

# USS MATRIX NCC-72296

Vice Admiral Joseph P Hoolihan  
*Commanding Officer*  
Commander John D T Hancock  
*Executive Officer*  
Fleet Captain Matt G Haley  
*Second Officer*

## Intercom

January 2010



### From the Center Seat:

Well, it's been a while since I've done one of these, but it's a new year, and I'm gonna try to get back into the swing of things!

We are now 15 years old! Wow! It's been quite a journey from the early beginnings in 1994 to now. We've seen a number of CO's, quite a huge influx and outflux (is that a word?) of crew, and a lot of swings in the amount of participation and activity.

I hope to make 2010 one of the upswings!

In this issue I'll outline a few areas for fun in the coming year;

I want to do some book discussions. I've been reading a number of different Trek series, and will give my options of the various books. I hope to hear yours as well!

Collectibles continue to be one of my areas of interest, so I'll be reporting on those as well.

RPGs seem not to be of interest any more, nor Collaborative Fiction. I may just start writing a serialized story each week or so to see what happens! I'll start with the Asteroid RPG that we were doing, as I definitely had a plot line ready!

I want to put more emphasis on Starfleet Academy and the Matrix University so that folks can take courses and get promoted! See my article on who's taken courses already, here in this issue.

Awards! See my article on Awards in this newsletter. I want to give out the 2009 awards by the end of February, so get those nominations in!

As always, I encourage all of you to put forth ideas and areas of interest, not only for the semi-infrequent-when-we-get-around to it Newsletter, but as the idea hits you!

Let's see what FUN we can have in the coming year!

CO Joe



### Crew Totals

Starfleet Members: 20  
Non-Starfleet: 13  
Affiliate Starfleet: 10  
Total: 43



## Starfleet Academy

One of the benefits of membership in Starfleet is the ability to take courses at Starfleet Academy. The Academy has over 1000 different courses to choose from; a lot are trek trivia based, but a number are actual courses of study.

For example, the Vulcan Science Academy has courses in Math, Physics, Biology and Astronomy.

There are courses across the genre; Dr. Who, Star Gate, Star Wars, BSG, and related areas such as James Bond and other action/adventure topics.

We have a number of folks who've really outdone themselves in taking courses. Our reigning King of Courses is our Chief Science Officer, LT Eric Schulman, with 496 course completions to date! (how do you find the time, Eric???)

Others who have impressive totals are:

<i>CDR Amy L'abbe</i>	<i>227</i>
<i>CDR Arnel Carigo</i>	<i>72</i>
<i>ADM Joe Hoolihan</i>	<i>62</i>
<i>CDR John Wagner</i>	<i>31</i>
<i>FCAPT Matt Haley</i>	<i>29</i>
<i>CDR John Hancock</i>	<i>17</i>
<i>CRMNR Pam Nery</i>	<i>9</i>
<i>FCAPT Bud Cullum</i>	<i>8</i>
<i>CRMN Emily Schulman</i>	<i>5</i>

Most of these courses are available on line or via email. A few require postage or a small fee.

They are a lot of fun!

Plus, the Academy has the Boothby awards, given for every 50 courses completed. Each level has a metal or gem designation: Bronze, Silver, Gold, Latinum, Diamond, Dilithium, Titanium, Zirconium, and Platinum. It's a fun way to recognize achievement!

I encourage all SFI members to check out the Academy!

Of course, we also have our Matrix University. While we don't have as many courses or areas of study, there is enough there to keep folks entertained and informed. We have our Command College, with the three courses required for Command Staff (NCOS, OBT, CQC), but we also have a variety of other courses in Engineering, Science, Medicine, and Communications.

Our web site at [ussmatrix.org](http://ussmatrix.org) has a link to the MatrixUniversity; check it out!

Finally, completing courses gets you promoted! I won't detail the various requirements here, since they can be found in our Ship's Operations Manual, but they are rather easy to attain and fun in the process!

Feel free to contact any member of the Senior Staff if you have questions about the SFA or MU, and enjoy!



## Book Reviews

I've been doing a fair amount of Trek Reading lately, and have found my opinions vary widely amongst

what I've read.

There are a lot of books in the Next Gen era, set after the events in "Nemesis". One plot line involves Picard marrying Bev Crusher, and Bev getting pregnant!

There's also a new series called Star Trek: Titan, about Will Riker's ship. I have found the four books out so far to be rather uneven, with \*very\* alien crew members (the ship's doctor resembles a miniature Tyrannosaurus Rex).

There was a recent crossover series based on the origins of the Borg, and involving Enterprise E, Titan, The NX01 Enterprise, Voyager, and a new ship commanded by one CAPTAIN Ezri Dax! It was a three part set, and very well written, except that it destroyed a whole bunch of planets in the Federation (Risa was one of them), and left the UFP in ruins!

The follow up book to that series, called "Losing the Peace", was so depressing I quit reading it halfway!

I can't say I like how the writers have reshaped the Trek universe so far!

One Fun series is Star Trek: Vanguard, set in the TOS era. It involves a space station (named Vanguard), and a secretive ancient race called the Shedai, who control immense power and have transwarp conduits that would rival those of the Borg! The plot is how the Federation, Klingons, Romulans, and Tholians are all trying to understand the various artefacts and ruins left behind by the Shedai, and how a few of them were still left alive, in hibernation, and are awakened by the various teams probing about!

It has a rich set of characters that inhabit the Station, both Fleet and non aligned. Also, a number of starships come in and out of the picture (NCC-1701 starts the series off, of course!)

This bunch of books I can highly recommend! Very readable, fast paced, and the plots actually make sense in the Trek Universe!

One note: Pocket books was supposed to have four new novels based on the new Trek Movie, but all four have been pulled from the publication schedule, no reason given!

I'd like to encourage folks to send in their thoughts on Trek books!



## Security Division ~ Monthly Status Report

<http://sec.ussmatrix.org>

*Reporting Period:* January 2010

*Reporting Officer:* Commander Ryan Smith

### **DIVISIONAL ROSTER:**

*Chief of Security* -- Commander Ryan Smith

*Asst. Chief of Security* -- Chief Petty Officer Nestor Rodriguez

*Watch Officer* -- Crmn. Karl Killebrew

*Tactical Officer* -- Lt. (JG) Nick Gabbard

*Master-at-Arms* -- **Position Vacant**

*Intelligence Officer* -- Crmn. Eoin Kilkenny

*Training Officer* -- Position Vacant

*Away Team Operations Officer* -- **Position Vacant**

*Emergency Operations Officer* -- **Position Vacant**

*Reconnaissance Officer* -- **Position Vacant**

*Security Officers* -- Lt. (JG) Brian LaPota

## PERSONNEL DATA

*Changes to the Unit Roster:* None.

*New Division Members:* None.

*Courses Passed:* None.

### CURRENT ACTIVITIES:

*-Divisional crew audit for 2010.*

*-Working on reviews for several Gold Key comics and resin model kits.*

Commander Ryan Smith  
Chief of Security  
USS Matrix NCC-72296



## AWARDS PROGRAM

The Matrix awards program has 2 types of awards: (1) ones awarded on a yearly basis and (2) ones that are used for immediate recognition. Given that we are a virtual group that has a membership that changes more rapidly than in meeting ships, folks may not remember all the various projects going on (usually only a couple people at most are working on them).

Recommendations for each of these awards are always welcome. Contact the officer responsible for the award to submit your nomination.

AWARD	DESCRIPTION
CITATION OF MERITORIOUS SERVICE <i>** Recommendations will be taken by the CO</i>	Awarded by the Commanding Officer to crewmembers for outstanding service over an extended period, or for superior performance on a specific task.
CITATION OF COMMENDATION <i>** Recommendations will be taken by the CO</i>	Awarded by the Commanding Officer to crewmembers for instances of significant service to the crew.
DIVISION/DEPARTMENT COMMENDATION <i>** Recommendations will be taken by the CO</i>	Awarded by the Commanding Officer to recognize outstanding teamwork by a division or department.
GAMERS CITATION	Awarded by the GM throughout the year to crew members for exceptional creativity or best performance during an RPG
MASTER GAMER CITATION	Awarded by CO and GM to recognize superior gamer ability onboard USS Matrix
DEPARTMENT SERVICE AWARD	Awarded by the Department Heads to recognize the efforts by individuals and teams on projects not always seen by crew.

WEBMASTERS	Awarded any crewmember who creates or significantly enhances Matrix WebPages. These pages can include: ship, department, division or any crew related activities (personal crew pages also).
RECRUITER	Awarded to any crewmember who recruits two or more fans as members of this chapter, or recruits one fan as a member of this chapter which registers with Fleet Headquarters. (The sponsoring crewmember must submit the applicants' email address to the Commanding Officer or the Personnel Officer to be eligible for this award).
COMMUNITY SERVICE	Awarded to any crewmember who participates in Matrix service activities.
CREWMEMBER OF THE YEAR	Any Active or Affiliate member is eligible for this award. Nominations will be accepted by the Executive Officer. That Officer will then distribute e-mail ballots. All votes cast will be returned to the Personnel Officer.
OFFICER OF THE YEAR	Any Active crewmember is eligible for this award. Nominations will be accepted by the Executive Officer. That officer will then distribute email ballots. All votes cast will be returned to the Executive Officer. (The Commanding Officer is not eligible to receive this award).
DISTINGUISHED SERVICE	The Ship's highest honor its crewmembers can bestow upon a fellow crewmember. This is not an annual award, but shall be awarded by petition of a majority of the crew.

**Table 5: Awards**



# USS Matrix SCIENCE DIVISION

<http://sci.ussmatrix.org/>



## Monthly Status Report

14 December 2009

### Science Division Crew Roster and Status

Chief Science Officer	Lieutenant Eric Schulman
Assistant Chief Science Officer	position vacant
Chief Stellar Cartographer	Jim Strait (Civilian Scientist)
Chief Astrophysicist	Caroline Cox (Civilian Scientist)
Sensor Chief	Lieutenant Connie Potter
Environmental Chief	position vacant

**Science Division Assignments:** Connie Potter to Sensor Chief

**Science Division Promotions:** Eric Schulman to Lieutenant

**Science Division SFA/SFMCA Courses Completed: 1**

### ●● Chief Science Officer's Report

The 15 years since the Matrix was commissioned have seen many important scientific discoveries and events. Some of the most significant are listed below.

1995: Proof of Fermat's Last Theorem published by Andrew Wiles.

1996: Birth of the first mammal cloned from an adult cell (Dolly the sheep).

1997: Deep Blue computer won chess match against world champion Garry Kasparov.

1998: Discovery that the expansion of the Universe is accelerating published.

1999: Discovery of largest bacterium (up to 0.75 mm wide) published.

2000: First crew arrived on the International Space Station.

2001: First human genome map published.

2002: Large amounts of water ice discovered under Martian soil by Mars Odyssey orbiter.

2003: Observations from WMAP satellite showed the Universe to be 13.7 billion years old.

2004: Mars Exploration Rovers Spirit and Opportunity landed on Mars.

2005: Huygens probe landed on Saturn's moon Titan.

2006: The heaviest known element, Ununoctium (element 118), was confirmed.

2007: Water vapor was detected in the atmosphere of an extrasolar gas giant planet.

2008: The first Earth-impacting meteoroid to be detected prior to impact was found.

2009: The oldest fossil skeleton of a human ancestor was announced (4.4 million years old).



## Collectibles Corner

One interesting set of Trek Cards that recently came out was a group of cards from the Mego Museum.

The Museum is dedicated to all things Mego; action figures, play sets and what ever. They recently gave out, for FREE, sets of trading cards showing the various toys that are in the Museum. One subset of the cards depicted Original Series Action Figures. There are a total of 14 cards in the subset, and, while the Museum is no longer giving out sets, they can be purchased at card shows and on eBay.

I'm close to getting a full set, just three more to go!

This is a good example of the kind of interesting finds you can make in the Trek Collectibles world!

The one picture missing is of the Talosian. Don't know how that differs from the Keeper (the character's name in the original pilot). Also, don't know where a Neptunian figures in, but, hey, it was early on in the Trek Phenomenon, and folks made up things that seemed to fit!

The rest of the Museum set has other action figures from Comics and TV series. You can see the entire set at [www.megomuseum.com](http://www.megomuseum.com).

Keep on Trekkollecting!!





## CREW MEETUPS

Even though we are spread far and wide across the planet its nice when we are able to touch base with each other in person.

If you've had a gathering of shipmates or just happened to meet by chance, let us know and if possible include a photo so we can publish it in future editions of the intercom.



*The XO (left) and CO finally meet face-to-face at Starbucks Dulles Airport as the XO prepares for his flight back to England.....*



## A Review of Star Trek Online

Lieutenant Eric Schulman~ *Chief Science Officer*

Moments ago I finished participating in the Star Trek Online two-week open beta testing. The massively multiplayer online game allows you to be the captain of your own starship in year 2409 of the Star Trek Universe. After you create your character from one of the Federation races (or a completely new race you develop), you start as an ensign during a Borg attack that kills the senior officers on your ship, leaving you in command of the Miranda-class light cruiser. Starfleet Command is so impressed with your performance that you are promoted to lieutenant and given permanent command of the ship.

Starfleet assigns you missions depending on how experienced you are. You can do these missions in any order, or decide not to do some or all of them. There's quite a variety of missions, most of which involve space or ground combat. These include driving off Orion pirates who are attacking a freighter, rescuing scientists from a starbase being attacked by Klingons, and fighting Gorn ships that have been attacking Federation citizens. However, some missions are peaceful, including mediating labor difficulties at a Federation mining camp and scanning interesting plant life on a newly-discovered planet.



**On a Mission to Speak with the Guardian of Forever**



**Federation ships team up to defeat the Gorn**

Space combat involves managing your weapons, shields, velocity, direction, and special abilities such as evasive maneuvers or sensor scans. You start with three weapon slots and gain more as you get bigger



ships. As you perform missions, you receive rewards in the form of new starship systems and ground equipment. If you want to swap out your ship's phasers and photon torpedoes for disruptors and plasma torpedoes, you can do that as long as you've found or purchased the new equipment.

You can also upgrade your engines, shields, deflector dish, and other systems.

At the start of the game you choose your race, appearance, starting attributes, and your branch of service: tactical, engineering, or science. Your branch determines some of the skills that you can learn. Ships also come in three varieties: escorts with extra stations for tactical officers, cruisers with extra stations for engineering officers, and science ships with extra stations for science officers. Your branch doesn't limit the kind of ship you can command, and in fact I commanded all three kinds after being promoted to lieutenant commander.

You fill these stations with bridge officers, who also accompany you on away missions. These officers are assigned to you by Starfleet command or may be acquired through missions. Bridge officers have one ground skill and one space skill for each rank and must be of lower rank than you are. On the ground, they use their skills automatically, but in space you must order them to use their skills (for example, divert power to the shields or prepare a torpedo spread).

You are promoted after you have accumulated and spent enough skill points to develop your either space combat and/or or ground combat abilities. Every rank has ten levels, each of which gives you somewhat greater capabilities. Moving from one rank to the next gives you access to bigger and better ships, better equipment, and also allows you to promote your bridge officers an additional rank to make them more effective.

Many of the missions can be done by yourself, with a group of up to four friends, or with a group of up to four other people who happen to enter the system when you do. Some missions are designed specifically for large groups of people (most of these are epic space battles that require the group to defeat dozens of enemy ships). Starfleet command will give you missions based on your rank and level, most of which are concentrated in the same area of the Galaxy. As a lieutenant you'll be dealing with a lot of Orion pirates and Gorns and as a lieutenant commander you'll be dealing with a lot of Klingons and Romulans.

You can visit dozens of systems in various parts of the Galaxy, whether or not you've been assigned a mission there. Beware of deep space encounters in such areas, however, as they might be intended for much more experienced commanders. As you enter a new area, Leonard Nimoy tells you about the political situation there. You can also have one or more of your bridge officers talk with his voice and you may even encounter Spock on a mission.



Visiting Deep Space 9

Once you've been a Starfleet lieutenant for a few levels, you'll be given the opportunity to create a Klingon character in addition to your Fed character. Klingons spend almost all of their time fighting with the Federation and each other in player-vs-player (PvP) combats in space and on the ground. The Federation also has access to PvP combat, but it is only one of many activities that Federation officers can participate

in. For Klingons, PvP is the essence of what they do.



Departing Qo'noS to Conquer the Galaxy

Star Trek Online goes live on February 2 in North America and on February 5 in Europe. The game costs about \$50 plus \$15 per month (slightly less if you buy in three or six month increments). Based on how many people participated in the open beta, I expect this to be a very popular game. The company had to install new servers after the first week to keep up with the demand. The Galaxy is at war, so there aren't many diplomatic or scientific missions, but content will be added as time goes on, with additional areas and missions (presumably including a lot more non-PvP for the Klingons) and new playable races, including the Romulans.

I've played a number of Star Trek games, from Star Fleet Battles the tactical board game to Starfleet Command the starship combat computer game. Although space combat in Star Trek Online has features in common with these, the game as a whole is a much closer approximation to commanding a starship in the Star Trek universe.

