

THE WRIGHT STUFF



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Publisher J.R. Fisher
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 John Troan



CONTENTS

A VIEW FROM THE CATBIRD SEAT	3
J.R. Fisher	
SCIENCE REPORT	3
Elaine Pischke	
COMPUTER OPERATIONS REPORT	4
John Troan	
FROM THE KITCHEN	5
Lynn Stone	
SECURITY REPORT	6
Spring Brooks	
VOYAGER - NEW BEGINNING	7
Brad McDonald	
UPCOMING EVENTS	10



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IMAGE - Featured Front Page
 The Hubble Space telescope in Earth orbit (March 2002). From hubblesite.org.

A View From the Catbird Seat

By J.R. Fisher



OK. It has been quite a month for us as we begin the spring season of the year. The first session at UNC-TV went well except that

we fell five short of our number to be able to get air time but I understand the reasons some folks did not make it.

The second show's problems are my fault as I knew that many of our crew would not be able to come or stay late on Sunday night; but that was the only slot we had a chance to get the numbers. For those who did show up, we greatly appreciate the sacrifices that you made to support your ship.

Now the question is: do we continue to do the Festival show for UNC-TV? We just concluded our twentieth consecutive year and we have had a lot of fun doing it, while enjoying good food and friends and raising A LOT of money for PBS. We have contributed OVER 3000 man hours to this project and can attest to taking pledges that have exceeded one million dollars. That is quite an

accomplishment. Something that every participant can truly be proud of. But with the fall off of participation, do we want to continue this project? Let me hear from you, but if the answer is yes, then you need to back that up with your presence at the event.

As to our other ongoing project, we will continue to acquire clothing, hygienic goods, toiletries and school supplies. Even now the kids are in need of composition paper and mechanical pencils. As their school year winds down, they will need these supplies to do their year end report papers and projects. Please give when you can as you can.

When the school year begins again in mid-summer, we will be dealing with a whole new group of children and again their needs will be great, perhaps even greater than the ones that we assisted this year. I hope that we can mount an even greater effort to help those children overcome their difficult times and move on to become productive and responsible adults and Americans.

I invite each of you to give serious thought as to how we can raise funds to help these kids and what we as

individuals can do to improve their situations. I would like to think that with all the education the members of this crew have and the love that they continually display, we can come up with a program that will really make a difference to these children. Please give it some serious thought and at our next meeting let us put our heads together and come up with some ideas that go beyond the government sponsored programs.

I know that there are answers out there and if we apply ourselves to searching for them, we will find them.

We are beginning the spring and summer con season and as always there are some good ones out there. If you are inclined to go to one or more, let the rest of the crew know and maybe we can put together an "away team".

You already make a difference in the lives of those around you. Search yourself and find out just how great a person you really are. I know you have the "Wright Stuff". Show the world, and show them how they can have it too.

Esse Quam Videri

Science Report

By Elaine Pischke

Scientists studying white dwarfs in the Milky Way galaxy have drawn some interesting conclusions based on observations of metallic pollution that exists in close proximity to these stars. Using NASA's infrared Spitzer Space Telescope, researcher Jay Farihi believes this material has to come from one of two sources: an asteroid belt, or the remains of smashed planets. Recent estimates suggest that approximately 15% of stars in the Milky Way have hosted systems similar to our own solar system. Additional data suggests that many of them have also contained water. It is looking more

and more like the odds are we are not alone in this universe, or at least, that ours is not the first planet to have hosted life forms of some kind.

In other science news, a 9-year-old boy may have made one of anthropology's most significant finds since Lucy was discovered in 1974, when he found the fossilized remains of another young boy. The remains, along with the remains of an adult female, are approximately 1.9 million years old, which places it between Lucy and modern *homo sapiens*. The remains have been labeled *Australopithecus sediba*, but there is still some debate as to

whether they belong in the *Australopithecus* family or should be more accurately placed in the *homo* family. They clearly possess features of both. The remains are also remarkable for another reason. Upon examination using electromagnetic radiation x-ray, it was discovered that the remains contain fossilized brain tissue. Hominid brain tissue over 8,000 years old has never been found before. These extraordinarily well-preserved specimens promise to answer many questions about the development of humans as a species.

Computer Operations Report

By John Troan

This month's feature photo became an easy choice when I realized that it was the Hubble Space Telescope's twentieth birthday (for on-orbit operations). Hubble was placed into orbit in April 1990 and has been sending back a lot of data ever since.

Not to be forgotten, though, is the problem discovered shortly after deployment. As it turned out, the big mirror was made to the incorrect shape and the incoming light wasn't being focused correctly. Fortunately, the required fix was determined and able to be designed into a set of corrections for the existing instruments and directly into each new instrument.

A before-and-after example is below. An image was taken of galaxy M100 a few days before the first servicing mission in Dec 1993. A few days after the servicing, the new camera -- with the corrective optics designed into it -- imaged M100 again. As

can be seen, the proper optics make a huge difference in getting Hubble to perform as was expected.

According to Hubble's home web site, over 6,000 articles based on Hubble data have been published since science operations began. Hubble is available for any astronomer in the world to write a proposal for using Hubble. Once the proposal is selected, the observations are added to the schedule in the best place to keep Hubble in constant use.

Five different instruments can see light from ultraviolet, through visible light (what humans see) and into near-infrared (the part of infrared just past visible light). This potentially allows several proposals to share observation time if they're targeting the same place, even at different wavelengths. The light comes into Hubble and is shared across all the different instruments at the

same time. Some proposals are designed to use more than one instrument at a time to compare how objects appear at different wavelengths.

I've seen a couple of the Ultra Deep Field images, with the most recent one showing objects as much as 13 billion light-years away (and ago). This pushes the limits of what Hubble can see because of how light is stretched as it travels over long distances. Visible light appears more red and eventually shifts into the infrared, depending on the distance.

The James Webb Space Telescope is being designed to see more into the infrared -- and farther away and farther back in time. Webb is currently scheduled to launch in 2014, so there's a good chance that both Hubble and Webb could be used in tandem.



From the Kitchen

By Lynn Stone

Ziploc Omelets

The newest planet to join the Federation was a rare, oval-shaped, Class M planet in the Delta quadrant, known as Ovoid. On this planet the Ovoidians eat only eggs... eggs of any sort... eggs from birds, reptiles, amphibians and fish. This presented quite a challenge to the chef for the signing ceremony, who came up with the following recipe. It's easy to make and works really well.

1. Have guests write their name on a quart-size Ziploc freezer bag with a permanent marker.
2. Crack 2 eggs (large or extra-large) into the bag (not more than 2).
3. Shake to combine them.
4. Put out a variety of ingredients such as: cheeses, ham, onion, green pepper, tomato, hash browns, salsa, etc.
5. Each guest adds prepared ingredients of choice to their bag and shakes. Make sure to get the air out of the bag and zip it up.
6. Place the bags into rolling, boiling water for 13 to 15 minutes. You can usually cook 6 to 8 omelets in a large pot. For more, make another pot of boiling water.
7. Open the bags and the omelet will roll out easily. Be prepared for everyone to be amazed.

This is nice to serve with fresh fruit and coffee cake. Everyone gets involved in the process and it becomes a great conversation piece...

Imagine having these ready the night before and putting the bag in the boiling water while you get ready for work. In 15 minutes, you've got a nice omelet for a quick breakfast!

Recipe for Dirt

Bet you thought this would be something to eat. Well, you could eat it but it's not recommended. This is the dirt used on all ships who need to grow their own food. It is a fantastic combination of elements that ensures that potted plants grow extremely well. It will grow annuals or perennials, herbs, fruits, flowers, vegetables and shrubs. The really nice thing about this is that it does not need to be changed for many years. Parts of this mixture continue to break down for years, continuing to feed the plants and also make the soil loose so tender roots can thrive as they grow easily through the dirt.

You can buy the ingredients at Southern States or any agricultural supply business. Because the ingredients come in big bags, you need trunk space or a small truck to load them into. There is some work involved in going to purchase everything and then to mix it up (usually a wheelbarrow works well for this), but your effort will be astoundingly rewarded in the health and productivity of your plantings which will require only water. (Feel free to sprinkle Osmocote fertilizer as directed by the label to further enhance your plant growth, but it's not really necessary.)

- 2 parts topsoil
- 1 part compost (Black Kow Manure)
- 1 part peat moss
- 1 part sand
- 1 part soil conditioner

Security Report

By Spring Brooks

How to Improve Security in Your Garden

The garden has a role to play in deterring burglars but instead of being turned into a prison camp, with barbed wire, high fences and searchlights, nature itself can provide a more subtle and attractive security.

Burglar-Friendly Environment

The back garden is an ideal environment for a burglar to go about their business undisturbed. It offers relative privacy away from the glare of street lights and the prying eyes of the neighbors, and its natural features, such as trees and hedges, provide valuable camouflage when breaking into a shed or the back of the house.

This friendly environment therefore needs to be turned hostile towards the burglar, but without spoiling the harmony of the surroundings. For instance, putting up high fences, barbed wire and blinding searchlights may well deter the prowler but it would also spoil the sanctity of the garden for its owners.

The Prickly Bush

Mother Nature's barbed wire is the prickly bush. Instead of a grim high fence surrounding the property, a hedge made from a prickly bush will provide a more effective security barrier and offer an attractive garden feature into the bargain.

Prickly bushes, such as the 'pink lady' (at right, pictured close-up), 'common hawthorn', 'rubra' and 'blackthorn', create barriers

that are almost impervious to intruders. Their thick mesh of branches prevents anybody from crawling through, and the prickliness should deter most people from attempting to climb over.

The prickly bush is an effective security barrier but in return for its pains it demands to be well maintained, not least because of its tendency to attract litter.

Spiky Shrubs

There are many different varieties of spiky deciduous shrubs that can be used as an efficient barrier. They can be grown next to a wall or fence to deter would-be trespassers from climbing over.

For example the thorny cactus provides an effective security

defense when planted along property lines and beneath windows. It also aids the more laid back gardener by requiring little water or general maintenance.

Keep Shrubbery Trimmed

Many homeowners use trees and bushes as a way of making their garden a private haven away from the prying eyes of the neighbors. Unfortunately if the property is too well concealed then burglars can too benefit from the privacy.

For this reason, windows and doors should be easily visible to the neighbors and the street. Any trees obscuring the view towards the house or other garden property should be trimmed up 6 feet from the ground. It is also advisable that bushes are kept down to 3 feet and beneath windowsill height; so that prowlers are unable use them as way of concealing their activities.

Climbing Plants

The access drainpipes provide up to windows and onto flat roofs can be easily cut off with the use of barbed wire or anti-climb paint, but this creates an undesirable effect. Many climbing plants, on the other hand, provide security whilst adding to beauty of the garden. The rambling rose, for example, offers both pretty pale yellow flowers and a prickly resistance to humans.



VOYAGER - "New Beginning"

By Brad McDonald

ACT ONE

FADE IN:

(NOTE: Episode credits fall over opening scenes.)

SPACE - VOYAGER

Voyager is moving at warp speed.

CHAKOTAY'S VOICE

First Officer's log. The Captain is taking a much needed rest.

VOYAGER - BRIDGE

TUVOK, KIM and PARIS are at their stations, Chakotay is at the Conn.

CHAKOTAY'S VOICE

(continuing)

Although we have encountered no humanoids in nearly a week, we have picked up a signal which may be a distress call. The nearby magnetar is interfering with our attempts to investigate, so we are going to investigate.

KIM

Coming out from the magnetar's influence now. Signal is beginning to clear up.

TUVOK

I have a ship at extreme range Chakotay moves from the Conn and approaches Tuvok.

CHAKOTAY

Location Mister Tuvok?

TUVOK

Zero nine five, mark five.

CHAKOTAY

Harry? Is that the source of your signal?

KIM

Confirmed. It's them all right.

CHAKOTAY

Tom, alter your course.

PARIS

Aye Sir. Zero nine five, mark five.

KIM

Signal is definitely a distress call and familiar too.

CHAKOTAY

Familiar? In what way?

KIM

If we were in the Alpha Quadrant, I'd say it was a mix between Federation and Romulan types.

Chakotay looks over Tuvok's shoulder

CHAKOTAY

Interesting mix.

TUVOK

Even more interesting are the results of my analysis of the ship. It reads as an amalgam of several technologies; Federation, Klingon, Romulan and Cardassian.

Chakotay now returns to the Conn.

CHAKOTAY

Open a channel, Harry. Let's find out what their problem is... and who they really are.

KIM

(working)

Aye, Sir. Channel open, I'm stabilizing a visual link now.

ANGLE ON MAIN VIEWER (OPTICAL)

The screen has some static, but clears. MILLER, a human male, becomes visible.

CHAKOTAY

Unidentified ship, this the Federation starship, Voyager. We are coming to assist you. What is the nature of your emergency?

MILLER

This is the Ark. Please repeat your identity, did you say Voyager?

CHAKOTAY

Yes. U.S.S. Voyager, I am the first officer, Commander Chakotay. Who are you?

In the B. G. of Miller's transmission we can now see several N. D. ARK CREW PERSONS and we hear cheers. Miller becomes very happy and emotional.

MILLER

The last surviving ship from the Alpha Quadrant. This is the Ark. We had no idea you were still here or that we would even find you. We're having engine problems, can you help us?

Chakotay is a bit confused by his statement.

CHAKOTAY

We'll be there shortly. Are you part of a rescue mission? Were there others who accompanied you on your journey that failed to make it?

Miller's jubilant mood is saddened somewhat.

MILLER

You don't understand. No one is left in the Alpha Quadrant. The Borg have completely taken over. We are all that is left.

NEW ANGLE - ON VOYAGER'S BRIDGE CREW

They are all deeply shocked by what they have heard.

Off their reactions...

CUT TO:

EXT. SPACE - VOYAGER

Voyager is moving at warp speed.

INT. VOYAGER - BRIDGE

JANEWAY is still just waking up as she enters. Chakotay vacates the Conn and explains:

CHAKOTAY

Sorry to disturb your sleep, but this discovery is a real eye opener.

She smiles at the friendly barb.

JANEWAY

I'm awake. You said you found survivors from the Alpha Quadrant?

CHAKOTAY

According to them, the sole survivors. They say the Borg have completely over run the Alpha Quadrant and they got out just in time.

He leans closer to her, whispering.

CHAKOTAY

The news has upset the crew.

He nods towards Kim. She turns to see a somewhat depressed Kim. Then she whispers in return.

JANEWAY

Does the rest of the ship know about this?

CHAKOTAY

Not yet, but it won't take long. Bad news travels fast.

She nods in understanding, then raises her voice

JANEWAY

E. T. A. to their location?

PARIS

Fifteen minutes, fifty seconds

JANEWAY

Visual of their ship.

TUVOK

On main viewer.

ANGLE ON VIEWER (OPTICAL)

We see Ark II, a ship of mixed technologies. The primary hull is Federation, secondary hull is Klingon, with Romulan engines and so on. There are no exterior markings. The crew is surprised and interested.

JANEWAY

Is that ship what it appears to be?

TUVOK

Indeed. I have been studying it since our initial contact. The external arrangement is consistent with analysis of materials, methods of construction and other parameters.

She returns to Kim's blank look and goes to him

JANEWAY

Harry, what about their signals?

He is distracted and quiet.

KIM

Um... yes, Sir. A mix of Romulan and Federation algorithms. The carrier is somewhat weaker, but that may be due to their power problems.

Janeway gets closer to Kim.

JANEWAY

Relax Harry. We need a lot more information before we buy their story, right?

He brightens just a bit and forces a smile.

KIM

I'll see if I can find out anything else from my scans.

JANEWAY

Carry on, Mister.

She returns to Chakotay's side. He's studying the viewer.

JANEWAY

Did you cut the communication or did they?

CHAKOTAY

They did. We spoke to Miller. He explained their origins and told us their engines were damaged in their attempt to get here. He became emotional and promised to assemble a senior staff for a visit.

She ponders the information for a moment, then:

JANEWAY

Well, you weren't exaggerating when you said it was a real eye opener.

TUVOK

Captain? Their engines do not register any output. Evidently their emergency is real.

JANEWAY

Very well. Put together an away team to render assistance, but I'd also like to be sure that they are exactly who they claim to be.

PARIS

What about them? Do we allow them on our ship?

Chakotay looks back to Janeway.

CHAKOTAY

If they aren't who they appear to be, we could be inviting trouble.

JANEWAY

Then we'll insist on a first visit. It's consistent with their call for assistance.

PARIS

And if they aren't who they claim? What about our away team?

JANEWAY

Leave the comm badges on and keep your phasers at the ready, set on heavy stun.

(to Chakotay)

Get your team ready. Let's solve this mystery, quickly.

EXT. SPACE - VOYAGER AND ARK

The two ships are side by side, motionless.

INT. VOYAGER - MAIN TRANSPORTER ROOM

Present are Chakotay, Kim, SEVEN, DOC and TORRES, waiting to transport. Janeway is at the transporter controls.

JANEWAY

Chakotay, I'll be monitoring you, if there is any trouble, I'll bring you back on the double. Otherwise, ask lots of questions and take plenty of readings. I want answers as much as our crew does.

She taps her comm badge.

JANEWAY

(continuing)

Voyager to Ark. Are you ready to transport?

MILLER'S VOICE

Still having problems with our transporter. You'll have to use yours.

JANEWAY

No problem, where would you like us?

MILLER'S VOICE

Beggars can't be choosers. Drop in anywhere.

JANEWAY

Very well, engineering seems most logical. Transporting now.

She nods to the team and begins.

INT. ARK - ENGINEERING (OPTICAL)

The room is a tangle of loose cables, conduits and equipment. All N. D. CREW PERSONS are armed and stop work to watch the away team arrive. As soon as they arrive, the Voyager team pulls their instruments and takes readings. Suddenly the Ark crew members become hostile.

CREW PERSON #1

(indicating Seven)

Kill her!

Tuvok and Chakotay step between Seven and Crew Person #1. The away team draws weapons and takes defensive positions. Other Ark persons move in.

DOCTOR

Not the reception I had anticipated

TUVOK

(to Ark crew)

Hold your fire, she is a member of our crew --

Crew Person #1 fires on the away team, just missing them.

CHAKOTAY

Voyager! We're under attack!

The away team ducks behind a control panel and returns fire.

KIM

They're getting behind --

Before he can finish, the transporter effect begins.

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT ONE

Upcoming Events

May 1 4 p.m. Ship Meeting, Triangle Factory Outlet

Jun 5 4 p.m. Ship Meeting, Triangle Factory Outlet
Articles for next *Wright Stuff* due

NOTE THE NEW DATES FOR THE NEXT TWO MEETINGS

DON'T FORGET TO CHECK YOUR STARFLEET STATUS

.....AND WITH THE NEW YEAR, *KITTY HAWK* DUES ARE NOW DUE.

THE WRIGHT STUFF
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