

THE WRIGHT STUFF



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THE WRIGHT STUFF

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IMAGE - Featured Front Page

Photo taken by *Kitty Hawk* member Jeff Cohn of the lunar eclipse on November 8.



A View From the Catbird Seat

By J.R. Fisher



First I want to remind all of you that this year's anniversary party is not going to be held on December 17th, but on January 17th; because it is the 100th anniversary of the Wright Brothers first flight at Kitty Hawk, N.C., and several of us will be there.

Secondly, please decide between now and our meeting on December 6, if you plan to attend the dinner on January 17th at the Kanki so we can reserve the appropriate number of seats. Last year's attendance was embarrassing. Do we need to require a deposit to be sure you will attend?

This past year has been somewhat disappointing in our civic activities; not our fault but still we did not do as much as in the past. We obviously need to find new charities to contribute our time and money to that will appreciate our efforts and work with us. We are asking each of you to look at the various drives, telethons, etc. that you know about and come forward with some suggestions as to how we can participate. If you would make some initial contacts, it would be appreciated.

If you get this before Thanksgiving, we wish each of you a very wonderful one. If you get it after, then we hope it was all that you wanted it to be and everyone is home safe and sound.

We look forward to seeing everyone on the 6th here at our house. We hope that all of you will look at the 100th anniversary in a new light and realize all that has happened because of what two brothers did and reflect on what I have meant over the years when we talked about having "The Wright Stuff". Each of us can make a difference in the lives of our families, our friends, and our community. We might not change the course of world history, but then again, we just might. That is the magic of life; the right word, the right deed at the right time, to the right person or in the right place can be the difference. Do the right thing.

Esse Quam Videri

Science Report

By Elaine Pischke

I hope everyone got a look at the lunar eclipse a couple of weeks ago. Unfortunately, all we got was a glimpse of the end of it, since we forgot to go out and look earlier, when it was first starting. Maybe next time!

The Hubble telescope continues to take amazing pictures from deep space. Have a look at some of the newer images at <http://wires.news.com.au/special/mm/030811-hubble.htm>. It takes a minute or two to load, but the images are worth the wait.

In environmental news, energy experts predict the levels of CO₂, the main greenhouse gas in the atmosphere, will likely rise by 50%

by the year 2020. The primary reason for this is the increase in population and growth in developing countries, particularly as use of cars grows in those areas. This is not good news. Although we in the U.S. (4% of the world's population) are currently responsible for 25% of the world's greenhouse emissions, we are reducing our energy needs by about 1% per year due to conservation and energy efficiency efforts. But clearly this is not enough. If you are wondering what you can do to help, there is a new program in place through all of the local energy companies (Progress

Energy, Duke Power) whereby you may elect to purchase "Green Power". That is, by making a small donation with your electric bill each month, you can help purchase energy from renewable sources, which at the present time are more expensive than non-renewable sources. For more information, go to www.ncgreenpower.org or call 919-857-9000. You can purchase Green Power in \$4.00 increments. For \$4.00 you purchase 100 kilowatt-hours of green energy (wind, solar). This \$4.00 is a tax-deductible donation.

Engineering Report

By Brad McDonald

Wow! What a month, or so, the Chinese are in space! For the first time since 1961, another nation has joined limited membership club. The U.S. and Russian space programs have stagnated and with the shuttle program grounded, there's not a lot happening on the manned space frontier. The Shenzou 5 space capsule is a Russian based design, so it's docking mechanism is compatible with the space station. In fact, the Chinese plan to launch a MIR type space station before 2010. That's not the end of their plans, the Shenzou 5 can handle a crew of three, so it too can be used to shuttle astronauts to the International Space Station. This could bring some new energy to the space program. The Chinese also plan to start a series of robotic missions to the moon and beyond. So add the name of Yang Liwei, 38, Lt. Col., Chinese Air Force, to the list of astronauts (Taikonauts).

Last month I talked briefly about increased mileage in cars, now the other side of that report has come to light of day. Lighter, and therefore more fuel efficient cars, mean more fatalities. That is to say, the smaller they are, the more susceptible they are to damage. The most fuel efficient and least expensive cars have a fatality rate, twice that of midsize cars and SUV's and four times a minivan's rate. So another factor has been added to the equation. All the advances in safety are negated by the simple equation of

mass vs. larger mass, or at least, more substantial mass.

I just finished reading a fascination book, *Resurrection* by Daniel Madsen. It is about the salvage operations at Pearl Harbor following the Japanese attack. Great reading for history buffs, technical geeks and such. What is important to remember, that although 19 ships were sunk or badly damaged, all were back in action with the exception of *Arizona*, *Oklahoma* and *Utah*. Quite a feat considering *West Virginia*, *California*, *Oglala*, *Shaw*, *Cassin* and *Downes* were also considered total losses. The chief of salvage operations told Admiral Nimitz, "Ships were designed to float, all we have to do is take away what made them sink." Although he was labeled as overly optimistic, he delivered on all his promises. What's really interesting is they even considered the *Arizona* for salvage. Of course, *Oklahoma* was righted and raised but deemed obsolete and too expensive to repair. Anyway, by this time the carriers were the most important part of the fleet and several new battleship programs had either been scaled back or canceled. An attempt was made on the *Utah*, but eventually it was simply moved out of the way and abandoned in place. *Utah* and *Arizona* remain there, both still contain crew members.

Speaking of books, *Star Trek, Strange New Worlds VI* is out. It's fan-written stories, covering all

Trek settings and a few surprises as well. As I have said before, this is the best of the *Trek* stories out now, written by fans for fans. (Who knows, maybe I'll convert one of my script rejects into a story!)

Big news this week is the 40th observance of the JFK assassination. As usual, all of the conspiracy nuts have come out of the woodwork, all to hawk their pet theories. Every network and cable channel is running some sort of Kennedy programming, some focusing on the assassination, others on JFK's presidency or life, and some on the entire Kennedy clan or curse. The most interesting facet centers on the milestone memory phenomenon, or "where were you when..." My parents remembered Pearl Harbor, my generation remembers the JFK assassination, now its 9-11. Most young people aren't even sure about JFK, they remember what their parents and grandparents remember, not what they know. It's surprising how much mythology surrounds Kennedy. One of the specials I saw centered on this unusual theme, so I watched it. It was quite good and exposed a number of historical errors and misconceptions. It was a real eye opener. Anyway, that's about all for now. As always, long live and prosper!

Medical Report

By Amy DeJongh

Changing the organ donation system so that people are automatically donors unless they specifically indicate otherwise would make more organs available and save thousands of lives each year. That's the conclusion of an article appearing in the Nov. 21 issue of *Science*.

There has been a debate about whether defaults, which are the automatic selections made when a person fails to signal a preference, actually make a difference.

In the United States, people are not organ donors unless they have explicitly indicated otherwise (on their driver's license or in a state registry, for example). This is also referred to as the "opt-in" system or "explicit consent."

Currently, there is an acute shortage of organ donors. According to the study authors, more than 45,000 Americans have died since 1995 while waiting for the appropriate organ. There was another recent study that discovered less than half of brain-dead potential organ donors actually provide organs to transplant patients. This is despite the fact that 85 percent of Americans have been found to approve of organ donations.

If you are in favor of organ donation, it is important to make your family aware of your choice in addition to selecting the appropriate response on your driver's license. It truly may make a difference.

Computer Operations

By John Troan

With the rest of the articles in place, I now have a couple column-pages to fill with *my* article. :-)

First a thanks to Jeff Cohn for sending me the lunar eclipse photo. With the eclipse being one of the major space event of the last two months, I was going to go look for an image on NASA's web sites. (Jeff's photo saved me from this task and also enabled us to show off more of his skills in astrophotography. I'm curious to see what contribution he'll have for January's issue.)

Speaking of January's issue, I'm hoping to start another script from Brad, assuming I'm able to get one from him. (The scanner has finally been unpacked and set up from my move last May. I only wish the rest of the computer room was unpacked, too.)

If you haven't gone out to StarTrek.com recently, it's worth a look. They've redesigned it and are including a lot more stuff. One of the more interesting items is the production reports as each *Enterprise* episode concludes filming. They'll typically include who the guests were, what sets were used, and any special notes about the episode's work on the sets. Also on the site are occasional chats with cast members -- Scott Bakula just had his fourth chat in mid-November.

While on the site this weekend, I ran across news that *Voyager* (Season 1) will be released on Feb 24, 2004, but release dates for the other seasons weren't listed (yet). My guess is that Paramount will release the rest of the series during 2004.

I also browsed through the *Enterprise* episode listings and found out that after the Nov 26 episode, there are several repeats until the Jan 14 episode airs.

The *Deep Space Nine* (Season 6) DVD set came out in early November -- and I, of course, bought it on release day. One of the things I was happy to see was a featurette on the episode *Far Beyond the Stars*. (Some of the cast said that it was one

of the best *DS9* episodes and possibly one of the best *Trek* episodes.) There's another featurette on the making of *One Little Ship*, where the production team says that some of what they were trying to do hadn't even been attempted for movies, let alone for TV.

Lastly, I'm going to close with a note about securing your home computer. Spring did an article on this a while back and I think it's time to cover it again.

With the rapid growth of broadband usage via cable modem, DSL, etc., home PCs are becoming more vulnerable to worms and hackers, along with the still-present threat from viruses. There are three things you can do to limit your vulnerability --

1. **Use anti-virus software and keep it up to date.** anti-virus software is only as good as the last set of virus signatures are. The best way to keep current is to use the software's automatic update feature.
2. **Use a firewall.** You can use firewall software on your PC, but a hardware firewall between your broadband modem and your PC is even better, especially if you have more than one computer that needs to use the broadband connection. Several companies make easy-to-use hardware firewalls that you just add in between.
3. **Run Windows Update** (for those running most versions of Windows) to get the latest patches, which are usually security-related. The easiest way to do this yourself is to start Internet Explorer, select Tools | Windows Update from the main menu, and follow the prompts when the Windows Update page appears. There's also a link to the Office Update page to get patches for Word, Excel, PowerPoint, Visio, etc.

Upcoming Events

Dec.	2	<i>Deep Space Nine</i> (Season 7) DVDs Released
	6	4 p.m. Ship Meeting, Fisher Home
Jan.	3	4 p.m. Ship Meeting, Fisher Home
	17	<i>Kitty Hawk</i> Anniversary Dinner Kanki at Crabtree Valley Mall
Feb.	7	4 p.m. Ship Meeting, Fisher Home
	24	<i>Voyager</i> (Season 1) DVDs Released

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