moore) decides to take an expedition there on her own to study the dinosaurs and how they managed to survive. If you remember, they only breed females hoping they would be more docile. Also, they were

genetically altered to have a dependency on an enzyme their body couldn't produce on their own. Hammond loses contact with her, and contacts her boyfriend, Ian Malcom (Jeff Goldblum) to follow her in. Malcom considers it a rescue mission instead. He brings along a munitions expert (Eddie Carr played by Richard Schiff) and a photographer (Nick Van Owen played by Vince Vaughn).

Once they arrive, they stumble upon a stegosaur herd. This provides an excellent opportunity for the Computer Graphics Imaging people to strut their stuff, and they do. This is a very beautiful and touching scene. Unfortunately, you quickly realize that this is the fault with this movie: It's nothing more than a special effects showcase. I even seem to remember hearing director Steven Spielberg say this was a request movie in special effects.

The second third of the movie is spent trying to make it to a control bunker while being chased by protective Tyrannosaurus Rex parents. They also throw in a Compy scene for dark humor and a Raptor scene for fear. Actually, they turned the Raptors into bungling clowns instead of the vicious, smart hunters they were. And the final third of the movie was done for the pure special effects opportunity and had nothing to do with the book by Michael Crichton. I considered the T-

Rex loose in San Diego bit to be more detrimental to than helping of the film. You can even tell that this was tacked on as an afterthought.

And that was the problem. *Jurassic Park* focused more on actual plot and the hard science-fiction necessary to make dinosaur cloning a reality. *The Lost World* was nothing more than an action thriller with great special effects. Sure, they tried to throw in some character development, but it wasn't very much. They gave Malcolm an adopted child to deal with, but this was nothing more than a repeat of the parental development done in the first movie. The only true character development occurred in the big game hunter (Roland Tembo played by Pete Postlewaite), but it was all to briefly done and forgotten.

Therefore, this movie gets a mixed rating. An A- for thrilling special effects and high action, but a C- for plot and originality. They also receive an A+ for scripting. They tried for a lot of humor, and in most cases, they succeeded in making you laugh and smile. You definitely need this given the amount of blood and guts and death cheating elsewhere. Overall, I'd give the movie a solid B. It is a good movie to go see, especially in a theater with a good sound system.

- FCAPT Richard L. Trulson

THE FIFTH ELEMENT

Bruce Willis dies hard as a pulp runner.

My SO (Significant Other) and I went to see *The Fifth Element* last week. As a result, I thought I would try my hand at a small review. Here goes:

Movie: *The Fifth Element*

View Date: 970521@2145

Location: Cobb Hollywood 16

Crowd: Minimal

The opening scene of *The Fifth Element* is set in 1914, but most of the action takes place 300 years later. Without a doubt, the elements (pun intended) of this film are there for all tastes. You have sci-fi/fantasy, drama, comedy, musical, and action blended with nice special effects and a good solid cast. The comment I made as I left the theater was, "*Blade Runner* meets *Pulp Fiction*".

Bruce Willis, of course, has a "bad-boy" reputation from *Die Hard* and similar movies, but the grouping of characters really fits in this bizarre puzzle. Chris Tucker is excellent as Ruby Rhod, an outrageous reporter/entertainer. The female star, Milla Jovovich, as Leeloo, is so unpredictable you can hardly keep up with her. Then there is the priest, played by Gary Oldman, whom many will recognize, but can't remember from where (Hint: "In space no one can hear you scream.").

So that the plot will not be totally revealed or otherwise compromised, the following statements will be kept in general terms.

This movie is about Good facing the ultimate Evil every 5,000 years. If this showdown were real, Evil has got some explaining to do. The build up of universal disaster went a bit overboard. While the plot, the action, the characters, and the special effects were all good, Evil just didn't seem all

that darn menacing. Sneaky, dirty, and under-handed maybe, but not menacing.

Bruce becomes involved with a priest to locate all FIVE elements to stop the ultimate Evil. The constant changing of location keeps the action flowing even faster. While the end may be somewhat predictable, it's a lot of fun and tense moments getting there.

My rating: A- (I WILL buy it when it becomes available on videotape.)

- Jim Dykes

ADC Communications

CONVENTION HUMOR

The top 15 things you'll never hear at a *Star Trek* convention [**Received via the internet, author unknown. - Rich**]

15 "Will the owner of the red Porsche 911, license plate 'STUDMFN', please turn your headlights off?"

14 "Does this Star Fleet Academy uniform make me look fat?"

13 "Make it so, Baby, make it so."

12 "It's pointless to compare the original crew to the *Next Generation*, since they're only fictional characters anyway."

11 "I dunno, sometimes I wonder if the show was really deserving of all this attention."

10 "Kirk, Picard... what's the difference, they're both losers. I'll take Will Robinson and Dr. Smith any day."

9 "I got laid last night!"

8 "Look! It's Eddie Murphy!"

7 "You're nuts. Swimming is by far the hardest part of any Iron Man Triatholon."

6 "Oooh, Girlfriend — Just look at all these hunks! Set your phaser for 'Love!'"

5 "If you think the brie's good, you should try the salmon pate."

4 "*To Wong Fu, Thanks For Everything*, Patrick Stewart."

3 "Dammit, Jim — I'm a has-been actor, not an autograph-signer!"

2 "Jim Beam me up, Scotty."

1 "Hey, guys, how 'bout we finish this conversation over a beer at the topless bar?"

STAR TREK WRITING CONTEST

Submit your short story and become famous!

Star Trek fans are notorious for producing their own fan fiction. Unfortunately, most of us don't have the proper resources or talent to be published professionally. However, the average Joe may get their chance thanks to Pocket Books. *Star Trek: Strange New Worlds* will be a collection of short stories submitted by fans. Some of the details are given below. If you wish to know more, contact me at richlt@hiwaay.net so I can send you the E-mail, or print it out for you.

The contest is open to non-professional writers who are legal residents of the United States and Canada (excluding Quebec) over the age of 18. Entrant must not have published any more than two short-stories on a professional basis or in paid professional venues. Employees (or relatives of employees living in the same

household) of Pocket Books, VIACOM or any of its affiliates are not eligible. This contest is void in Puerto Rico and wherever prohibited by law.

Entries should be no more than 7,500 words long and must not have been previously published. They must be typed or printed by word processor, double-spaced, on one side of non-corrasable paper. Do not justify right-side margins. The author's name, the story title, and the page number should appear on every page. No electronic or disk submissions will be accepted. All entries must be original and the sole work of the Entrant and the sole property of the Entrant.

Each entry must be mailed to: *STRANGE NEW WORLDS*, *Star Trek* Department, Pocket Books, 1230 6th Avenue, New York, NY 10020. Each entry must be submitted

only once. Please retain a copy of your submission. You may submit more than one story but each submission must be mailed separately. Enclose a self-addressed, stamped envelope if you wish your entry returned. Entries must be received by October 1st, 1997. Not responsible for lost, late, stolen, postage due, or misdirected mail.

Submissions will be judged on the basis of writing ability and the originality of the story, which can be set in any of the *Star Trek* time frames and feature any one or more of the *Star Trek* characters. The judges shall include the editor of the Anthology, one employee of Pocket Books and one employee of VIACOM Consumer Products. The decisions of the judges shall be final. All prizes will be awarded provided a sufficient number of entries are received that meet the minimum criteria established by the judges.

Some of the prizes include publishing contracts, copies of the book, and \$1000 in addition to the word rate of ten cents a word to the grand prize winner. All winners will share the royalties. The winners will be notified by mail or phone. The winners who win a publishing contract must sign the publishing contract in order to be awarded the prize. All

Continued: See Contest on page 28...



REVIEW: *BATMAN AND ROBIN*

All in the (Bat) Family.

People either really liked this movie, or they really hated it. I went to see *Batman and Robin* twice. The first time I saw it, I loved it. The second time I saw it, I hated it. Here's what happened to cause such a dramatic change in opinion.

First of all, forget plot. If there is one, it gets lost in all the characters they introduce: Alicia Silverstone as Batgirl, Arnold Schwarzenegger as Mr. Freeze, Uma Thurman as Poison Ivy, and Jeep Swenson as Bane. At least Chris O'Donnell returns as Robin. And they also introduce yet another Batman: George Clooney. Unfortunately, none of them can act. But then again, the writing is so putrid, there's nothing to act on, so it's not their fault. The villains were all over the top though. Jack Nicholson as the Joker started the outlandish action in the first

movie, and it seems every villain has been trying to outdo him ever since. The campy, overacting is ridiculous and quickly grates on your nerves. The heroes at least were rather subdued in their roles.

The best part of *Batman and Robin* is that it is a very breathtaking visually oriented movie. A comic book has literally come to life. People defy gravity and other physical laws in fight scenes to create a very surreal experience. The rubber bat-costumes have become even more anatomically correct. The costume designers have got to be some kinky individuals with a leather fetish. Along with the nipples from the last movie, these outfits come complete with butt cracks. Good thing Alfred the Butler (Michael Gough) can color coordinate, as I'm really beginning to wonder about him in his younger years.

Gotham, which seems to have grown even larger from the previous movies, is a breathtaking visual feast. Buildings and roadways are built on a grandiose scale, towering hundreds of stories into the sky, which is quite reminiscent of the Mega-Cities in *Judge Dredd* or *Fifth Element*. Architects of the city seem particularly drawn to the human male form, as scantily-clad giant statues of Atlas-like gods adorn the city. It has a very Roman gothic flavor to it.

Remember I said the scripting and plot stunk? This is mainly cause there is nothing original about it. The third movie was funny, but at least the jokes were fresh. Every one-liner, bad pun, and punch-line used in this movie has been told countless times. After the first hour, you know exactly when they're going to do a joke, and what joke they're going to do. It's that predictable.

However, *Batman and Robin* does have a few humorous gems. They don't mind poking fun at themselves, which is good. Unfortunately, I can't tell you what they are without spoiling them, as they are rare gems. I can mention they do tip their hat in homage to a cult classic: *A Clockwork Orange*. Be on the lookout for white long johns and black cod piece clad punks during a panoramic sweep of the gangsters just before the motorbike race. (They also kept the glow in the

Batman and Robin are mesmerized by Poison Ivy.



dark neon colors for the gang members from the previous movie, which I thought was a nice touch.) Also be on the lookout for a tribute to M-M-M-*M-Max Headroom*.

And like with Val Kilmer in the last movie, we have to compare Clooney to the other bat-actors. In brief review: Michael Keaton's Batman was better, but Kilmer's Bruce Wayne was better. Clooney is just sort of in between them both. He's neither really good, or really bad at either character. There isn't a dramatic difference between his Batman and his Bruce Wayne as there was with the previous actors. However, despite this mediocrity, I think Clooney makes a better choice overall for both. He certainly has the ruggedly handsome looks for both parts.

As far as the other actor choices for the characters, O'Donnell is still the perfect boy wonder. Ivy and Bane both work fairly well with the actors chosen. However, Schwarzenegger as Mr. Freeze stinks. It's hard to believe that his character is suppose to be a Nobel Prize winning scientist. But again, the villains are very cartoon-like while the heroes are portrayed more realistically. Silverstone is *Clueless* as she switches uncomfortably between schoolgirl innocence and biker babe toughness.

Continued: See Batman on page 20...

REVIEW: *MEN IN BLACK*

Here come the *Men in Black*!

I wasn't excited about this movie at all when I did the preview in the last newsletter. However, once I saw a teaser for it at the theater, I was eagerly anticipating its release, as it looked awesome. I was not disappointed at all. MiB is an AWESOME movie.

Apparently, Roswell did indeed happen and the United States government has been acting covertly ever since to keep the existence of extra-terrestrials a secret. The *Men in Black* is an organization of men dressed in black trying to protect the earth from the scum of the universe. They are out last, best, and only hope... for peace. (Sorry, couldn't resist a *Babylon 5* reference.)

Agent Kay (Tommy Lee Jones) has the task of training a new recruit known as Jay (Will Smith). As the movie progresses, we are introduced to a wide variety of aliens living secretly among us. The plot unfolds and the *Men in Black* have to "save the galaxy hidden in Orion's belt". This "rosebud"-like mystery is eventually revealed, but not before some of the most hilarious side-trips ever taken.

This movie knows how to use humor well, and does so expertly. The alien birth scene had me laughing so hard tears nearly came to my eyes. Thankfully, they don't overuse humor as *Batman and Robin* does. They do occasionally rely on special effects, but not as much as *The Lost World* did. MiB takes the time to develop its characters and plot into something meaningful.

Since there is nothing to complain about, this is a short review. Go out and see this movie at a nice theater with a great sound system, and you will be pleased. It's the most awesome movie so far this summer. It gets an A+. This will probably be one of the few movies that I will actually buy to keep.

- FCAPT Richard L. Trulson

The Men in Black take down a flying saucer.



...Batman continued from page 19.

I think that's where this movie fails where the previous ones have succeeded: They treated all their characters with equal respect. At least Alfred, while threatened with death, is given a larger spotlight this time around. I was also bothered that they changed the villain origins from the comics much more than before. In trying to distance the heroes from the villains, they destroyed their credibility.

In the final analysis, I'd recommend seeing *Batman and Robin* once, but only once. Nor will this be a good movie to own for repeated viewings. (Unless of course, you like being told bad jokes over and over.) Unfortunately, the beautiful visuals will be lost on the small screen, and they are the best part of this movie. A+ for the imagery. Unfortunately, the overall rating is B- for the first viewing, and C- and lower for each subsequent viewing. Go into this movie without expectations of anything good and you will enjoy yourself. Otherwise, you will be disappointed greatly.

- **FCAPT Richard Trulson**



UPCOMING MOVIES

Release dates and brief teasers of movies coming this fall.

August Movies

- 1 *Spawn* An assassin is brought back to life with mystical powers and must stop the evil blue-skinned Clown from using a deadly bio-weapon.
- 8 *Conspiracy Theory* A paranoid cab driver accidentally uncovers a real conspiracy. Stars Mel Gibson, Julia Roberts, and Patrick Stewart.
- 15 *Event Horizon* In 2046, a salvage team discovers a spaceship that disappeared 10 years ago, and has re-appeared with a terrifying creature aboard. Rumors say it's a combination of *Aliens* and *The Relic*, with the last half being like nothing previously done in sci-fi/horror films.
- 22 *Mimic* Mira Sorvino stars in this suspense/sci-fi film about a genetic experiment gone wrong causing mutant 6-foot roaches to be formed. Pre-screener claim this is a very scary movie.



September Movies

- 12 *Phantoms* Returning to their hometown, two sisters find the citizens all dead. Something ancient and evil then stalks the police and media.
- 26 *The Peacemaker* George Clooney and Nicole Kidman must stop nuclear terrorists from blowing up the United Nations Building in New York.

October Movies

- 31 *Deep Rising* A gang of thieves hijack a passenger ship and discover no-one's aboard. Soon weird creatures attack them and they fight back.

November Movies

- 7 *Starship Troopers* A sci-fi war drama showing the daily lives of several marines fighting a galactic war against giant alien insects. Based on the classic novel by Robert Heinlein. Theater teasers make this look like the *Aliens* and *Star Wars* of the 90's.
- 14 *The Jackal* An IRA commando (Richard Gere) must stop the infamous assassin 'The Jackal' (Bruce Willis) from killing the FBI Director.
- 21 *Mortal Kombat Annihilation* When the Outworld realm begins to merge with ours, the fighters must stop Emperor Khan or Earth is doomed.
- 26 *Alien Resurrection* Ripley is cloned back to life, and must escape and destroy a large ship infested with aliens, bound for Earth.

SPAWN LIVES

Another comic creation comes to life on the big screen.

Tod McFarlane is one of the hottest comic artists and writers around. Along with a few others, he created Image Comics, a major contender to mighty Marvel and DC. McFarlane's unique style and no qualms approach has established a loyal following. The title character and comic has been *Spawn*. It's been so successful, it's even got a half hour cartoon on cable. Both the series, and apparently the movie, use lots of violence and other controversial subjects.

Spawn began as Al Simmons, a family man who also worked as an assassin for a Government agency. When Jason Wynn, the agency's leader decides Simmons is no longer needed, he sends the female assassin Priest to kill him. Simmons dies, but in Hell he makes a deal with the devil and claims he will lead the dark forces if he is returned to Earth. Simmons becomes a Spawn, and is returned to Earth five years after he died. He is shocked to discover that his wife has married his best friend, and realizes he can do nothing now except take revenge on Wynn. Two other spawn attempt to coerce him, one named Cogliostro who tries to teach Spawn how to use his powers and tells him to fight back against the devil. The other is the creature known as Clown, a bizarre shapeshifter who wants to see Spawn follow his deal. Wynn in the meantime has

developed "Heat 16", a powerful virus and plans to use it to threaten governments of the world. Clown convinces Wynn to set the detonator to go off if Wynn's heart stops, thus if Spawn kills Wynn he will end up destroying humankind.

The movie teasers look as if the special effects in this film are incredible! They appear to do a superb job of mimicking MacFarlane's drawing style. If you've ever scene his work, he likes to use lots of excess cape and fluff in his images. As a result, the image is very stylistic but not technically possible. If it were real, it would look good, but probably get the hero killed cause his cape would keep getting in the way, nor would he be able to contort into the shapes. But like the *Batman* movies, they've taken stylistic liberty to get a muscular costume. Mix that in with the special effects, and Spawn's costume literally comes alive and looks like the drawn image. And while I haven't seen the cable cartoon, I have the impression they are able to do with special effects that they would normally only be able to do in a cartoon or drawing.

If they are able to combine the visuals with excellent acting, scripting, and good plot, they should have an awesome movie on their hands. However, the Clown character looks too loud and cartoonish compared to the darker Spawn. They might should have taken a



cue from the *Batman* folks and darkened the Clown's costume a bit.

Another potential problem may be the very thing that made *Spawn* popular: the violence. The drawn image can be absorbed at whatever rate the reader needs. A cartoon, while at a particular rate and can be just as violent (Seen any anime lately?) as live-action, is still somewhat muffled because it is a cartoon. However, translate that to the live action with real looking blood and guts, and the violence may be overwhelming, especially if it's senseless and unnecessary to the plot.

But then again, Americans seem to love anti-heroes. They want someone who doesn't have to play by the rules, which stifles what they can do. That's why comic heroes like Sandman, Punisher, Wolverine, and Spawn are so popular. They break the taboo of what's proper for a hero. We'll see if this anti-hero can make the transition to the big screen.

- FCAPT Richard Trulson

SPOTLIGHT: RUSS MCNUTT

Introducing your new Executive officer.

As you're probably aware by now, Russ McNutt has been appointed as the new Executive Officer of the U.S.S. *Wernher von Braun*. However, he comes to us with quite a bit of *Star Trek* and STARFLEET background behind him. And while he may have just moved from Florida, his origins are right here close to Huntsville.

Russ is an only child who was born in Athens, AL on May 1, 1955. After living there for four years, his family moved to Nashville where his Dad pursued his masters degree at Vanderbilt. Upon graduation, his family moved to Chapel Hill, NC for a while. However, they returned to Nashville while his dad completed his doctorates degree. Afterwards, in 1966 they moved back to Athens where Russ spent most of his high school and college years. Russ graduated Athens State College with a Bachelor of Science degree in Business Administration.

After working various odd jobs, Russ returned to college to take some computer courses. He was then hired by Computer Sciences Corporation doing contract work for about nine months. He was then transferred to the Kennedy Space Center in 1981 where he worked for ten years. While there he had two contract jobs with CSC and Lockheed. After being laid off due to downsizing, he continued to

live in Florida for five years. If the space program was going good, so did Titusville where Russ lived. However, if it didn't, neither did Titusville. Finally in May of 1997, Russ moved to Huntsville.

Involvement with STARFLEET began for Russ in the mid 80's as an associate member unassigned to any chapter. He believes he joined after seeing an advertisement by Fleet in *Starlog* magazine. However, he let his membership lapse but continued with his interest in *Trek* by going to several conventions. His first convention was in 1989 in Orlando, FL with James Doohan (Scotty). "He was real nice," commented Russ, who got Doohan's autograph. Russ was even able to play on Doohan's team a in a *Trek* style *Family Feud* and won! This convention was quickly followed by others, gaining even more autographs including those of Patrick Stewart (Picard), Gates McFadden (Dr. Crusher), and Marina Sirtis (Troi).

Then in 1990, Russ was able to see Doohan again when the star was touring the Kennedy Space Center. He had a special item he wanted autographed: This drawing showed the saucer section of the movie era *Enterprise* affixed to a special secondary hull. The main part of the hull was replaced with the space shuttle's

fuel tank and the warp nacelle's were replaced with shuttle's solid rocket boosters. A caption below read, "NASA announces STS: The Next Generation." Doohan exclaimed that this was one of the best designs for the *Enterprise* he ever saw.

Star Trek 30: One Weekend On Earth was considered the "convention of the century" by Russ. Like most everyone, he was inspired and awestruck to see the entire original cast on stage together at one time. The only thing he would have liked to have seen though, would have been all four Captains there together as well. However, he was pleased at having representatives from all four series. He particularly liked having the Galaxy Class ticket package that allowed him higher priority in the autograph signing, and in access to the VIP gala dinner Saturday night. It was at the gala that he had a chance to chat with Kate Mulgrew (Janeway) and Robert Picardo (Holographic Doctor) on a personal basis. Mulgrew seemed to attract an especially large crowd following at the dinner.

Daniel Goldin, the director of NASA, was another of the individuals Russ was also able to meet and chat with at *Trek 30*. Unfortunately, this was a nervous meeting since in a round about way, Goldin is responsible for Russ losing his job at Kennedy. And while the cutbacks may be needed from a

financial standpoint, Goldin didn't seem to be very people oriented and concerned with individuals' problems. But on a more cheerful side, Russ was able to meet many other *Trek* stars. He was, of course, armed and ready to gather lots of autographs. By this time, he had managed to acquire duplicates even. One of the autographs he cherishes most is that of Chase Masterson (Leeta the Daabo girl on DS9). She signed it, "To Russ, Love Chase." While *Trek* 30 may have been the "convention of the century", Russ is ready for more. He hopes that con promoters like Joe Motes would do more conventions in the Huntsville area.

With all these convention visits, Russ eventually hooked up with the USS *Guardian* chartered in Cape Canaveral, FL. He rejoined STARFLEET and joined the *Guardian* in January 1994. He became their Department Chief of Sciences in 1995. Due to his growing collection, he assumed writing responsibilities for the article now appearing in both

the *Guardian* and *von Braun* newsletters, the "Trek 411 Collector's Corner," which showcases all the latest in *Trek* collecting. Actively involved with the ship and earning the rank of Lieutenant Commander, he would often host video parties and other events at his house. He has also taken an active role in STARFLEET Academy. Starting with Officer Training School, he has also taken and passed many other courses. He completed the computer College with Distinction at both the Bachelors and Masters level courses and with Honors at the Doctors level. He completed the Vulcan Academy of Science with First Honors in Math and received the IDIC Award.

Deep Space 9 is Russ's current favorite of the four *Trek* series. When asked who his favorite characters were, he named just about every DS9 crew member from Kira to Dax. He liked the comedy aspects of Bashir and O'Brian, as well as Quark and Rom, who he considers the stooge. He likes it when they break the monotony of the seriousness with some humor. And like most everyone, he has thought the addition of Worf to the crew has just improved the series dramatically with action. Data also managed to make it onto his favorite character list.

Most of Russ's favorite episodes come from the *Next Genera-*

tion, however. "Relics" with Scotty is one of the few stand alone episodes that made his favorites list, as most of them were two part stories like "Unification" with Spock. "Best of Both Worlds", which was one *TV Guide's* "Top 100 Episodes of All Time," was also one of his favorites as he was literally holding his breath wondering if Picard would return due to rumors at the time that Stewart was leaving the cast. However, leave it to DS9 to appear hear as well. Russ loved the season finale and is eagerly awaiting the second part to see if they reclaim the station. Perhaps his favorite episode of all though is "Trials and Tribble-ations," which he considers a "classic within a classic."

What Russ would like to see though is a series with George Takei as Captain Sulu of the USS *Excelsior*. In fact, him and the *Guardian* have urged people to contact Paramount if they want to see such a series. This isn't the only time Russ has contacted Paramount to do something. He sent E-mail to Majel Barrett Roddenberry encouraging her to persuade Rick Berman and crew to continue DS9 series beyond the next season when he heard rumors that this would be the last season. He was quite impressed to find out she answers all her E-mail. She even has a website at <http://www.Roddenberry.com/> on the internet in dedication to her late husband, Gene.



Of course, *Trek* isn't the only science-fiction Russ enjoys. However, he has never gotten into much of the current stuff, such as *SeaQuest DSV*. He loves the sci-fi TV that he grew up with, including *Voyage to the Bottom of the Sea* and the original *Twilight Zone*. He especially loved the original *Outer Limits*, with all the scary monsters. He felt that there was "just something about them" that made them better than the current stuff. Perhaps one exception to this is *Dark Shadows*, which he loved both the original and the recent 90's version. Unfortunately, he felt the distraction of the Gulf War prevented the new *Dark Shadows* from catching on like the original did, though it too has its own cult following.

As far as the summer movies currently playing, Russ went to see *Contact* and enjoyed it greatly. He had bought the book in 1985 and had reread it just before seeing the movie since he enjoys seeing how movie adaptations vary from the books. However, though he read Michael Crichton's book of *Jurassic Park* and the *Lost World*, he has not seen the movie. While he is thrilled with scary monsters, something about dinosaurs has always made him a bit queasy, especially as a kid. Russ's parents also enjoy seeing sci-fi movies and his Dad shares his son's love of *Trek*.

Some of Russ's favorites include the color blue and eating corn dogs, especially from Corn Dog 7 at the Madi-

VOYAGER RUMOR

The season premiere of *Star Trek: Voyager* is rumored to have a new cast member: a female Borg designated as "Seven of Nine". Jeri Ryan will play the character who was assimilated as a young child. After she is severed from the Borg Collective in "Scorpion, Part II," she will develop a more sensuous personality as she rediscovers

her humanity. Ryan recently costarred in the short lived NBC series, *Dark Skies*. She played an intelligence officer named Juliet, who helped the US government keep alien life a secret. Rick Berman, the head of Roddenberry's *Trek* empire, hopes this addition will improve the show's ratings and provide many new plots.

[*Heard on the net.* - Rich]

son Square Mall. He's always been a junk food junkie, though lately he's been trying to eat more healthy foods. In fact, he's been quite fond of Boston Market's roast chicken. Music wise, he prefers classic rock from the 50's to the 70's, such as the Beatles, Elvis, and the Beach Boys. While he doesn't care for much of the modern stuff, he does like the new age stuff from Enya.

Since Russ has been a fan of *Star Trek* since it's premier in 1966, you can imagine that thirty years of collecting memorabilia has led to quite an impressive collection. In fact, touring his basement is like stepping into a *Trek* museum. It started simply enough with buying the original *Star Trek* book written by James Blish, who adapted the TV script into book form. He also built a model of the original *Enterprise*. As the years, progressed, he has continued to buy more books and probably has over a hundred of them, including many of the recent releases. Russ also has an

impressive plate collection from the Hamilton Collection, with over twenty of them. He would like to get more, but has quickly ran out of money and space to display them. And of course, like any good *Trekker*, he has tons of videos.

Even though finances prevent Russ for buying as much memorabilia as he use to, he still has an impressive collection and buys when he can. He has several of the Franklin Mint ships; however, he considers the metal models of the original and *Next Generation Enterprises* to be his favorites though. He also has both of the Mint's insignia / comm badge collections. Even though he considers himself a lousy chess player, he has both the original series and *Next Generation* chess sets, though he has little desire to get the 3D chess set. He also has all the ornaments, including the first, very valuable original *Enterprise* ornament. However, Russ has said, "Even if my collection appreciates a million per cent, I'm never gonna sell it."

...Dragon*Con continued from page 1.

prised me knowing Chase.) Considering the circumstances, she was beautiful (as always) and she was very nice to me. I felt really bad for her about the luggage and was sorry that I could not do anything for her. Anyway, because of the aforementioned luggage problem, she did not have any photos to sell so I had her sign my magazines and bought a polaroid of her for my brother's birthday.

I got some more autographs today: Richard Hatch (*Battlestar Galactica*), Michael O'Hare (Jeffrey Sinclair, Valen), Ed Wasser (Morden). Ed messed up my picture - he saw my Chase membership 'badge' and made it out to Chase so I gave it to her. I also got signed comics from several of the crew at Chaos! Comics including Brian Pulido, Steven Hughes, Jason Jensen, and Justiniano. Friday's JRD installment: He had not yet arrived, but he would be there on Saturday.

Stardate 970628

Arrived once again at 1000 hours. Got to see Chase briefly in the dealer's room before the panels got started. She was in a much better mood owing to the fact that her luggage (including her photos) had arrived. She hugged me (again) - this always makes me feel good - no, that's not what I mean. I gave her a little something for Jeremiah's (her son)

11th birthday; she was thrilled (really thrilled if you know what I mean). I also added another photo to my Chase collection. These few moments were definitely the highlight of DragonCon for me.



Magician Rudy Coby. Photo by Don Daniel.

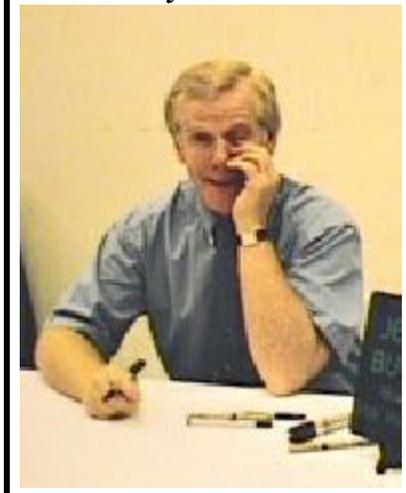
This was Chase's most active day as far as panels were concerned. Naturally, I made an effort to attend them. At 1130, Chase and several fan panelists discussed DS9 in general. They discussed, with audience participation, where the show has been and where it is going. At 1300, Chase had a panel with Michael O'Hare, comedian-magician Rudy Coby, and Mike Jitlov. This involved a discussion on making fictional characters seem real. Rudy was very funny especially when someone commented on his hair (it

stands up). There were also several funny exchanges between Chase and Michael (he can be very funny without really trying). Chase was very entertaining (as usual).

At 1430, Chase served as a guest auctioneer for the Georgia Literacy Foundation. This auction was for a good cause and was also very entertaining. At 1600, Chase got her very own panel. She was terrific doing Q&A as always. She also related the Nordic Track / Cathy story which I always find amusing and Sid's hole-in-the-pants adventure. After this last panel, Chase was sweet enough to pose for a couple of photos (one including yours truly) before dashing off to the dealer's room. Today I also got one of those new shot glasses that Chase has.

Saturday's JRD installment: He had not arrived and since he was seriously injured in a riding accident, he was not going to come. (That's OK, I can understand that.)

*Jeremy Bullock is Boba Fett
Photo by Don Daniel.*



Stardate 970629

Arrived at 1030 hours. Milled about the dealer's room - can you tell that I really enjoy this? Reacquired an autograph from Ed Wasser; this time he got it right - it's a very nice photo, too. At this point, I got a bit bored (ha ha), so I went to the autograph room. This brings us to the final JRD installment for Sunday: I asked the guy working there if maybe John Rhys-Davies had arrived. He said that Mr. Rhys-Davies had indeed arrived but that the line for his autograph had been closed at 85 people as Mr. Rhys-Davies not only had the rib injuries but the flu as well. (What a big man even though I didn't get his autograph- I may write to him to try and get one.) I was pleased that John had shown up but disappointed that no one that was working the convention seemed to know what they were talking about concerning his appearance.

Rogue of the X-Men Photo by Don Daniel.



New Battlestar Galactica recruits? Photo by Don Daniel.

At 1600, I attended Chase's final panel which included Ed Wasser, Tracy Torme, George Johnsen, Lewis Murphy, and Michael O'Hare. This panel featured a lively discussion comparing and contrasting *Babylon 5* and *DS9* which proved to be very entertaining. At one point, Mr. Johnsen offered a trade in order to get Chase (Leeta) on B5. Mr. Wasser also made several remarks eliciting some laughter including a reference to his head being mounted on a pike after his "death". Chase was once again great holding her own with the rest of the panelists in defending the honor of *DS9*. Both shows are great, but *DS9* has a significant advantage and it rhymes with cheetah :). Once again, after the panel, Chase was gracious enough to pose for a couple more pictures (with yet another of yours truly). After a quick bite to eat, I proceeded in the general direction of my commode, er, abode satisfied in the knowledge that the trip had been well worth the effort.

Synopsis

Although there were a couple of disappointments (Charlton Heston did not show up due to scheduling snafu by the promoter and that I did not get John Rhys-Davies' autograph), I thoroughly enjoyed myself and, as usual, Chase was definitely the highlight of my experience. I also got some nice autographs while I was there. I will most likely be attending again and I hope that Chase will too. Thus ends my opus.

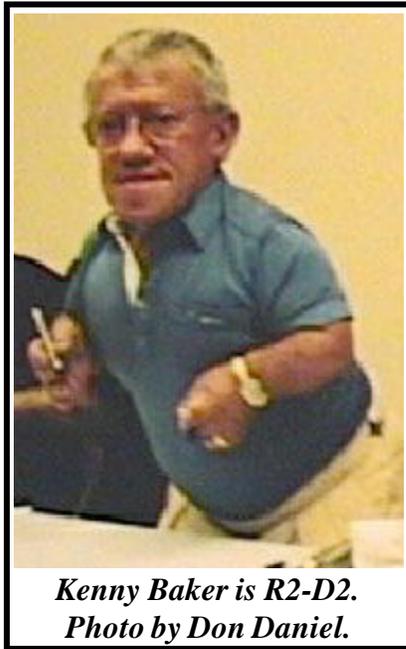
-LT (jg) Don Daniel

*[I received an E-Mail from Monty Strickland, the STARFLEET volunteer coordinator for Dragon*Con, via the Region 2 E-Mail listserve. Here are brief snippets taken from that report. - Rich]*

Region 2's Participation in Dragon*Con was very successful because of enthusiastic member participation. Besides staffing and promoting our table which was located next to the B5 table in the hall

outside the Dealer's room, STARFLEET also participated in *Trek Trak* (Dragon*Con's *Trek* programming). Every member who participated or volunteered deserves a great thanks because we showed the public a positive image of STARFLEET.

As to the STARFLEET table itself, we had the most participation in manning the table than has ever been the case in recent history. I'd like to thank each and everyone of the folks who volunteered to help with the STARFLEET table. When I asked in meetings or via the internet for help, the response was immediate and positive. There were some out of town members who volunteered for duty on the table who did not get a chance to serve such as Don Daniel, Chief Science Officer, U.S.S. *Werner von Braun* and Adm. Lori Anne Brown, CO, USS *Paegan* who along with several of her members were manning the TachyCon convention booth



***Kenny Baker is R2-D2.
Photo by Don Daniel.***

downstairs, as well as other R2 members who stopped by and passed time with us and I am grateful to all of them. Finally I'd like to give my greatest thanks to those who did serve on the Starfleet R2 Dragon*Con Table.

**- PO2 Monty Strickland
USS *MacLeod*
Medical Officer
Montine@juno.com**

David Prowse is Darth Vader. Photo by Don Daniel.



**...Communications
continued from page 9.**

or *Mission Briefing* this year. (We're finally back on track with that at least.) Maybe next year we can try something different. I just hope the amount of submissions continues to grow. And if that happens, we may need to go to a more frequent publication rate, or a larger size. Either option would also require greater funding, which is already spread thin.

And because I got so busy with stuff going on in June, I decided to go ahead and combine the Spring and Summer issues into one. I know that seems to be a recurring theme, but I do have a life too ya know. If someone would be willing to take either Communications or Command responsibilities off me, then maybe I could focus on the one. Until that happens, or I learn not to procrastinate so much and organize my time better, you're just gonna have to put up with occasional delays or combined issues. So you might know what it's like to put one of these little monstrosities together, I think I'll let you know for my next report, as this one seems to have grown quite long already.

Take care folks and happy reading. Oh, in case you didn't notice, the Summer issue, which is half of this issue, is out on time. WOW! Take a picture.

**- FCAPT Richard L.
Trulson**

...Contest continued from page 17.

federal, local and state taxes are the responsibility of the winner. A list of the winners will be available after January 1st, 1998 on the Pocket Books *Star Trek* Books website, www.simonsays.com/startrek/, or the names of the winners can be obtained after January 1st, 1998 by sending a self-addressed, stamped envelope and a request for the list of winners to WINNERS' LIST, *STRANGE NEW WORLDS*, *Star Trek* Department, Pocket Books, 1230 6th Avenue, New York, NY 10020.

Certain types of stories will be disqualified from consideration: a) Any story focusing on explicit sexual activity or graphic depictions of violence or sadism. b) Any story that focuses on characters that are not past or present *Star Trek* regulars or familiar *Star Trek* guest characters. c) Stories that deal with the previously unestablished death of a *Star Trek* character, or that establish major facts about or make major changes in the life of a major character, for instance a story that establishes a long-lost sibling or reveals the hidden passion two characters feel for each other. d) Stories that are based around common cliches, such as "hurt/comfort" where a character is injured and lovingly cared for, or "Mary Sue" stories where a new character comes on the ship and outdoes the crew.

U.S.S. *Wernher von Braun* Information

(Someone new, someone old, someone in blue.)

Commanding Officer	FCAPT Richard L. Trulson	423-6638
Executive Officer	CMDR Russ McNutt	650-3195
Communications	CAPT Richard L. Trulson	423-6638
Engineering	needed	
Medical	needed	
Security	needed	
Science	LT (jg) Donald Daniel	882-2024
Operations	CMDR Dallas Vinson	883-4132
E-mail: USS.Wernher.von.Braun@sfi.org		
World Wide Web URL: http://www11.web2010.com/omni/wvb/		

The U.S.S. *Wernher von Braun* is a chapter of STARFLEET, the International *Star Trek* Fan Association. STARFLEET's general purpose is to create a social organization of *Star Trek* fans that work to fulfill Gene Roddenberry's dream: a future where mankind has learned to work through its differences and problems to live in harmony. The U.S.S. *Wernher von Braun* accomplishes this through a variety of social and community service activities.

For more information about the U.S.S. *Wernher von Braun* or STARFLEET, contact:

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Subspace Static

Submissions for the next issue are due by the beginning of January, April, July, and October for the newsletter that comes out the following month. Please send them and all comments about SS to:

Richard L. Trulson 28825 Airport Lane Ardmore, AL 35739	(205) 423-6638 richtl@HiWAAY.net
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Preferred submission format is on PC disk or E-mail. Contact me before you submit something to make sure I can import your file. Plain text files are guaranteed to work. If you mail a disk, please include a printout just in case the disk gets damaged. Handwritten materials (typed is preferred) can be mailed as well.

Any ship or science-fiction related submission is acceptable. This includes reports, interviews, cartoons, artwork, reviews, poetry, short fiction, etc. We will also accept other genres. If you wish your submissions returned, include a self-addressed, stamped envelope. Donations are also accepted.

Each Winner grants to Pocket Books the right to use his or her name, likeness, and entry for any advertising, promotion and publicity purposes without further compensation to or permission from such winner, except where prohibited by law. All entries

become the property of Pocket Books and of Paramount Pictures, the sole and exclusive owner of the *Star Trek* property and elements thereof. Entries will be returned only if they are accompanied by a self-addressed, stamped envelope. Contest void where prohibited.