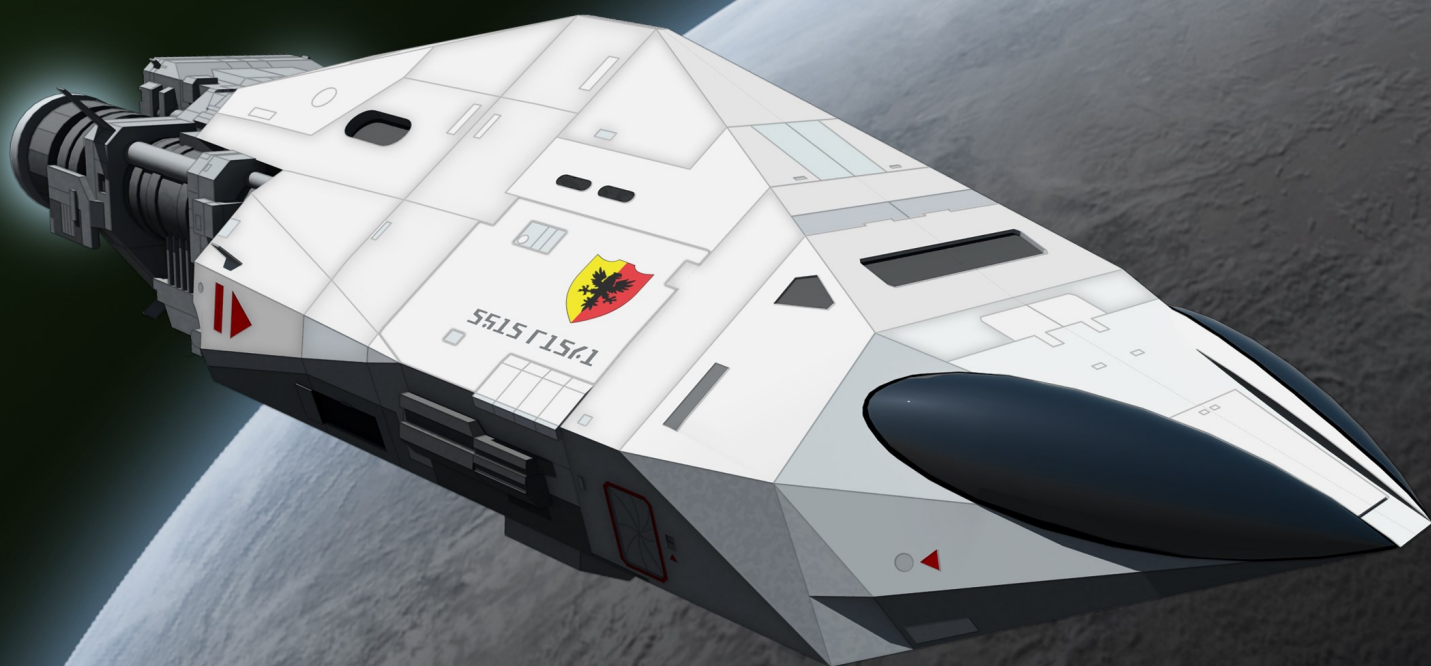




FREELANCE TRAVELLER

The Electronic Fan-Supported Traveller® Magazine and Resource



Featured Article:

Neptune Station

by Michael Tumey

Issue 066
June 2015



A Note About Production

Freelance Traveller is prepared using Microsoft Office Publisher 2010 running on a Windows 7 Ultimate x64 system. The program is reasonably easy to use, and produces good results with moderate effort; it also supports advanced typographic features such as typographic quotes and apostrophes, small caps, ligatures, swashes, and stylistic alternatives (if the advanced features are implemented in the font). Generation of the PDF files is built in to this version of Microsoft Office; no additional products are needed.

The title and heading typeface is ZapfHumanist BT, a Bitstream adaptation of Hermann Zapf's digital redesign of his 'hot lead' typeface Optima, chosen as a 'tie-back' to the title typeface of the original edition of *Traveller*. The black-and-orange of the section headings is also a tie-back to *Traveller's* origins, though we felt that the 'correct' red was too dark. The heading sizes vary from 12 to 16 points. Body text is set in Palatino Linotype, also designed by Hermann Zapf, and is set at 11 points for most body text, giving approximately the same text spacing as Times New Roman at 12 point (which was the original *Freelance Traveller* body text), but a lighter 'color'. Palatino Linotype also 'balances' better as a body text typeface to Optima as a titling typeface.

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From the Editor: *Jeff Zeitlin*

Critics' Corner: *Spica Publishing, from their website or scanned from the printed product.*

Active Measures: *Michael Brown*

The Prep Room: *Michael Barry*

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Freelance Traveller is published monthly in PDF form by the editor. The current issue is available from *Freelance Traveller's* website, <http://www.freelancetraveller.com>.

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From the Editor



Sometimes, “it just works out that way”, and this issue is one of those times. By now, most of our readers have spotted our pattern—a “normal” issue is 28 pages of content; a double issue (if we’re making up for a skipped month) is 56. Then, there’s months like this month—a single month’s issue, what would ordinarily be a “normal” issue, but somehow, we ended up with a whopping 48 pages of content, almost-but-not-quite a double issue. That’s because of this month’s featured article, a level-by-level look at an undersea research station, taking up just over half of the issue. We spotted this in one of the *Traveller* communities on Google+, and quickly came to an agreement with the creator, who is also releasing the station as a product in PDF (at much higher resolution than we have here) and virtual tabletop formats. We hope it will inspire others to work up some large projects like this for us.

This month also marks the opening of a new section of *Freelance Traveller*—The Prep Room, a home for articles that focus on what you do before you sit

down with a bunch of friends, dump out your bag of dice, and start playing. What it becomes will ultimately be up to our contributing readers, but the key to the section is “stuff you do between times to make future sessions better/smoothier/faster/more fun/more interesting”. “Between times” can also include prepping in advance of (e.g.) cons or demos.

As usual, we’re looking for more material for future issues. Material for any section is always welcome, but we’d like a good mix of articles. Sections that have lain fallow, relatively speaking, are of special interest; that includes Less Dangerous Game, The Shipyard, and Up Close and Personal; reviews of recent releases would also be very welcome. Contributions for *Traveller By the Byte* are also sought; don’t assume that it has to be in obscure languages like APL. “New” authors are always welcome, and we also encourage regularly-appearing authors to try some work out of their “normal” sections—if for no other reason than to show that *Freelance Traveller* *doesn't* grant ‘franchises’ on any particular section.



Career Book 1

Reviewed by Megan Robertson

Career Book 1. Richard Hazlewood.

Spica Publishing <http://spicapublishing.co.uk>

40pp., softcover or PDF

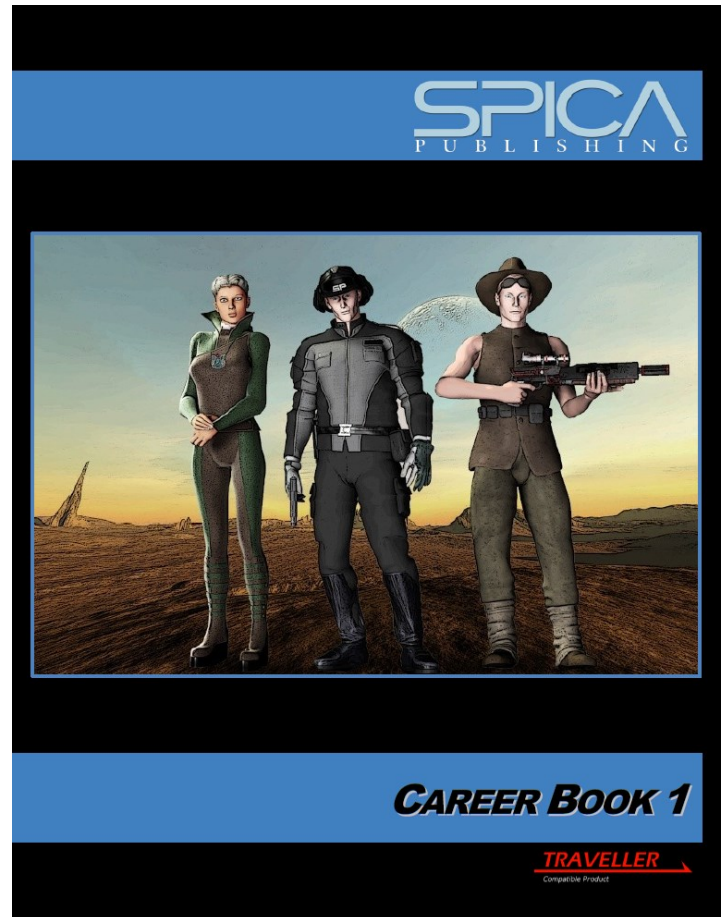
US\$12.50/UK£6.05 (softcover, Lulu)

US\$6.99/UK£4.47 (PDF, DriveThruRPG)

This review originally appeared on <http://rpg-resource.org.uk> in 2009 and is reprinted here with permission

Intended as a supplement to Mongoose's *Traveller Main Book*, this work looks at alternate options that could be available to characters following careers in the core rules and provides some new career paths. As any experienced *Traveller* player knows, the 'career' defines what his character knows and what he did in the past before the game itself began—a ready-made history even before you start thinking about the specifics of what happened to make your character the man he is today. The Mongoose ruleset in particular has taken advantage of this method of character generation by providing tables of 'Mishaps and Events' that you can roll on to provide extra detail and flavour; and here we have additional tables for the Agent, Drifter, Entertainer, Merchant, Nobility, Rogue, and Scholar careers which feature in the Mongoose rules. There are also generic Life and Unusual Event tables. The new tables are entertaining to read and have the potential to spawn plenty of backstory which will no doubt return to haunt you during the game!

Next comes eight new career paths. All are suitable for human characters, and most will suit at least some alien races as well. All the career-specific information and tables are here for you to create an Adventurer, Bounty Hunter, a member of the Clergy, a Colonist, a Corporate Citizen, a Militant Religious individual, a member of the Space Patrol or a Worker. Each has sub-paths, so your clergyman might be a missionary or a monastic, while your wage-slave Corporate Citizen may earn his way as a lawyer, accountant or administrator... while giving ideas, none tie you down too much, just providing a



framework on which you can build your character as you choose. Again all the incidents provide plenty of ideas for background for your character... the good sort of background (for the GM at least) that provides lots of material for the things from your past that pop up to make the present interesting!

The final part of the book contains a bunch of pre-generated characters, useful if you need an NPC in a hurry or even need a character and have no time to generate one. Although they have allies, enemies and such like listed, presumably from the appropriate life path tables, there's no indication of what went on, so either make it up or roll a few times to come up with a backstory for them if you need that kind of detail.

Overall it is a neat addition to the Mongoose ruleset. Back in the days of the 'little black books' I spent many an afternoon inventing new career paths, it's good to see that the appeal of trying to model just about anything that a character might have done in his past is alive and well! 🎲

The Prep Room

Scratchable Game Maps

by Michael Barry

There's something satisfying about a printed physical map, but how does the GM keep some map details secret while revealing others? Even in the far future, high technology can take an occasional rest.

This recipe is for a simple, low-tech alternative to graphical mapping packages. This simple formula for scratch-off paint allows the GM to reveal portions of the map during the game as they become available to the PCs.

Required Materials

- Plastic-covered map (either laminated or covered in contact plastic)
- Paint mixing bowl or cup

- Liquid soap (such as dishwashing detergent or hand wash soap)
- Cheap acrylic paint of the desired colour (colour selection hints below)
- Small quantity of tap water
- Broad paintbrush for paint mixing and application
- Coin (or reverse end of brush) for scratching paint

Procedure

1. Prepare the work surface first by covering with newspaper. Ensure all materials are to hand.
2. Mix the liquid soap and acrylic paint in a 1:2 mix. Mix gently to avoid generating soap bubbles. The soap ensures that the paint will not bind to the plastic surface. A little tap water will improve paint mixing and flow.



(Continued on page 4)

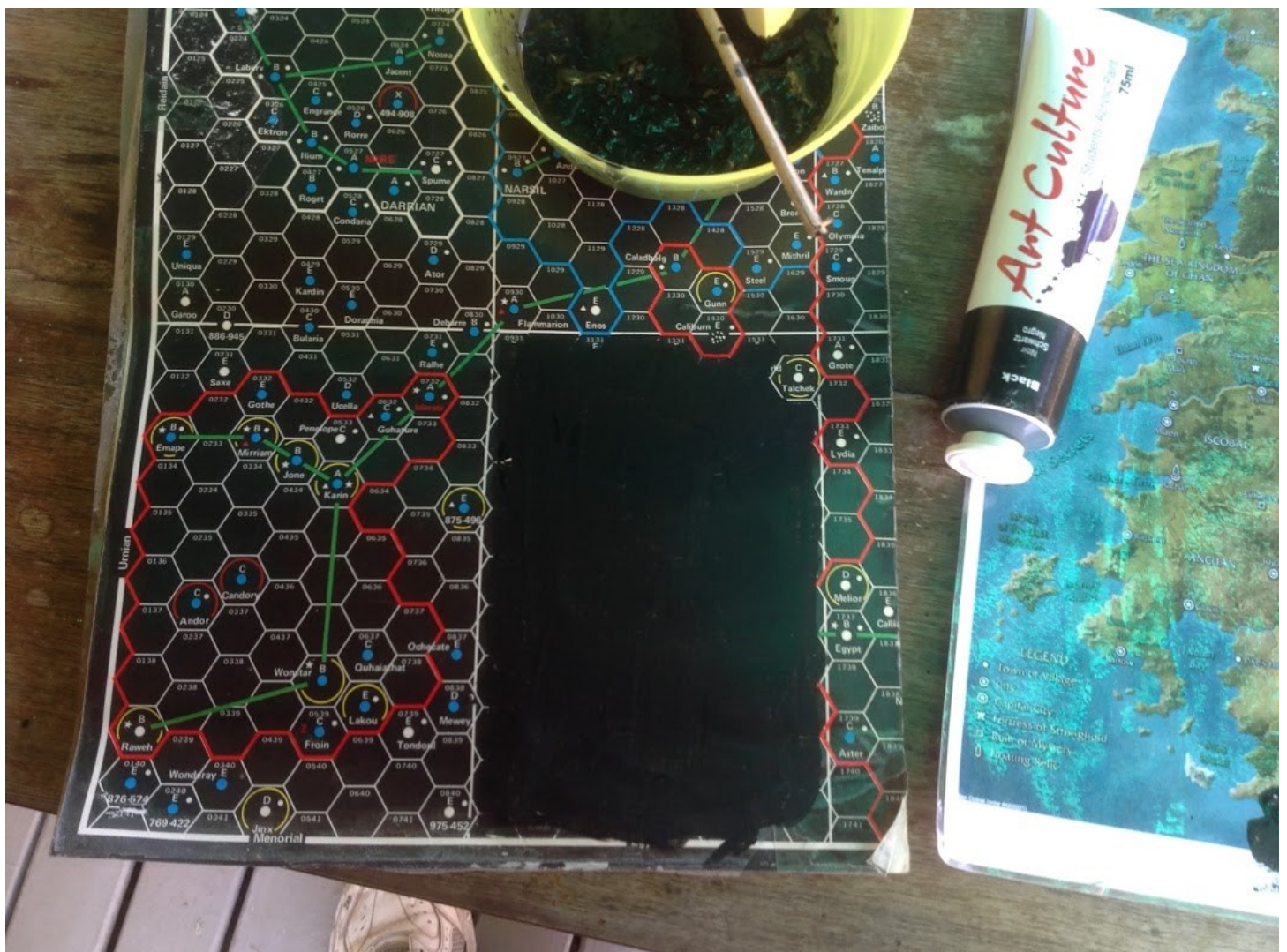
The Prep Room

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3. Cover the plastic map surface with a single thin coat of the paint mix. Use a broad paintbrush with long, even strokes.
4. Allow the map to dry. Depending on temperature, humidity and air flow, this may be as little as 5 minutes or up to 20 minutes. Longer probably means that the paint is too thick.
5. Tidy up, using a coin to scratch areas intended as visible to players from the beginning. In the example shown, Imperial worlds are known to the PCs, with jump tapes available at a once-only expense for a minimum-risk jump. Jump calculations are free but time-consuming, and must be performed for every jump, with greater risk of a mishap.

Hints and Tips

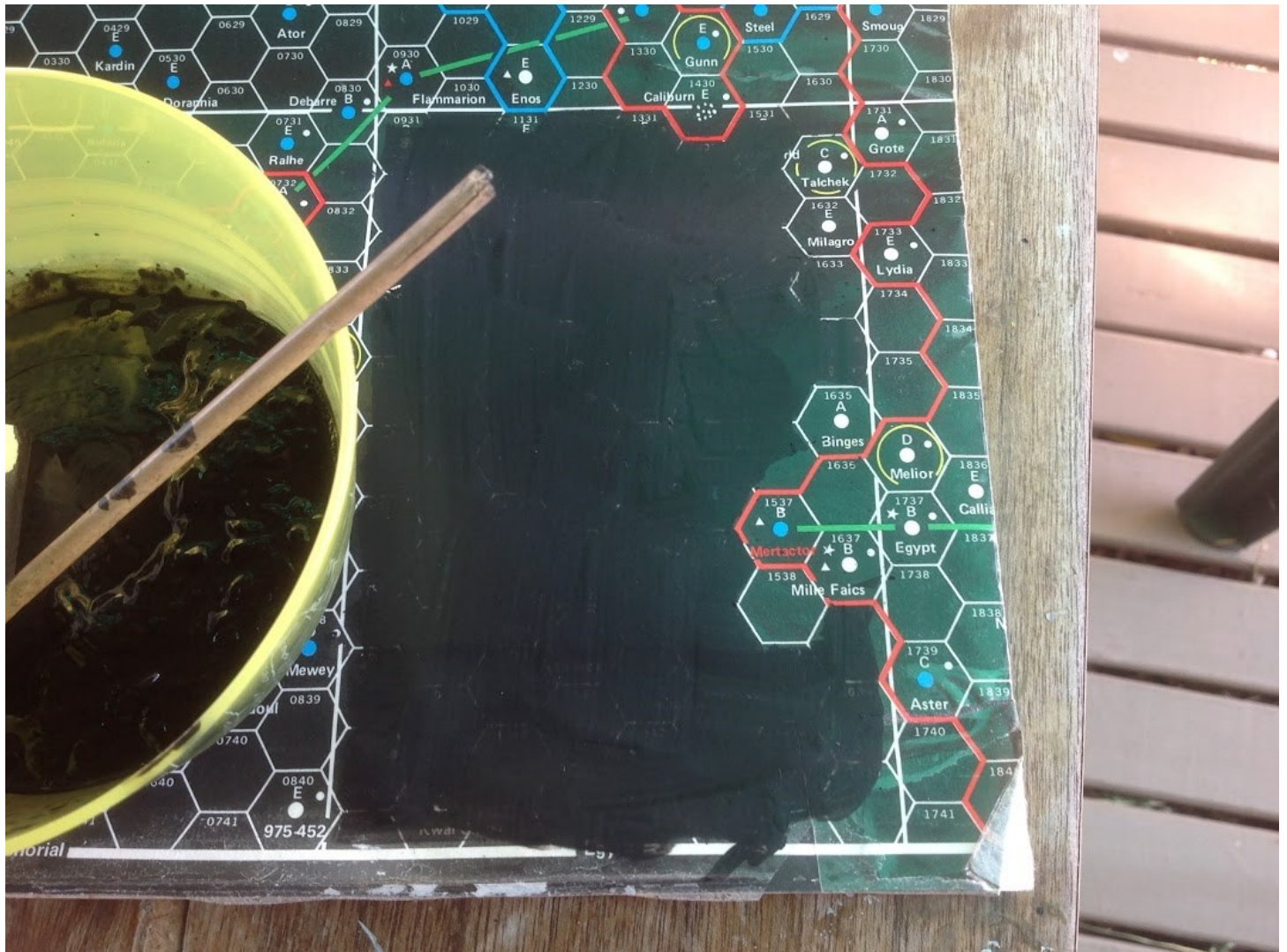
- Black paint gives the best coverage, because it has the highest pigment density. Other colours may need several coats. Red, for example, looks great but light “shines through” a single layer; with yellow paint, this problem is even more pronounced. Please note however that any colour is possible, so long as each coat is allowed to dry before another is applied.
- A cheap cosmetic sponge (available in discount stores and supermarkets) spreads paint more evenly. The illustrated example was coated in this way.
- I recommend you experiment with other techniques to find your own solution. For example, stippling (using the brush or sponge in a dabbing motion) gives a dappled pattern of paint



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The Prep Room

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which dries more rapidly, but still obscures features like writing without requiring perfect coverage.

- Consider using this technique for terrain maps, tactical maps such as deckplans and building

blueprints, or even for concealing NPC details. It would also be possible to create solo adventures, where the player reveals details as the game progresses. Explore and have fun! 🎲

Raconteurs' Rest

A Compact Model

by Andrea Vallance

Part 3

210th of 2029 (036-98): Cisvus

Special Agent Vu had decided it was time to act. He'd left his hotel room, carefully lost two of his

three minders and met with a new group of mercenaries. He made sure the last minder saw before losing her too. He headed for the shuttle to Daramm Up. All he needed to do now was wait.

210th of 2029 (036-98): The Gubashiidi Estates

My anger had subsided. I found Siish sitting glumly in the garden. "I'm sorry I called you an arse, *sheevia*."

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Raconteurs' Rest

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He looked up, still depressed "I assume by that I'm forgiven? Yes, I'm sorry too. You don't mean it about the diet do you?"

"Siish, you must have put on ten kilos since we got here; you need to lose some of that." He sighed heavily; I took pity on him. I took his hand "I'm sure we can sneak in a few treats, on the ship." He smiled. "In moderation." Another sigh "So, Siish, the Imperial Agent? What are we going to do?" Changing the subject seemed the best idea.

"I was planning on running through Kirsov's mission tonight, and if everyone's agreed, we'll be leaving tomorrow. I've already cleared a dummy flight plan, so he won't be able to follow us."

I smiled "Good," Much as I loved Daramm, I was missing space; it would be good.

I saw Isabella approaching, she looked concerned about something. Her message was to the point. "Vu's gone missing. He met with a bunch of mercs and has now slipped his tail."

Siish frowned. "That's not good."

I giggled, "You reckon, genius?" Sometimes his ability to state the obvious was outstanding.

He blushed ever so slightly. "How many?"

Isabella's look had not changed "Seven."

He decided. "Change of plans, we leave now."

210th of 2029 (036-98): Daramm Up

Agent Vu listened, satisfied. Not perfect, not by a long way, but acceptable. The L'polan he'd had watching the estate was still on the shuttle up, he'd got delayed. They seemed to be all in one place, he could hear six voices. He'd expected them to separate, engineering, landing clamps, clearing the umbilicals, they would have worked a lot faster that way. Even if it gave him more time, it meant he'd have to try and deal with them all at once. That meant activating the virus before he wanted to. Still, they were on the ship. He chuckled, Vice Admiral Siishubuu Manish. His tactical method had two basic features. He'd won the Second Battle of Da-

ramm²⁶ with it. One, force your opponent onto ground of your choosing, preferably prepared beforehand. Two, seize the initiative and hold it relentlessly. Vu had achieved the first; now it was time for the second. He turned to his two companions and indicated it was time to go.

Nobody was happy; rushing never puts people in a good mood. But here we all were, on *Raledenet's* bridge trying to prep the ship. Jane was struggling to get the fusion reactor back on line "You know, this would be much easier if I was actually in engineering, Siish."

"Probably, but separating is a bad idea. How long to get the reactor stable?"

"From standby, about another ten minutes from here, at least. Half that if I was in engineering. Rushing it from here is not good; I've got fluctuations all over the place."

He ignored the remark and turned to me. "Flight?"

"I'll have the plan ready in three, four tops."

"Good; Ariaryn?"

Ariaryn was working quietly on another console "Like Jane, this would be much faster outside. But I'll have us out of the clamps and umbilicals away in ten minutes."

"It will do." He took a breath. "And, Isabella?"

She was more than a little annoyed. "Siish, I am not a computer tech, I am a doctor. It's a transponder, making it say we're not going where we're going is meant to be difficult. It'll be done when it's done."

Siish frowned. "A rough estimate at least?"

"Ten minutes, but I'm pretty much picking a number from my head. If you wanted this done quickly, you should have let Sakuya do it."

He was sitting quietly in a corner, trying to keep out of the way. "I could do it if you'd like, captain."

Siish looked over at the boy. He spoke kindly "It's okay, you don't know our systems. And it's just Siish, not *kaptan*." I, of course, knew the real reason Siish didn't want him doing it. What's more, I'm

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Raconteurs' Rest

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pretty sure Sakuya knew them, too. It took a while for Siish to fully trust people.

Sakuya looked a little down. "Is there anything I can do?"

Siish considered carefully. "There's some cordial in the flight galley. I'd kill for one, imagine everyone would."

Sakuya smiled, took two steps and started rummaging. Siish returned to filing the 'official' flight plan. He did try to be nonchalant as he quietly added "Oh, and there's some *ceejka*²⁷ in the freezer."

It didn't work. "Siish, you're on a diet." I looked up at Sakuya. "No *ceejka*."

He had a different opinion. "Firstly, I don't need a diet. And, secondly, you said I was allowed occasional treats." He stressed the word *treats*.

I, on the other hand, stressed the word *occasionally*. "Yes, a few, occasionally. Not the second you get back to the ship. And most certainly not smothered in cream and ice cream. And that cordial, it's like twenty percent sugar."

Siish huffed and half barked, "Fine! Sakuya, make mine a black coffee. With no sugar, if that's acceptable." He glared at me. I just smiled and nodded.

Agent Vu was chuckling ever so slightly. There seemed to be something of a disagreement going on on the *Raledenet's* bridge. The *kaptan's* lover was banning him from dessert. He smiled to himself, his mind briefly wandering again. He focused and took out the ear piece. There'd be a very minor power surge when he activated the virus, just a tiny one. He ensured it would be in a tertiary system, something that wouldn't be noticed, but they'd wired the bug to that system too. It was an amateur's mistake, not one his people would have made. But it meant the bug would be fried when the virus started. He spoke quietly and quickly, "Make it quick and clean, weapons only if there's absolutely no other choice. And even then, shoot to wound, not kill." He'd

stressed this very carefully to all the L'polans, harming a child of Lady Manish didn't bear thinking about. He flicked a switch. Inside *Raledenet* there was a momentary surge of power and its security systems switched over to silent test mode. The three of them stood and dashed into the landing bay.

I heard Sakuya yelp with pain and the smash as the coffee pot shattered. I turned to look, he was clutching his hand.

"Sorry, I dropped it." His voice still small, he didn't mention the spark that had hit him.

Isabella stood and went over. "Ouch, that's going to need some spray."

She went to leave for sick bay; Siish, however, had other ideas. "Transponder, Isabella."

She shot him a look. "Hand scalded; doctor, remember. If you want the transponder, get Sakuya to do it, like you should've in the first place." She turned to Sakuya. "I assume you can do it without using that hand?" He nodded.

Siish sighed, "Okay, Sakuya, have the transponder show us going to Shirshagi." I saw a huge smile spread over his face as he sat at the console.

Agent Vu looked at his two companions as they reached the hatch. Susan was a former special forces sergeant. She was strictly by the book, followed orders and good at her job; he had no worries with her. Gami, on the other hand, was a heartless killer; he knew that. Once a member of the L'polan *Ver-mox*²⁸, he'd drifted from one morally dubious job to the next after the fall. He'd even worked for the Protectorate, at the start of the war. Obviously he'd gone too far; they'd had him in prison for four years. Not somebody to leave on his own, not when you wanted a zero body count. But he couldn't afford to be too fussy, here. He quickly checked the lock, green. He hesitated a moment; the techs had assured him it was flawless, but they'd assured him his ID was flawless, too. No time to be worrying about that; he pushed the button. The iris value slid open, he smiled and breathed again. Susan boarded first, cau-

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Raconteurs' Rest

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tiously; she indicated it was safe. Vu and Gami followed her in. Vu glanced around, clear. Time was critical now, they headed for the bridge.

Isabella reached the sick bay and retrieved her medical bag. All the basics were in there, bandages, sprays, anaesthetics, a full range of usual drugs, more than enough. She paused a second; it was Sakuya. She grabbed a handful of sedatives as well.

I'd just finished the flight plan and moved on to pre-flight checks; I could hear Jane mumbling away over on engineering; Siish was just finishing up filling the official flight plan when Sakuya spoke: "Uhhmm, is this buggy?" He sounded quiet and very uncertain.

Siish looked up. "Is what buggy?"

Still unsure. "Anti-hijack, it's not displaying a test message."

Siish checked on his console, he sounded a little frustrated. "Of course not, it's not in test mode. Just finish the transponder."

Sakuya sounded really uncomfortable. "I'm sorry, I... I already have," I thought, *that was quick, damn quick*. "but I noticed anti-hijack. It says it's live, but it's looping video feed; it only does that in test mode."

Siish's response was instant. "Weapons, now!" But all the weapons were safely stored in the arms locker.

Ariaryn was first to react, he turned and started to sprint to the door. It opened just as he got there. The man's rifle butt came up, Ariaryn blocked with one arm. His other arm swung up and round and Ariaryn elbow solidly struck him in the side of the face. The man stumbled sideways, dazed; a fourth degree adept of *eeniaq*²⁹ is quite impressive to watch. Ariaryn's arm continued through, striking again on the down stroke. Another, a woman. Ariaryn kicked. I'd seen Oloku teach that move; apparently

you needed precise placement, but it had the advantage that a lot of women didn't realise how vulnerable they were. He connected; *ouch, that had to hurt*. I felt for her a little as she doubled over in pain. Ariaryn moved to finish her off when the third, another man, placed his pistol in Ariaryn's ribs. "I'd stop if I were you." I recognised the accent; Sesheryn, Agent Vu, the sub-machine gun in his right hand carefully covering the rest of us.

Ariaryn froze a moment. I could see him considering. One breath, then he relaxed and slowly lowered his arm. The dazed man was recovering. He stood and looked at Ariaryn, then hit him with his rifle butt. Ariaryn stumbled back, nose bloody. Vu turned angrily to the man, "Gami, stand down or I'll put you down!" He indicated the rest of us. "Cover them." Vu turned back to Ariaryn. "I apologise."

Ariaryn glared back "I don't." I could see the anger seething in him.

Vu surveyed Ariaryn a moment "I understand, but I'm still sorry." He looked around the room, counting. His face changed "Everyone into the corner, slowly and sit, hands on heads."

We all moved slowly to the corner. Sakuya was terrified, I hugged him before we sat. "Don't worry balul, just sit next to me, right up to me." Vu saw and heard but remained silent. I sat next to Sakuya, my body touching him, reassuring him. Part of me chuckled; if he'd been Luriani, if I wasn't broken³⁰.

Vu turned to the woman, she was struggling to her feet. "Susan, check them for weapons. Quickly, one's missing."

Susan came over, she was still wincing, it must have hurt. She frisked us all, one by one, carefully. There was no need, none of us were armed. Vu's face was concerned. "One's missing; go and secure the arms locker, then find her and bring her here." He turned to Gami. "If you shoot her, I will kill you; do you understand?" Even I could tell he was deadly serious. Gami did not look happy.

The pair departed while we sat, hands on head. I could see Ariaryn wasn't the only one seething, Siish

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Raconteurs' Rest

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almost hissed at Vu, "You won't get away with this."

Vu smiled at Siish "It would seem, *kaptan*, I already have."

Isabella had almost reached the bridge; she could see the backs of two men. She didn't know who they were, but she could guess. She heard one telling somebody to find her. Isabella looked around; a fresher; she hid and listened. She heard footsteps, two sets, passing. She waited and left, looking around for a weapon; a fire extinguisher, that would do. She moved carefully through the ship, heading for the arms locker. She knew that was where they'd go, but she wanted something a little more deadly.

She paused at the corner and peered carefully around it. They were there, working on cracking the lock code. She moved slowly, silently behind them. A man and woman. She swung the extinguisher with all her might and connected with the back of the woman's head. The crunch was sickening. The woman fell forward heavily. The man turned. Isabella gasped; she knew this man. A malicious grin spread over his face, his gun trained straight at her. "Still not co-operating, I see." Terror gripped Isabella for an instant, then anger. An anger she'd not felt for a long time. Without thinking she swung the extinguisher upwards. There was a lot of anger behind that swing. It caught Gami by surprise. Isabella was no longer the broken pliant subject he remembered from Sesh Liryn; she was a person again and that person was angry. The extinguisher struck the side of his head. He groaned and stumbled forwards. Isabella brought the extinguisher down on the back of his skull with all the force she could muster. He fell to floor and lay motionless, a pool of blood spreading around his head.

I sat powerless, longing wanting to something, anything. An idea; I could see the comms panel,

maybe, open a line, somebody might hear. I guess I was kind of reaching, but I just couldn't sit there. I very carefully undid my watch buckle. I kept my eyes on Vu, he said nothing, did nothing. Slowly I let the strap fall lose. Vu still did nothing. I let the watch fall into my right hand. I smiled, right handed, he'd be watching the left. I judged the distance. Vu spoke, "Corig *Wa*, if you'd be so kind as to gently toss your watch to me. I'm sure your *kaptan* would be rather upset if his *eshal* were to be hurt."

"I'm not his *eshal*, I'm his *nuntarri*." I hissed it at him.

Vu looked at Siish, he just glared. "*Nuntarri*? As in the holodramas?"

This really was too much, him too? "Yes, *nuntarri*," I felt like screaming. "*Nuntarri, nuntarri, nuntarri!*"

He actually sounded interested rather than amused. "You know, some of the Sesheryn worlds still have *nuntarri*. Not like in the First Protectorate though. More a discreet arrangement. No hair or dresses and about as many men as women. Though some do dabble in politics." He was talking rather enthusiastically.

"Really?" I drew out the word, filling it with as much disdain as I could.

"Oh yes. So you're reviving the tradition?"

"Yes."

"Well, Corig *Nuntarri*, your watch please."

Isabella stood panting. She looked at the man. The woman was groaning, she knelt and reached in her bag. Anaesthetic; she jabbed the needle into the woman's neck as she started to move. She squeezed the syringe. The woman looked at her, then fell into unconsciousness. She moved to the man, felt his neck. No pulse. She sat back heavily. She'd seen a lot of death. She was a doctor, she'd been at Rurur, she'd been on the ground during First Daramm³¹, she even tried to bring about her own once. But she'd never killed anyone before. She'd hoped she'd feel guilt or remorse; she didn't. She'd feared she'd

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Raconteurs' Rest

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feel elation or even satisfaction; she didn't feel that either. She just felt a little sad. It concerned her.

Isabella stood and opened the arms locker. She took her case and opened it. Ariaryn always insisted on stowing weapons safely. He was almost obsessed by it. Every lesson with him started with a safety lecture. Her guns were unloaded. She took her p5 and loaded it. A problem, her outfit wasn't exactly designed to carry firearms. She shoved the pistol the only place she could think of. The c5, she took a magazine from the locker. It was loaded. She pushed it home then turned to the gun. The selector, fully down. Four settings marked S, 1, B and F. Ariaryn had not got to teaching her on it yet, he had concerns. She chuckled. She considered a moment, should be simple. She pushed the selector fully up and set off for the bridge.

Isabella could see the door to the bridge, she could hear Agent Vu's voice. She noticed her heart beating just a little faster. She paused a moment to flick back her hair and straighten her dress. She told herself she was just regaining her composure. She took a breath and moved towards the door, smiling.

Notes

Notes 1-25 appeared with earlier parts of this story.

26. 252nd of 2027: A large raiding force of Imperial battlecruisers from the Ley sector fleet attempted to strike directly at the Protectorate's capital (recreating on the success of an earlier much smaller raid). Vice Admiral Manish forced the

attackers deep into Daramm's gravity well, trapping them between his liners and the ground based defences.

27. The intelligence service of the L'polan Empire, noted for its ruthlessness and sometimes brutal methods. Many former members had to flee from the Imperium's wrath after the fall of the Empire and found employment as mercenaries.
28. A frozen desert high in sugars and fats.
29. A traditional Luriani form of unarmed combat.
30. The Luriani are noted as an extremely tactile culture with a very small personal body space. Such an action by a trusted person would be seen as reassuring. However it is also extremely intimate, even for the tactile Luriani.
31. 100th of 2027: Commodore Rebecca Bat Elam's raid on Daramm is considered one of the most daring Imperial actions of the Luriani War and one of the few successes of the Ley Fleet. She managed to take her destroyer flotilla deep into Protectorate territory undetected and strike at the capital itself. The raid caught the defenders unprepared and she was able to bombard the surface for almost fifteen minutes challenged only by surface based fire. Bet Elam's flag, the light cruiser *Al-Hassan*, was crippled covering the escape and she would spend the rest of the war in captivity. The raid caused little damage to the Protectorate's industrial or military capacity, but resulted in over 20,000 civilian casualties. The First Battle of Daramm was a much needed boost to the morale of the Ley Fleet and a blow to the Protectorate's prestige. ✪

Active Measures

The Mote Perspective

by Michael Brown

While supporting a mineralogical survey team, the adventurers contend with hostile primitives and their mysterious "god."

The Mote Perspective is designed for 5-7 Classic *Traveller* characters of varied career backgrounds. The group may or may not have worked together before the adventure. No special skills are required for the adventure, although Prospecting and Recon skills are useful. A starship is required.

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Active Measures

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Pre-Adventure Preparation

The referee should select or create the following items:

- An anomalous, extra-Imperial world with Starport type X, Diameter 1-2, Atmosphere 5-6, and Tech Level 0; referred to in the text as Mote. It may be interdicted; if so, the referee must decide who placed the interdiction, how it's enforced, and the consequences of violating it.
- A primitive native race (may be a Minor Human race)
- A sketch map of a lush valley with a large, tablet-shaped rock formation overlooking it roughly midway along its length
- (Optional) An animal encounter table (per Book 3) for Mote

Prologue

Mote is a small, dense world located beyond the Imperial border, between several pocket empires and client states. It's an unusual planet in that despite its small size it has features characteristic of much larger worlds: a standard atmosphere, near 1g gravity, a moderate climate, abundant wildlife; and a population of a primitive sentient species bound by loose tribal ties and animistic religions. When it was discovered, Mote was found to be of little interest. Whether due to malfunctioning sensors or sheer incompetence, scans indicated little in the way of exploitable resources, and trade with the somewhat xenophobic natives wasn't seriously considered. The little planet was subsequently classified nonessential and left alone by mutual agreement between the surrounding states.

Until now.

Recent deep scans refuted the initial surveys. The new scans indicated an abundance of useful minerals, especially lanthanum. The probe's originators tried to keep the findings quiet, but word got out anyway. Suddenly Mote is one of the most inter-

esting planets in the galaxy. Several expeditions are currently being mounted to determine mining and exporting viability. An interstate accord was set up to ensure proper treatment of the natives, but no one seriously expects that to be honored once companies start striking it rich.

Act I: A Little Meeting

The PCs are asked to meet with representatives of Navari Extractions, a large mining corporation based on one of the worlds closest to Mote. The team is offered a contract to ferry a cargo of supplies to one of the company's mineralogical survey teams. Payment is standard cargo rates for 10 tons of cargo per jump to Mote plus a bonus of Cr25,000. PCs with Broker skill may try and negotiate a higher payment.

As they are leaving, an aide—a strikingly beautiful young woman—approaches the group discreetly. Gerde Staussen confides to them that the rest of the delegation didn't tell them the whole story. The survey team hasn't been heard from in several months, even accounting for communication lag times and the nature of their work. Her brother Kristof is a member of the expedition and she'd like to know of his fate; she offers the group an additional Cr3,500 for such word.

If the team goes back to the delegation with the knowledge that they weren't completely up front, the head representative allays their concerns, informing them that Mote is out-of-the-way, and the survey team was intended to operate independently for extended periods. If they persist, he offers them an additional Cr25,000.

This time, as they are leaving, any PCs with the ability to do so (enhanced technology, Clairaudience, etc.) will overhear a tense but quiet conversation between the representatives' leader and one of his colleagues. The discussion centers on why the adventurers aren't simply told the truth: that the survey team might be in trouble and need rescuing. The leader's reply is that the survey team's last report indicated that they had found something of val-

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ue, but they don't want any other company to get wind of it.

Act II: A Little Misunderstanding

Navari supplies the PCs with what data it has on Mote, consisting of the information found in the Prologue above, and files on the survey team. They aren't important to the adventure, but the referee may create them, if (s)he feels otherwise.

The surveyors were originally deployed in an area of rough terrain surrounding a lush valley with a distinctive feature: a large, tablet-shaped rock formation rising overhead about midway. Several tribal villages dot the area; curiously, none are within the valley itself.

Mote has no provision whatsoever for starship landings; the team must find clear space to safely put down. The nearest such area is 3D kilometers from the valley, making a journey necessary. When the group gets within a kilometer of the valley, throw 8+ per 15 minutes to encounter 4D+2 native Motans (see NPCs below.) If the number encountered is less than 15, this is a hunting party armed only with crude spears and knives; otherwise it's a war party equipped with spears, clubs and hide armor giving them the equivalent of Jack. The locals don't fear the visitors; in fact, they are somewhat aggressive toward them. Perceptive PCs notice that the natives seem determined to keep them away from the valley.

The heroes will be taken to the nearest Motan village; how they get there depends on how they treat the locals. If they return the hostility, the Motans will do their best to subdue the travelers and take them in as prisoners. If the heroes refrain from harming the Motans, instead trying to communicate with them, they will be invited guests.

Of course, neither group speaks the other's language. If the PCs try anyway, they must throw on the following task:

To communicate with the Motans:

FORMIDABLE; INT, Liaison; 5 minutes

REFEREE: A throw of "2" indicates a misunderstanding; make an immediate throw on the Reaction table (Book 3) at -4. Success indicates that the heroes can communicate simple ideas (e.g.: "We are friends," "We have food.")

In either case, they are taken before the tribal chief, who is accompanied by an elaborately-garbed native (apparently the tribe's shaman; he's carrying a crystalline rod clearly not of local manufacture). If the travelers are prisoners, they are stripped of their equipment and bound to poles stuck firmly into the ground. When the chief finally deigns to speak with them, the resulting meeting is more like an interrogation. If the heroes are guests, the chief grants them an immediate audience and things take a much friendlier turn.

As they parley with the chief, any ex-military adventurers or those with Liaison skill notice the warriors' body language indicates most of them are more deferential to the shaman than the chief. The shaman stays silent throughout the encounter with the chief, but carries an unmistakable air of authority behind the throne.

Through broken communication, the chief relates that the village met strangers such as the adventurers in a local timeframe corresponding to several months prior. The strangers were instructed not to go into the valley. The visitors left not long afterward; the chief doesn't know where they went, but if they went into the valley, they must die. If asked why, the chief simply informs them that the valley belongs to their god, who will be angry at the intrusion.

Act III: A Little Difficulty

As the PCs have arrived close to the Motans' rest period, the chief declares the audience over. If the PCs are guests, a tent is prepared for them; otherwise they are left tied to the stakes.

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Sometime during the rest period, a disheveled offworlder makes discreet contact with them. If the PCs are prisoners, he attempts to quietly free them from the stakes if they haven't already freed themselves (7+; failure alerts 1D Motans, who attack while raising the alarm) and lead them to safety (8+; failure as above.) If they are guests, he sneaks into their tent.

The PCs new acquaintance introduces himself as Kristof Staussen, a member of the Navari survey team (and Gerde's missing brother.) He saw them encounter the Motans and had been waiting for an opportunity to speak with them. He is—as far as he knows—the last survivor of the Navari survey team. On the orders of the expedition leader, the surveyors entered the valley, breaking local taboo and forever poisoning relations with the natives. The portion of their study was complete and they were ready to try and leave the valley (sneaking past Motans sworn to kill them) when they disappeared. Staussen was away at the time, and returned to camp to find his colleagues gone, with no hint of what had happened to them. He's been surviving as best he could on his own ever since. He knew leaving the valley was suicide without help. Given that the locals are now mostly hostile to offworlders; the PCs apparently had the good luck to encounter a relatively-friendly tribe.

While Staussen is with the group, the Motans discover them. Finding the strangers with a target for murder now makes them enemies as well; the natives attack in an effort to kill them all. Staussen instructs the travelers to make for the valley, where the Motans are unwilling to follow.

Unfortunately, the tribal shaman feels personally affronted to the point where he feels breaking the taboo is justified. Hastily assembling a war party (see above) outnumbering the PCs 3:1, he pursues them into the valley (an indicator that he's been here before!) One thing in the travelers' favor is the Motans' terror of breaking taboo, even under orders. It affects their morale, and as a result it's all the

shaman can do to keep them organized. If the PCs at any time engage the natives, they will break and run on a throw of 7+. The shaman's presence gives a DM of -2, but he must actively work to keep his men from being routed.

A tense game of cat-and-mouse now ensues as the travelers try to shake their pursuers and the Motans try to catch and kill the PCs. To quickly and simply administer the chase, the referee may use the following abstract method:

The referee should give the PCs' group 5 "chase points," which may be defined as increments of any value—distance, time, etc. Every fifteen minutes, pursuers and pursued alike throws 2D; the higher result wins. If the PCs win the throw, they add 1 to their chase points; if the Motans win, the PCs subtract 1. Throws of "2" or "12" subtracts or adds 2 chase points, respectively. The chase ends when the PCs reach 10 points (escape), or 0 chase points (the Motans caught up to them.) The Motans attack immediately if they catch up. Naturally, the heroes may choose to stand and fight at any time.

While the groups are in the valley, the referee should also make secret throws every fifteen minutes. On a result of "12," a new combatant appears: a crystalline column (see description below; observant PCs note that the object looks like a larger version of the shaman's rod) erupts from the ground. Immediately upon appearance, it fires a beam at any targets in the area in the following order of choice: any Motans, any allied NPCs, Staussen, the closest PC—appearing to disintegrate them. If it achieves surprise, see the Surprise rules (Book 1). Any Motans still in the area immediately flee in terror, chanting as they run. Apparently the entity is the "god" that strikes terror in their hearts.

The shaman, however, checks morale as above. If he stands, he may accidentally seize control of the object on 11+. If so, the column stops in place, apparently waiting for orders. It takes the shaman INT/5 combat rounds to realize what is happening and attempt direct control. The team has that long to act. See below for the rod's abilities.

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Active Measures

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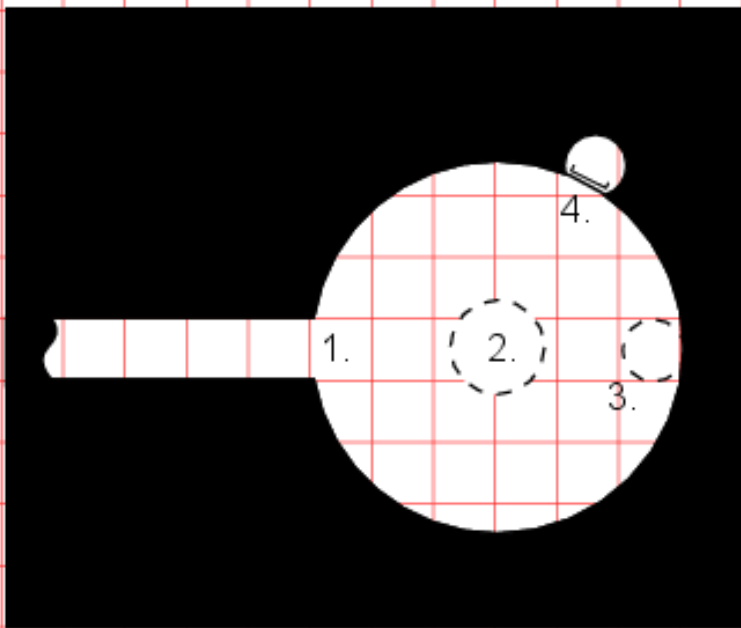
Unless controlled, the pillar disappears in the same manner in which it appeared; after zapping 1D-3 individuals; or upon being attacked,
Act IV: A Little Knowledge


After the attack by the strange device, they may investigate what happened to their comrades. Although they appeared to have been disintegrated, there are no traces or indicators of such. In the patch of ground where the machine came from, they find a concealed iris valve 1.5 meters in diameter. There are no obvious controls. They may force it open (per the rules in *Supplement 7: Traders and Gunboats*), or if

they seized the shaman's rod, whoever has it can open the valve by concentrating on it for one combat round, then making a throw of their INT or lower. If the wielder is a telepath, the attempt is automatic.


The iris valve opens into a vertical shaft with ladder rungs set into the wall, descending ten meters. Below, a narrow corridor 5.5 meters high and 1.5 meters across (obviously designed for the Machine) stretches into the distance. Neither shaft nor corridor is lighted.

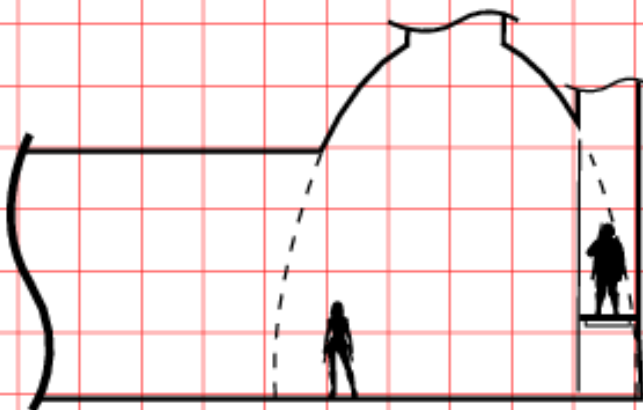
Assuming the shaman hasn't run away or otherwise been dealt with, he follows the group after a few minutes if they left the iris valve open. If he encounters the party again, he is no longer hostile, and



 Maintenance Hatch


1.5 meters


Typical Humans



1. Chamber Entrance
2. Ceiling aperture: This shaft is obviously for the Artifact. Presumably it leaves and returns by the same egress.
3. Lift shaft: This rises into the Main Base at point 1 (see below.) It operates automatically.
4. Maintenance shaft: Ladder rungs are set into the far wall of this tube.

Active Measures

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in fact seems to be increasingly awestruck at his surroundings.

The entire valley is crisscrossed with such tunnels. How complex the system is depends on the referee, who can make them as simple (a grid, perhaps) or as complex (a maze) as (s)he likes. Shafts to the surface appear at irregular intervals. It might occur to the heroes to map the warrens using their equipment. The tunnels are shielded, however, making this more difficult (and explaining why the system didn't appear on sensor sweeps of the planet):

To obtain sensor scans of the Artifact tunnels:

FORMIDABLE; Electronics, INT; 30 minutes.

REFEREE: Success maps a square kilometer of tunnels, including egress points for the Machine. Multiple attempts allowed.

The referee should determine the chance that the group gets lost while exploring the channels. Of course, mapping them eliminates this.

Eventually, the party arrives where the myriad passageways converge: a large, ovoid room below the giant rock overlooking the valley. Refer to the Base Entrance floorplan.

The Hidden Base: 50 meters above is a hidden base. Built of the same materials as the underground tunnels, it's also shielded from scans, in addition to being deep within solid granite.

All corridors in the installation measure 5.5m×5m and are lighted from above. The walls appear to be made of black glass, behind which lights constantly flicker, shift, and change color. PCs with Computer skill recognize this as a visual representation of high-magnitude quantum computations taking place.

If the shaman is with the team, he's in a state of profound awe. Recall that he's a primitive viewing a precursor installation for the first time. As far as he's concerned, he's a (possibly unwelcome) visitor to the home of his gods, a realm far beyond his limited comprehension. The shock to his psyche is profound. Throw his INT or less; if he fails, his mind

snaps and he goes catatonic. Otherwise, he meekly accompanies the adventurers anywhere they go in the complex.

The referee should refer to the base map (overleaf) and the key below:

1. Artifact "Garage"
2. Control Stations
3. Reintegration Tubes (See below)

Artifact "Garage": This chamber is similar to the one below, except here there are openings at all points of the clock. PCs standing in one of them can see down very long corridors into an apparently large complex. The walls are covered with data umbilicals, automated waldoes, and other equipment which any PC with Electronics (or Robotics) skill recognizes as advanced robot service and repair equipment; apparently for the Machine. The device itself is present on a 6+, but it ignores the group unless they act in a violent fashion. If the group gains control of the garage via the control stations (below), they can order it to repair any damaged electronic devices they may have, at the equivalent of Electronics-5 skill.

The Control Stations: These rooms duplicate one another and resemble a starship's bridge; indeed, they are the control centers for the complex. All base functions can be monitored and directed from these twin rooms. The controls within are labeled in an unknown language, but the team can learn their purposes through experimentation and deduction:

To determine a control function:

(VARIOUS); EDU, Computer or Electronics; 1 minute (times indicated factor)

REFEREE: The degree of difficulty for the task depends on what the group is investigating. Some suggestions:

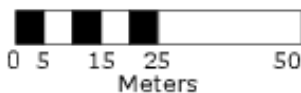
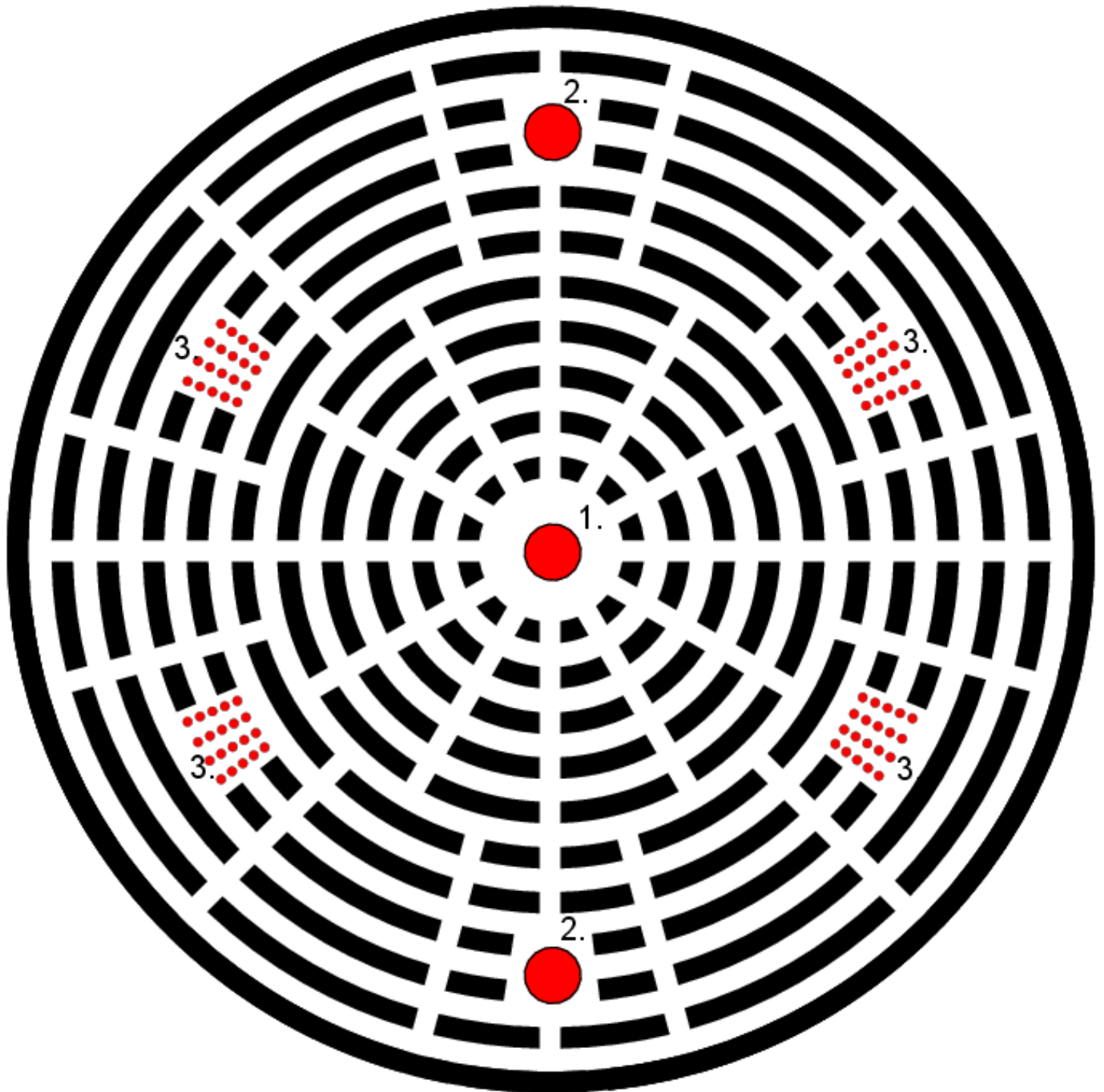
EASY: Control light level in a portion of the complex; monitor power levels; lock out the lift shaft; access maps of the base (×1)

ROUTINE: Control light level in the entire complex; monitor Artifact's movements; control lift shaft; access external viewers (×5)

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DIFFICULT: Control power levels; access environmental controls; access quantum sub-routines (×10)

FORMIDABLE: Control Artifact's movements; access basic files (including its pur-

pose and mission, logs and capture files (see below); access a base directory (×15)

IMPOSSIBLE: Retrieve and revivify captures (see below); access the self-destruct mechanism; access the operating system (×20)

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Apply the multiplication factors in parentheses to the time required for the task. PCs may combine capabilities; each helper contributes 1/5 of their EDU or 1/2 of their skill level (rounded down)

One set of displays shows a very high level of activity. PCs with Computer skill eventually connects the displays with the quantum computations going on behind the walls. If the group gained access to the quantum subroutines (above), they can determine a clear correlation between the computations and DNA mapping.

This information should give them the last piece of the puzzle (if they haven't already accessed the base logs): the entire complex acts as a gigantic digital storage unit. Indeed, the base map resembles a huge computer disk drive. Exploring the many files shows holographic representations of thousands of native life forms, sapient and otherwise; as well as the Navari survey team (identified by Staussen, if he is with the party) and a few other offworlders.

Although its purpose is lost to history, its function is clear: storage of life forms. The Machine (which the Motans mistook for a god) digitizes creatures (using "hyperadvanced" technology) and uploads the resulting file into the colossal computer/base. Once uploaded, the creatures can be held indefinitely. Retrieval is possible by calling up the proper file in the base directory. The Machine then copies the file to the Reintegration Tubes (3). The captures are resurrected through a combination of "hyperadvanced" technology and a protoplasmic "soup" stored in large tanks below the floor. The base can reintegrate up to 80 creatures at a time, although this puts a strain on its power plant.

The referee should decide whether the base and its roving Machine are of Ancient (Droyne) manufacture, or a bleeding-edge creation of some lesser race.

Reintegration Tubes: It should occur to the PCs that their presumably-disintegrated allies are just

disembodied, and can be restored. The process occurs as above, but unfortunately isn't perfect; some unavoidable loss occurs. Each adventurer or ally that is reintegrated should throw vs. Aging (Book 1) as though (s)he had just completed their 12th term of service, with the stated consequences of failure.

The only control that doesn't have a duplicate is the self-destruct. These are set apart from the other controls. To activate it, the control in both stations must be activated simultaneously. Nothing happens otherwise. Once the self-destruct has been activated, a plainly-understood holographic countdown timer appears along with an alert klaxon. It's similar enough to the self-destruct sequence aboard a starship that the PCs can't mistake it for something else. It also can't be stopped. In fifteen minutes, the base and the rock surrounding it (!) is obliterated by huge explosions.

Act V: A Little Getaway

Assuming the travelers didn't trigger the self-destruct, they must now decide what to do with the knowledge of a precursor base. Reporting the find to the Imperium is a very lucrative option, but the empire would feel it must annex and interdict the planet. To say that the governments surrounding Mote would disagree would be an understatement. Ironically, any of those states would undoubtedly do the same thing.

Altruistic PCs might try and resurrect all of the captures in the files. While this is possible, restoring and releasing the creatures would take a very long time, and unless they shut the Computer down, the entire process would simply start all over again.

If the shaman accompanied the PCs into the base and survived, he returns to his village a god among men. The things he's seen and the knowledge he's gained allows him to easily gain control of his tribe, and perhaps unite with other tribes in the area. Add 1 to his INT and EDU. He also intercedes on behalf of the strangers, allowing them to leave peacefully.

Then there's the matter of the Navari team. They must be returned to the company. But the referee must decide whether they'd be willing to keep quiet

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Active Measures

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about their ordeal, and determine the flow of subsequent events.

NPCs

Kristof Staussen 577987 Age 34

4 terms Scientist

Computer-2; Jack-O-T-2

The Motans

The Motans are not detailed here to give the referee maximum flexibility in their creation. Brawling, Hunting (*Supplement 4: Citizens of the Imperium*), Survival, and melee weapon skills are common among them.

Motan Tribal Shaman

The shaman's stats and skills should be determined by the referee based on the above. His skills are Dagger-1 and Survival-1 at a minimum. His possession of the crystal rod makes him the power behind his tribe's throne. He has no idea how much power is actually at his command.


The Crystalline Rod

The shaman found this item on one of his secret trips into the valley. Creator only knows how it got

there. The object measures 33cm×7cm and apparently made of the same material as the Machine (see below.) While grasped, the wielder can control the Machine (directing its movements and designating its targets, for example), has limited communication with the central complex, and can find either by following a homing signal. The shaman hasn't yet discovered these abilities, although he might stumble onto them during his confrontation with the PCs (see above.) Tech Level unknown; Cr N/A; Weighs 0.5 kg.

The Motan "God"

The "god" is actually a sophisticated roving robot programmed to digitize life forms. Its base is the hidden central complex within the tablet-shaped rock (see above.) It appears as a crystal cylinder, 5m×1m with a glowing band near its top from where the digitizing beam emanates. It travels using grav propulsion and has limited self-repair capability (regeneration) up to 10% of its hit points. More extensive damage makes it return to its "garage" for repairs.

	Weight	Hits	Armor	Wounds/Weaps
Crystalline Robot	5800 kg	1000/0	as Cbt Armor	Special 

Multimedia Gallery

Neptune Station: Undersea Research Facility, University and Community

created by Michael Tumey

Station Overview

Neptune Station is an undersea science station located in 480 feet of water on a seamount. As a multinational government and commercial venture some compromise exists even in its architecture. Some participants argued for a domed community, while others, particularly those with undersea mining investments desired stacked modules placed in pits excavated from the seamount itself, thus the research station community is a mix of those two de-

signs. The station serves as post-graduate schools in oceanography and marine biology for major universities from each member state involved at the station project (18 are nation states and 34 are multinational corporations).

The station houses a permanent population just over 500, of which nearly 400 are students attending the university. The remainder includes the university staff, research station scientists, hydroponics workers, security officers, physicians and health care workers, moon pool maintenance crew, and the managers and employees of the restaurant and shops operating within the main habitat dome, as well as cleaning, engineering and warehouse staff.

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Multimedia Gallery

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Each dome is framed in titanium alloy in a proprietary, non-geodesic design holding a composite glass that withstands great external pressures. Beneath the large dome and the two smaller domes connected to the southwest sit atop disc shaped modular levels that stack into excavated round pits cut into the seamount below. The two smaller domes connected to the southward tube have no levels beneath.

Main Habitat Dome

On the full map that shows the entire station and surrounding undersea terrain the largest of the domed structures houses the community and habitat levels for the entire station. Within the main habitat dome are two levels, an upstairs serving as the station university, with the downstairs as the main community level. Moving top to bottom, left to right:

Community Level

The habitat dining room occupies the northernmost area of the main habitat dome, with a kitchen behind a long counter just to its south. As the station's only food service facility, a full breakfast, lunch and supper menu is provided, serving the entire station population. To make the station more amenable public restrooms exist throughout, with the first of these west of the kitchen and east of the stairway to the second floor (University level), which lies opposite the kitchen to the east.

The 120 Fathoms Lounge lies south of the kitchen on the west, to provide alcohol and entertainment in the evening hours, closing at midnight.

Keeping to the west, south of the lounge is the station gift shop containing clothing, snack foods, beverages, and gift goods – what you would expect to find in a well-stocked convenience store.

South of the gift shop is the station bookstore, with books fully serving the university curriculum, as well as fiction and non-fiction from best sellers to topical materials that serve the interest of the station

population. (The bookstore is marked as a convenience store on the map.)

South of the bookstore is hair and beauty salon.

To the east of these four outlets is the station hospital that includes office and administration, restroom and bathing facilities, an operating room, nurses station, and a dormitory of sick beds. Two full time physicians for 3 shifts serve this hospital with a skilled healthcare staff. A hyperbaric chamber for pressure accidents and scanning beds, as well as a complete laboratory make a complete hospital facility rather than a simple sickbay.

East of the hospital is the maintenance room which contains station cleaning supplies, laundry, as well as backup generators and pumps. The station's maintenance elevator which connects the main habitat level granting access to the warehouse and industrial operations level, though bypasses the habitat levels.

East of the maintenance room is the station gym facility with exercise bikes, treadmills, weight machines, free weights, and a mat for martial arts, gymnastics, dance and other workouts. South of the gym is a locker room, while to its southwest is a full restroom, sauna, hot-tubs and shower facility.

To the south of the sauna facility is the station's brig (jail). While eight inmate cells may seem too many for such a secure station, Neptune Station is a kind of regional government facility, serving nearby undersea mining and science facilities, housing criminals throughout the region for eventual transport to courts and penal colonies outside this station.

The entire area south of the brig is station security with a front and back office, and a rear area containing the security break room, training area, and a full interrogation chamber complete with adjacent room and one-way mirror.

South of the Station on the outer edge are two high speed, large capacity (up to 20) elevators accessing the habitat levels below.

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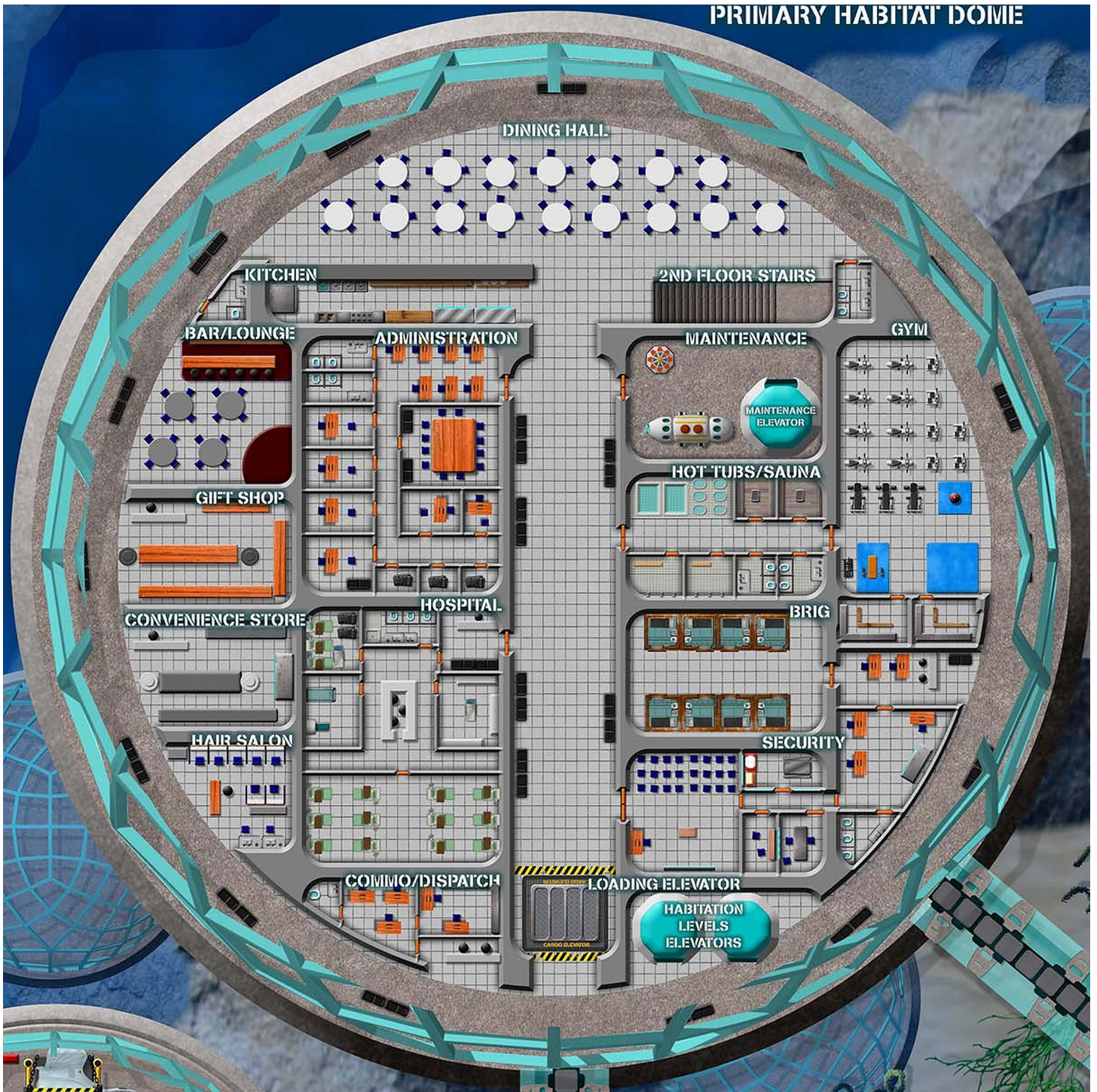
Neptune Station Overview

The main community level of the Primary Habitat dome is shown, with the single-level Moon Pool and Observation Platform domes connected to the south, and the multi-level Hydroponics and Marine Laboratory domes connected to the southeast.



Primary Habitat Dome: Main Community Level

The main community level of the Primary Habitat dome contains the only full-service dining facility, several small commercial establishments, and the station's hospital, gym, and security offices. Access to the ancillary domes is also via this level.

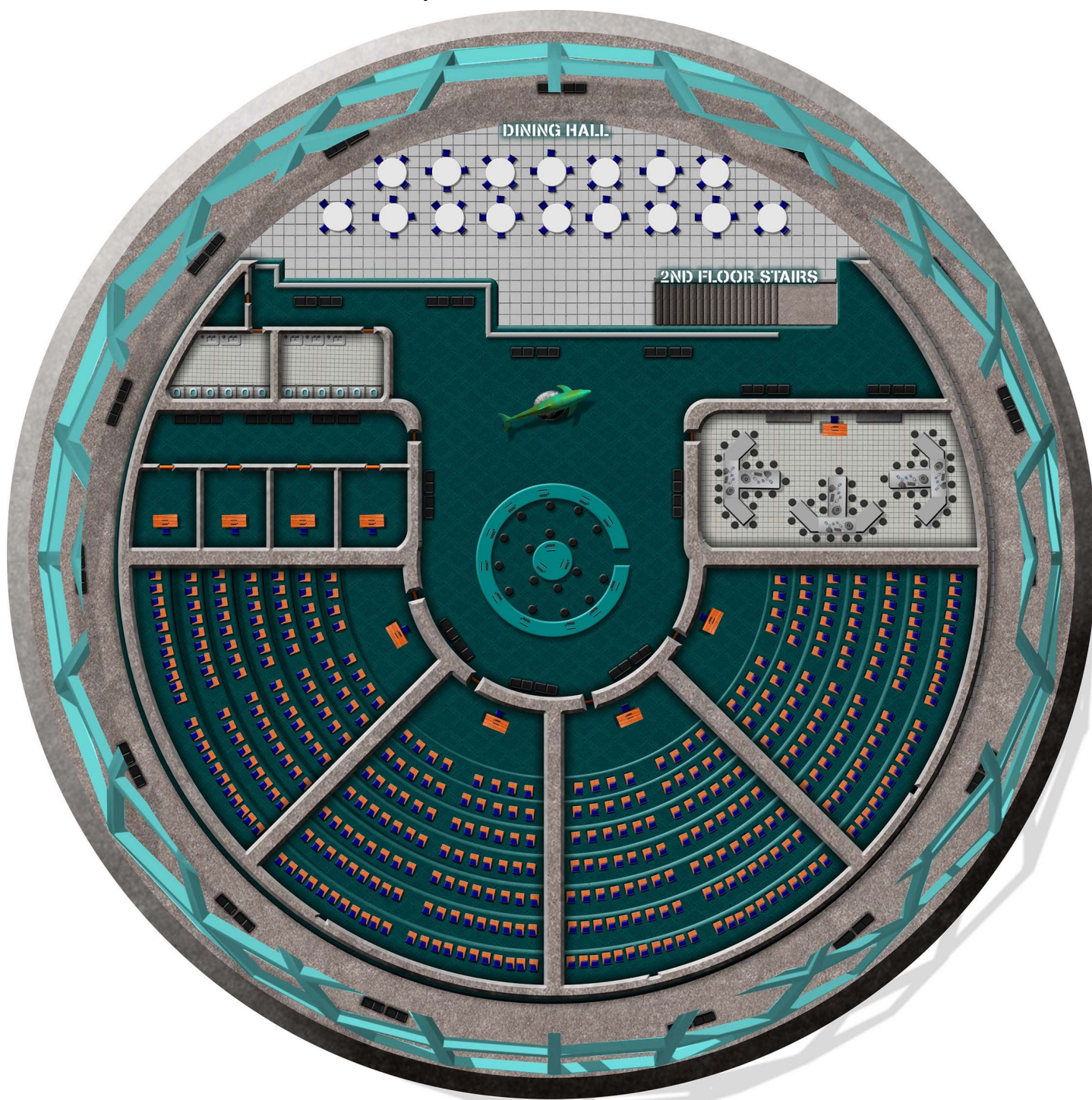


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Oceanographic and Marine Biology University Level

Accessed from the stairs adjacent to the station kitchen on the north side of the main habitat level is the university level. Four large, tiered classrooms that can contain 400 students, a university laboratory,

and offices for four professors. Extensions from a dozen major world universities have curricula at this university location.



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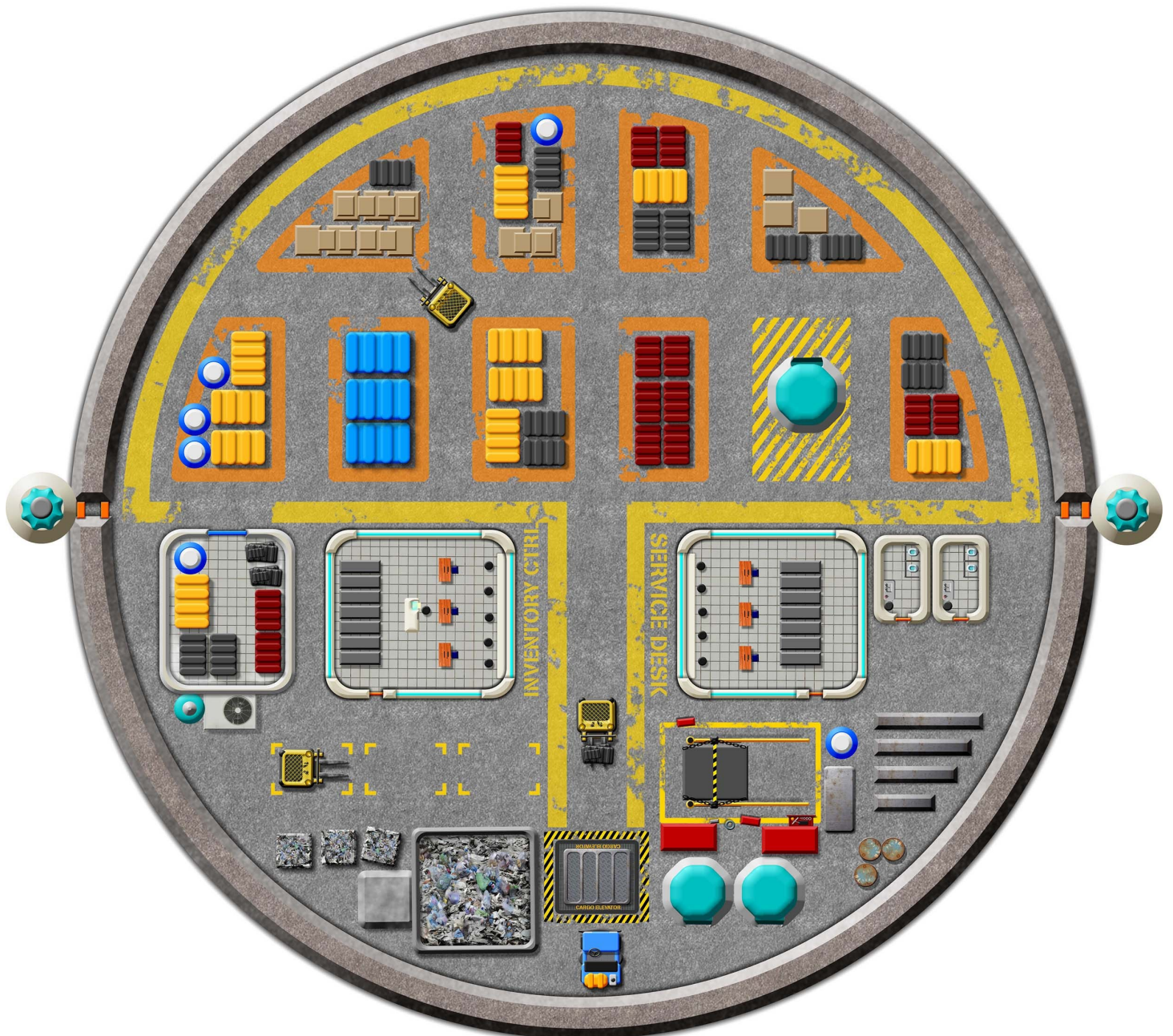
Multimedia Gallery

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Warehouse/Maintenance Level

To better serve the station population by offering quicker access and distribution of station supplies, the maintenance/warehouse level lies directly beneath the main habitat level. All maintenance outside the boat shop in the moon pool occurs here. A

warehouse management office lies across from the maintenance office, with upright forklifts parking alongside. On the north side is container storage for the entire station, with refrigerated storage adjacent to the warehouse management office. The maintenance elevator opens on this level.



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Habitat Levels

Beneath the warehouse/maintenance level are five habitat levels that house the entire population of the station. Each level can house up to 76 inhabitants, two per room in the interior dorm room circle, with an outer circle of suites with a double bed, and double fold-out couch bed. Though not the most comfortable accommodations, rotations of six month and annual cycles minimize effects of "cabin fever". Each habitat level is accessed by the two high speed, high capacity elevators. The maintenance elevator passes through each habitat level with an access door. A cleaning staff closet lies adjacent the elevator access on each level. Small public restrooms primarily serving visitors to the entertainment venues though housed on different levels.

Each habitat level contains enough escape pods for all inhabitants of each level with a spare pod. These pods each contain seats for 10, and are jettisoned away from the station to float to the surface with lights, power, atmosphere systems, serving as lifeboats for up to two weeks with meals and water for all.

At the center of each habitat level a different entertainment venue is provided that serves anyone in the station community. On the top habitat level is a dance nightclub with a full service DJ, bar, stools, video entertainment and dance floor. This level is popular with the student population. On the second habitat level is large swimming pool with diving board on the deep end, and life guard chairs on either flank. The third habitat level contains a movie theater with a full service refreshment stand. The fourth habitat level contains a playground for the families with children at the station. On the fifth and

lowest habitat level is an entertainment venue and training center for the devilfish submersible that serves as the primary transport to and from the station with bays for eight such submersibles in the moon pool. A trainer/simulator with holographic undersea display projected to its front forms the centerpiece of the training center. While regular training sessions for submersible operators occur here, between training sessions, this facility serves as a great entertainment venue for all ages.

Three of the habitat levels have small attached domes. The top dome serves as a public viewing chamber serving as kind of a park. Because most of the station views the deep water surrounding the station and seamount, this extended dome gives psychological relief to some of the inhabitants as it sits at the top of the seamount, with an undersea coral garden outside the dome, granting the illusion of sitting on the sea floor, rather than the top of a mountain. The two lower extended domes contain luxury suites housing the station chief of operations and the senior scientist of the research dome.

Industrial Operations Level

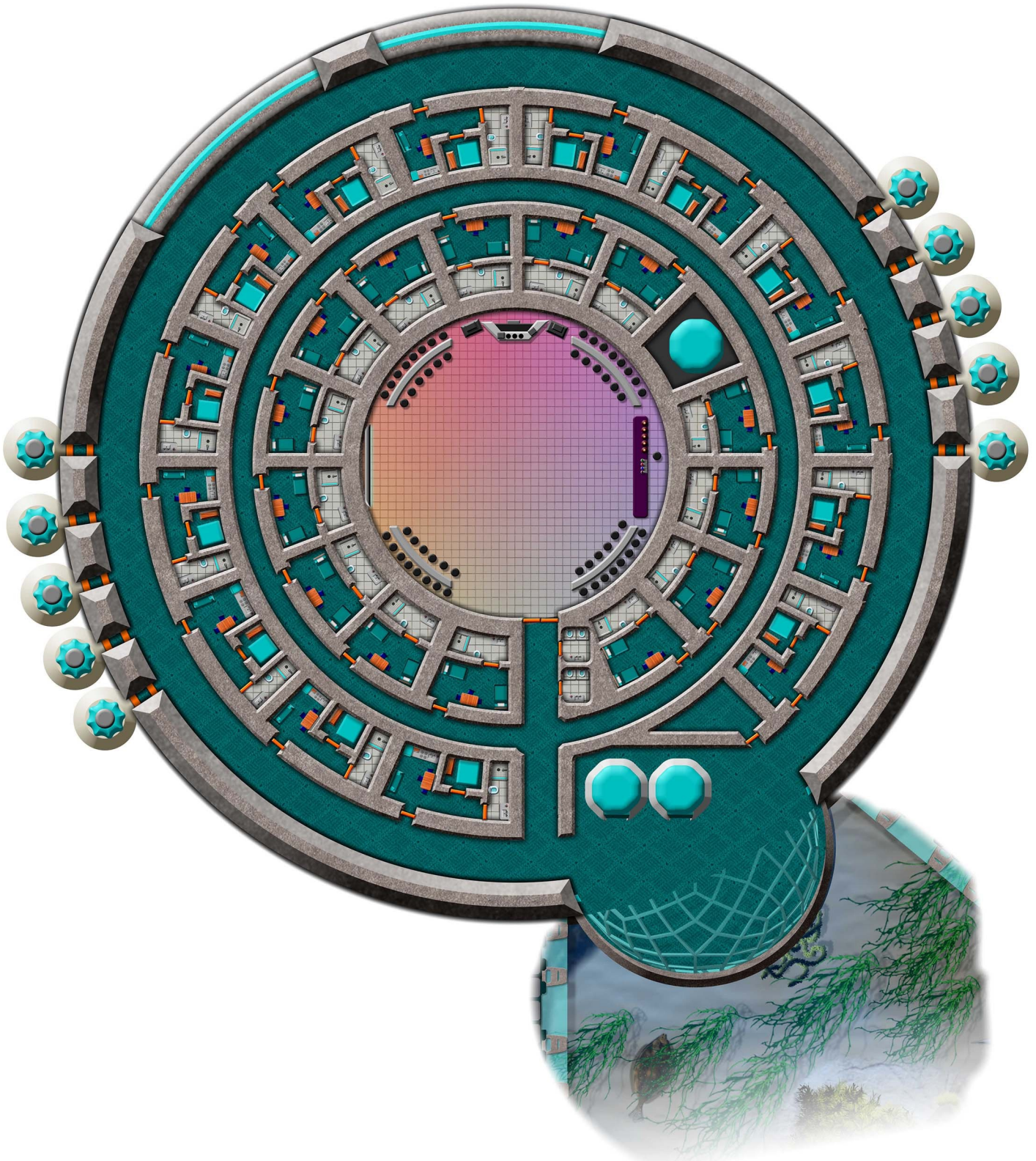
The lowest level of the main habitat structure, located beneath the fifth habitat level is the industrial operations level. Here all the life support systems are contained included sewage treatment, sea water desalination systems, air purification, and the station's geothermal power plant using the excavated volcanic structures within the seamount beneath the station. A full control room for all systems sit to the east side of this level. Adjacent to this office is the maintenance elevator. Two escape pods exist for the workers on this level.

(Continued on page 31)

Multimedia Gallery

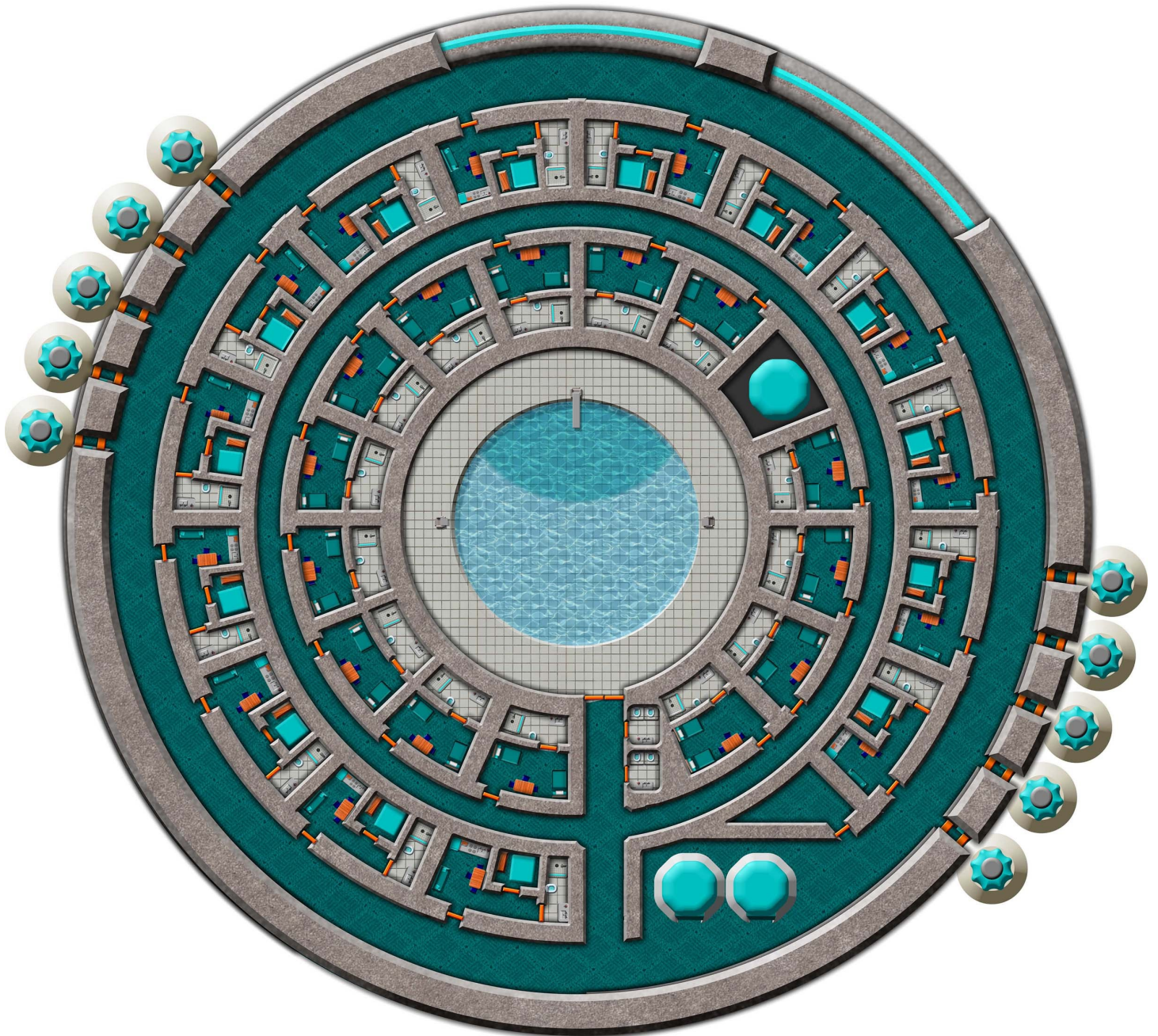
Primary Habitat Dome: Residential Level 1

The central attraction of this level is a nightclub with a dance floor, DJ, full-service bar, and video entertainment. An observation bay to the southeast looks over the sea floor from some distance up the seamount.



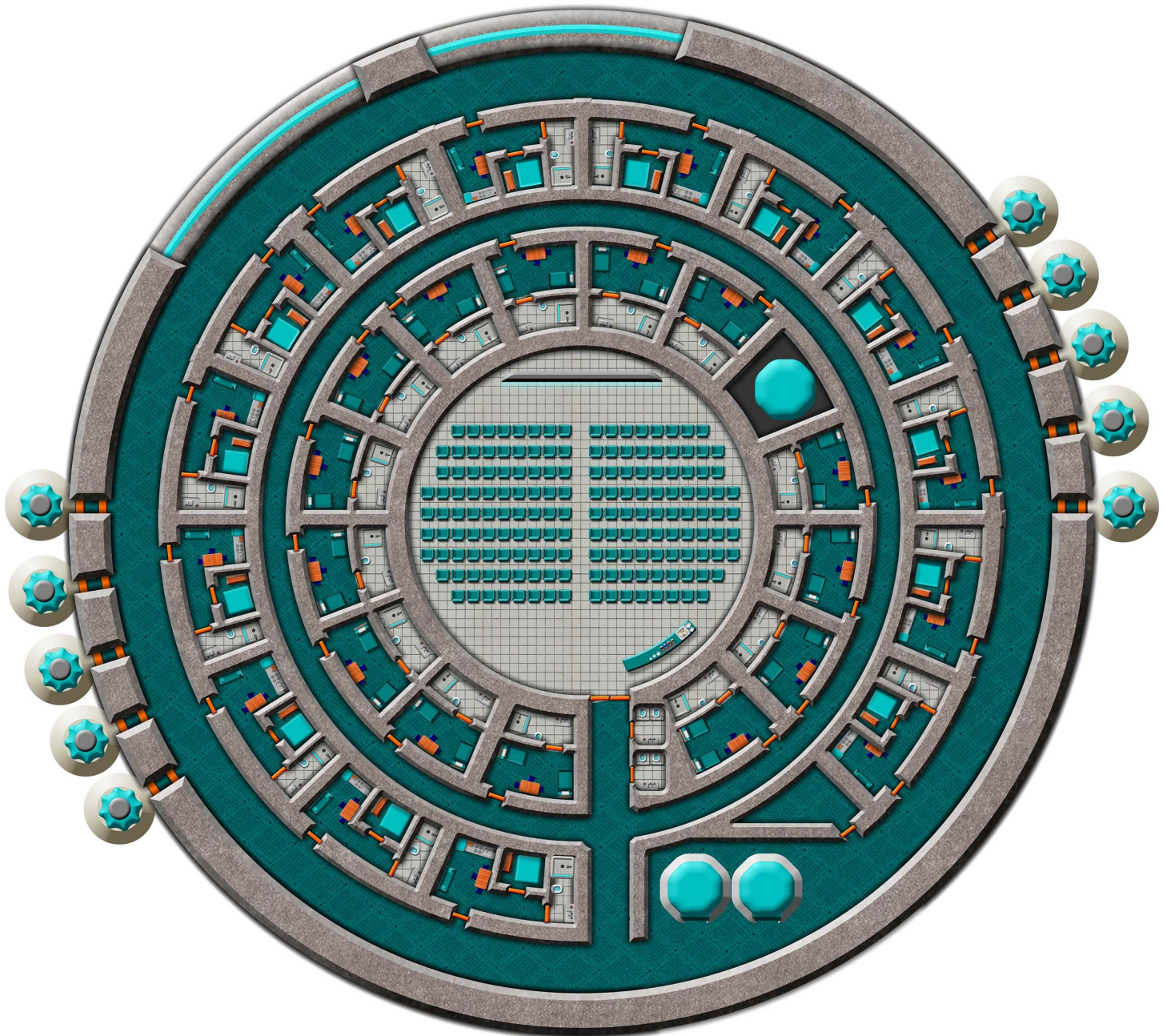
Primary Habitat Dome: Residential Level 2

The central attraction of this level is a swimming pool. There is a deep section to the north that sports a diving board.



Primary Habitat Dome: Residential Level 3

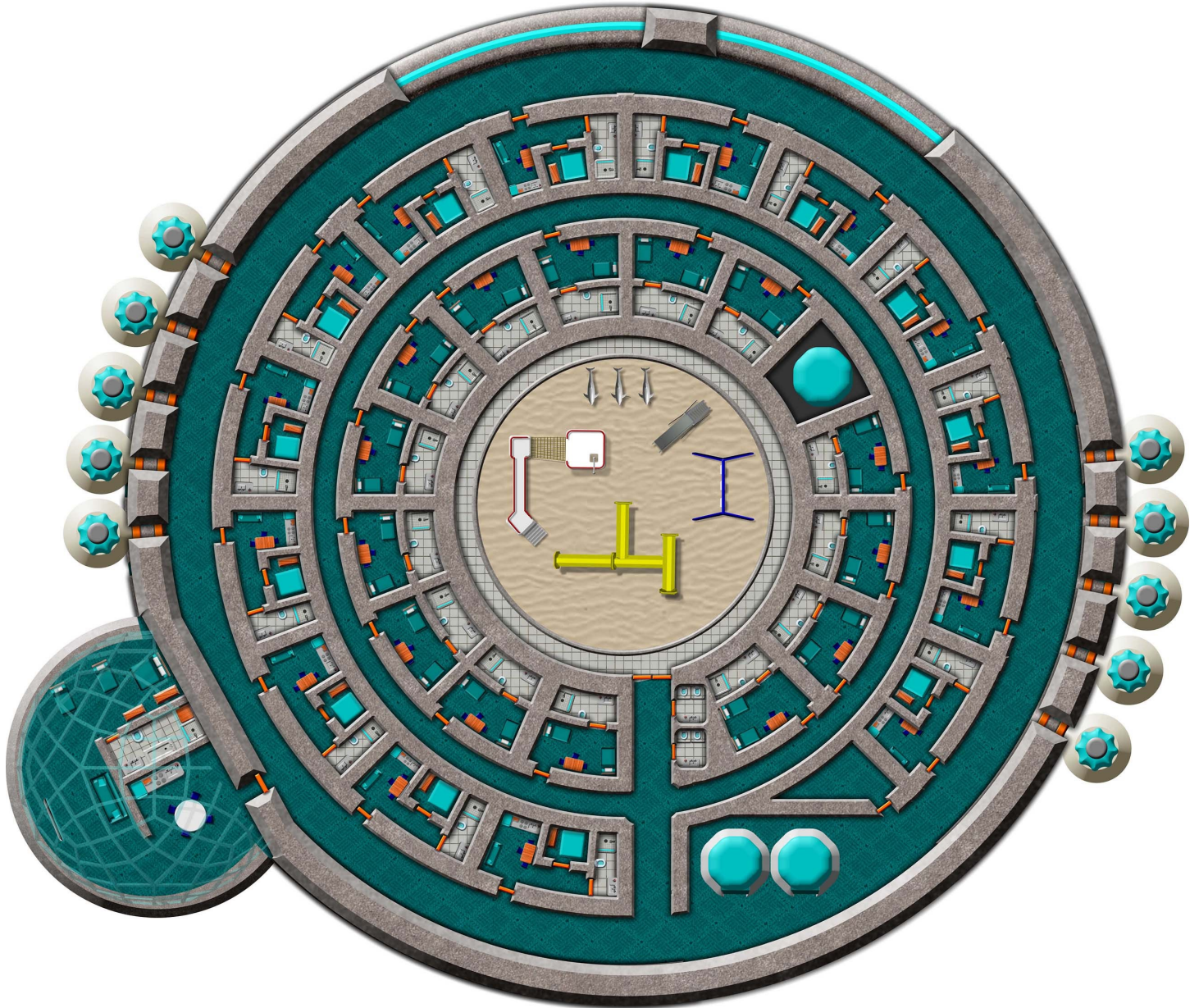
The central attraction of this level is a cinema with a full-service refreshment stand.



Multimedia Gallery

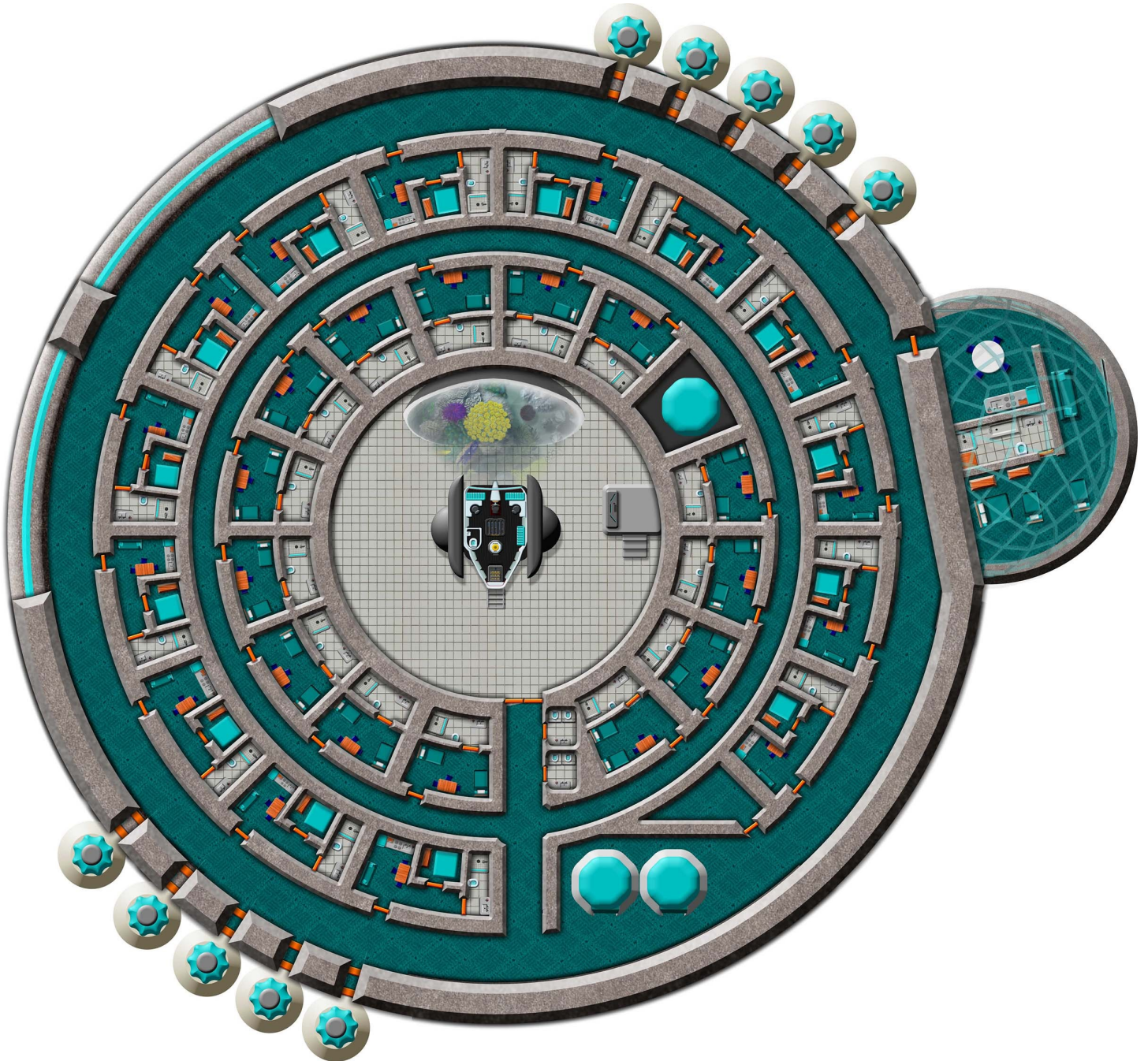
Primary Habitat Dome: Residential Level 4

The central attraction of this level is a playground, for the children of those families stationed here that have them. The bay apartment to the southwest houses the station's Chief of Operations.



Primary Habitat Dome: Residential Level 5

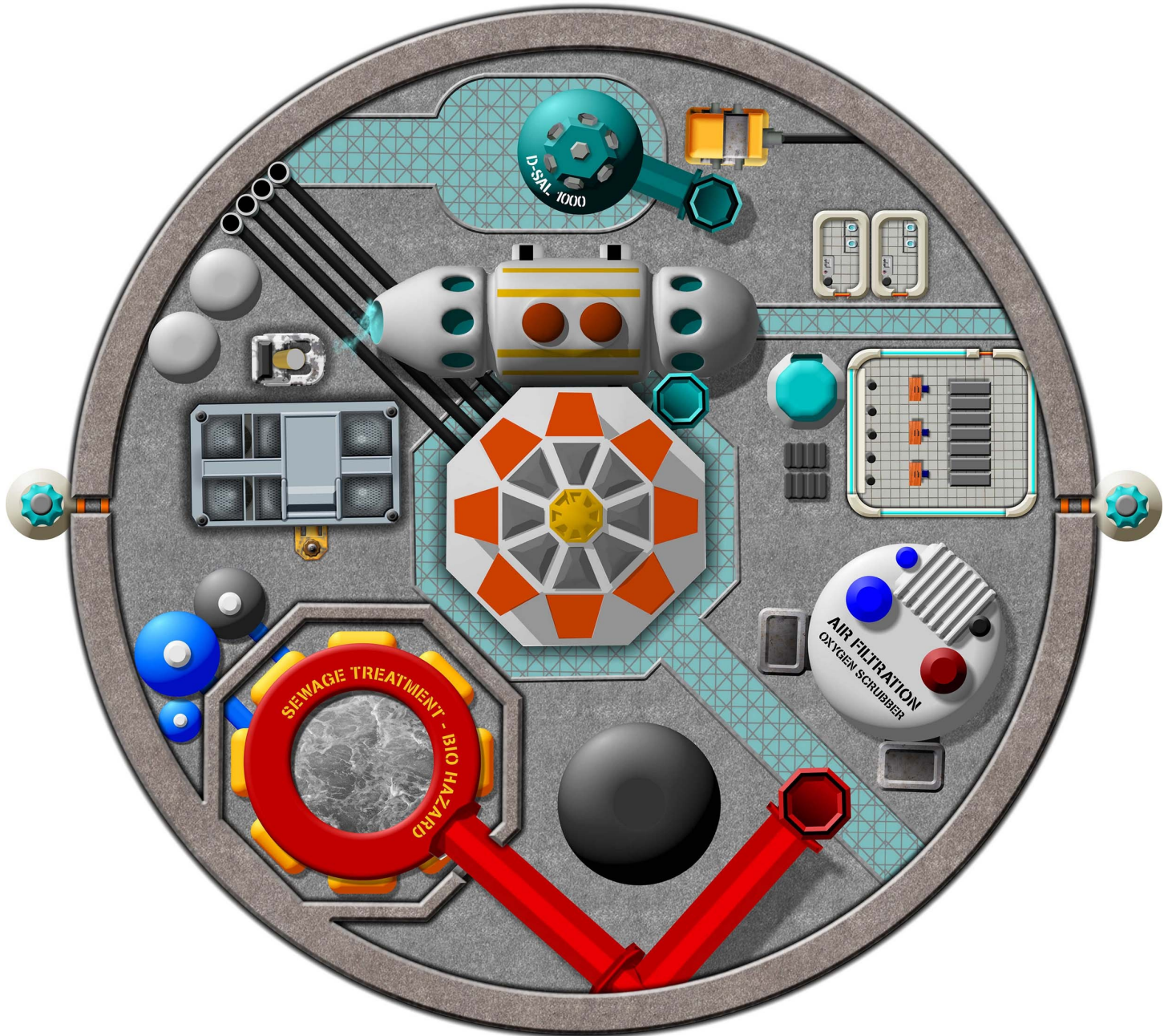
The central attraction of this level is a simulator for the devilfish/manta submersibles. It is used for both formal training on the craft, and for entertainment.



Multimedia Gallery

Primary Habitat Dome: Industrial Operations Level

Life Support, including power, air, and water production, and waste reclamation, all occurs here. Neptune Station is designed to disrupt the undersea environment as little as reasonably possible.



Multimedia Gallery

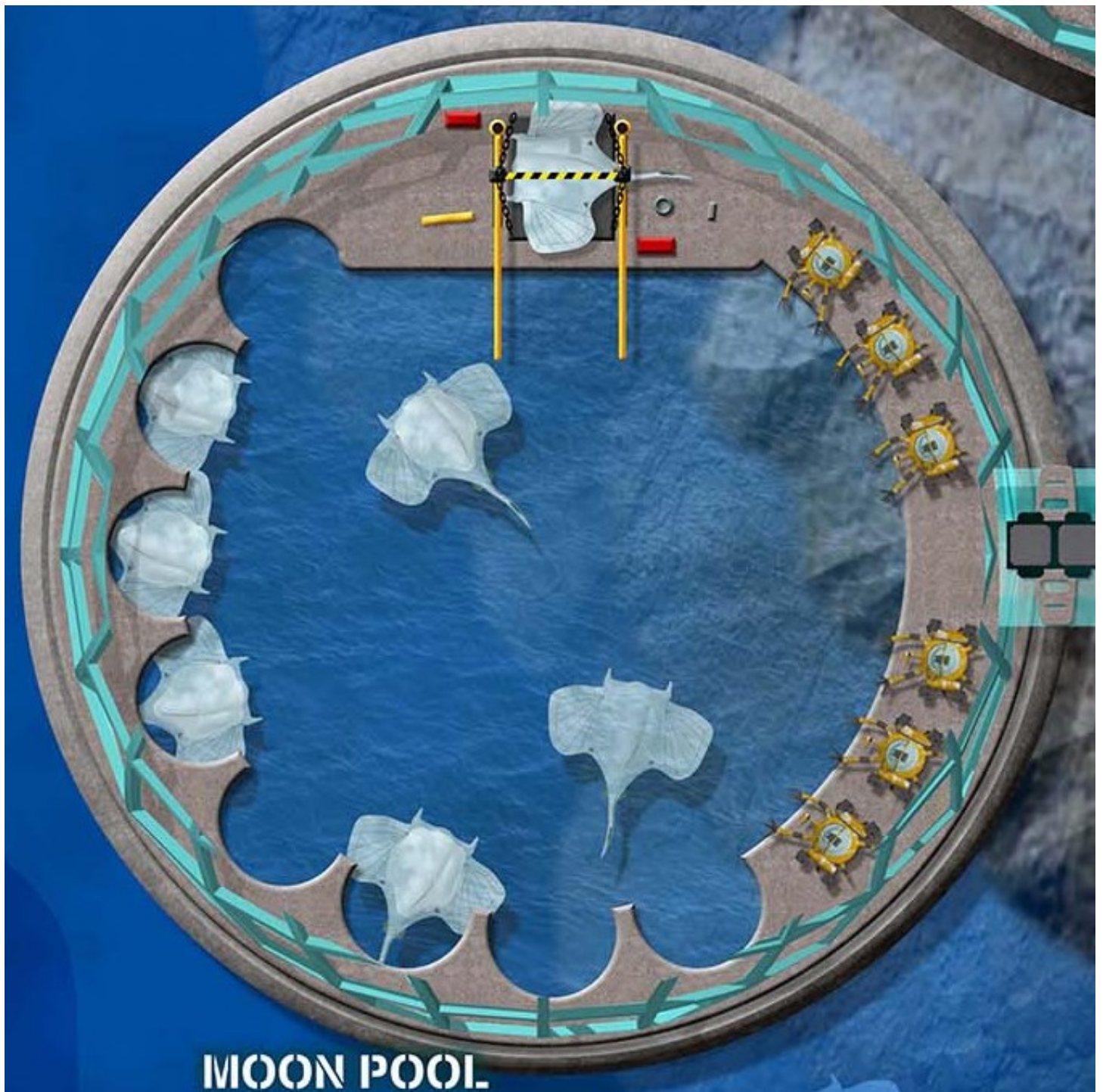
(Continued from page 24)

Ancillary Domes: South Connection

Moon Pool

The Moon Pool serves as the station's port for both the maintenance crabs and the manta-shaped submersibles that provide all transport and logistics for Neptune Station. A full service boat maintenance

shop sits to the north side of the moon pool. Submersibles rise into the moon pool from below with a slip for each boat.



(Continued on page 32)

Multimedia Gallery

(Continued from page 31)

Observation Platform

The Observation Platform serves as public facility for many activities including non-denominational religious services, marriages, funerals, celebrations,

special classrooms, and public events. In many ways this dome serves as a park. Public restrooms sit on the north side of the dome.



(Continued on page 33)

Multimedia Gallery

(Continued from page 32)

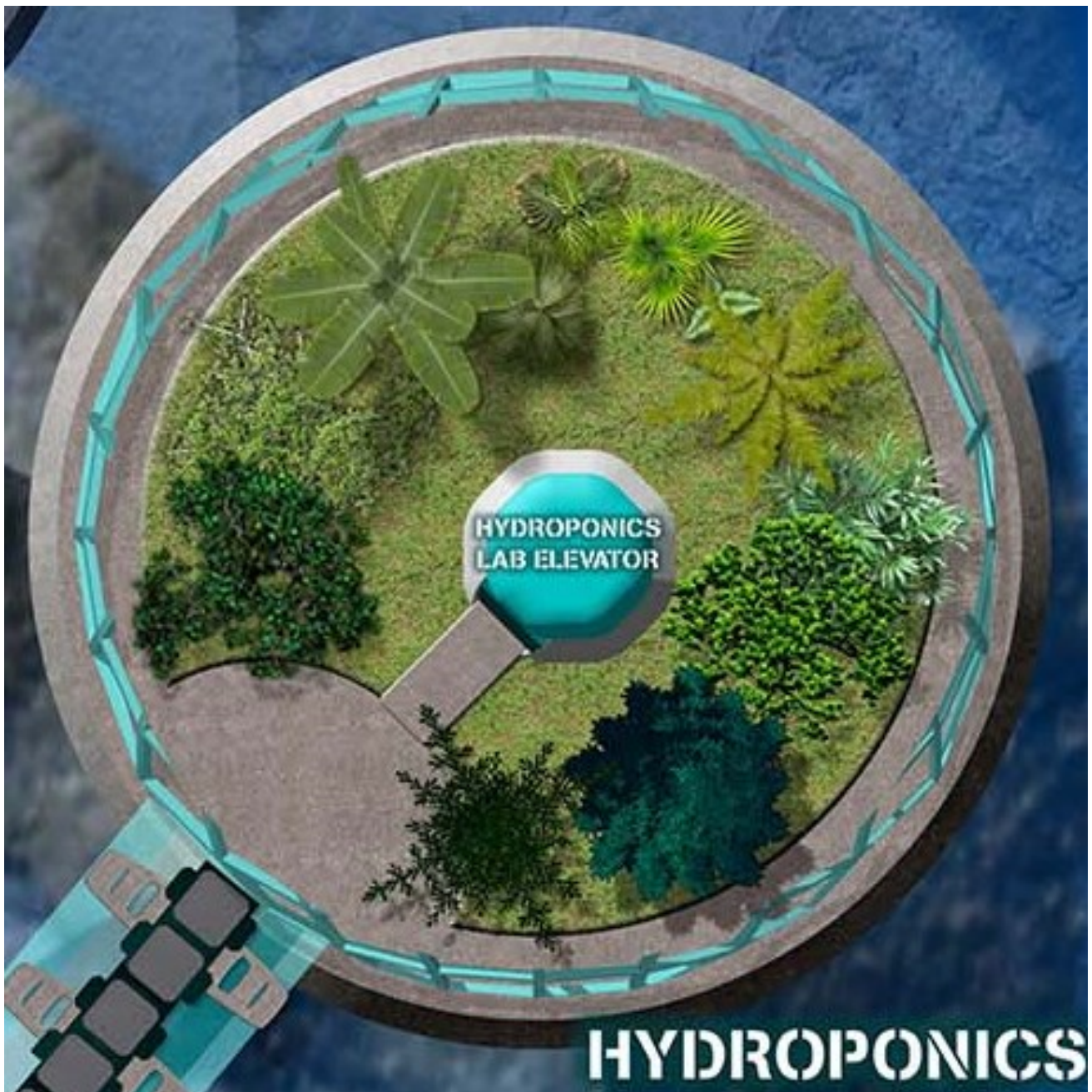
Ancillary Domes: Southeast Connection

To the southeast of the main habitat dome lie two smaller dome structures, both containing sublevels beneath the domes.

Hydroponics Laboratory Dome

Serving as the primary food source, the hydroponics labs contain farms for all fruits and vegetables. The top level inside the dome is an arboretum, also serving as a kind of woodland park for station

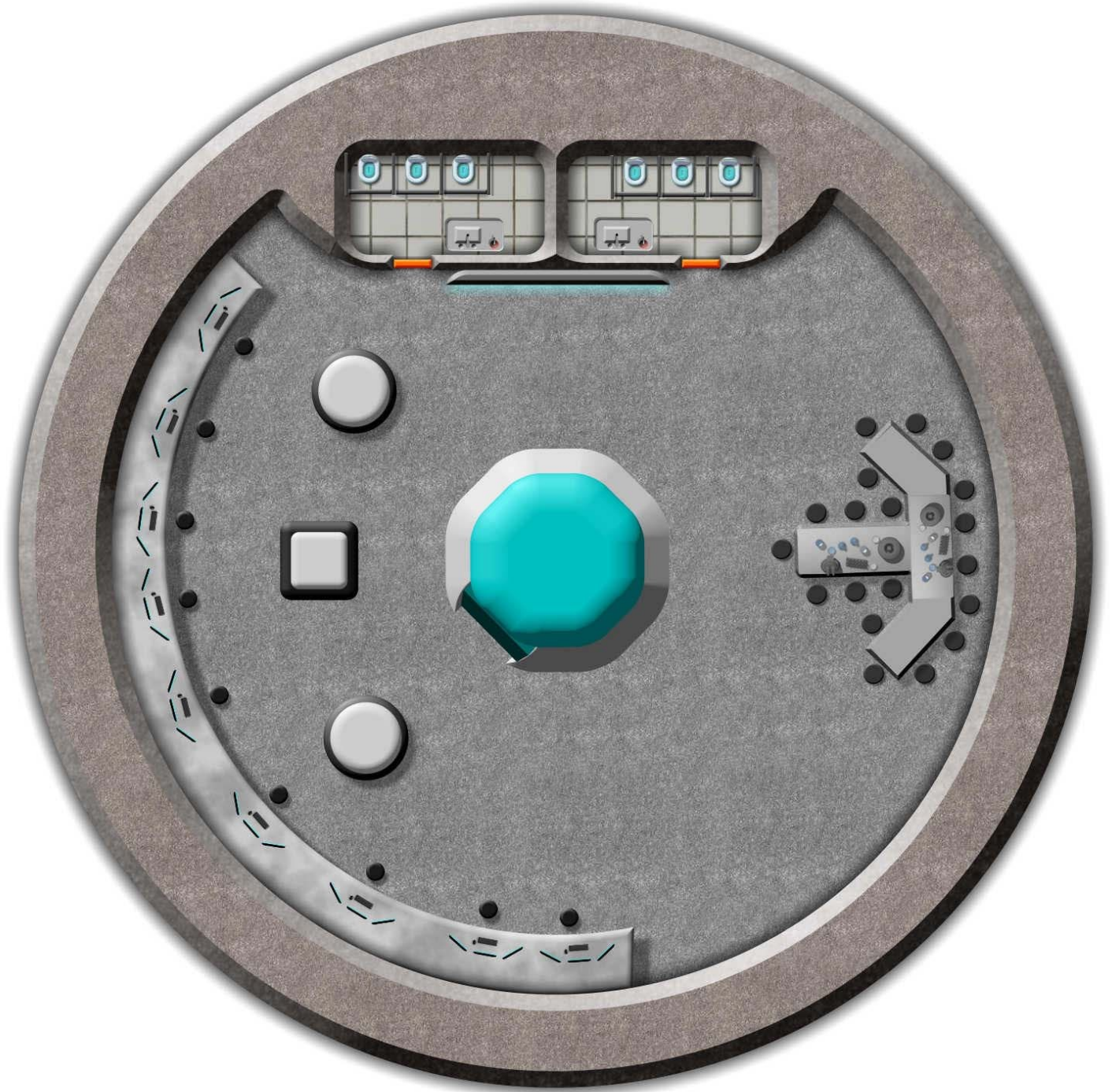
inhabitants. The first level beneath the arboretum is the agricultural science research laboratory. The second level beneath is a nursery for seedlings grown in preparation to be moved to the next level down when ready. The third level houses the main grow room for hydroponics produce. Each contained area is on a different growing schedules to provide a continuous source of food, with “seasonal” fruits and vegetables varying throughout the year. The level beneath this one serves as a laboratory for undersea agricultural science studying various plant diseases and nutrient supplements.



(Continued on page 38)

Hydroponics Dome: Underlevel 1

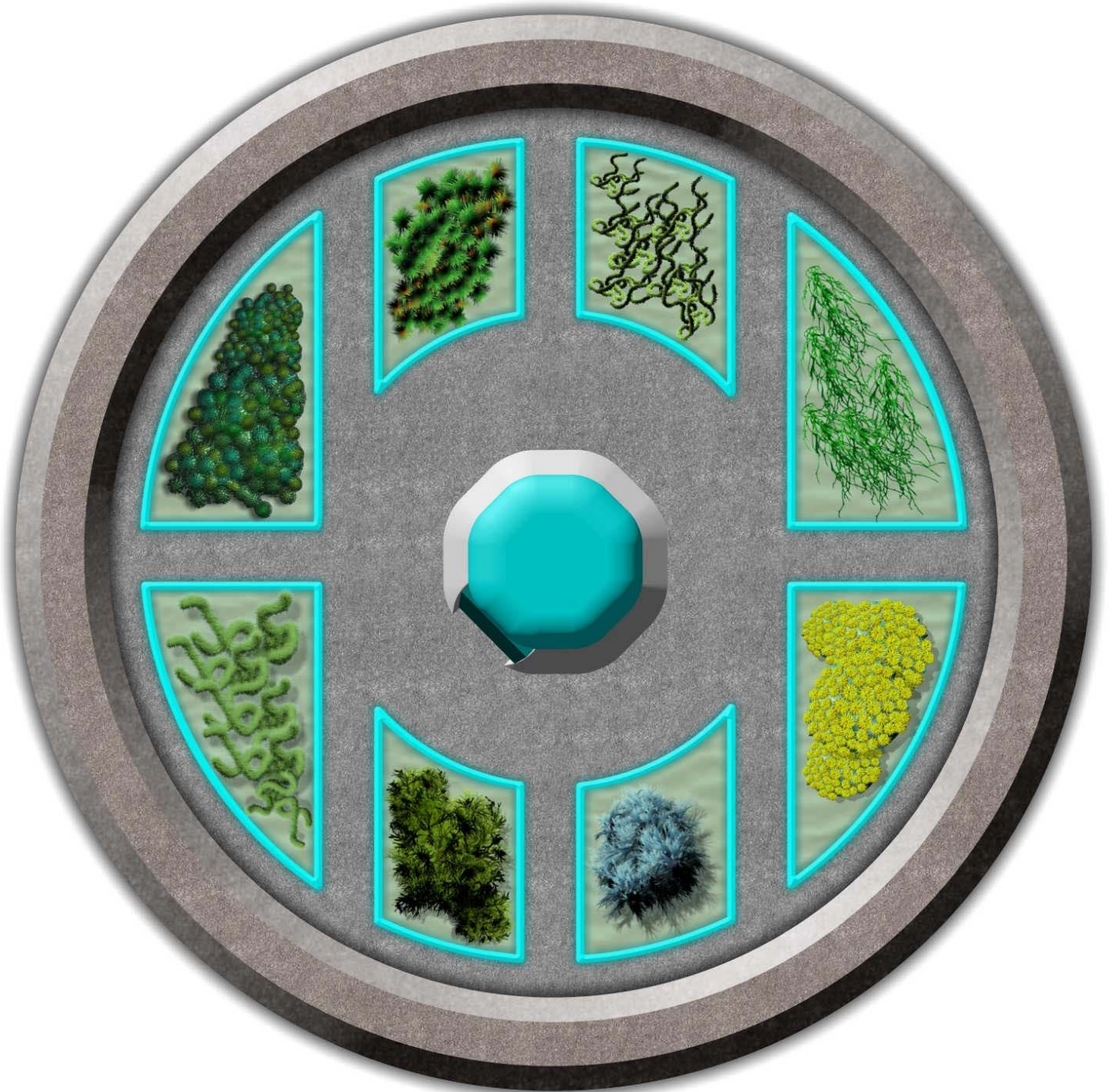
This level is a research lab, focusing on agricultural science.



Multimedia Gallery

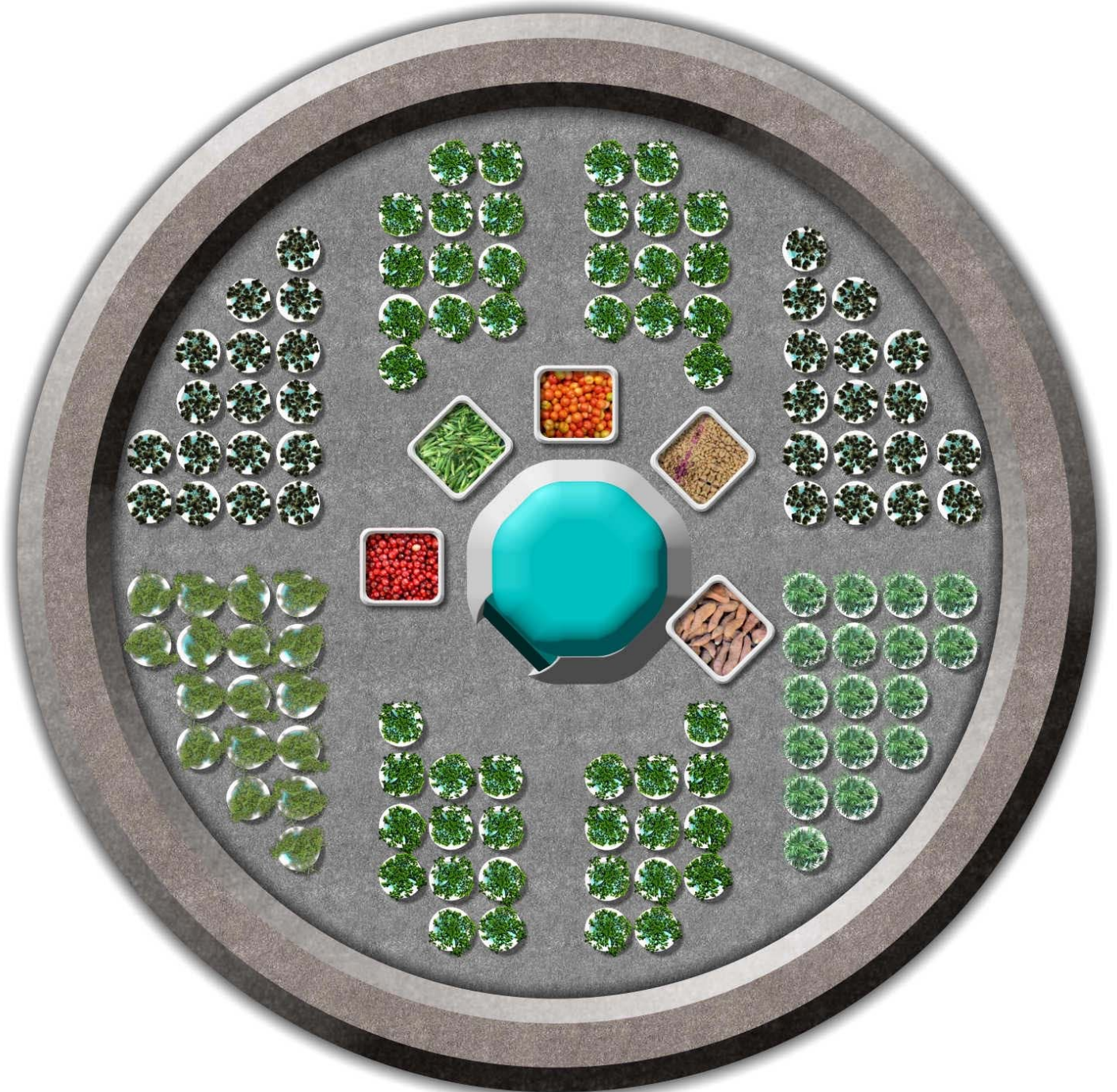
Hydroponics Dome: Underlevel 2

This level is a nursery for seedlings. When they are mature enough, they will be moved to the next level down.



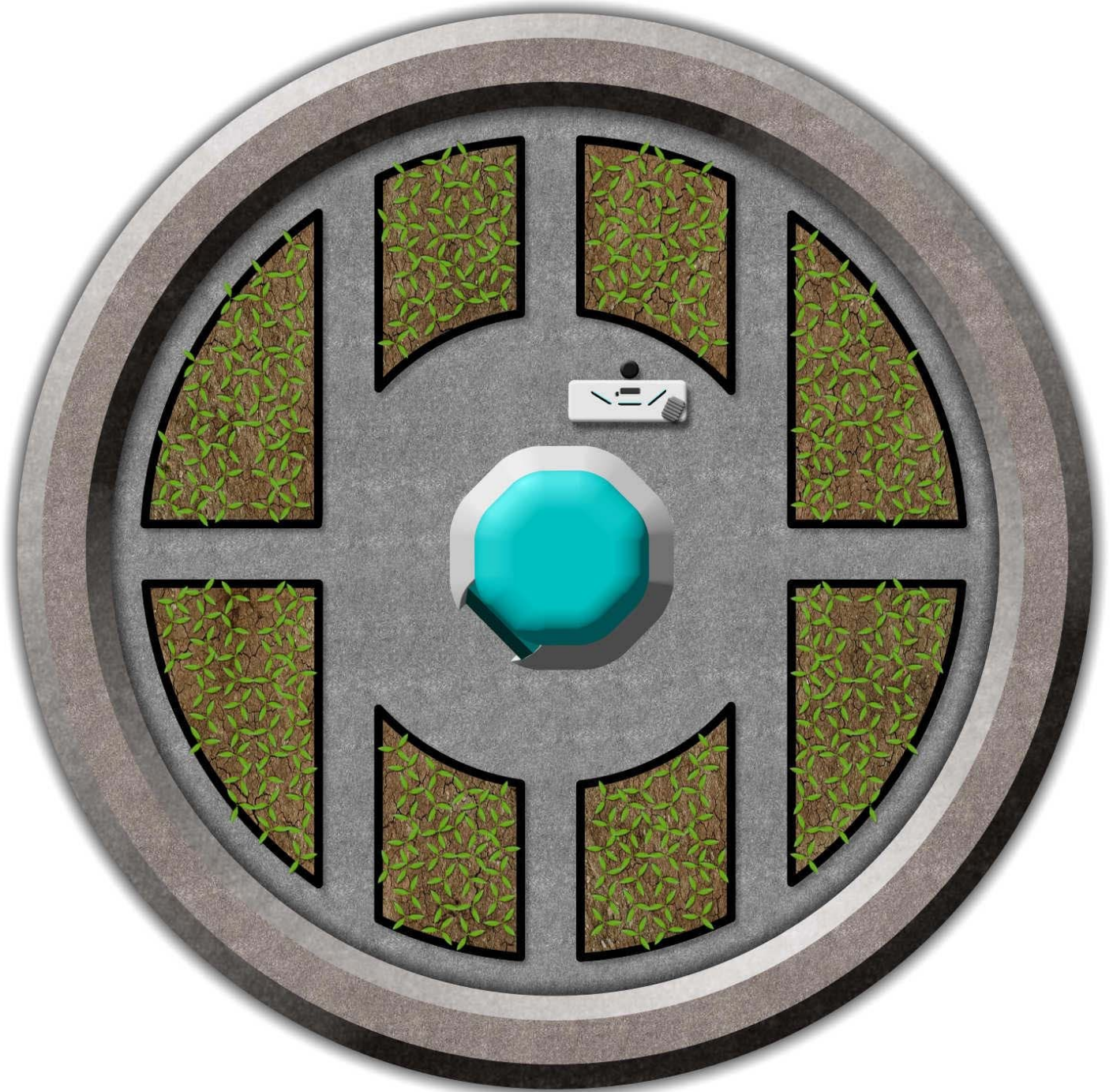
Hydroponics Dome: Underlevel 3

This level is the main "grow room". Different planting areas are on different schedules to provide fresh produce year-round, with available varieties shifting throughout the year to keep the station population interested.



Hydroponics Dome: Underlevel 4

This level is a laboratory, studying various plant diseases and designing and studying nutrient supplements.



Multimedia Gallery

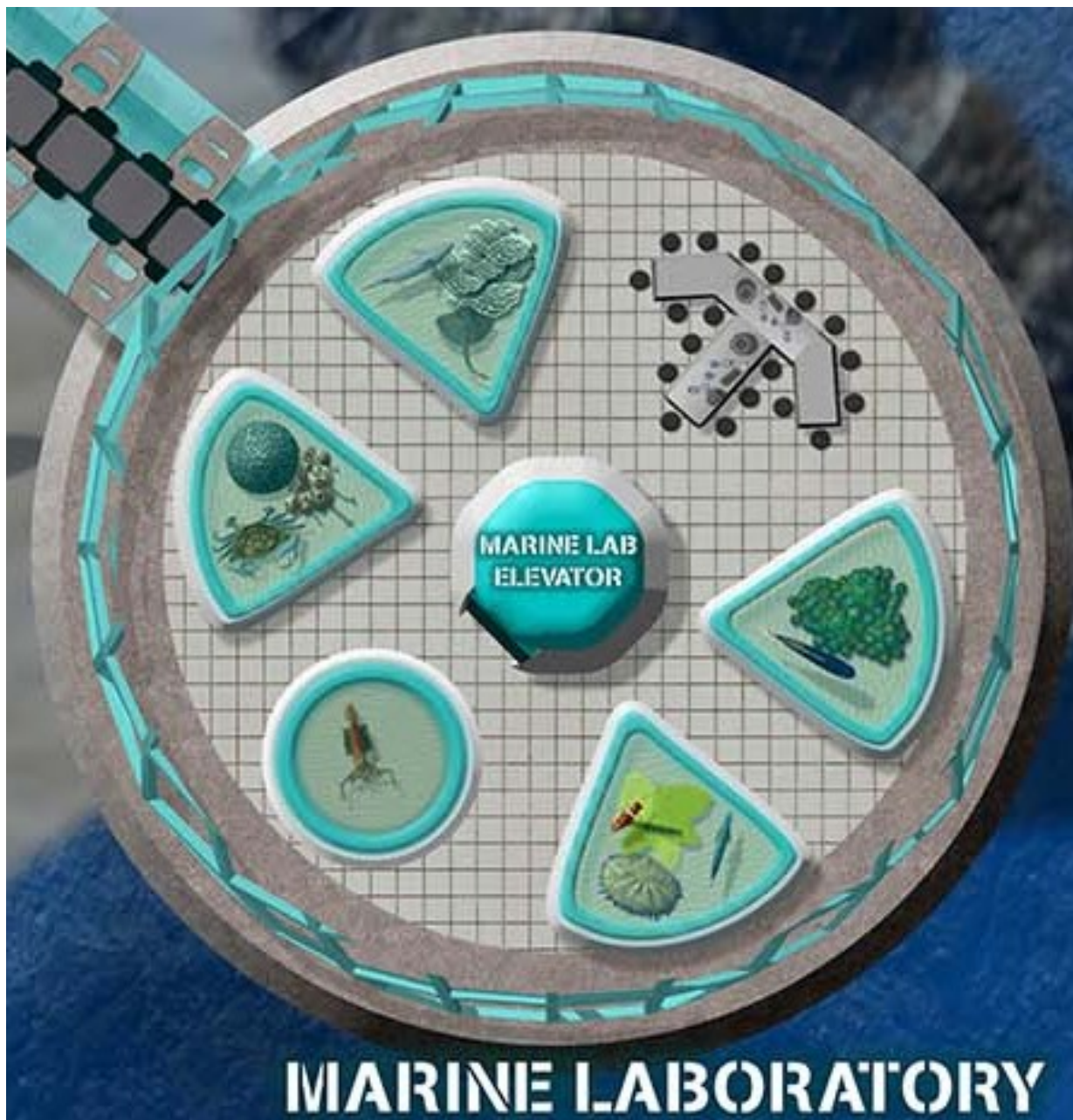
(Continued from page 33)

Oceanography/Marine Biology Lab Dome

The southeastern small domed structure contains the oceanographic/marine biologic laboratories with the main lab and fish tank exhibits on the top floor within the dome. The first level beneath holds the Oceanographic Sciences level with the structures restrooms as well as systems for undersea cartography, seismic studies, current research, thermoclines, salinoclines and other oceanographic fields of study. The second level beneath houses cetacean/

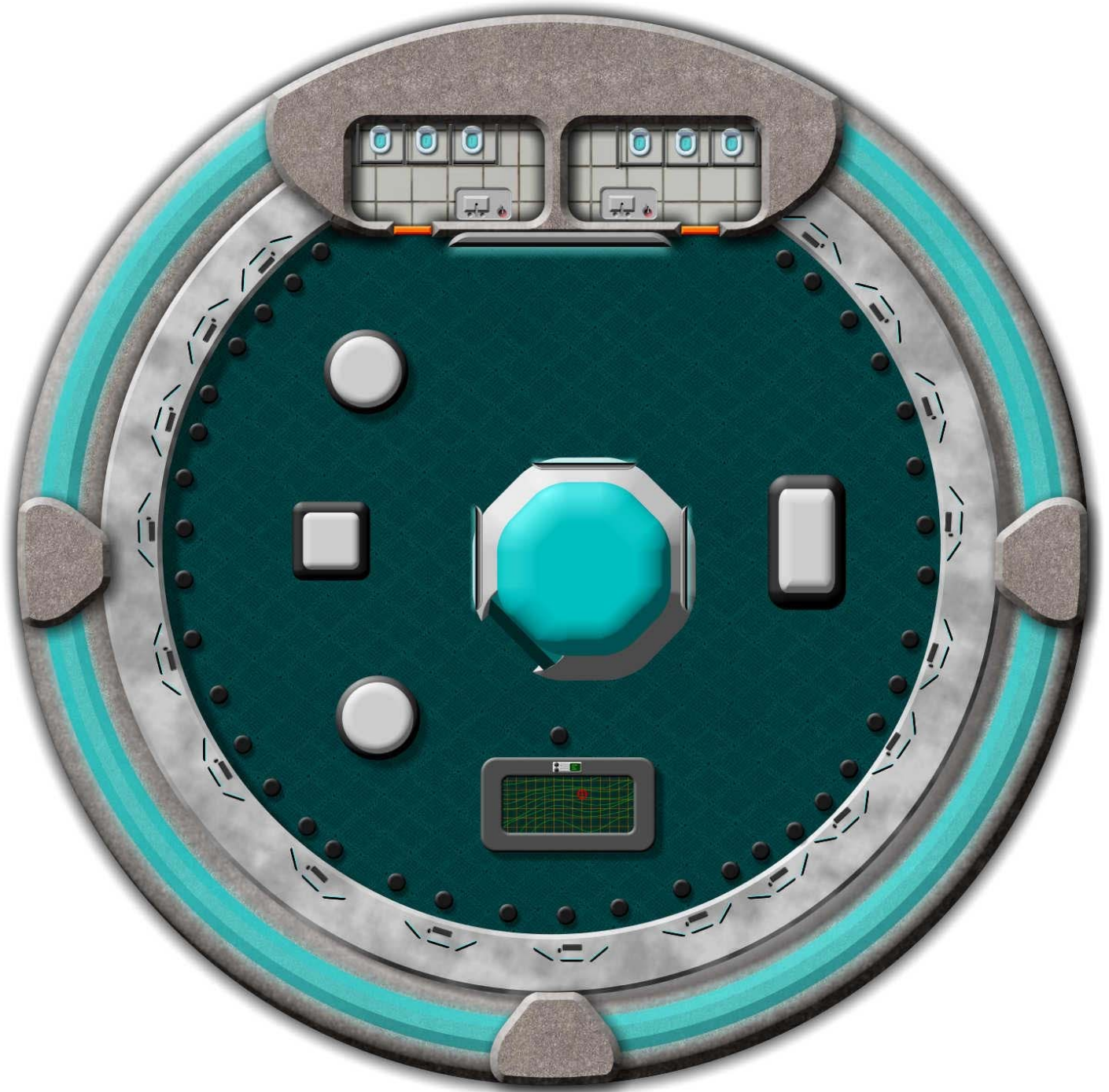
dolphin studies with both training and tagging facilities. The third level serves as a marine biologic hospital facility studying diseases and behavior sciences. The lowest level of this laboratory houses a high pressure, high water temperature tank for the study of deep sea, hot water “smokers” found in the deepest water to study the unique ecologies in such alien environments.

(Continued on page 43)



Marine Lab Dome: Underlevel 1

This level is the Oceanographic Studies facility.



Multimedia Gallery

Marine Lab Dome: Underlevel 2

This level focuses on training and studying dolphins and other cetaceans.



Multimedia Gallery

Marine Lab Dome: Underlevel 3

This level focuses on the diseases and behavior of marine animals.



Multimedia Gallery

Marine Lab Dome: Underlevel 4

This level focuses on studying extreme marine environments, such as those around "smokers" at the ocean bottom.



Multimedia Gallery

(Continued from page 38)

Editor's Note: Neptune Station has been released commercially by the author as both a PDF product and a set of maps for Virtual Tabletop systems such as Roll20, at \$4.99 each. The commercial products are at higher resolution than the maps presented here, and the PDF sections may be printed at sizes suitable for use with miniatures

Author's Note: if you ignore the undersea aspects in the areas surrounding the main map, as well as finding an alternative to the moon pool, and oceanography dome, this facility could easily work as a planetary space station on an airless or exotic atmosphere environment, so

it's doesn't solely have to serve as an undersea facility. This map can be more versatile than that.

The commercial versions of the mapped station are currently scaled at 1 inch = 10 feet. The large, main map measures 72×72 inches, so from edge to edge the area shown depicts 720 feet making the station an entire, compact undersea town and really quite extensive. This means rescaling it to 1 inch = 5 feet would rescale the dimensions to be 144×144 inches, meaning you would have to divide this map into 4 quarters to display on platforms like Roll20. At the 1 inch = 5 feet scale, even the sublevels and the main habitat level would be larger than 72×72, so a single full level couldn't be displayed in its entirety on a Roll20 screen.



Doing It My Way

Hazard: Tornado!

by Michael Brown

A particularly loud thunderclap drew Willem's gaze upward. Were he a Primitive, like his partner who'd disappeared into the underbrush to circle around their quarry, he'd say the gods were angry. The sky certainly was. Overhead, the clouds boiled black. Off to the west, they took on a greenish cast. The rain came down in sheets. The wind gusted to worrisome levels. And the lightning...it wouldn't do to stay exposed like this.

We should wait this out in the ATV, he thought. Then he remembered how he and Bereld had chased their bounty across the subsector. They weren't about to let him—and the 25,000 credits on his head—get away. They'd never been this close to catching him.

Cursing, Willem returned to the hunt. Staying low to avoid being struck, he tried to catch a glimpse of the other men through a face full of rain. He knew the barbarian would flush their prey toward Willem's waiting shotgun. He had to be ready.

The rain suddenly stopped, as though Bereld's gods had decided enough was enough and flipped the "off" switch. It was then that Willem heard it: a loud rushing sound. A waterfall, or...?

He peered westward, toward the sound. A few kilometers away, a grayish-white finger of cloud had begun a journey to the ground below. Rope-thin at first, it gained girth as it touched down and announced its presence with a roar of wind and a veil of black dust.

Willem had heard of these things, but had never seen one; now one was bearing down on him. As he cast quickly about for shelter, his mind—probably in a ludicrous attempt to keep his fear at bay—dwelled on the name for the phenomenon. The Vilani called it iirupiiim. He'd heard a Vargr once call it zoghfaeng. He remembered the ancient Terran word as he dove for a welcome depression in the ground:

Tornado.

The worlds of the Imperium are unique, with their own beauties and their own dangers. Weather is often one of those dangers, as any planet with a thick enough atmosphere and an energetic enough star has significant meteorological events. Storm form and sometimes become life-threatening. One of those threats is an example of the worst a world's weather has to offer: the tornado. This article builds upon "Hazard: Storm!" appearing in an earlier issue of *Freelance Traveller*, providing background material, scientific explanation, and a game mechanic the referee can use to implement such a disturbance.

Author's Note: while based on real-world meteorological science, the concepts presented here are part of a game. Nothing written here is intended to be used in real-life situations. Tornadoes are dangerous weather phenomena that cause great damage and injuries. Warnings regarding their appearance should be promptly observed and authorities' instructions strictly followed. Readers are directed to their respective national weather organiza-

(Continued on page 44)

tions or meteorological research institutes for more information.

Defining a Tornado

A tornado is “a rotating column of air, in contact with the surface, [suspended] from a [vertically-developed] cloud, and often visible as a funnel cloud and/or circulating debris/dust at the ground.” (American Meteorological Society.) Also called *twisters*, *whirlwinds*, or *cyclones*, a tornado is the most violent and unpredictable known atmospheric disturbance. Tornadoes are also among the most recognizable. They appear in many shapes and sizes, not necessarily the classic “funnel” shape. Width ranges from a few hundred meters to almost five kilometers. Winds in the most powerful examples can approach 500kph, more than enough to level almost any structure and hurl vehicles like toys. Their lifespan is typically less than ten minutes, although some last mere seconds and others can ravage the landscape for over an hour. In short, there is no such thing as the “typical” tornado.

Tornadoes are rated by a scale known as the Enhanced Fujita, or EF, scale. This scale doesn’t measure tornadic winds directly; rather it estimates the prior wind speed using a combination of observed damage and knowledge of building strengths. The scale ranges from EF0 (a weak tornado doing little damage) to EF5 (the deadliest, most powerful storms.)

A waterspout is a common tornado variant; it’s essentially a tornado over a large body of water. Generally weaker than a classic tornado, it can become one if it comes ashore. Waterspouts pose a threat to small watercraft, although larger watercraft and some aircraft have been known to survive encounters with them.

The Making of a Tornado

Tornadogenesis is complex, and a full discussion of it is beyond this article’s scope. For gaming purposes, however, a grossly oversimplified version of the events will do:

Each tornado is a unique creation, but they all start the same way: cool, dry air clashes with warm, moist air. Thunderstorms develop along the boundary between the air masses. Some of these storms develop powerful updrafts and downdrafts; the interplay of this wind shear eventually becomes rotation—a mesocyclone—within the thunderstorm. The storm then becomes a supercell. The mesocyclone in due course extends downward, pulled by intense downdrafts, through the cloud base. The visual manifestation of this is a wall cloud, and is a near-certain confirmation of impending tornadic activity. The funnel cloud extends downward out of the wall cloud, but isn’t considered a tornado until it touches the ground. The funnel may not be visible if there isn’t enough condensation to make it so; it’s thus invisible and only detectable on electronic sensors or by observing swirling debris under the wall cloud. Heavy rains and darkness may also hide an approaching tornado.

Fortunately, twisters tend to be self-limiting. The updrafts which pull in the warm air feeding the storm also draws cooler air that eventually cuts it off. The tornado soon weakens until it enters a rope-out, or a stage where it narrows until it resembles a rope or cord hanging in the sky. It dissipates soon after. However, a powerful enough parent storm can form another mesocyclone and begin the cycle again.

Particularly powerful supercells may also spawn multiple vortices, in the form of separate twin tornadoes; a smaller “satellite” tornado orbiting a much larger and stronger funnel; or multiple suction vortices revolving around a common point. These are the most dangerous tornadoes of all, and spark the common observation of one structure being destroyed while an adjacent structure survives.

Surviving a Tornado

While the only truly safe place from a tornado is underground, heroes have several courses of action which increase the odds of survival. PCs can take refuge in a basement or specially-constructed safe room or get into the structure’s interior on the low-

(Continued on page 45)

(Continued from page 44)

est floor, away from windows and with as many walls between themselves and the twister as possible. If caught outside, they can lie flat in the lowest depression available (such as a culvert or ravine.) A vehicle such as an ATV or Ground Car or a light structure like an Advanced Base (Book 3) may be death traps and aren't recommended as shelter.

Of course, the best way to survive a tornado is to listen closely to weather reports for a particular area and then be elsewhere before it arrives.

Aftermath of a Tornado

Twisters can cause great damage, but this is typically along a set path. Thus, a tornado is by nature a local phenomenon. However, an outbreak, or multiple storms and associated tornadoes appearing in a widespread area, can cause extensive damage. Such disturbances on planets with particularly dynamic weather patterns may see outbreaks become regional in scope.

The typical response to a tornado's aftermath is to locate survivors, render aid to the injured, account for the missing and the dead, and assess the damage with an eye not only to calculating monetary costs, but assigning an EF rating. On worlds with a low Law Level, victimization of survivors by criminals—especially looters—can be a problem.

A tornado can have a large impact on an area's economy, infrastructure, environment, and even its society. Damage from an EF5 or an outbreak can reach into the billions of credits. Typically only the area directly affected by a tornado bears the costs of recovery. Even an outbreak rarely rises to the level of requiring aid from a nation-state, world or the Imperium. Infrastructure can be greatly compromised, especially the delivery of essential services such as power, potable water, and foodstuffs. If the tornado destroys the main provider of these items, recovery can take years instead of weeks. Environmental damage comes from the destruction of cropland, forests (which can lead to soil erosion and

animal migration), and food chain disruption. Facilities that manufacture toxic compounds, if damaged or destroyed, can leak poisons into the ground and water. Tornadoes that become waterspouts can carry hazardous debris with them. Fires sparked in the storm's wake can wreak secondary havoc, especially if local emergency services have also been compromised. Social disruption can lead to psychological problems such as Post Traumatic Stress Disorder, social unrest in the form of increased crime and rioting, and even mass exodus as a populace decides to relocate to safer places.

Refereeing a Tornado

The following rules are a more detailed version of the rules appearing in "Hazard: Storm!" and replace the tornado rules therein. It's also geared toward creating classic supercell twisters.

Determine if—or rule that—a thunderstorm is powerful enough to become tornadic. Once the funnel begins descending, it touches down in 1D combat rounds.

Throw 2D-2 for the tornado's Intensity (i). Apply the result to the following calculations, substituting 1 for 0 except where noted:

- The funnel's width in meters at its narrowest point: $100i$. If the Intensity throw was a natural 12 (before die modifiers), throw 1D-1 (minimum 1) and multiply the funnel width by the result.
- The wind speed in kph: $50i$ is its wind speed in kph. Consult published sources for EF scale wind speeds
- The vortex's forward speed in kph: $10i$
- The time the tornado is in continuous contact with the ground: i minutes. If this is longer than its lifespan (below) it touches down only momentarily then spends the rest of its life as a funnel cloud
- The tornado's lifespan: $2i$ minutes. If the Intensity throw was zero (modified), the time is 2D seconds instead.

(Continued on page 46)

Doing It My Way

- Attempts to stand, fight, etc. for exposed characters: -2i. Double this if flying exposed (a grav belt, Droyne, etc.)
- The DM to Pilot skill to operate a flying vehicle, including a starship: i

DMs: Atmosphere 4-5 = -1; Atmosphere 8+ = +1

Note that there isn't necessarily a correlation between the size of the funnel and its Intensity.

A direct hit by the funnel inflicts 2i dice of damage per second it is in contact, from dust and debris driven hard enough to penetrate solid objects. $(\text{Funnel width} \times 0.28) \div \text{forward speed (round to nearest value)} = \text{number of seconds}$. For example, an Intensity 3 funnel measuring 300 meters across moving at 20kph takes 4.2, or four seconds to pass over an area. Anyone unlucky or foolish enough to be caught in the vortex takes 6D damage each second for four seconds. Armor protects normally, for what it's worth.

A person in such straits is endangered not only by the shrapnel, but being lifted and thrown. The total direct hit damage calculated above \div the object's weight in tons = number of meters the object is moved. In the example above, the total of 24D would be used to calculate how far an object would be thrown. If the object is a person, throw 1D; if it comes up "1," (s)he is thrown into the path of the tornado, to be thrown again. Repeat this for each result of "1" on the 1D throw.

However, tornadoes have been known—rarely—to leave creatures completely unharmed. Total the victim's STR, DEX, and END. If the result equals or exceeds the total damage dealt by the funnel, the character suffers no damage, but may still be thrown, as above.

As noted, a vehicle is the worst place to be in during a tornado, but if the heroes are caught in one, it protects its occupants as Combat armor for a number of seconds equivalent to its weight in tons divided by i (round off), thus reducing the damage somewhat. Atmospheric craft instead divide weight by 3i due to their light construction.

If use of the EF scale is desired to help describe the tornado, throw 2D: 2+ = EF0, 6+ = EF1 10+ = EF2, 11 = EF3; 12 = EF4. If a natural 12 results, throw again. If 12 again results, the storm is the dreaded EF5. DMs: +1 if Atmosphere 8+. Note that the vast majority of tornadoes are EF0-1.

Forecasting a Tornado

Predicting tornadic weather is an inexact science at best. The storms are completely unpredictable; they may not appear even when conditions favor their development, and may form even when conditions don't warrant it. They may not necessarily move in a predictable fashion: they've been known to stand still, make abrupt turns, and even backtrack. And they can appear and disappear with disturbing suddenness.

Still, to save lives, science endeavors to understand them. Again, the best way to survive a tornado is not to be near one in the first place. The key to accomplishing this is earlier prediction. Meteorologists have long focused their efforts on lengthening the time between a prediction of a tornado and its manifestation. Imperial science has helped; tornadoes can be predicted on worlds prone to them with high accuracy and long prep times. The tools used to do so haven't changed, only the technology behind them.

"I Happen to Know Something About Tornadoes"

PCs with certain skills and backgrounds can be very useful in an adventure or campaign featuring tornadoes. They typically will have received some measure of training involving the study, prediction or survival of tornadic weather.

PCs hailing from worlds with tornadic weather will be familiar with the proper safety techniques. They can advise other heroes on how to take cover from the storms, signs that show if one is imminent, and whether an intended survival action is a good idea. As noted before, primitives still attuned to nature can often sense innately if tornadoes are likely to develop.

(Continued on page 47)

Doing It My Way

Scouts receive a broad meteorological overview as part of their planetology and survey studies. Scientists certainly have the option of specializing in atmospheric mechanics or meteorology. A subset of scientists gets up close to the storms and attempt to insert remote sensing devices but many such “storm chasers” are motivated more from the adrenaline rush than pure science.

Two skills can dovetail with tornado knowledge. Pilot skill must have knowledge of wind shear and atmospheric conditions favorable to safe flights, and any PC with Survival skill has at least some knowledge of tornado safety and avoidance.

A Tornado's Impact on the Game

The appearance of a tornado in an adventure can serve many purposes: as a random or background encounter; as an unthinking, unfeeling adversary; as a spur to adventure; as a device to provide clues; or even as a *deus ex machina* should the heroes find themselves in over their heads. Regardless of how

the referee uses a tornado, the result should be to enhance the adventure, not derail or destroy it.

Ship's Locker

THOR (Tornado Haven Optimally Restrained) (10) Cr10,000. This is a higher-tech expression of a safe room. It uses gravitics technology to keep itself anchored to the enclosing structure's foundation and deflect flying debris. Its armor is equivalent to Combat for any debris that does get through.

Tornado Reconnaissance Drone (9) Cr89,500. A remotely-piloted, lifting-body robot designed to enter a tornado funnel (a maneuver called “punching the core”) and take readings and measurements. Basic remote control range is 5 kilometers. Some models have wireless communication systems that allow them to be controlled at longer ranges, even from orbit. At Tech Level B+ low-level AI takes the place of remote control in some models. Against debris damage, its armor is equivalent to Cloth. Weighs 400kg. ☼

Up Close and Personal

Cassius Belli

profiled by Daniel Phelps

This is a lightly-edited version of an article that appeared in the pre-magazine Freelance Traveller website in 2008

Cassius Belli is a human male, apparently in his mid-60s. When asked about his life he replies frankly, “It's been a landscape forlorn hopes and frustrated aspirations.”—not his, but his customers'. He is first and foremost an arms dealer. He always provides the goods; that his customers don't always use them wisely is not his concern. He is the biggest private dealer in previously owned and surplus small arms in the sector, specializing in reliable weapons for the lower-tech, standard-atmosphere market. His inventory typically includes weapons generally considered company level or below and stop well short of ship-killers. He prefers cash-and-carry deals, and anyone needing a consignment has only to contact him or his staff. Once payment had been negotiated

and funds transferred the consignment would be released, or, for an additional fee he would arrange delivery to a mutually-acceptable location by the quickest secure route.

His past is murky. He clearly saw some military service early in his career, and was apparently recruited by and served for several years in an Imperial Intelligence service, but the details are unknown. He does have a nearly encyclopedic knowledge of small arms and their individual faults and foibles.

He has good connections and might be encountered posh but very discreet resorts, restaurants, hotels, casinos, etc. If the PCs control, own or serve as crew on a star ship he may seek to use the vessel to deliver a consignment. While he is above board in his business dealings and will not violate Imperial laws, he is less concerned about planetary laws. Possible scenarios involving him might be kidnap attempts by irate planetary officials, delivery of cargoes and the pickup of merchandise. ☼

Feedback

Please tell us ...

- what you think of both magazine and website
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- how we can make our magazine better
- how we can make our website better
- what kind of articles you do or don't want to see
- what you think of our look
- how we can make it better

Please, give us your opinion! We've provided several ways you can do so:

- e-mail: feedback@freelancetraveller.com.

- feedback form at <http://www.freelancetraveller.com/infocenter/feedback/ftfbf.html>.
- Forums:
Traveller Fanzine section of SFRPG: <http://www.sfrpg-discussion.net/phpBB3/viewforum.php?f=36>
Lone Star at Citizens of the Imperium: <http://www.travellerrpg.com/CotI/Discuss/forumdisplay.php?f=13>
Note: you must be registered with the forums to be able to use this method.

Traveller on the Internet

IRC: The #Traveller and #LoneStar channels

Freelance Traveller sponsors channels for *Traveller* fans on the Undernet and Otherworlders IRC networks, and the two channels are "bridged" so that if you're visiting either, you can see what's going on in the other, and talk to people there. For more information about both channels, see our informational pages at <http://www.freelancetraveller.com/infocenter/travnet.html#IRC> and <http://www.freelancetraveller.com/infocenter/travchat/index.html>. Come talk "live" with other *Traveller* fans about anything at all, *Traveller* or not, and make both channels "jumping" places to hang out!

You can also run "play-by-IRC" game sessions in either channel; please stop in and ask one of the channel operators (FreeTrav or EMT_Hawk) to schedule it, so we can ensure that the 'bridge' and the 'bartender' are set into a nondisruptive mode.

Please watch the *Traveller* Mailing List, the *Mongoose Traveller* forum, and the *Lone Star* section of the *Citizens of the Imperium* forum for announcements of Topical Talks!

News About Traveller

Recent Traveller News and Findings

May 2015

- **Far Future Enterprises** has released *Classic Traveller Special Supplement 4: The Lost Rules*.
- **Christian Hollnbuchner** has released *Starships Book 1000000: Trident Interstellar Scout*, *Starships Book 1000001: Light Escort Cruiser*, and *Space Stations XIV: Breakers Yard*.
- **Mongoose Publishing** has released *Borderland Profile: Tanith*.
- **Terra/Sol Games** has released *Six Guns: Lasers*.
- **Gypsy Knights Games** has released *Clement Sector Player's Guide*.
- **Felbrigg Herriot** has released *Decopedia Volume 1*.



Submission Guidelines

What is *Freelance Traveller* looking for?

We're looking for anything and everything to do with *Traveller* – reviews of products, house rules, alternate settings, NPC profiles, world write-ups, adventures, equipment, starships, fiction, “color” articles... If you see it in *Freelance Traveller*, or on our website, we're interested in it. Even if you don't see it in the magazine or on the website, we might be interested; write to *editor@freelancetraveller.com* and ask.

Some things that we want that you might not think of as “*Traveller*” would include reviews of non-*Traveller* products that easily lend themselves to being ‘mined’ for ideas for use in *Traveller*, or reviews of fiction (in any medium) that “feels” like *Traveller* in some way. In these cases, your article should focus on the *Traveller*-esque aspects of the item. There may be other things, as well; if you're not sure, write and ask.

What about ...

The rule of thumb is “If it's a *Traveller* ruleset, or a setting that has been published for use with a *Traveller* ruleset, go for it!”. That includes the non-Official *Traveller* Universe settings that have been published for use with any version of the *Traveller* ruleset, including (but not limited to) *Judge Dredd*, *Strontium Dog*, *Babylon 5*, *Reign of Diaspora*, *Twilight Sector*, the two GURPS variants on the Official *Traveller* Universe, *Avenger Enterprises' Far Avalon*, and the forthcoming *Traveller Prime Directive*, and any others we may have forgotten.

...Hyperlite?

We've made the decision to support *Hyperlite* as though it were an alternate *Traveller* setting, much like *Twilight Sector* or *Reign of Diaspora*. The changes that Sceptune Games has made to *Traveller* to get *Hyperlite* aren't really much more than the differences between Classic *Traveller*, *MegaTraveller*, *Marc Miller's Traveller*, and *Mongoose Traveller*, and converting between any of those systems and *Hyperlite*, in either direction, should be ‘trivial’.

... Diaspora, or Starblazer Adventures?

If your article is about “crossing over” between these products and any of the “standard” or supported *Traveller* rulesets or settings, by all means, submit it! If it's support for those systems beyond *Traveller*, we'll accept and hold

the submission, but will not print it unless/until we've had a reasonable level of expression of interest in such support from our readers.

How should I submit my article?

What needs to be in the submission?

At the very minimum, we need the submission itself, your name (for credit), and a valid email address to contact you at if we need to.

What format should I submit it in?

That depends on what you're submitting. Generally:

Text should be submitted in Microsoft Rich Text Format (RTF), Microsoft Word 2003 (DOC) or 2007/2010 (DOCX), OpenOffice Writer (ODT), or plain text (TXT). Most word processors will support one of those; if yours seems not to, please write to us for assistance. Avoid PDF if at all possible; it is difficult to reformat PDFs for our magazine or website.

Graphics should be submitted in the format that's best for the type of graphic. Most of the time, that will be GIF, PNG, or JPG/JPEG. Submitting in higher resolutions is better; we have tools to resample a picture to make it smaller if we need to – but it's not possible to make a picture larger without it becoming pixellated.

If you're submitting a graphic that you'd like to see us use for a cover of an issue, please make sure that it will fit nicely on both US Letter and ISO A4 pages – we'll crop the picture to fit, to avoid distorting shapes, so please leave reasonable “margins”; don't run “critical” imagery right to the edge where it will look bad if we crop it. A good resolution is 100 dpi or more.

Plans (deck plans, building plans, maps, etc.) may be better submitted in a vector-based format such as CorelDRAW! format (CDR) or any format that can be imported into CorelDRAW! X4. Scalable Vector Graphics (SVG), Windows Metafile (WMF), Enhanced Metafile (EMF), Encapsulated PostScript (EPS), or Microsoft Visio (VSD) are some common vector formats that can be imported.

How do I get it to you?

Email it to us at our submissions address, *submissions@freelancetraveller.com*. Your subject line should specify the type of article that it is, and what section you think it should be put in, e.g., “Combat Rules for Doing It My Way”.

