



StarLight

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE U.S.S. BRIGHTSTAR

VOLUME TWO

FEBRUARY 2021

ISSUE SEVEN



**What he said, I think just about
covers everything**



From the First Officer

Hi and welcome back to another edition of the StarLight newsletter, the official newsletter of the USS Brightstar. So you here at last. Well after three years of dealing with that would have driven any sane person crazy. But despite all that I had to go through, I managed to get through those things and managed to accomplish a few things, things that I or anyone else would have thought not possible. Learning to walk again was numero uno on that list. It doesn't look great when I walk and I do have to use a cane, but at least I am walking again. I can even manage for short distances, to walk without the cane, but as I said it's only for short a distance only. I told someone once, I had to be in that wheelchair for medical reasons. And after I found out what it was like to have to be in that wheelchair I did not like it one damn bit. I know that I may end up in that chair someday, but until then I am going to fight like hell to keep that from happening. And when that does happen, I'm still going to fight like hell to get out of that chair.

This next accomplishment that took place happened about seven months after the fact. The StarLight newsletter has been running without interruption for the last eighteen months. I may have to wait a while before I turn them in, but they are done and turned in. And beginning in March I'll be taking back over, doing the s.p.a.r's report. As the First Officer of the Brightstar, that was one of my duties. A duty that I had done before this little trip began three years ago. As I said before, it has been a long time coming. While I was on limited duties status, my commanding officer had to do the s.p.a.r's for the last three years since my accident in May of 2018. But that neither here nor there. About the only thing, I can put in this newsletter for my Captain (if she is reading this), is this, thank you. If I could give her an award for what she has done for me, I would.

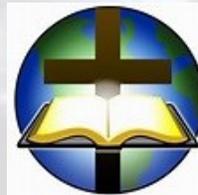
So here we are with another edition of the StarLight newsletter. We have the usual installment, plus a couple of new things as well. And since this will be for February the first new thing, is an article about groundhog's day.

As this newsletter was going to print, the forecasted weather for February 2nd is a toss-up. He may or may not see his shadow. Well, at least here in Peru, Indiana that is. The second new thing is we're starting in this issue we're doing a 'where's Waldo' type of thing. A while back, I found a mini-figurine in the shape of a mini-David Tenant as Doctor Who. A 'Where is the Doctor' Doctor Who that is. The first picture will be a closeup. You will have to guess where the Doctor is at. The second picture in the next following issue (in this case the revealing picture will be seen in the March issue) To send in your guess/answer, you can contact me either on my Facebook page at James Webb or at my email address at captsikes@yahoo.com.

Well, (and don't you say, "that's a deep subject") that is pretty much it for this installment. I hope you enjoy this month's newsletter. See you next issue.

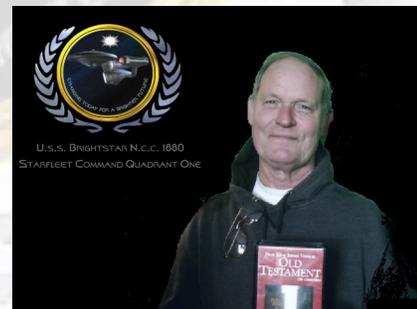
It's time to put this puppy to bed.

The First Officer.



Bible Quotes

Commit to the LORD whatever you do,
and he will establish your plans



February Birthday

Lt. Comm. Donald Henderson
Chief of Chaplin Services.

The Weird, The Strange, and

What The #&@*

Impostor: Thomas Dodd, 30, admits he was drunk when he filled out the paperwork to legally change his name. The nightclub manager from Tamworth, Staffordshire, England, was watching a Christmas Eve concert by singer Celine Dion at home on the telly, since he couldn't go out due to COVID-19, and the drink emboldened his decision. But he forgot about it until the paperwork arrived confirming his name change — to Celine Dion. “At first I didn't think it was me that had done it, but in a way it just sums up 2020,” Dodd — *er*, Dion — said. “I should not be left alone with a bottle of champagne.” On the other hand, “My name is still Celine Dion and I don't plan on changing it back. It keeps people smiling and laughing and we could all do with that.” He plans to study to become a paramedic. (RC/Nottingham Post) *...In which job he'll meet all sorts of people who did much more ridiculous things than that after drinking.*

Please Hold for the Next Available Operator: With demand for COVID-19 vaccine shots far outstripping supply, health departments are inundated with requests they can't even begin to schedule. And those without Internet access are getting irate, since the reservation systems are almost all online. Worse, that mostly includes seniors, who are the most vulnerable to the virus. To accommodate that group, New Jersey has set up a telephone line to help set up their appointments. But so far, only the technology is in place: the state has been scrambling to hire and train 250 people to answer the calls. In the meantime, calls to the hotline bring a recorded message ...directing callers to the state's COVID-19 web site. (RC/Bergen Record) *...Which is already bogging down from the load.*



Been nice knowin'
ya, Ensign Generic.



Penn-Penn's Recipe's

Hey and welcome back. This time around, Penn-Penn thought that going off the beaten path for something a little different type recipe's. And she found a couple of good ones. This first one is based on a Doctor Who episode. In fact both recipe's are based on a couple Doctor Who episodes. Well, anyway this first one is called.

Exploding TRADIS cookies

Whether you're stranded on the wrong side of a rift in the universe or merely waiting for a coalition of everything that ever hated you to spring their inevitable trap, it's a sure bet things are about to get shaky inside your TARDIS. Demonstrate the severity of the situation to your companions using these sexy TARDIS sandwich cookies for props.

Season 5, Episode 12: The Pandorica Opens
From *Dining With the Doctor: Regenerated – The Revised and Expanded 2nd Edition Whovian Cookbook*
(makes 24 sandwich cookies)

Dough

- 2 cups/450 g butter, softened.
- 2 cups/250 g white sugar
- 1 tbs/15 ml lemon extract
- 1 tsp/5 ml orange extract
- 1 tsp/5 g baking powder
- 2 eggs
- 3 tbs/45 ml blue food coloring
- 6 1/4 cups/800 g all-purpose flour

Filling

1 large tub buttercream icing
steampunk and lightning bolt [Geeky Sprinkles from The Geeky Hostess](#)
yellow and blue sanding sugar

Variation: substitute hazelnut extract for the lemon and orange extracts then substitute buttercream for the lemon or buttercream icing.

Before we can stuff our TARDIS with gears, electricity, and glittery gold Gallifreyan life force, we need to build its outer walls. If your TARDIS happens to have a functioning chameleon circuit, you technically don't need to bother with this step.

All of these things are TARDISes.

However, if you're currently traveling in a squeaky blue box with the parking brake on (I'm not naming any unpronounceable names, sweetie) then here's how to make an acceptable rendition of your time machine's silhouette.

This batter doesn't require any freezing, so heat pre-heat your oven to 350F/175C while you work.

Start by tossing all your softened butter into a stand mixer. If you don't own one, you can use a regular old hand mixer, but much like figuring out the Doctor and River's anniversary, it's a lot of work. Sweeten the butter up with all your sugar and beat it into creamy decadence.

Add in the extracts, eggs, and food coloring. If citrus flavors remind you of all those satsumas you kept in your pocket during a previous regeneration, feel free to substitute hazelnut extract.

While the creamed butter and sugar are making friends with the color and flavors, grab a clean bowl and whisk the baking powder into the flour.

Now that the wet mix is looking plenty friendly, gradually introduce $\frac{1}{4}$ of the flour mix. Let the stand mixer blades work their magic, pausing to scrape down the sides before adding the next bit. Keep this up until you're out of flour, then let it run until you end up with an incredibly stiff blue dough.

Grab a fist sized wad of raw cookie potential. Use your fist to smush it between two pieces of parchment paper before rolling it down to $\frac{1}{8}$ inch/3 mm thickness.

There are infinite variations on TARDIS cookie cutters available on Think Geek, Etsy, Amazon, and at Doctor Who conventions. In a pinch, Kitchen Overlord's minion [Sarah Wright even has instructions on how to make your own kid-friendly cookie cutters from leftover milk jugs and hot glue](#). Whatever cutter you use, arrange your blue boxes on a parchment paper lined baking sheet at least 1 inch/2.5 cm apart so they don't try to merge realities.

Bake at 350F/175C for 10-12 minutes, depending on how crispy you like your cookies. If you prefer soft & pliable sugar cookies, you can bake them for as little as 8 minutes. Personally, when I break into the TARDIS, I want to feel the door snap.

When you pull the first batch from the oven, go ahead, and shove a fresh one right in your face. Now that you have that out of your system, slide the rest onto a cooling rack and leave them the heck alone while they harden and cool. Repeat the process (hot cookie taste testing optional) until you run out of cookie dough.

Once your cookies have toughened up, it's time to install all the 'splody bits.

Scoop an entire tub of store-bought lemon icing into a large plastic sandwich bag. If you're using the hazelnut variation, substitute buttercream icing. Snip a tiny hole off the end of the bag – yes, tinier than that. More the suggestion of a hole than a big gaping wound in the plastic. If your first one was too big, just cram the whole bag inside another one (much easier than scooping out that sugary mess) and make the next cut a little smaller

Draw a thick line of icing around the perimeter of one cookie. I found it easiest to build it up like a wall, or a clay pinch pot, or an earthbag house. Really, use whatever comparison you want as long as you add about 3-4 layers of icing. The goal here is to create a nifty little reservoir to hide your time machine's secret innards. Innocent bystanders will think you made some nice sand-

wich cookies worthy of being dunked in milk, but after one bite, they will be assimilated.

That reservoir is begging for some TARDISsy parts.

In a pinch, you can use whatever sprinkles you like, but for best effect, I recommend a combination of the Steampunk and Lightning Bolt [Geeky Sprinkles from The Geeky Hostess](#). Every time the TARDIS is about to be ripped apart, it seems like electricity and gears go flying everywhere. These sprinkles let you make that happen in an innocent Whovian's mouth.

Add a pinch of lightning bolts.

And a pinch of gears.

And a few shakes each of gold and blue sanding sugar, just for good measure.

Then gently lay a clean cookie right side up on top of the icing. Press down just a smidge before using a butter knife to clean away any excess icing. If you shake it gently, you should hear a faintly ominous rattle from inside your cookie.

You could do something boring, like stack your cookies on a serving plate, but if you added enough icing, they're wide enough to stand upright with no support.

I say build your own Stonehenge out of TARDIS cookies arranged around a toy Pandorica. At a watch party, you can also subtly plant them somewhere in everyone else's dishes. Put one rising up from a salad and claim it landed on a jungle world. Behind some meat? Oh, that poor alien. It never stood a chance. Hidden in the ice tray? Actually, these are delicious when frozen.

Then gently lay a clean cookie right side up on top of the icing. Press down just a smidge before using a butter knife to clean away any excess icing. If you shake it gently, you should hear a faintly ominous rattle from inside your cookie.

You could do something boring, like stack your cookies on a serving plate, but if you added enough icing, they're wide enough to stand upright with no support.

I say build your own Stonehenge out of TARDIS cookies arranged around a toy Pandorica. At a watch party, you can also subtly plant them somewhere in everyone else's dishes. Put one rising up from a salad and claim it landed on a jungle world. Behind some meat? Oh, that poor alien. It never stood a chance. Hidden in the ice tray? Actually, these are delicious when frozen.

BUT WHAT IF I'D RATHER MAKE TARDIS INSPIRED COOKIE DOUGH ICE CREAM?

Clever girl. You can easily use a wad of your TARDIS-tastic cookie dough to fake your own Ben & Jerry's style fancy schmancy Whovian pint.

If you own an ice cream maker, congratulations on having your third excuse this year to use it. If not, just grab a big box of your favorite brand of vanilla.

Let the ice cream soften in the fridge for about 30 minutes. Now cut the whole box into 8 smaller pieces and peel away the cardboard. Remember – you're faking that this is an original creation. Get rid of the evidence and store the final result in airtight freezer bag.

Line a baking sheet with parchment paper. Arrange your ice cream into one layer, top it with more parchment paper, and try to roll it into a single rectangle of cold dairy goodness. It's okay to use your fingers to rip off hunks and smush it around. Try to work fast so you don't lose too much to melting.

Once you have a rectangle of dairy, spread a thin layer of cookie dough on top.

Now for the fun part. Grab one edge and, using the parchment paper for support, gently roll the ice cream inwards. As you go, generously dust the exterior of the ice cream with sanding sugar and geeky sprinkles. This will give you an impressive ice cream spiral with a swirl of blue cookie dough on one side and a layer of TARDIS interior bits on the other. Roll this as tight as you can (and don't skimp on the sprinkles) then wrap it all in parchment paper.

Put the parchment paper wrapped roll of ice cream in a freezer bag. Press out as much of the air as possible before sealing it up and storing it in the freezer until it's completely hardened.

When you're ready to serve it, cut your creation into rounds so people can see the full glory of your swirling vortex of tastiness. If you're feeling extra fancy, garnish each portion with a leftover TARDIS cookie.

Now this next one I'm willing to give a go myself when I can find the time. This one is called,

Slitheen Pretzel Buns

Who needs to colonize Earth when you can just launch World War Three and mine the lovely radioactive debris without any pesky local sentiments getting in the way of all your delicious profit. In honor of the occasion, why not make some ham sandwiches from the semi-sentient pig you forced to crash land onto Earth? Follow these easy instructions to wrap the slaughtered pig up in a Slitheen shaped bun while you wait for the humans to finish wiping one another out.

Season 1, Episode 5, "World War Three"

Dough:

1 cup whole milk
1 tbsp active dry yeast
1 tsp white sugar
3 tbsp packed light brown sugar
2 tbsp softened butter
1 tsp table salt
1 egg
1 tsp green food coloring
2 1/2 – 3 cups flour

Baking Soda Bath:

4 cups warm water
1/3 cup baking soda

Finishing Touches:

12 small blueberries
1/4 cup sliced blanched almonds
1 strip fruit leather
Nutella or black icing

If you've ever tried to make dyed bread, you know the crust always comes out golden brown with faint highlights of food coloring. Luckily for you, there's a simple hack – bathe your dough in baking soda before popping it in the oven. Technically, this turns it into soft pretzel bread, which happens to be delicious. The process also preserves artificial colors in the baking process so your buns will have the glorious skin tone of your new overlords while also being as soft as their pot bellies.

Start by warming the milk to the temperature of a nice bath. Don't be afraid to put it in the microwave. After all, if the Slitheen have their way, soon the whole planet will be a radioactive wasteland.

Pour the warm milk into your stand mixer's bowl. If you don't have a stand mixer, you've got a bit more of a slog ahead, but this is totally doable.

Now whisk in the yeast and 1 tsp of sugar until the yeast has dissolved and the milky mix looks like the thin mud that will soon be polluting that creek in your favorite park. You know the one. A ship piloted by a sentient pig crashed into it.

Leave the yeast alone for 10-15 minutes. You'll know it's ready when it blooms like a mushroom cloud.

Dirty it up with your brown sugar, softened butter, table salt, egg, and green food coloring. Your whisk is still a mess from earlier, so use it to beat the mix together like it's the spirit of the last humans left alive before you strip mine their planet.

Once you have a beautiful green sloppy mess, gradually add the flour, mixing with a fork after every 1/2 cup, until it transforms from a liquid to a solid.

If you have a stand mixer, attach the dough hook, set it to low, and let it knead away for 6-8 minutes, until the dough is glossy and smooth. If you're kneading by hand, you'll want to put your back into it for 8-10 minutes.

Once your dough is properly subservient, roll it into a ball, toss it in a bowl, and cover it with a clean kitchen towel. Leave it alone until double in size, usually about an hour. This is a good time to study your maps of Cardiff.

While you're admiring your handiwork, bring 4 cups of water to a boil. Let it simmer until you're ready for the next step. You want it to be as warm as a post-nuclear summer.

When you return, give the dough a friendly punch to deflate its spirits. Use your hands to flatten and stretch it into a rough rectangle. Cut it in half length-wise and turn each half into three trapezoids (a rectangle that's narrower at the top) plus some scraps that will become heads and arms.

Now mix the baking powder into your boiling water. Add a little at a time or else you'll end up with an elementary school baking soda volcano effect. Whenever it foams up, just stir until it settles down, then add more baking powder.

Your Slitheen overlord's body will be one big trapezoid. The head will be a smaller version of the same shape. If you look at a Slitheen, their heads look like a jowly pyramid with the top blown off. The arms are just little snakes of dough with the ends trimmed. You'll want to roll your body and head around in the baking soda mix for about 60-90 seconds. Lift them out with a slotted spoon and lay them on a sheet of parchment paper. Use your fingers to pinch the top of the body upwards, forming a neck. Press the head into the neck.

Now grab two of the trimmed snakes and sort of swish them around in the baking soda water for 30 seconds or so. I used my fingers, but you can use a slotted spoon if you prefer. When you take them out, squish them onto your Slitheen's sides.

Finish the slitheen by pressing two small blueberries into the face to create the eyes. This also helps the cheeks bulge out. Make the claws by pressing three slivers of almond deep into the ends of each hand.

You want a lot of space on your baking sheet, because much like a Slitheen escaping a human skin suit, these are going to grow. I suggest no more than 3 per baking sheet. That gives you just enough time to prep the second batch while the first one bakes.

Bake your Slitheen buns at 350F for 10-12 minutes, or until their bellies just barely begin to take on a lightly mottled brownish hue over the green.

When fully cooled, draw on a mouth using Nutella or icing. Cut out a thin strip of fruit leather and wrap it around the neck for their skinsuit collars.

These rolls are thick enough to stand upright, so you can have your own Slitheen army watching over the rest of your food. Like any sandwich buns, you can stuff them with whatever you'd like, but I recommend serving them with ham and trimmings to celebrate the crash of London's first (known) Alien.



Star Trek: Brightstar

'Moving On'

17

Captain's Log

Stardate: Subjective

Captain Deora recording

"Saffet the sole survivor of the destruction of the welcome center at Vulcans Gate, is returning to Vulcan to undergo the ..., oh, the ..., dammit, the ..., whatever the name of it is. The process of transferring the katra of J'dar that Saffet is in possession of, to a storage device. I am told this will preserve the knowledge and the experiences, if not the very soul of J'dar for future references and consultation.

It has been said, that with Vulcans, it's like reading a book. What you read, is what you get, or what you see, is what you get, however you want to look at it. I can say with a fair amount of certainty that is not entirely true. At least not when it comes to my Chief Medical Officer Doctor D'lan.

It turns out, the good doctor knew Saffet, back in the day as it were. They were part of a team of Vulcans that was sent to Romulus to observe the Romulan government's adherence to a new treaty between Romulus and the Federation. Once that assignment was completed, the team was brought back home to Vulcan. Once home, everybody went their separate ways. I have to give the Vulcans this much, they're good at hiding their emotional reactions. I mean I did not see one single reaction come from Doctor D'lan when we encounter the real Saffet as he fell out of the closet we found him in along with the body of J'dar. Well, maybe one, her insistence that we returned to the ship for treatment. If anything else, I will have a good long talk with the CMO about her past.

The senior bridge crew and I are currently standing by in holodeck one while the First Officer and Chief Engineer Kenny are making some adjustments in the holodeck computer matrix to allow the playability of an iso-linear chip that was left to us by the late Captain S'tol. The last message from him, the one we saw at the welcome center at Vulcans Gate was bogus,

a decoy as it were, not meant for us. But was intended for the Vulcan Extremists. Our message, what this message is this time, where we need to go, I do not know. I hope this little treasure hunt S'tol has us on, will end soon. If not for my sanity, but the sanity of my officers and the crew. In my opinion, the crew of the Brightstar will need (if not earned) an extended shore leave.

One final note before I wrap this up. How is it possible for a man who is dead, to stay ahead of the Extremists? How is it possible for him to know at all what is going to happen next or at all,

Something else, of late I have been having these feelings of dread. Of something that is coming our way and that if we're not ready for it, we could lose this race that we find ourselves in. What or where or why for that matter, these feelings are coming from, again I do not know. Therefore I ordered a stage one yellow alert, passive sensors only while we are still in orbit above Vulcan. Once we find out what S'tol message contains we'll go from there."

"I'm sorry sir, this is taking longer than what I had estimated. It turns out the chip is configured for the holodeck all right. But for a model that hasn't been in use for over thirty years. We've had to dumb down the computer so it can play correctly." T'sikes explained to Captain Deora.

"I'm not surprised, Commander. Do the best you can." Deora stated with a half-grin

"Yes sir. We should have something in a few minutes. Kenny and I both agree, at most maybe four or five minutes." T'sikes stated.

Captain Deora was about to say something when Chief Kenny called out for the first officer.

"Sir, I think I finally got some magic happening over here." Chief Kenny stated like a child on Christmas morning opening his presents.

The first officer walked over to the arch and took a look at Chief Kenny's work.

"And this is why everyone calls you the 'Magic Man'." The first officer said with a smile on his face.

He quickly went back to Captain Deora.

"Sir, we're ready whenever you are," Sikes told his commanding officer.

"Well then, let's see where we're off to this time," Deora said with an unusual amount of impatience.

"Go ahead Kenny, flip the switch." The first officer called out.

"Aye, sir. And here we go." Kenny said.

This time for some reason there was not the usual light show that the portable holoprojectors put on before they displayed the messages in the past. Instead, a strange little man appeared in the middle of the holodeck. When he spoke, his voice sounded odd and yet familiar to the captain and the first officer.

"Please state the security code." He said.

Everyone looked at each other as if to say, "What security codes?" It was Captain Deora who finally spoke what everybody was thinking.

"What security codes?" The envelope only contained the iso-linear chip.

"That's all I saw in the envelope too sir," Sikes stated to his captain.

"Without the proper security codes, this message will not display and will self-destruct in one minute." The strange little man said.

As everyone was trying to figure out what or where the codes might be, the strange little man was counting down the time.

At forty-five seconds, it was Chief Kenny who found what they were looking for.

"Ah sir, there something is written on the inside of the envelope."

At forty seconds, "What, where shows us, Chief Kenny!" Belek asked the Chief Engineer.

At thirty-five seconds, Chief Kenny walked over to the group. Opens the envelope slightly to expose the codes.

At thirty seconds, "Well I'll be, there it is. Security code is seven-alpha-one-nine-delta-three-tango-five-Charlie-five." The Captain stated.

"Security code accepted. Please state the nature of your relationship to Captain S'tol." The strange little man said next.

Everyone looked at each other as if to say,

"What the hell?"

It was Belek who finally got things moving again.

"I am Belek, first cousin to Captain S'tol." He stated. Then the other members of the group follow suit as well.

Once everyone had stated their name and their relationship the strange little man stood there for a moment and then said, "Security codes accepted, Family relationship accepted. Please stand by for a retinal scan."

Then a pedestal appeared, followed by a retinal scanner that sat on top of the pedestal. Then the strange little man requested everyone, "Please submit to a retinal scan." The strange little man asked.

Belek was one of the first of the group to step up to the scanner. Then he was followed by Captain Deora. Once the rest of the group was scanned, the strange little man spoke for one last time.

"Retinal scans complete. Security codes accepted. Family relationship accepted. Retinal scans accepted. Stand by for your message from Captain S'tol." With that, the strange little man disappeared, along with the retinal scanner and the pedestal.

After a moment or two another being appeared in his place. That being was none other than Captain S'tol.

"My friends it is agreeable that you have made it this far. By now you must have realized how dangerous this race has become. I'm sure that by this point, you're wondering how I can stay ahead as I have been. That I cannot tell you..., yet. What I can tell you is this, there are other forces at work from behind the scenes. Those are in bed, as it were, with the Vulcan Extremists. Before I give you your next clue, I wish to say this, I apologize for what I have, and about to put you through. This will end very soon. Something you must know. The holoprojector that you found at the welcome center at Vulcan's Gate if you have it with you get rid of it as soon as possible. This device and the message that it contained was not meant for you. It is part one of a two-part clue. These two items were also meant for the Vulcan Extremists as bait. To try to bring them out into the open. If this has not happened, and you have the device, then this means they found out or had foreknowledge of the tracking

device embedded inside of the projector. Please don't try and look for it. It is well hidden. Just get rid of this projector.

Because if they did leave this device behind, that means they are aware of the tracking device and maybe able to, ah, by using this projector, to track the Brightstar. Now, this part is the clue you have been waiting for. And the place you are going is slowly coming into its own version of the twenty-first century. Even though you'll still see evidence of the days when the prohibition era gangster once had divided the planet into territories and scrobble amongst themselves. This planet had been visited by an Earth ship a century before Kirk and Spock. The society was inadvertently interfered with by the Earth ship Horizon when the said Earth ship left behind several books. One of which, was about the old Chicago mobs of the 1930's gangsters of the prohibition era. You can see where they got some of their ideas (although be it their ideas about Earth life were wrong) from. There are no time limits here, but the sooner you get there, the better. That's your clue for now. It's not as cryptic as previous clues, but it is cryptic enough that if you don't combine the two clues, you won't know where or what to look for. That's it for now. Remember, be mindful of your surroundings and keep your sensors and phasers charged and your shields up. Captain S'tol out."

With that, the holographic image of Captain S'tol faded from the holodeck.

"Josh, you just heard what Captain S'tol suggested. Go down to science lab one and get that thing off my ship." Captain Deora ordered.

"Captain if I may suggest something?" Commander T'sikes said.

"Yes, what is it number one?" Deora asked.

"Could you relay that order, sir? We may be able to use this device to our advantage." The first officer started to suggest.

"Explain how we can use this to our advantage?" Deora asked.

"Right now, the Brightstar is ready to leave orbit at a moment's notice. Am I correct sir?" Sikes asked.

"You know we are. You're the one that suggested that we should. What is your point?" Deora quizzed her first officer.

"My point is this sir. We are most likely being

watched. The Extremists and whoever else is involved are trying to anticipate our next move. Right now they only know about the one message telling us to head towards Earth. Of course, there is a possibility the Extremists may suspect the message that the two spies heard might not be true and suspect there may be another message or an alternate message. Now what I am suggesting is this, once we figure out where our next destination is, we do not head there, at least not at first. We leave the orbit of Vulcan as we would if we were heading to Earth. In fact, we'll lay in a course for Earth as they expect we would. Then at a predetermined point on our course towards Earth, we drop out of warp just long enough to launch a warp-capable shuttlecraft with the holographic projector onboard. Then the Brightstar will quickly jump back into warp, while the shuttlecraft heads towards Earth. At another predetermined point, the Brightstar will lay in a course towards its true destination." T'sikes explained.

"If they are watching us, won't they try and follow us? And if they follow us, won't they see what we are trying to do and scan the shuttle for lifeforms?" The Captain asked her first officer.

"I can install a unit in the shuttle itself and program it to send out a false signal indicating life signs. And if that fails to throw them off, I can modify the shields and navigational array and program the craft so that it will take evasive action maneuvers and or make an attack run." Chief Kenny offered.

"That's a good idea Chief. But how do we launch the shuttlecraft without being detected when we drop out of warp, and then jump back to warp?" Ensign Josh asked the group.

"Captain, may I ask a question?" Belek asked the Captain.

The Captain looked at Belek and wonder why he would even have to ask considering he's part of the group anyway.

"Of course, Belek go ahead ask your question," Deora stated.

"This may sound like an illogical question, but what happens if the shuttle bay was suddenly exposed to the vacuum of space with the electronic barrier down?"

"Why everything inside the shuttle bay would naturally be sucked out into space." Chief Kenny stated with a certainty of a Chief engineer.

"Exactly," Belek said.

"But there is one drawback on your idea Belek." The first officer countered.

"And that is what Commander?" Belek asked.

"The mag-locks on the shuttlecraft. They automatically on when the shuttlecraft either lands or is stored in the shuttle bay. To keep what we are discussing about from happening, losing the craft to space." Chief Kenny explained.

"But can you disengage the lock?" Belek asked the Engineer.

"I would have to look into it, but I don't see why not," Kenny said.

Captain Deora stood where she was for the moment. Then began to pace. Everyone knew she was thinking about what was just said. And knew she was working on a plan, just by watching her blue antenna twitch. Then it stops just as quickly as it started.

"Alright, this is what we're going to do. Commander Henderson when we get done here we should have our true destination. Plot the course to Earth. Then pick the two points somewhere along our course to drop off the shuttle with the device aboard, and the other point to alter course to our true destination. We'll drop out of warp just long enough to eject the shuttlecraft along with some miscellaneous junk. That part falls to you, Kenny. Use whatever you can lay your hands on. Then we jump back to warp." The captain said as she listens to Kenny giggling away at the idea.

"A most logical plan Captain and an excellent one, but what if the Extremists anticipate this?" Belek pointed out.

The captain looked at everyone and said, "Unfortunately, that is the risk we'll have to take. Now let's get back to why we are here. Where are we going next?" She asked.



Punxsutawney Phil and Groundhog's Day

Groundhog's Day is a yearly event that draws thousands of people from the world over. The way this works is if on February 2nd, Punxsutawney Phil, or Phil if he sees his shadow, it means we will see six more weeks of Winter. But if Phil should not see his shadow, then spring will come early. The event is held at Gobbler's Knob in Punxsutawney in western Pennsylvania.

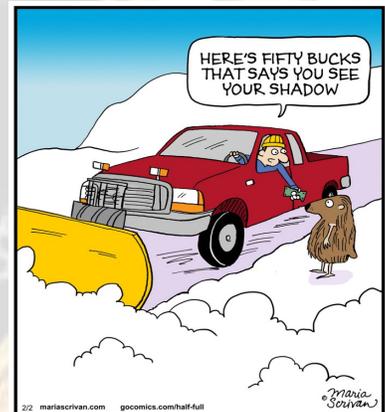
This yearly tradition came from an early Christian holiday and tradition called Candlemas Day. On this day, the early Christians would take their candles to the church to be blessed. It was thought that the blessed candles, once they were returned home, would bring blessing to the household for the rest of the winter. This tradition would change over the centuries into a weather prognostication, and a song came about in those days to reflect this. It went something like,

If Candlemas be fair and bright,

Come, Winter, have another flight:

If Candlemas brings clouds and rain,

Go Winter, and come not again.



The Interpretation of Candlemas Day during the Middle Ages, for most of Europe, made no mention of animals. At least not until the day and the traditions that went with Candlemas Day was introduced in Germany. Since Germany had no groundhogs, they used a hedgehog. In Germany, it said that, if the hedgehog were to see his/her shadow, it would mean a "second winter" or six more weeks of bad weather. When the first German settlers came to America, so did the traditions and folklore of Candlemas Day. Since the German settlers could not find any hedgehogs, a second animal was



When I Find That Damn Groundhog I'm Gonna Kick His Ass

chosen to take its place. This led to another evolution of the tradition. That animal was the groundhog.

1886 would mark the first time that groundhog would be seen in

the local newspaper. A year after that, it became a tradition to make a trek to Gobbler's Knob. Each year following, there has been a steady increase in those making this trek. Someone said that "this is a day to take things a little less seriously and to break up the monotony of winter."

Here are some interesting facts about Groundhog Day:

During the prohibition era, Punxsutawney Phil threatened to impose sixty more weeks of winter, if he wasn't allowed to have a drink.



1958 when the Soviet Union launched Sputnik, Phil changed the name of the satellite to the United States Chucknit or Muttnik as the first man-made satellite to orbit the Earth.

1981 Phil wore a yellow ribbon in honor of the hostages being held in Iran at the time.

1986 Phil went to Washington D.C. to meet with then-President Ronald Reagan, he was joined by Groundhog's Day club President Jim Means, Al Anthony, and Bill Null.

1987 Phil met with the then Governor of Pennsylvania Dick Thornburg

1993 Columbia Pictures release Groundhog Day starring Bill Murray.

1995 Phil appeared on the Oprah Winfrey show



Years after the release of Groundhog Day record crowds, some of as large as 30,000 people would visit Gobbler's Knob in Punxsutawney, Pennsylvania.

1996 Sega games donated \$10,000 to the club for help in promoting the new Sega game Sonic the Hedgehog 3. That same year, Phil would start his website.

1998 the festivities of Groundhog's Day were broadcasted live via the internet.

2001 Phil prediction was shown live on the Jumbo Tron in Times Square in New York City. Attending the ceremony was then Pennsylvania Governor Ed Rendell. The first governor from Pennsylvania to do so.

2010 Stephan Tobolowsky who played Ned Flanders in the movie Groundhog Day attending the ceremonies.

2013 Danny Rubin the writer who wrote the screenplay for Groundhog Day attended. When he addressed the crowd that was there he said, "My, how you have grown."

2015 Phil and his inner circle traveled to Indianapolis for the March Madness College Basketball Bracket picking challenging Dick Vitale.

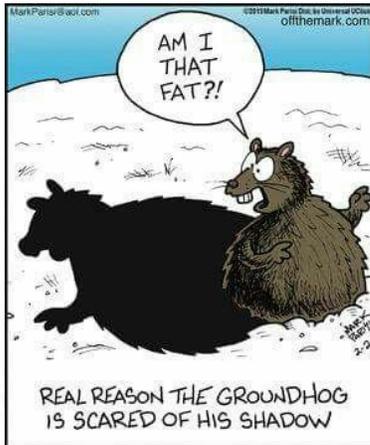
Phil and his handler administered the coin toss for Animal Planet's Puppy Bowl XIII in New York City.



In the fall of 2016 Phil, Discovery Studios, and Animal Planet channel collaborated to produce a documentary title, "A Groundhog Day Story: A Tale

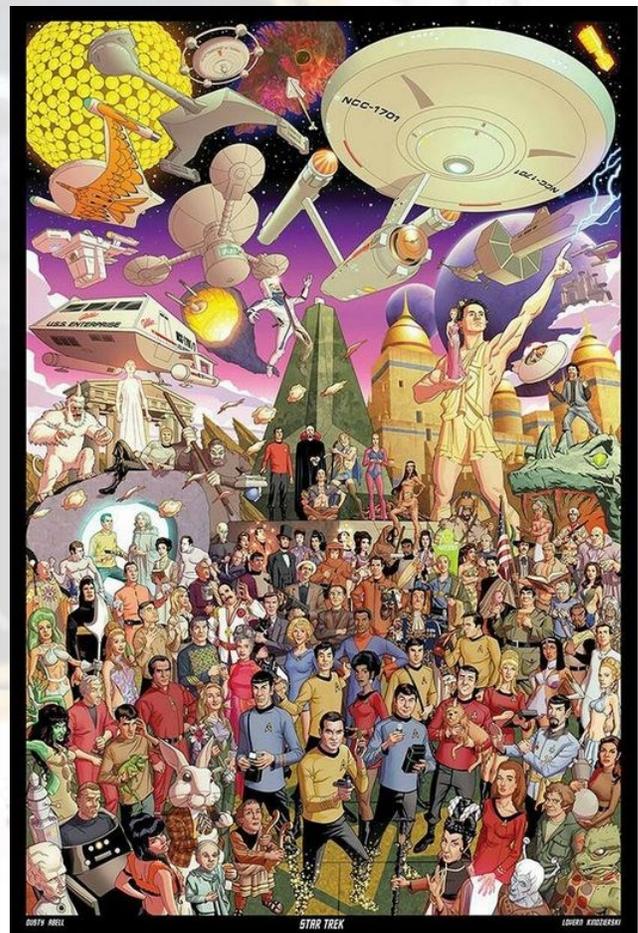
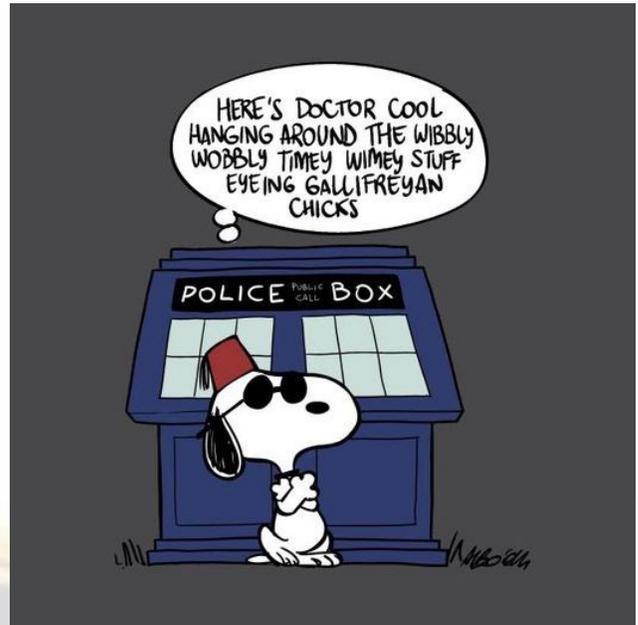
of a marmot, his shadow, and the people who protect him. The documentary aired on February 2nd, 2017 on the Animal Planet Network.

In the fall of 2017, Phil initiated the capital campaign called, 'Destination Gobbler's Knob. Its primary goal was to raise funds for a new visitor center.



Where is the Doctor?

Starting in this issue, we're doing something new and different. We're calling this Where is the Doctor? We show picture of Doctor Who and it is up to figure out where he is. To send in your guesses you can contact me on my Facebook page or my email. My email address is captsikes@yahoo.com.



Where am I

Happy Groundhog Day

**Eeek! My shadow makes
my butt look HUGE!!!**



See You Next Issue