



USS Silver Fox

NCC - 19500

March Issue, 2012

From the Bridge:

Greetings. Welcome to our makeup March issue. This month the USS Silver Fox chapter begins expanding its fan base. We'll be doing this in two sections: first, continuing to be active with letter/email writing amongst the SFC members (to get acquainted with our fellow SFC members); and second, to expand to other fan groups out on the Internet.

This second section will include clubs in the New York and Pennsylvania state areas. Some SFC members might say that Pennsylvania is outside my state and not part of my concern. But,

Erie, PA is just an hour's drive from here, closer than the nearest NY state city (Buffalo) to me, and the Erie area has always been fairly active in sci fi fan activity. So too with Pittsburgh, PA, which is the same four hours driving time away as Rochester, NY (both these areas are fairly active). And if I include all of New York State in my search, Harrisburg and Philly are about as close as New York City.

Also, along these lines is an online community called www.meetup.com . Apparently this is a service that pulls together solitary fans from a variety of same interests to meet up at conventions and other events. In which case, this online community may or may not be considered a club in the normal sense (or maybe it does - I'm still exploring what this thing is more precisely). In any case, meetup.com has a number of groups that are sci fi and Star Trek oriented. For example, www.meetup.com/NYSci-Fi-Fantasy/ has 849 members, www.meetup.com/panerds/ (Southeastern PA Nerd Herd) has 457 members, and www.meetup.com/nystartrek/ (New York City Star Trek) has 322 members. Also, there's a NY Steampunk - Artists and Enthusiasts group with 637 members, a Boston Sci-Fi & Fantasy group with 713 members, and Pittsburgh Geekdom group with 181 members. It's almost hilarious that I've never heard of this outfit before. It will keep me busy hunting down how to make use of this material. Onward!!!

Also, in the wind is an attempt to create logo design for the Silver Fox chapter. I have worked up a few ideas that are included later in this issue. I would appreciate some feedback on what you guys out there think about them, or any ideas you might have.

Finally, I just got done watching a new fan film created by the www.startreknewvoyages.com people. Their film, listed as 4x06 in their series, is called Enemy: Starfleet. Once again this fan group has made a film based around the original Star Trek series. There are a couple holes in the logic of the plotline, but there is enough quality production to make this a look see event (you know this if you've seen some of their other productions). Check it out.

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An Introduction to John Carter on Mars

On March 9th, Walt Disney Productions and Pixar will release the movie John Carter onto the world. For those who have seen the previews, the story seems to involve a “hairy-chested hero” fighting monsters on a fictional version of the planet Mars. Also in store are rockets & rayguns, lost civilizations, and a not-so-hairy chested princess. And to help the reader build up some enthusiasm for watching this film, we present this little introduction to John Carter on Mars.

So where does this movie come from? The movie is based on the novel called A Princess of Mars by adventure author Edgar Rice Burroughs. If the name of the author sounds familiar

then you might recognize it from Burroughs' most popular creation - Tarzan of the Apes. And while Burroughs started his two dozen novels with Tarzan in Africa, he was also expanded his range by writing cowboy western novels and fantasy adventures on other worlds (John Carter on Mars, Carson on Venus, and David Innes at Pellucidar). For John Carter, also known as the Barsoom series, Burroughs ended up writing eleven novels. All of them were set on the Mars that was envisioned back in 1912, thus the dated "science" that will be appearing in the movie version (and thus, my only referring to the movie as fantasy adventure rather than science fiction). Whatever faults of the dated the movie should make up for it with its sense of wonder factor.

From the previews we can pick little of the film's details, but a few comparisons can be made between that and the novel version. Both include hairy chested adventure (there's that expression again; we should be used to hearing by now what with all the Conan the Barbarian and scorpion King movies on the market), 12 foot tall Martian reptile people called Tharks (they are the big green guys, with an extra set of arms and six-inch tucks), civilizations both lost and advanced, and a certain princess - Dejah Thoris. In the novel series' history, most artists who have rendered Dejah Thoris, have drawn her as a voluptuous woman wearing necklaces, jewels, and not much else. In the movie previews, their version of Dejah Thoris still has her as the ever popular eye candy, but also wearing leather armor and fighting along side Carter (this at least brings a nice modern touch to the character). Oh, and, of course, the bad guys, who want to conquer the world (and possibly the solar system) to keep everyone else busy for the duration of the movie. If you, dear reader, have watched the previews and decided that this movie could have easily been called - Conan the Barbarian Meets the Martians (or in this case, Tarzan Meets the Martians), than consider yourself correct.

All in all, though, Disney and Pixar look like they've put a lot of production into the project. The Burroughs novel helps them out as it was written in an era where the story values were in the forefront. This made the story simple enough to fit comfortable in the length of a theatrical film, while still having room for the producers to play with the characters and bits of plotline. Viewing the movie should make for an interesting experience.

Side Note : Edgar Rice Burroughs' success with writing his novels influenced a variety of other authors to follow his lead in writing adventure books. It was full of sense-of-wonder and a whiz-bang adventure that influence a whole branch of the science fiction scene. Chief among those who copied Burroughs' styles was Otis Adelbert Kline. And in 1930, Kline wrote the SF novel Maza of the Moon. Now the upshot of all this is that, between Burroughs and Kline, they paved the way to one of the largest early sci fi heroes - Flash Gordon.

Flash Gordon started out as a newspaper comic strip in 1934. Alex Raymond was the artist/writer, and must have read a lot of the space opera style SF to place into his storylines. Burroughs' work was deffently in there - heroes vs. villains & monsters, spaceships & rayguns, and planets with advanced & lost civilizations. The hero of the story (Flash) was a courageous and athletic man who fought equally well with a sword as he could handle a raygun. The female love

interest (Dale Arden) was very feminine and, in those days, just as likely to provide Flash with adventure when the bad guys captured her (in which case, after she was released from capture, she could be *so grateful* to the hero ;-). With them was their local scientist type (Doctor Zarcoff), who added at least *a little* science to the adventure tale. And, of course, the Bad Guy (Ming, the Merciless).

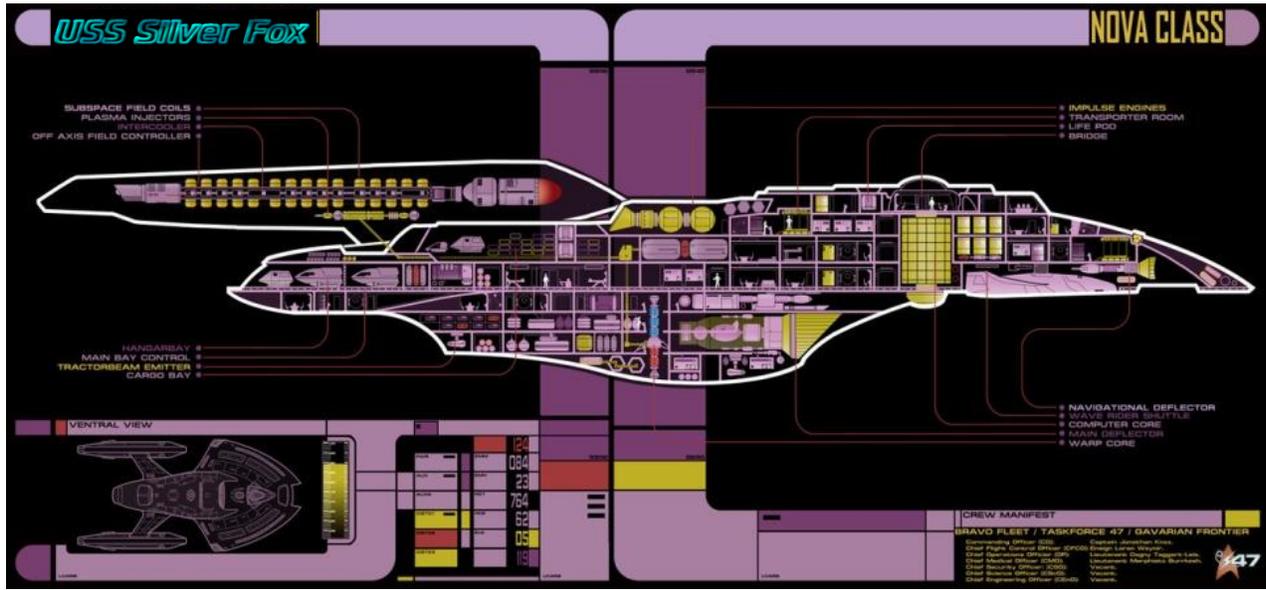
Raymond must have included a reading of Maza of the Moon while setting up his comic strip; elements of that story are included throughout the strip's history. In Maza, hero is Ken Dunstan, who is not only courageous and athletic, but also an inventor and scientist in his own right. Among his various inventions (which includes a raygun design) is the first rocket to travel to the Moon. Unfortunately, when it hits the Moon's surface, it crashes into one of the underground cities of one of the Moon's inhabitants. This leads to retaliation by the Moon men and a general invasion of the Earth. The invasion is done with a combination spaceships and a purple death ray (in the Flash Gordon strip, this was one of Ming's favorite activities). And to answer this, Ken Dunstan whips together a useable spaceship (don't you just love these old fictions?) and adventures off to the Moon to stop the invasion. Once there, Dunstan discovers two races inhabit the Moon: one, a race of Caucasians with a really cute princess (out of all the other people on the Moon, Dunstan runs into her first - amazing!)(at least, in the story, author Kline recognizes that air-breathing people would have to have environmental suits to survive on the Moon's surface), and second, a race of mean humanoids who have connections with Earth's oriental people (in other words, the oriental menace that was popular in U.S. fiction before the 1930s). It was this second race, lead by P'an ku, that was invading Earth. The oriental features of P'an Ku ended up in the appearance of Flash Gordon's villain Ming. As for the inspiration of Doctor Zarcoff, Raymond used a combination of Dunstan's scientific skills, a kindly Professor (whose name escapes me) and Dunstan's associate Roger (who not only stays on Earth to defend the home front, but also arranges a "cavalry-to-the-rescue" with the super battle cruiser spaceship the heroes were developing). Add in strange locations, weird plant and animal life (monsters included), and you can guess the rest of the story.

It was fun reading this old stuff and just sitting back to enjoy the adventure to the thing. Oh, and after reading this book and reading half way through A Princess of Mars, I found out that Edgar Rice Burroughs also wrote a novel called Maid on the Moon. After I dig into a couple other novels I've downloaded off the Internet, maybe I'll see if I can get this novel. And, no, the readers here don't have to worry about me reviewing that book here - I think I've bored you guys enough with the above as it is.

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USS Silver Fox View



USS Silver Fox - NCC 19500

Category: Science/Escort Starship

Length: 165 meters

Decks: 8

Width: 85 meters

Crew: 80 (officers & enlisted)

Height: 34 meters

Phasers: Type X

Cruising Speed: Warp 6

Max Speed: Warp 7

Why call this starship the “Silver Fox”? Well, since I was the one starting the Silver Fox as a local chapter I did get a chance to name it. Also, if you know me at all you’d know that I have an affinity for foxes. They are a sort of totem animal for me – every animal has traits and abilities that allow them to succeed in their own little niche in nature; this then means that the fox has a few things that it can teach us.

Fox symbolism:

- Cunning (“sly as a fox”)
- Intelligence/wisdom
- Stealth/camouflage/invisibility
- Magic/shape shifting/trickster

- Adaptability
- Provider/sense of family
- Sensitivity

The fox is the smallest of the dog family of mammals. As such, it has found a unique niche in nature's plan - it avoids competing with the other predators who hunt during the daylight by being a night time predator. The fox is watchful, stealthy, and using its own wits to obtain its goals. And since the fox hunts at night, the species has long been associated with mystery, magic and the mystic realms.

“The fox encourages us to **think outside the box** and use our intelligence in different creative ways. The fox also brings us a message to try to approach our circumstances differently than we normally would. Be aware of some of our habits, and try a different angle of action.

The fox also provides a reminder that we must utilize all our resources (seen and unseen) in order to accomplish our goals. Sometimes this means calling upon some unorthodox methods.

Furthermore, the fox is a sign to be mindful of our surroundings.”

--www.whats-your-sign.com/fox-animal-symbolism.html

Therefore, a fox is the perfect symbol for a starship that flies science/escort missions. Everybody seems to like Starfleet's cruisers; they run into a problem, then they have the muscle to punch their way out of it by force. If I run into a problem I like to think things through to solve it. And if I run into a situation where I have to fight my way out, I'd rather fight smart (I have to do that; like the fox, I'm a bit of a shorty).

“Fox can show us the skills necessary when it comes to handling people. The ability to camouflage can be deduced as being about to take a step back and view an interpersonal situation with detachment. This includes opening up the less obvious senses, such as intuition.

Often the underlying basis of a situation may seem obvious, but instead of making a quick judgment, listen closely to the outer and inner senses. Then you may perhaps get a completely different picture of what is going on. When the outer situation and the inner senses don't match it is wise to handle [the situation] like a fox, to trust ones intuition/instinct/inner voice, and to lay low”.

-- Ina Woolcott -- www.shamanicjourney.com

And the idea that the fox is tied to the mystic, magical realm appeals to me. I always did like sticking a little fantasy in with my science fiction. So for the moment, we'll be keeping the Silver Fox title.

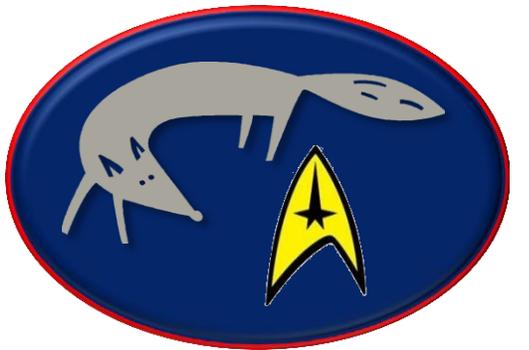


USS Silver Fox Logo - Samples

Commodore Peterson has asked me if the USS Silver Fox has a logo design. The answer to that question is currently no. So I have been trying to work up a design that we could use here, and see if we can make it look half-way decent. Well, the answer to *that* question is not yet. However, I am still working on that project.

If anyone out there can do better, than feel free to submit a design.

One thing I'm having trouble with is that a fox (silver or otherwise) is a four legged animal. As such, a horizontal animal doesn't lend itself to a vertical logo design (in that, a vertical design symbolizes hope, forward thinking, and a look to the stars). Incidentally, the third design has a crescent shape in the bottom part of the design; this is supposed to symbolize a moon. It's not a fox, but it is silvery colored.



USS SILVER FOX





Finally, March looks

like the start of the convention season.

Genericon in Troy, NY (cosplay & anime - March 2nd), LunaCon in Rye Brook, NY (March 16 to 18th), and Icon 31 at Stony Brook University, NY (March 30st - April 1st) are all going to be happening. What this paragraph is building up to is me asking anyone who is going to these conventions (or any other in the NY and Penn state areas), if they could write us out a report on their experiences attending these cons. We would like to hear how any of these events were fun.

Also, I don't know if I can maintain a monthly schedule with this newsletter. But since I'm not working right now, it should be pretty close.

Clear skies,

Ltjg. Jeff Wilcox - USS Silver Fox

