

USS Silver Fox



Tall Ships in a Stellar Sea

Greetings from the crew of the USS Silver Fox.

In the grand tradition of fanzines, I would like to apologize for this issue being late. It should've come out last month, not this month. The reason is that there was a period of time where it looked like I wouldn't be renewing my membership at SFC for the coming year. But the situation has turned around and I will be boring you guys with my ramblings by email and these newsletters (though hopefully not boring you...



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...too much). My contributions to the SFC this year will be more along the lines of letter correspondence and this newsletter than in recruiting. Recruiting for new members won't be ignored; it's just that I spent a lot of time recruiting new members last year. That was so I could have a local chapter with local meetings and face-to-face contact. This is a fine notion; it's just too bad it didn't work out. And as that recruiting took most of my time at SFC, I missed out on other fun activities that could've kept me going in the club. At the time, it didn't - it was very frustrating for me.

So now we're going to do something different. Again, recruiting won't be ignored. It will just be balanced out with the other fun stuff our club is noted for. I encourage any of the readers out there to enjoy such activity themselves, and come visit us here.

Relax. Take you shoes off, and enjoy yourselves.

Ltjg Jeff Wilcox

Your Personal Star Trek Dream Project

In a recent discussion at the online community, Trekspace.com, member Trekscribbler (aka Ed) prompted the general membership into revealing where dream Star Trek projects they would like to see. Most of them were for Star Trek themed parks or restaurants. And my contribution to the discussion is below:

I'm one of the older fans here; old enough to remember seeing the first presentation of the first episode to the original series back in 1966 ("Man Trap" episode).

When the 1970s rolled around and the show was in syndication, I had the great idea. That idea was that new episodes of Star Trek could've been made if the show had been setup as a syndicated series for local TV stations. That is, Gene Roddenberry could have set up stories and ideas that local TV stations could take and create in their home markets. The local stations would then use their own resources and actors to create new TV episodes set in the Star Trek universe. In the 1970s the amount of Trek memorabilia was such that you could pick up anything (costumes, phasers, tricorders, etc.) short of a *full-scale* model of the USS Enterprise. Plus set designs for most of the Trek universe was already seen from the old episodes. So a locally created Trek TV series was possible back then.

The drawbacks of this project would've been money and time. To cut costs for what would be a super-low budget the show would've been shot in video tape (as it would be done if the show were tried locally today). However, I doubt the USS Enterprise would have been allowed for a local series. Very likely Roddenberry wouldn't have allowed his iconic starship to be used anywhere other than the original filmed series. On the other hand, other starship names and classes could've been used; larger TV stations could've used the Constitution class cruisers as their home bases, while smaller stations could use smaller scout and corvette ships (complete with less expensive bridges to use). Also, to justify the expense of the series, episodes might be run in half-hour slots five days a week. No doubt the storylines would've been done in serial fashion (maybe one story arch for each five episodes in the week?) to save on the writing chores too

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(maybe yes, maybe no). This schedule would be hard to keep up for whatever actors are involved with the series, but a similar schedule was done back in the 1950s by the old Space Patrol series (originally created for a local California TV station).

Today, we take it for granted that the fan-created video adventures are possible. What I'm saying is that this could have happened as far back as the 1970s.

Book Review: A Game of Thrones

A Game of Thrones by George R.R. Martin is the first fantasy novel in the “Song of Fire and Ice” series. It deals with a mythical land called the Seven Kingdoms (also known as “Westeros”), complete with knights in armor and castles you would have found in medieval Europe. And the novel uses the political intrigues and backstabbing as the platform for the story’s drama. In this, Martin skillfully moves the plotline along with a character driven story. In fact, Martin uses a unique fiction device, that each chapter is written from the viewpoint of a different character.

In this first novel, most of the action flows around three sets of characters. The major of the chapters center around the royal family of Lord Eddard Stark. He and his family live in the wintery North where even summertime can have snow. Stark and his family are the honest, straightforward image of what knights in shining armor and the lords of minor kingdoms should be like (hopefully to grab readership sympathy with these likeable characters). And as such, Stark and his family are the royals (along with the common folk) that get hurt and broken apart by the political intrigues performed by other royal houses. The second viewpoint used is with Daenerys Targaryen, exiled princess. She, her brother, and a dispossessed knight are amongst the survivors of an earlier Westeros king, pushed around by the politics in a foreign land, and wishing they could return to power and their home. And the third viewpoint follows Tyrion Lannister, a minor lord who is also a dwarf of the House of Lannister. Tyrion is an interesting character because he is caught between dealing with what he considers a “shortcoming” (pun intended) and the not so nice way the rest his family treats the people around them (yep, House Lannister is the bad guys in this first book). And so, as each character adds their viewpoint to the events happening around them, the plotline is advanced and leaves the reader a rich tapestry of ideas and emotions. Neat.

Also good is that author Martin concentrates most of his novel on these otherwise “historical-like” events. For a fantasy drama, the novel treats its characters like mundane real people. But, lurking around the corners of the drama are hints that there really are some fantasy characters to deal with. For, while the royals play their “games of thrones”, there are creatures called the Others waiting their turn to appear. Plus other things; though I won’t spoil the surprises for who ever out there wishes to read the book.

Also, here is a warning. A Game of Thrones is the first book in a series printed in five novels. And like the Lord of the Rings story and Dragonlance Legends, each of which have only one story but are printed out in a series of three books, A Game of Thrones story doesn’t come to an end with the end of the book. The book has a cliffhanger ending that leads into the next book - Clash of Kings . So if you don’t care for longer fiction, then you might find other, shorter works to your taste.

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I was introduced to this book when my brother recommended it last Christmas. And part of the recommendation was because he noticed that the HBO network was turning the books into an ongoing TV series. A Game of Thrones novel then will be part of the first season, while the second novel Clash of Kings will span the second season. And I'm not certain, but I think the second season has started already. George Martin isn't new to either writing novels or developing TV series; it should be interesting to see how this latest project of his turns out.



Letters

Your comments and thoughts could be here.

Contacts

sfcq1.com **Starfleet Command** is Trek fan organization that's been around since the early 1990s. It's a large national/international organization that's separated into national headquarters (for the organization's top officers), regional offices called "Starbases", and local chapters that are named after starships or Starfleet outposts. Activities range from regular face-to-face contact at the local chapters to Internet and letter correspondence; and, as with a number of other Trek clubs out there in fandom, members can do some role-playing (if they wish) as Starfleet officers at their respective chapters or club activities.

trekspac.org An online community that concentrates on science fiction/fantasy in general and Star Trek in particular. See you there.

startrekonline.com I just joined this game online. For those that know, Star Trek online is now free for use to the fans. Thank goodness, I know I don't have the cash it would take to pay a monthly fee for a game of this quality (added features, such as extra tweaks to the characters or starships, can be had for additional cash). If the readers here play the game, then you can find me under the game name of Orion Fox on the starship Foxfire One.

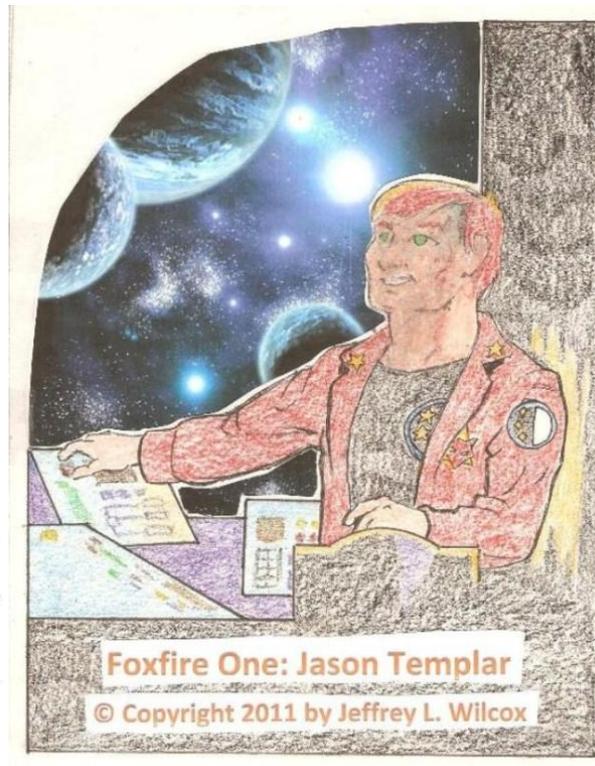
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Finally – The 30 Character Challenge

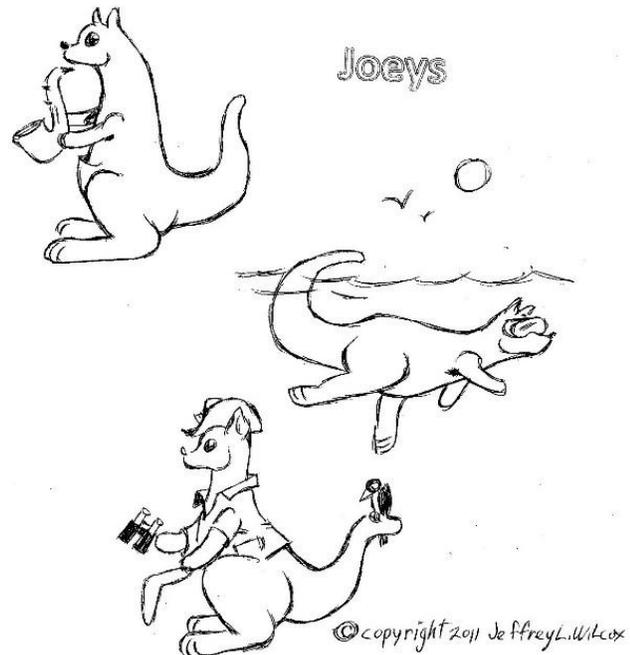
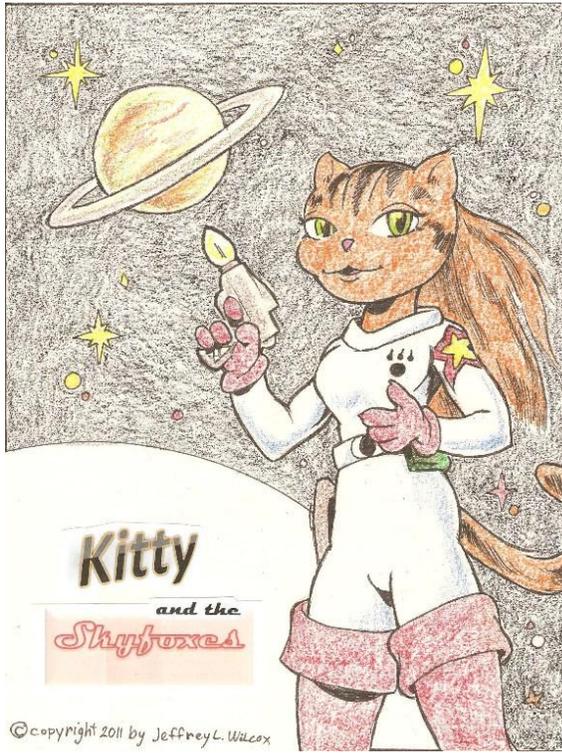
Last November I tried a new activity. Part of my hobbies is doing artwork, mostly pencil drawings and pen and ink illustrations. And last Fall I discovered an online challenge – the 30 Characters Challenge. www.30characters.com The challenge in November was to create 30 characters for the website within the 30 days of the month. Most people applying to the challenge showed their characters as art illustrations or cartoons; though the challenge also allowed for the characters to be presented as written descriptions. I joined in with the challenge this year (apparently 2011 was the challenge’s third year) and managed to post better than the 30 characters needed (my last illustration was titled “the Unemployed Cartoonist”, with an illustration of myself surrounded by six small versions of my cartoon characters).

Added here are six of my creations: Thoughtful Kitty, Jason Templar – Space Ranger, Kitty of “Kitty and the Sky Foxes”, Pajama Dragon (an idea inspired by my granddaughter Kim), Dr. Lemuria, and Joeys.

30 Character Challenge is created by Tyler James, who also has another website www.comixtribe.com that is an online community for comic book artists and writers.



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See you next issue.