



July 2016

Volume 13 Issue 07

Crew Meetings & Activities 2015

2016

Aug 20 regular meeting (CO is officer of the day)

Sept 17 regular meeting

Oct 15 regular meeting

Nov 19 regular meeting

Dec 17 Star Wars movie premiere

All above meeting are subject to change. Normally we meet at Shady Oaks BBQ at 3:00 p.m. on the dates above (unless otherwise mentioned.)

From the Ready Room

You know the hologram in sickbay, well, we are thinking of creating one for the CO. Not that he has missed the crew meetings but since he seems to be too busy to provide us with a small report for this humble newsletter.

He was able to come to this month's meeting since his appointment at the Ronald McDonald's House ended early. And it was good to see Scott make the meeting. We had a great turn out and I hope everyone has managed to see the new movie. I want to put in my two cents for the new captain of the new series : Star Trek Discovery – David Tennant or Nathan Fillion. Nathan is remembered for Firefly but David was really good as Dr. Who and he is very flexible in his acting.

One last thing, we would like everyone who feels comfortable doing so to let either myself, Tank or Liz have your phone numbers. This is so that if something comes up and we have to cancel an activity or meeting, we can contact you. Thank you to those who have provided theirs already.

LLAP

Captain Michael Cross

XO

Tank, When He Rolled a Twenty.

As many of us do from time to time, I was re-watching an episode of *Star Trek* the other day. Specifically, the episode was "Darmok," the second episode of the fifth season of *Star Trek: The Next Generation*. The first time I saw this episode, I remember thinking "what the h***?" I was as confused as to what was going on, probably just as much as the characters were.

Darmok, On the Ocean

By the end of the episode, it had become one of my favorite *Trek* episodes. When I re-watched it recently, it reminded me of a conversation I'd recently had, and these thoughts blended with a discussion about how "Thieves' Cant" in *Advanced Dungeons & Dragons*, Second Edition (and one of the many retro-clones thereof, *For Gold & Glory* (FG&G)) worked. Here's the relevant part of the FG&G rulebook:

Thieves' Cant: Thieves have a special language used to communicate with each other. Thieves' cant isn't an actual language but disguised words, body language, and misleading statements that can be worked into any language.

Thieves' cant is limited to subjects pertaining to thieves; hideouts, stolen goods, contacts, black marketers, etc.

Only thieves speaking the same

*language can use thieves' cant to communicate.*¹

A player in the group was asking me about how her thief could communicate to another thief without any non-thief understanding. I mentioned how the thief might use a code word or special phrase, maybe pulling on her earring, or adjusting a part of her clothing at the same time, and while a fighter or cleric wouldn't really notice, a thief would be able to interpret this as a question about the local constabulary's attitude towards pickpocketing during a bar brawl.

Sokath, His Eyes Uncovered

A few days later, a friend mentioned that she was happy she could understand me. She explained that she read a post of mine on Facebook. This post mentioned that my lovely bride and I were watching *Gods of Egypt*, and we both thought that "that kid sure rolled a lot of 20s." Some younger people were in the room at the time, and she explained how they (who had never played any pen-and-paper role-playing games) would have no idea what I was talking about. We asked; she was right. Most of my friends – even those that do not play RPGs, maybe even have never played them – understand my reference. It's part of "Geek Culture" and is simply understood.

For those of you who DON'T know (gasp!), in every edition of *Dungeons and Dragons*, probably the world's best known RPG, a twenty-sided die (a "d20") is rolled when characters are in combat, to see if the character hits. A higher roll is better. A "natural 20" – meaning when the die roll itself is a 20, without any modifiers added to it – always hits, and in many versions of the game, results in a "critical hit," which may double the damage done, or result in full possible damage, or something

else. Even if the character has no real hope of hitting the opponent, if he rolls a 20, he hits. This 5% chance is often thought of as the "luck factor."

"Rolling a 20," therefore, means doing something exceptionally – even unbelievably – well. In the common slang of pen-and-paper gamers – in a "Geek's Cant" if you will – when someone does something amazing, unbelievable, or awesome, we'll say he rolled a 20. (A sports fanatic might instead say that he made a "Hail Mary pass.")

There's other unique elements of "Geek's Cant," or at least the version I speak. I often refer to myself as a crusty old grognard². I refer to the registration booth at outdoor fairs & festivals as "Troll."³ An area marked off to keep people from wandering into it? That's an "Eric."⁴ An unfortunately large person (not just fat, but **DAMN** fat) is sometimes called a "Jabba."⁵ I've repeated some of the Ferengi Rules of Acquisition⁶ when discussing fund-raising. Pulling a shirt, vest, or jacket down when it rides up? That's the "Picard Maneuver⁷." When my friends and I go somewhere as a group, it might be as a "Landing Party" (or, sometimes, an "Away Team".)

Many terms have made the jump into the common, mundane language. Warp Speed, "Beam Me Up", "May the Force Be with You," and similar sayings are so well known, no one needs to explain them. (And people who are *only peripherally aware of Star Trek, Star Wars, and so forth, often think they are being really clever when they say them to me.* You get an "A" for Effort, guys, but you can stop. You don't do it right, anyway.)

Picard and Dathon at El-Adrel

So, what's the take-away? What lesson can we learn from this?

¹ *For Gold and Glory*, v2.0.1: 6 June 2016, created by Justen Brown; it's available from RPGNOW.COM. Get it, it is great!

² Grognard, from the French word meaning "grumbler." It originally referred to "an old soldier," but has come to mean someone who enjoys playing older war-games roleplaying games, or older versions of such games, when newer versions (and newer games) are available. I have been playing RPGs since about 1979, and my go-to game is usually either the First or Second Edition of Advanced Dungeons & Dragons. Games of similar style, called "Old School Gaming" or OSR, also pique my interest.

³ "Troll" or "Troll Booth" is an SCA term. The SCA is the Society for Creative Anachronism, a group that "re-enacts the Middle Ages, both the way it was and the way we'd have wanted it to be." I understand that the registration table was first called the "Toll Booth," as in "you pay the toll to pass". Slang being what it is, the term quickly changed to "Troll,"

now referring to the troll that lived under the bridge in the Billy Goats Gruff story.

⁴ In the SCA, the area that heavy-weapons combat occurs is marked off so that people won't accidentally wander into it and get whacked with a sword. Originally, the field was marked off with a red rope. SCA people are both history-minded and pun-loving, so the red rope quickly became nicknamed "Erik" (as in "Erik the Red"). The nickname soon referred to the area marked off, and as people tend to spell things any way they want to spell them, any marked-off field has become an "Eric." (or "Erik" if you'd rather.)

⁵ Jabba the Hutt, from *Star Wars: Return of the Jedi*.

⁶ From *Star Trek: The Next Generation*. If you need to know more, Google it, dude.

⁷ Ibid

⁸ https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eric_and_the_Dread_Gazebo

I don't really know. I know that we need to be as inclusive as possible. We need to bring people in on the joke. Maybe tell the story about the Dread Gazebo.⁸ Maybe explain why, when Stormtroopers fire on Red Shirts, it's funny that the Red Shirts die anyway. Maybe, just maybe, if we can explain our Geek's Cant to mundanes, they might join us in our "Wagon Train to the Stars." Hey, it's worth a shot.

Respectfully,

Commodore Tank Clark, SFMD
First Officer, USS *Regulator* NCC-2009

Communications

July though hot was a good month for us. Those who could went to the opening of the new Star Trek movie. Everyone I talked to seemed to like it. There will be a Fen Con in Sept. Mirror, Mirror month is Oct and that is also promotion month. We will be having our December meeting at the movie theater since that is the day the new Star Wars comes out. Also, don't forget we will be changing over to the new directives where we eliminate departments and have divisions. We will be taking nominations for new division chiefs in January. Hopefully, we can have a laser tag away mission in Nov or March (have people looking into that).

Liz Goulet, R.Admiral
Communications Officer, USS *Regulator*, NCC 2009

MEDICAL ALERT!! MEDICAL ALERT:

Please state the nature of the medical emergency... oh, it's YOU again.

The CMO is off working on something she calls "Real World Issues," so, once more, I will attempt to educate people on a medical-related subject.

Iron Deficiency:

You may have pumped iron at the gym, but your body pumps it continuously through the bloodstream every day. Iron is needed to make hemoglobin, a part of red blood cells that acts like a taxicab for oxygen and carbon dioxide. It picks up oxygen in the lungs, drives it through the bloodstream and drops it off in tissues like skin and muscles. Then, it picks up carbon dioxide and drives it back to the lungs where it's exhaled.

If the body doesn't absorb its needed amount of iron, it becomes iron deficient. Symptoms appear only when iron deficiency has progressed to iron deficiency anemia, a condition in which the body's iron stores are so low that not enough normal red blood cells can be made to carry oxygen efficiently. **Iron deficiency is the most common nutritional deficiency and the leading cause of anemia in the United States.**

Sources of Iron

The body absorbs two to three times more iron from animal sources than from plants. Some of the best dietary sources of iron are lean beef, turkey, chicken, lean pork, or fish. Although you absorb less of the iron in plants, every bite counts, and adding vitamin C to vegetarian sources of iron will enhance absorption. Some of the best plant sources of iron are:

- Beans, including pinto, kidney, soybeans, and lentils
- Dark green leafy vegetables like spinach
- Fortified breakfast cereals
- Enriched rice
- Whole-grain and enriched breads

How to Prevent Iron Deficiency

Eat a balanced, healthy diet that includes good sources of iron to prevent any deficiencies. Combine vegetarian sources of iron with vitamin C in the same meal. For example: a bell pepper-bean salad, spinach with lemon juice, or fortified cereal and berries.

If treatment for iron deficiency is needed, a health-care provider will access iron status and determine the exact form of treatment – which may include changes in diet, or taking supplements.

This is your friendly neighborhood Emergency Medical Hologram, reporting for

Commander Tracy "Gleek" Clark, SFMD
Chief Medical Officer, USS *Regulator*, NCC-2009

HELM

"Mr. Sulu, you may... indulge yourself."



The Captain and I are working to order Ship's Polos at a reasonable price. We're looking forward to everyone ordering them, and then we can all wear them together, and look like an organization (instead of like a small crowd).

We've talked about some future landing parties during recent Ship's Meetings. I've put them on the "Activities" page of the web site (<http://ussregulator.weebly.com/activities.html>) but I'll review them here for your convenience.

FenCon, a local convention with a literary focus, will be held at the Westin DFW hotel on the corner of Highway 114 and Esters Road in Irving, TX. It spans the weekend of 23 through 25

September. I plan to attend on that Saturday, and I hope to see many of you there.

I have tentatively set Saturday 12 November as the date for our Landing Party to **Build-A-Bear Workshop** in Grapevine Mills Mall. Wear your Polo (I'm assuming we'll have them by then), and we'll meet at 1100 hours at the store, then we'll find a nearby location to eat lunch with each other and our new buddies.

In December, *Star Wars: Rogue One* comes out on the same weekend our regular meeting is scheduled. I stopped at the Sci-Fi Factory, and they are thinking about hosting another charity/movie event – and they are thinking about the same location, the Texas Movie Bistro on Boat Club Rd in Lake Worth. Obviously, we'll be keeping in touch with them, and we'll do what we can to support them.

Other activities we've talked about: Perry has a location we may use for Role-Playing (and other) games, as well as for Trek-watching parties. We will have to work with him to determine a schedule, but I'm looking forward to rolling dice with y'all.

Meanwhile, keep your eyes on the Ship's web page (<http://ussregulator.weebly.com>) and the Ship's Facebook group, for more information and to keep up with the fun!

Releasing the parking brake!

Commodore Tank Clark, SFMD
Helmsman, USS *Regulator*, NCC-2009

BOSUN (Chief in Charge) **Flip Top Totals**

Special Note: Please put your name and what group you want your flip tops to be counted for on your bag with the tops. If you **do not** put your name on it, you won't get credit- I will.

BONUS: For those who recruit somebody whether you are an individual or family, they may assist you this year only in the flip top contest. This is to encourage you to get somebody to join the ship.

Alan Goulet, MCPO

From the Flight Deck: **OIC, VMA-333 "Phoenix Squadron"**

Take a knee, Marines.

Grab your calendar, folks, and circle Saturday 08 October.

Then, grab your GPS devices (or smartphone's GPS application), and enter in "3300 Ross Ave, Fort Worth, TX, 76161."



The 333rd Marine Strike Group, VMFA-333 "Phoenix Squadron", will gather at the Fort Worth Aviation Museum, at the above-mentioned address, at 0900 hours. We will enjoy a wonderful museum, and experience their "petting zoo" of aircraft parked around outside. (I'm hopeful that the weather will be accommodating.) Visit https://www.groupon.com/deals/fort-worth-aviation-museum?z=skip&utm_medium=afl&campaign=201506&mediaId=600&utm_source=GPN for a Groupon, to save \$4.00 on a family admission.

We will be taking photos in front of the F-4 Phantom with the USMC's VMFA-333 squadron's colors. I'm hopeful that by then we will have our Ship's Polos in, so we can wear them all together... but if not, we'll figure out some other matching outfits.

Thank you all, and Carry on!

Brigadier General Tank Clark, SFMC, SFMD
Officer-in-Charge, VMFA-333, "Phoenix Squadron"
Never Give Up, Never Surrender!

From the Deck 15 Horde: Known as the Klingon Krew

nuqneH!

First, read the Ranger's article, then come back here.

Okay, done? Good. As the Ranger Team Leader may have mentioned, the game *Starships and Spacemen* is obviously – even to the casual observer – a *Star Trek* roleplaying game with the serial numbers filed off. The time frame seems to be similar to Original Series, but could possibly be a bit earlier – probably before Pike would have taken command of *Enterprise*.



The race that fills the role of Klingons in S&S is the Zangid.

From S&S, Section 1: Introduction:

"The First Interstellar War began in 2247, soon after the Humans encountered the Zangid. The Zangid are a humanoid race that closely resembles humans. Not unlike the Mongols of human history the Zangid Empire has a philosophy of conquest. Human inexperience and Zangid aggression led to a clash of war and death that the Humans had not seen since their Third World War.

The Humans fought a losing war for three years before Earth itself was in danger. Earth would have fallen to Zangid rule had the Humans not fortuitously met the Taurans."

Zangid ships are similar in capability to Confederation ships, and have similar types: frigates, destroyers, cruisers, battle cruisers, and a variety of freighters. Zangid ships are armed with "beam banks" (phasers) only – they do not have "ion torpedoes" (photon torpedoes.) The Zangid fleet does not have dreadnaughts, but they do have Zangid Sting Carriers – a large, spherical central station with eight movable arms, each of which holds a small, spherical drone – unmanned, computer-controlled – craft that function like fighter aerospace craft.

Zangid often go into hand-to-hand combat carrying unique swords, instead of using ranged weapons.

The illustrations in the rulebook are all black-and-white... one may hope that the typical Zangid uniform does not include lavender.

For the Empire!
Klark, son of Konald

Have Phaser, Will Travel!

Once again, the monthly reminder: You should, when and as possible, be taking Ranger courses from STARFLEET Academy. You can get the lists of what you should take for each Grade (1 through 10) from the Publications page of the SFSO web site:



<https://sfisfo.wordpress.com/publications/> There's a lot of stuff to learn, and it's fun. Do it! When you complete a grade, notify me, letting me know the dates you completed each course within the grade. I'll send it up through my chain of command, and get you certified. Easy-peasy. Completing Grade Two earns you the Major Hayes ribbon.

Now, on with the game stuff...

First, a follow-up on *For Gold and Glory* (FG&G): good, solid game. We experienced only two minor issues. First, we find it worthwhile to actually purchase a hard copy of the game's book. We were using PDF readers on my laptop, an iPad, and a Windows tablet. Looking something up quickly was more difficult than it needed to be, and a printed copy would have removed that difficulty. A softcover edition in black-and-white (with a color cover!) cost less than \$11, and arrived within ten days.

The second minor issue relates to my being bad at math. FG&G uses the same "THACO" ("To-Hit Armor Class 0") combat system that AD&D used, but I chose to use the system from *Stars Without Number*, a free science-fiction RPG that uses "Old School" elements. In this system, the attacker adds the result of a d20 roll to his Base Attack Bonus, any relevant modifiers (like Strength bonus to attack with a melee weapon), and the defender's Armor Class (which starts at 10 for an unarmored target and improves by the number getting smaller, just like in AD&D and FG&G. Chain Mail, for example, is AC5, and could be modified by Dexterity, shields, and magic items.) If the result of this modified roll is 20 or greater, it's a hit; 19 or less, a miss.

To get the Base Attack Bonus (BAB), simply subtract the THACO given in the book for your class and level from 20, and write that number down on your character sheet.

Example: George the third-level fighter has a FG&G THACO of 18. $20-18=2$, so George's BAB is 2. He's very strong; his strength bonus to hit with a melee weapon is +2. He's specialized in Cutlass (a type of sword), so he gets an additional +1 to hit with it, and he owns a +2 magic cutlass. When using a cutlass in combat, George therefore would add 2 (BAB) to his other modifiers (Strength +2, Specialization Bonus +1, Magic +2: total +5) and his opponent's Armor Class (AC) – let's say a human wearing chain mail, so AC 5 – to a d20 roll. $2+5+5=12$, so $d20+12$, and any result of 20 or more is a hit. Most of this math can be done beforehand, with each weapon carried, so it's simply a matter of adding the enemy's AC to George's normal +7 with his cutlass.

The math problem that I will confess to is the simple $20-THACO=BAB$ equation. I did not prepare so diligently as to write the total attack bonuses (BAB plus modifiers) down, and a couple of times I subtracted the bad guy's AC from 20 instead of his THACO.

Regardless, *For Gold and Glory* is awesome, and well worth both the free download and buying the book. If you haven't yet done so, please point your browser to <http://drivethrurpg.com/product/156530/For-Gold--Glory>, and download the free PDF.

Now, I did get a new (to me) game published by Goblinoid Games entitled *Starships and Spacemen (S&S)*. Goblinoid Games is the publisher of other “Old School Roleplaying” (OSR) games: *Labyrinth Lord*, *Advanced Companion Labyrinth Lord*, and *Mutant Future*. *Labyrinth Lord* is strongly based on “Red Box” D&D, while *Advanced Companion* adds elements from AD&D First Edition. Honestly, the AC is kind of like how my group played AD&D back in the day: a bit of “original” D&D, a bit of “the new stuff.”



Anyway, *Starships and Spacemen* has a very similar “engine” to Old School D&D. There are races (species) and classes; each class has a specific function, as well as different primary (and secondary, and “other”) skills. For example, a Medical officer is a subclass of a Scientific Branch officer. As a Scientific Branch officer, he has a primary skill of Science, and as a Medical officer, he has a secondary skill of Technical. This gives him a better Science skill than, say, a Military Branch officer (as well as a better Science skill than an Enlisted (Scientific Branch) character) but his Technical skill is not as high as that of a Technical Branch officer.

There are three branches: Military (who wear gold uniforms), Science (who wear blue), and Technical (who wear red.) Enlisted characters have a lower Experience Point (XP) requirement to advance than officers, and Military Branch officers have a higher XP requirement than officers of the other two branches. Each branch has sub-classes: Military has Command, Security, and Fire Control; Scientific has Biology, Medical, and Sentient Life; and Technical has Communications, Navigation, and Engineering.

Officers progress through twelve levels, and Enlisted through nine. (There is, to my Navy brain, a mistake in the rank titles for enlisted crew: a fourth-level enlisted is listed as “Petty Officer First Class,” with 5th Level being Second Class and 6th Level being Third. In the Real World – and in STARFLEET, for that matter – it’s the other way around. 4th Level should be Petty Officer Third Class, 5th = Second Class, and 6th = First Class.)

There are four Skills: Combat, Contact, Science, and Technical. Primary skills are higher than Secondary, and both are higher than “Other” (If it’s not a primary, or a secondary, it’s other.) These skills improve with level, and the game mechanic calls for the player to roll the skill number or lower on a twenty-sided die (d20). The skill may be modified by ability scores, special items, situations, equipment, etc.

The races somewhat resemble standard *Star Trek* races. For example, the “Taurans” are a green-tinged, pointed-eared species with great strength, a “machine-like logical mind,” copper-based blood, psionic powers, and a nerve strike that may stun a victim. They also go into a “blood fever” every so many years, during which their ancestral aggressive impulses rise to the surface. *Pon Farr*, anyone?

Since the system is similar in many ways to other games published by Goblinoid Games, it would not be difficult to use “monsters” from *Labyrinth Lord* or *Mutant Future* as aliens – sentient or not – in this game. For that matter, it would be fairly easy to add Elves, Dwarves, or Halflings to a starship’s crew.

Equipment is issued to characters based on their level and class: a Security officer can’t get an “auto-analyser” (tricorder), a Biology officer can’t get a Skirmish Suit, and an Engineer can’t get a Medkit. The more powerful the item, the more “Units” it costs. A starting Human Ensign has two units to “spend.” A communicator is one-half unit, as is a Universal Translator. A Beam Pistol costs one unit. Equipment is returned to the ship’s locker, or to the starbase, at the end of the mission.

There’s a lot more to it, but overall, I find it simple to understand, and probably very easy to generate characters and to play.

Grab some dice, and let’s start killin’ some goblins...

Sum non Satis?

Commodore Tank Clark, SFMD

Team Leader, 33rd STARFLEET Rangers (“The Paladins”)

“Have Phaser, Will Travel”

Ship’s Services

August birthdays: Roon Marchant Aug 24, Karen Chaffin Aug 28

Renew Memberships with Fleet:

June: Cynthia Crouch

August: Katelyn Barnett, Sean & Laura Washburn

September: Roon Marchant

Upcoming Movies:

The Little Prince Aug 5

Pete’s Dragon Aug 12

Ben Hur Aug 19

Kubo and the two Strings Aug 19

Miss Perogine's Home for Peculiar Children Sept 30
Inferno Oct 28
Fantastic Beasts and Where to Find Them Nov 18
Dr. Strange Nov
Rogue One Dec.

Engineering Department

Just general maintenance going on. You know with a ship this size there is always something needing to be done or updated. Remember, if you have any issues with your replicators or illumination in your quarters, just give us a call.

Roone Machart, LTC
Chief of Engineering, *USS Regulator*, NCC 2009

SECURITY! SECURITY!!

Everything has been quiet on board. We are doing regular drills in the holodeck just in case we encounter hostile aliens.

Scott Cornatez, CDR
Security, *USS Regulator*, NCC 2009

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Meetings for the *USS Regulator* are held every month at 1500hrs at Shady Oaks BBQ at Sand Shell & Hwy 35. Usually on the third Saturday of every month. For information contact CO Capt Michael Cross

at
regulator@region3.org

or visit our web site

<http://ussregulator.weebly.com/>

Regulator Charge! Newsletter is a monthly publication produced to inform members of upcoming events with the ship, with the region, and with the fleet. As well as things of interest everyone might like to know about. Information in this publication is obtained through emails and internet sites. The *USS Regulator* is a non-profit organization affiliated with STARFLEET. Although we are Star Trek based, this club does enjoy and encourage anything that is SciFi related such as Battlestar Galatica, Stargate, Star Wars, X-Men, Superman, etc. This is an 'on line' publication for all those who have email. If requested a printed copy can be sent to you at your home address.