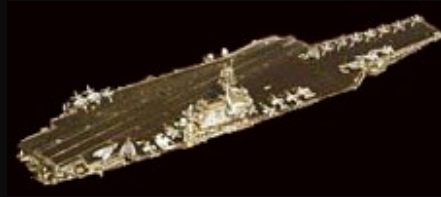


THE WRIGHT STUFF



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THE WRIGHT STUFF

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CONTENTS

THE CENTER SEAT	3
John Troan	
COMPUTER OPERATIONS REPORT	3
John Troan	
ENGINEERING REPORT	4
Brad MacDonald	
YEOMAN/QUARTERMASTER REPORT	5
Larry Cox	
FROM THE CHANCELLOR'S DESK: KLINGON LANGUAGE CONFERENCE.....	6
William Simkiss	
<i>ST:TOS</i> – "ONLY THE GOOD"	7
Brad McDonald	
UPCOMING EVENTS	10

IMAGES - Title Banner

Wright Flyer from NASA/Ames PAO photo archive; *U.S.S. Kitty Hawk* (USN CV-63) from navicp.navy.mil; *Constitution* class cruiser from gwu.edu/~rljones/khawk.

IMAGE - Featured Front Page

It's a black hole!

<https://www.nasa.gov/image-feature/its-black-hole-friday>

Engineering Report

By Brad McDonald

Scientists have discovered what is being called a pi-Earth, which is a planet that orbits its sun every 3.14 days! The planet was located by data from the [Kepler Space Telescope's K-2 Mission](#) in 2017. The data was recently checked by using the Speculoos System which networks ground-based telescopes.

Asteroid Vesta has been 'shedding' and pieces of it have been found on sister asteroid Bennu. Six boulders were positively identified by brightness differences and matching them to Vesta. The shedding was probably due to an impact on Vesta. In a related story, NASA is in a race to get the [OSIRIS-REX spacecraft](#) back to Earth and preserve samples collected from the asteroid Bennu. There's a concern that much of the samples will be lost as the compartment holding the samples cannot be sealed, due to a stuck valve on the craft.

While watching an episode of *NASA's Unexplained Files*, I was surprised to see a familiar face amongst the experts commenting on several topics. Tim Russ, *Voyager's* Tuvok, was listed as an astronomer on the Science Channel program. I did not know that Tim had a second career and wish I had known that when I met him.

Our moon may be younger than originally thought. Scientists at the German Aerospace Center believe the moon formed 80 million years later, at the end of the Earth's formation and following the Earth's crust finally solidifying. It was at this time a Mars-sized planet hit Earth and formed the moon.

The [Hubble Space Telescope](#) is still providing information. 'Baby' stars have been located in blue and orange gas swirls of the Great Barred Spiral Galaxy. Also known as NGC 1365 in the constellation Fornax, it's 60 million light years away!

Wallops Island Flight Facility in Virginia was a navy station in WWII and, over the years, has launched over 16,000 rockets of all types. The FAA has cleared the way for Rocket Lab to begin launches there and soon Northrup Grumman will be using the site to launch its Antares rockets for cargo resupply missions for the space station. Northrup will also launch its Minotaur rockets from the Wallops site. Rocket Lab will launch



approximately once a month and, combined with Northrup, will make Wallops the second busiest launch site in the U.S. The state of Virginia is lending support and provided \$250 million to create the Mid-Atlantic Regional Spaceport. NASA also supplied \$15.7 million for upgrades and a mission operations control center which opened in 2018. Rocket Lab will begin launching its Electron rockets from the same facility soon. Once NASA certifies the autonomous flight abort system, flights may begin before year's end. Other companies are locating there, including Boeing, United Launch Alliance and SpaceX. Blue Origin is in the process of constructing a manufacturing facility on site and upgrading an existing launch pad. The facility plans to keep a rocket on standby to facilitate quick or emergency launches. Needless to say, NASA and the Pentagon are very interested.

Rocket Labs' new two stage rocket is made of carbon composite material and all of the primary components are 3D-printed! Launches are therefore relatively cheap at \$7.5 million each. Current plans are being made to launch a probe to Venus. No details are available as of this writing.

I saw a very interesting documentary on Netflix titled *Challenger: The Final Flight*. The documentary is in four parts of approximately 40 minutes each. It was recently released and provides a close look at the sequence of events that led up to the loss of the shuttle *Challenger* and its crew. There is a lot of vintage video covering events of the period of time beginning three years prior to the disaster and has many interviews of those involved. It's quite an eye opener and very interesting. If you get a chance to see it, do so.

Tesla had to recall 30,000 Model S, X and EV's in China for suspension problems which is an ongoing issue for the car maker. *Consumer Reports* has published reports on the suspension problems regarding cars built from September 2013 to January 2018 and covers both front and rear suspensions.

Scientists at the University of Colorado have taken another look at the orbits of asteroids and minor planets. Some of these have what are called detached orbits or tilted and/or elliptical orbits. Their research has shown that the asteroids and minor planets don't necessarily need outside influences to achieve those peculiar orbits. This counters the idea of a 'planet nine' with a mass of 20 Earths is necessary to do so. So maybe 'Vulcan' doesn't exist after all.

Production on *Jurassic World: Dominion* has resumed after being suspended twice due to Covid-19 concerns. However, there is no firm release date, only a vague "summer of 2022" has been mentioned. Cast and crew were given a 107-page manual detailing all the protocols and procedures for the production. That

included vacuum packaged and sealed meals handed out by masked workers behind plexiglass partitions in a take-out only cafeteria. Of interest is the return of one of the original characters from the first movie in the franchise. Played by B.D. Wong, Doctor Wu has been resurrected and Wong is very surprised, but delighted. In the book, on which the movie is based, Doctor Wu had a much bigger part and Wong was disappointed by the reduction of his appearance in the movie. Now, he has a chance to make up for lost time.

Spoiler alert: *The Mandalorian* Season 2 will have started by the time you read this. (Friday October 30) Fortunately, the production was completed just before restrictions went into effect. Season 2 will introduce a new character, a green pig Gamorrean. Moff Gideon will be back and we will learn where 'baby Yoda' comes from. Boba Fett returns and Rosario Dawson will appear as one of my favorite characters, Ahsoka Tano from the *Clone Wars* series. Katee Sackhoff will reprise her role as Bo-Katan Kryze from the *Clone Wars* and *Rebels* series. Also appearing will be Michael Biehn and Timothy Olyphant. Season 3 already started with writing and preproduction efforts which began in April.

NASA's [Stratospheric Observatory For Infrared Astronomy \(SOFIA\)](#) has confirmed discovering water on the surface of the moon. Water was found in the Clavius Crater and SOFIA showed about 12 ounces of water in approximately a cubic meter of Lunar soil. This is the first time water has been found on the sunlit side of the moon, even though scientists always suspected it was there.

However, its source is still unknown. This could be the result of chemical reaction or by way of micrometeorite impacts. It's an extraordinary discovery since the moon has no atmosphere, something must be regenerating water and holding it as well.

I recently watched the first five episodes of National Geographic's new *Right Stuff* mini-series. It's based on the original book of the same name, just as the movie was. However, it goes into much more detail that focuses on the astronauts and their families — more than the actual space program. The episodes of approximately 40 minutes each feel more like a soap opera and, frankly, didn't hold my interest. I kept watching, hoping it would get better, but... it didn't. If you've seen it, I'd like to hear your opinion.

On a personal note, I have been diagnosed with a return of prostate cancer. I will have started treatments by the time you read this and my prognosis is fairly good. A PET Scan revealed that the cancer has not spread and remained in the same general area of the original prostate diagnosis. 33 radiation treatments combined with hormone therapy will provide me with a good chance of beating it a second time. This situation was always a possibility, so it wasn't entirely unexpected, just not welcomed to say the least. I will be under treatment until the end of the year, perhaps into 2021 depending on my reactions to the treatments and their effectiveness. Needless to say, I won't be going out much, not that I was anyway. It should make for a rather quiet holiday season. If I have any updates, I'll pass them along at the next video conference *Kitty Hawk* meeting. Keep your fingers crossed!

Yeoman/Quartermaster Report By Larry Cox

It's nice to see the participation continuing on the Zoom meetings. For me, it's not the same as a face-to-face meeting, but it's better than no meeting at all. Thanks, Diane, for arranging the games and providing the Zoom link for us. It's good to see and connect with everybody.

Unless you've spent 2020 under a rock, or on Mars, you're probably aware that, like the rest of the year, the holidays will be different this year. And along those same lines so will the *Kitty Hawk's* annual Food Bank food drive and Toys for Tots toy collection. Since we're not meeting in person, it isn't practical to try and arrange a mass pick up of food or toy items.

As you may imagine under these current circumstances, the requests for assistance from these organizations is as great or greater this year as in years past.

The **Food Bank** has a variety of options available on their website (<https://foodbankcenc.org/>) for methods to donate money or food. They are accepting in-person food donations at their facility at 1924 Capital Blvd in Raleigh and are in need of healthy volunteers to help at the facility as well. Some of their most needed items include canned fruits, vegetables, meat and soup, (pop-top cans and low sodium a plus); whole grain pasta, brown rice, dried beans and cereal; peanut butter and other nut butters; Pedialyte, infant cereal, powered formula, diapers and wipes; fruit cups, juice boxes, granola

bars, crackers, popcorn and sugar-free pudding cups; and hygiene items, household items and paper products.

The **Marine Reserve Toys for Tots** campaign is now underway as well, and runs until 12/18/2020. Elaine mentioned at our November meeting that the Panera Bread store on Capital Blvd is a toy drop-off location. It is my understanding that this is not a companywide effort but is strictly store by store; so some stores may, and then others may not, be accepting toys. If you were planning to drop toys off at your local Panera, check ahead to see if they are participating.

The past few years I had been dropping the toys from the *Kitty Hawk* off at the Johnson Lexus dealership, also on Capital, just down from Panera, but I've not confirmed if they are a drop-off location again this year or not. I've not been able to find a website that lists drop off locations for the drive; I don't know if that might come in the future. It's not on The Toys for Tots website as this article goes to press. A couple of the Toys for Tots websites are:

- <https://raleigh-nc.toysfortots.org/local-coordinator-sites/lco-sites/default.aspx?nPageID=100&nPreviewInd=200>
- <https://www.toysfortots.org/donate/Default.aspx>

I look eagerly look forward to resuming our regular food and toy drives next year.

From the Chancellor's Desk: Klingon Language Conference

By William Simkiss

One of the only good things to come out of the destruction of Praxis and our subsequent lockdown has been that conferences otherwise impossible to attend were now made available virtually! This was wonderfully true of the annual conference of the KLI – the Klingon Language Institute.

The Institute was begun in 1992, and while *Star Trek* enthusiasts were clearly involved, many international linguists also were intrigued and enjoyed the language, many of whom had no interest whatsoever in Science Fiction – just the language! Now there are local qep'Hom groups across 30 countries and all seven continents – yes, Klingon has been spoken in Antarctica! – as well as major conferences in the USA and Germany. Klingon has become by far the biggest “ConLang” of all, a “Constructed Language,” with over 300,000 copies of the Klingon Dictionary sold as of the year 2000.

I had never been to the qep'a' – wait! What is a “qepa”, you say? You have not heard? You have not been?!? This is the premiere annual meeting of the language enthusiasts of the glorious Klingon tongue, soon to be the primary language in the entire quadrant, voiced alongside the banners of conquering legions with the fleet's battle flags planted everywhere. Surely this is an honorable task! A worthy goal! One that might even keep you safe, and not under suspicion, once you “find” yourself in a Klingon protectorate.

I had marked it on my calendar every year for years, and each time realized I could not afford the time and the travel expenses. The three-day conference itself is only a minimal expense. But held in various areas across the USA, a day or more of travel each way, plus the three nights of hotel rooms and meals, it becomes a major vacation and well beyond the means of a Minor House like mine.

But! Everything this year has been done over subspace! Which means I could finally attend! Not only myself, but the largest attendance the conference has ever had! And it was glorious. The entire event was handled over the Discord server system, and the KLI volunteers on IT did an incredible job on very short notice to make it all run exceptionally smoothly. Everyone went by their Empire names, and when J'me' here had to ask a question, it was glorious to see all the Klingon names available to help.

The level of interaction was for all grades of skill. Some were Terran languages only, primarily

Federation Standard. Many were a mix of Klingon and Federation Standard. Some were Klingon only. One online group was for encouraging people to use their basic skills, using Klingon only. People there would encourage you and remind you of really basic terms you can use as simple responses, as often you can understand a language from your learning, but not necessarily form a proper response with certainty. So people were brought into it gently and humorously. No one was ever condescending towards those who speak little or no Klingon. And this was a huge conference! Hundreds were online at any one time.

Some groups were for just hanging out and chatting, meeting each other, telling their *Star Trek* or Klingon Language stories – how they first bumped into them, how they learned the language and why, what they love best about *Trek*. There were seminars – with interaction! – on various topics of grammar and language use, often repeated in European- or Asian-friendly time zones. There was even a live performance of a Klingon-language-only pop and rock music performer, a very good singer. I hadn't know that Bon Jovi's material was adapted from a native Klingon song!

There was a really enjoyable seminar with the creator of the language, Mark Okrand. Very informative also! He outlined with grace and humor the basics of how it all began. And to the delight of those of us who had known most of this, he added details, clarifications, and corrections to the popular account! More trivia! More insider information! More grist for the geek mill!

And one of the biggest highlights is the yearly release of all the new words that have been added – officially only via Mark Okrand – from his work in various TV shows and articles written, or questions answered over the year. This is poured over by the linguists, nerds, and book writers for insights into the culture, and new ways to phrase things. As vast as the language is, there are many things not revealed yet as to how to say certain things.

All in all, it was a wonderfully enjoyable time. While I soon found myself awash in things way over my experience, it was an incredibly well organized conference, and a profoundly accepting atmosphere. If you have any interest in the language at all, you might find next summer's qep'a' to be a *Trek* worthy of your travels.

ST:TOS - "Only the Good" By Brad McDonald

ACT TWO

TWO SHOT – KIRK AND SPOCK

FADE IN:

EXT. SPACE – ENTERPRISE AND DELTA OMICRON V
Enterprise is in orbit around planet.

INT. ENTERPRISE – BRIDGE – ON COMMAND SECTION

Uhura is working her console and becomes excited.

UHURA

Captain, I have the person the admiral spoke of; audio only.

Kirk turns to her and motions to open channel.

KIRK

I'll take it here!

UHURA

Aye, sir!

Kirk taps control on command chair.

ON KIRK

KIRK

This is Captain James T. Kirk of the starship Enterprise. Am I addressing Mr. Barat?

BARAT (V.O.)

I am Senior Council Member Barat. You represent the Federation?

KIRK

Yes, Senior Council Member. We wish to make peaceful contact but our first effort ran into trouble. Perhaps you knew that.

BARAT (V.O.)

I apologize Captain. I should have been there. Would you agree to meet with me personally?

NEW ANGLE

KIRK

Yes, sir. Where do you suggest?

BARAT (V.O.)

At my own house. Give me time to make the arrangements. I'll contact you again from there.

There is static, then:

UHURA

Communication terminated, sir.

Spock moves closer to Kirk.

SPOCK

(quietly)

You cannot go to that meeting, Captain. You would be in great danger.

KIRK

He specifically requested me and this is an important mission.

SPOCK

I must remind you, sir, not all of the inhabitants agree with Councilman Barat.

KIRK

I don't really have a choice.

Kirk studies Spock for a moment then makes a concession.

KIRK

(continuing)

I will go, but you may select the team members.

Spock is about to protest again when Kirk gives him a cold stare.

SPOCK'S QUARTERS - WIDE ANGLE

Spock is busy at his duty desk when door chime sounds. Spock is surprised.

SPOCK

Come!

Bingham enters timidly.

BINGHAM

(moving)

Sorry to bother you, sir, but I have a request.

Spock indicates a seat near his.

TWO SHOT – SPOCK AND BINGHAM

SPOCK

What is it you require, Lieutenant Bingham?

BINGHAM

I saw the duty roster for the next mission and I'm not on it.

SPOCK

Nor am I. The captain must feel we have already... 'done our share.'

Bingham smiles knowingly.

BINGHAM

The aliens specifically requested the captain, sir, so you can't go. That and he's trying to protect me, correct?

ON SPOCK

He realizes Bingham's purpose.

SPOCK

And you do not wish to be... protected?

ON BINGHAM

BINGHAM
(surprised)

You understand?

SPOCK

To a degree.

BINGHAM

You know my... situation. I don't want to spend my last few weeks, sitting in my quarters... waiting.

AS BEFORE – ON SPOCK

He nods in understanding, sympathetic.

MAIN TRANSPORTER ROOM – WIDE ANGLE

We see shore party waiting. Present are Kirk, Sulu, Chekov, McCoy and Barrows. Kirk is anxious, looking around.

KIRK

We're missing a team member, security.

NEW ANGLE

Kyle is at transporter control console.

KYLE

Security signals they are on the way, sir.

Kirk steps up to the transporter platform and the others follow as doors open.

ON KIRK

He's surprised.

ANOTHER ANGLE – CAMERA FOLLOWS ACTION

Bingham enters and steps up to transporter platform next to Kirk.

BINGHAM
(moving)

Sorry I'm late, sir. Last minute replacement, it won't happen again.

Kirk is stunned, starts to protest, Bingham smiles.

BINGHAM
(continuing)

Mr. Barat is waiting, sir.

KIRK
(reluctant)

Energize, Mister Kyle.

EXT. SPACE – ENTERPRISE AND DELTA OMICRON V

Enterprise is in standard orbit.

EXT. PLANET – CITY STREET – ON BARAT'S HOUSE

City is unremarkable, similar to twentieth century Earth.

INT. BARAT'S HOUSE – LARGE ROOM – ON TEAM

We see team revealed in transporter effect and look around cautiously.

TEAM'S P.O.V.

Aliens BARAT, MIDOR, TELL, MAZ and PARA step forward, mesmerized by transporter, but friendly.

WIDE ANGLE

Enterprise team moves to greet aliens. Kirk leads, smiling and friendly.

KIRK

I am James Kirk.

Barat steps forward.

BARAT

I am Barat, senior member of our planet's ruling council.

He turns and indicates each of his people in succession and they nod in acknowledgement.

BARAT
(continuing)

This is Midor, Tell, Maz and Para. All are close friends and associates in our government.

NEW ANGLE

Kirk steps closer and speaks in a friendly manner.

KIRK

These are my officers: Lt. Sulu, Ensign Chekov, Dr. McCoy, Yeoman Barrows and Lt. Bingham.

BARAT

May I suggest we all be seated? I have refreshments and food if you wish.

KIRK
(smiling)

Sounds like a good idea, Mr. Barat. Lead the way.

DISSOLVE TO:

DINING ROOM

Room and long table are ornate. All are seated with Enterprise crew on one side and Barat's people on the other. Kirk and Barat sit at opposite ends. Dining and drinks are done, conversation is in progress.

KIRK

Mr. Barat, your hospitality is remarkable. Which is confusing since my people were not received this way previously.

ON BARAT

He is uneasy and apologetic.

BARAT

I am sorry for that, but there are some who believe that Starfleet is a belligerent arm of an expansionist government, the Federation.

ON KIRK

He's calm and tries to explain.

KIRK

You have visited Earth and Vulcan, you know that isn't true.

ON BARAT

BARAT

Agreed, but that lie is being accepted by many of my people. It is difficult to change that perception with evidence to the contrary.

NEW ANGLE

McCoy is slightly agitated.

MCCOY

What 'evidence' is that?

MIDOR

Our ships are being attacked.

TELL

Also, the Federation is expanding at an alarming rate.

CHEKOV

But only through memberships, not conquests and our fleet offers protection to those members.

SULU

We offer trade agreements; cultural, technical and agricultural exchanges.

MCCOY

We also offer medical assistance and training if you wish. But we do not force ourselves on anyone.

BINGHAM

The Federation is made up of many different people, cultures, beliefs. Each is treated as an equal, contributing to the greater good of all.

MAZ

We are a small planet with few resources. What can we offer?

BINGHAM

Yourselves, not as a conquered people, but as friends.

MCCOY

We already have members with smaller populations than yours. No matter what you may think... size does not matter.

TELL

Our planet is far from regular trade routes, how can you help?

SULU

Establish new trade routes...

CHEKOV

...and conduct regular patrols with our ships...

KIRK

...including your people, so you know it's not us who has been attacking your ships.

NEW ANGLE

The aliens look impressed. Nodding, they converse quietly with each other. Kirk nods to Bingham.

KIRK

(whispering)

Nicely done, Lieutenant.

BINGHAM

(whispering)

I just wanted to finish... the mission on a positive note, sir.

ON BARAT

He's smiling and confident.

BARAT

My associates are in agreement. We would like you and your people to make a presentation at our planetary ruling council. Would that be... acceptable?

ANOTHER ANGLE

KIRK

Absolutely! We would welcome the opportunity.

BINGHAM

But would we be welcomed? After all, we came unarmed, as your culture prefers.

Kirk is surprised by her statement but realizes she is doing her job as a security specialist.

PARA

(adamant)

I will see to that, personally! Can you transport directly to our ruling council chamber?

KIRK

(encouraged)

That can be arranged, yes!

Kirk stands and pulls communicator. Suddenly the doors burst open and armed aliens enter. Their LEADER points weapon at Barat.

LEADER

Just as we thought. Our own people conspiring with the Federation! You're all under arrest!

FADE OUT.

END OF ACT TWO

Upcoming Events

Dec	5	4 p.m. Ship Meeting On-line
	31	Initial RSVPs due for Proposed Virtual Anniversary Dinner
Jan	2	4 p.m. Ship Meeting On-line
	15	Articles due for Jan/Feb newsletter
	31	6 p.m. Proposed Virtual Anniversary Dinner
Feb	6	4 p.m. Ship Meeting On-line

DON'T FORGET TO CHECK YOUR STARFLEET STATUS

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