



THE WRIGHT STUFF

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

A View From the Catbird Seat

By J.R. Fisher



Here it is, holiday season once more and time for our anniversary party. As we said last

newsletter, it is at 6 p.m. on December 17th (Monday) at the Kanki at Crabtree Valley Mall. At last count, we had 29 members signed up for dinner. Any last minute additions need to get in very quickly. I hope to see all of you there.

I have already received my packet of information from UNC-TV in regards to the upcoming Festival. As of now, we will work the 6 - 11:30 p.m. slots on February 16th, and March 23rd. This may change because of corporate sponsors but this is what we have asked for. We have 25 slots for each night. Of course, you are always free to volunteer to work other shifts on your own, they can always use the help.

Please start marking your calendars now so that other things do not interfere with these events. Remember, they always have great food and it is a ball. Plus it spotlights us and gets us great coverage. So plan now to be part of Festival '02!!

Speaking of volunteering, don't forget that we have a booth in downtown Raleigh for the evening of December 31st as we participate in Raleigh's First Night. We will be selling buttons and giving out information from 4 p.m. until 11:30 p.m. Last year was cold, but we

still had fun. Remember, the more of you that show up the warmer we will all be! Great food and good times - the essence of Kitty Hawk!

It seems I have covered the most important things in such a short space I don't really know what to add to this article. It has been a good year and I thank everyone for all their hard work on all our endeavors. As always, I hope the next year will be even better with more things to do and more participation.

Larry is working on a schedule or schedules, for a gaming night and a movie night for the coming year. These are just some suggestions for getting together with some of your fellow crew members to relax and have some fun. We are always open to other group activities as long as you are willing to participate. Talk to Larry or Jeff if something comes to mind.

While we will not be working the con, do not forget about the Slanted Fedora con in Durham the last weekend in January. All the previously scheduled guests, plus some surprises.

For those who regularly attend meetings, don't forget to bring stamps for the stampede or aluminum for recycling. Of course, that money goes into the Duke Children's jar into which you can always drop your loose change.

Next year will be here before we realize. If we want it to be better than this year, then now is the time to start thinking about how to make it better. Too often, we

don't make firm plans and we get mired down in the details of which weekend is best, who can drive, who can't get off work when, etc. If there are things you really want to do next year, start now, getting others that want to do the same thing, to plan that trip or event. Don't put it off.

As far as our community service goes, I would very much like to see us do more than we currently are. If you know of an activity that everyone can do, that qualifies as a community service, please step forward and let us know what it is. The telethons are great, but, they are not year round events.

Everyone has expressed an interest in new shirts for the Kitty Hawk, so be thinking about what colors you would like to see us print next time. So far the original red seems to be the preference.

That about wraps it up for me this time. I hope to see you at the holiday party on the seventeenth, Raleigh First Night on the thirty-first, or at our meeting January fifth. In the meantime, be safe and be happy. Give generously to those who need and be kind to all the animals. I hope everyone has a great holiday and you come back ready to begin a new year with all the Wright Stuff.

**Esse Quam Videri and
God Bless America**



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Science Department By Elaine Pischke

I know some of you saw the recent Leonid meteor shower, but did any of you hear it? For centuries people have been reporting hearing hissing and sizzling sounds during the Leonid meteor storm. Finally, scientists are beginning to take these reports seriously and come up with some plausible explanations for these sounds. Witnesses report hearing the sounds as the meteors passed directly overhead, with no delay between seeing and hearing. This has puzzled scientists, since light travels much faster than sound, you would expect a delay, such as when viewing lightning, then hearing the thunder. Theoretically, there should be a five minute delay between seeing and hearing any sound coming from the Leonids. This is the primary reason scientists have until recently dismissed these reports as fantasy. However, physicist Colin Keay believes he has an explanation. According to Keay, glowing meteor trails give off not only visible light, but also very low frequency (VLF) radio signals. Such radio waves, which oscillate at audio frequencies between a few kHz and 30 kHz, travel to the ground at the speed of light – solving the vexing problem of simultaneity. But people can't hear radio waves, right? According to Keay's theory, something on the ground must be converting radio waves into sound waves. Simple materials

like aluminum foil, thin wires, pine needles -- even dry or frizzy hair -- can intercept and respond to a VLF field. Radio waves induce currents in electrical conductors. "Strong, low-frequency currents can literally shake ordinary objects," explains Dennis Gallagher, a space physicist at the NASA Marshall Space Flight Center. "When things shake, they launch vibrations into the air, which is what we hear." Higher-frequency radio waves, like TV transmissions or FM radio broadcasts, oscillate much too fast to substantially shake conductors. Even if they did, we couldn't hear the resulting MHz-frequency sound waves, which are far above the frequency range of a human ear. But VLF waves can do the job. Keay discovered that even a pair of glasses could be made to vibrate slightly. So next time the Leonids pass over, lay your head down on a bed of dry leaves or grass, don your wire framed glasses, and listen for the Leonids! (It will help if you have dry, frizzy hair, too!)

Merry Christmas, and Happy New Year to all!

Computer Operations By John Troan

As you can see, this month's newsletter is a short one. Hopefully, this means that everyone is enjoying the holiday season -- even with it warm enough to drive around with the windows down -- and that you'll be back and ready to contribute to the February *Wright Stuff*. (I'm still planning to debut a new layout with the Feb. '02 issue., but have yet to design it.)

As of this writing, *Enterprise* has aired 11 hours -- the premiere plus nine one-hour episodes. From the letters printed in December's *Star Trek the Magazine*, the series appears to be a success so far. With the November sweeps over, I expect the next batch of new episodes will be out in January.

The *Kitty Hawk* web site has been a little stagnant lately, mostly because I've been trying to renovate the football portion of what's on the server. (Unfortunately, I won't make my self-imposed deadline of the NFL Wild Card Playoffs to finish the work.) I'm also preparing for upgrades in the servers' memory and software that'll be done during the New Year's break from work.

Upcoming Events

Dec.	17	<i>U.S.S. Kitty Hawk Anniversary Party</i> 6 p.m. Kanki @ Crabtree Valley Mall
	31	4-11:30 p.m. Raleigh First Night
Jan.	5	4 p.m. Ship Meeting, Fisher Home
	26-27 ?	Slanted Fedora Convention
Feb.	2	4 p.m. Ship Meeting, Fisher Home
	16	UNC-TV -- Festival 2002
Mar.	2	4 p.m. Ship Meeting, Fisher Home
	23	UNC-TV -- Festival 2002

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