

alternative realities in a universe nearby

Words assembled by rebelart.cyber-pod.com

As the game years pass I find my self spending more and more time in the GDI Battle and Babble Bunker, talking with the other dudes in the Galactic Defense Initiative, helping them with answers to their "what to build next" questions whilst providing moral support and motivation. (A real life month is equal to 1 game year.)

In the BBBunker I spend most of my time with BrewPaw, a C.A.D designer from South Dakota; fellow aussie Repinz who is just starting his university degree in Woolongong and GroG who runs an internet café on the banks of the Amazon River in Peru. Other main babblers are Kirazo, a ninja from nmbidgee, Fallenmotto from Alaska, SystemX from foggy old London, kinin from Spain, rescawen from Finland and osodrac from Portugal.

Another standout member of the GDI is sdtom, a quadriplegic. He reckons he has a huge advantage over the rest of the GDI because he has plenty of time to play the game and no one tells him he is wasting his time, instead they tell him its good for him to have an alternative reality, that its good therapy to exist in a universe where arms and legs are not a factor.

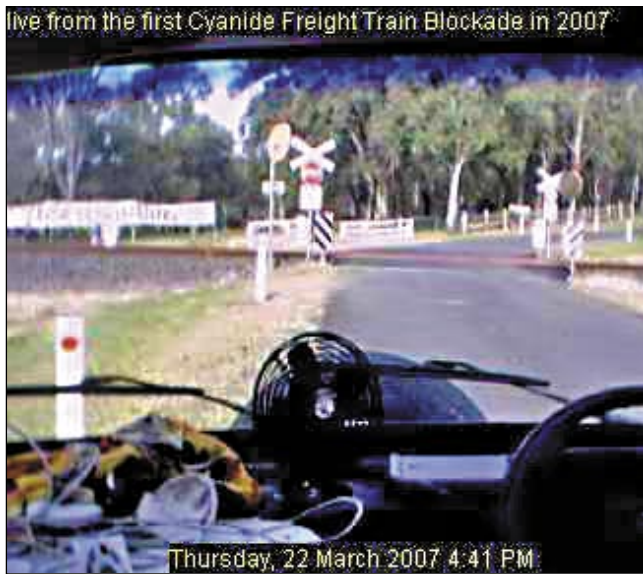
Age is not much of a barrier either, the youngest GDI is 13 years old, and neither is our oldest (50) our best. There is even an entire household of GDI somewhere in Omaha, mum dad, both teenage sons and daughter all play, a house where 'the game' is the main topic of conversation at the breakfast and dinner tables. Chores and homework all get done on time and they attack as a family unit with hilarious results.

Once you been plugged into the universe for a while, you will find out that all the long term gamers call it "Ocrack" and talk about their "Addiction" same as at an AA or NA meeting. You can hear how they shape their lives to ensure that they maximise the clock, setting the alarm for 3.04am to watch the attack, make a couple of mouse clicks, reset alarm clock to 5.18 to be there for the return of the fleet and so on, a thing I have promised myself I would never do. It's a promise I have broken only once, but it was an attack I just had to make. I was short on duet for a research upgrade and, to quote BrewPaw, "Power napping with one eye open is part of what makes me a great gamer."

After 6 months of ocrack, I went into vacation mode, this meant I couldn't be attacked, it also meant that I couldn't build anything, sort of the equivalent of going into deep sleep and during my time in the freezer, I spent a lot of time in another universe inside a very different sort of battle ship in a VERY different sort of campaign....

Real Life vs Game Life

I strapped my self into the seat of the main control panel of the peacebus.net webcasting unit. All was in readiness even before John Peace had finished the start up procedure of the diesel engine, and quick as a wink we were rumbling off down the potholed dirt road live webcasting our way towards our first mission of the 007 Campaign. A great moment, the realisation of seven years of careful building towards this live webcam ability. To my mind, the peacebus.net had never run as smooth, JP having been methodically rebuilding every moving part



until the chances of mechanical breakdown were as close to zero as possible. Another sunny day was splashing through the windows causing me to reflect that rain had never dampened a peacebus.net or peacebus.com action for that matter, I search back through the memory banks and couldn't think of a one of them.

Over the hills and round the corners as smooth as smooth could be, webcam and satellite hook up clicking along superbly, green lights right across the control panel, through Kyogle and then down the last stretch, past the police line and onwards to the trackside vigil site. Enroute, we paused the peacebus.net on the train line, we had no intention of parking the peacebus.net on the line to stop the train, that came later, our task was to 'capture the track scene' and then proceed to the other side of the tracks to join up with peacebus.com and launch the laptops to capture the action. We straddled the tracks for I am not sure how many left right left right head swivels the ever alert JP made, he was cycling at about 2 seconds per swivel, 10 to the webcam image! Soon as we had 4 images uploaded, so JP engaged the clutch and off we rolled just as the police came up to tell us to move.

Off the bus with the lappies, uploading to the website every 20 seconds, first down to capture the scene trackside and then deployed to the grassy knoll across the other side of the train line long enough to capture the 'flare demonstration' of the component of the blockade and then, as the light was failing and whilst already starting to pack up, being asked by the police to move on as they tightened down the security perimeter, 'strictly' in accordance with the legislation.

Time passes like quicksilver treacle, sun now down, dark all around, except for light from lanterns glinting off reflective vests and the eyes and teeth of anxious activists, some mouths frothing at the sight of so many POLICE, tension until the Train appears, TRAIN STOPS. Train stays STOPPED. Train blasts horn in such a way that I recall a far away morning in 1999, another bus, another train, another crossing... Rolling on the Cannabus with the BiG Joint on the roof heading down for the NSW Drug Summit, the Sydney Harbour Bridge, a line of cars all matching speed with the Cannabus and the passenger train blowing its horn in response to all the other horns going off in that impromptu parade.

Horn blasts again, back to track side, train still standing still, more horns, more reflections, train moves, cyanide passes. Darkness all around. Back to blockade camp, hot cups of chai and conversation. First successful train stop since Ned Kelly tried, I realise, and upload that metaphor to the website.

A north bound freight appears, security perimeter enforced once more, ignored by us, no movement in our camp towards the police line, south bound freights our only interest. As the candles in the lanterns gutter, I depart the scene in another bus, leaving the two peacebuses and others in vigil, full of images heading back to home to download,

Photo Galleries to build, movies to edit and more words to write and a few more upload cycles and then, maybe then, I'll come out of vacation mode in the www.ogame.org for a couple of weeks, couple of weeks tops, mardigrass is just around the corner and I got a lot of webcasting to do then as well.

Hands around the World

by Binnah

We here on the North Coast don't adhere so much to the whole terror and fear mentality that permeates mainstream society at present. That's why we're here, exploring better ways to live together.

But where do we look to find what underpins our new hope on surviving these challenging times of global warming and family instability??

Some things never change – such as the Ancient Wisdoms of Indigenous Elders and their understandings and knowledge of our interaction with and connection to the Natural World and beyond.

The lack of this deep and ancient connection to our Mother the Earth leads business leaders and politicians into making decisions which are ultimately to the detriment of our selves, our families and indeed all life.

As Professor David Suzuki has been suggesting for years now, it is time to listen to the wisdom of the elders and incorporate the resulting understandings into our daily life again. With the understandings received from the elders of where we really fit into the scheme of things, we can bring values such as reverence and respect for all life back to a daily practice.

In this way we dispel the darkness of fear, ignorance and insecurity. This is where it starts. If the concepts of 'What the Bleep Do we Know' and 'The Secret' are right - that we all must take responsibility for what is created, then all the other 'messy gritty' thoughts that help create plagues and weeds and wars will be cleaned up along the way.

Dwal Khul, the travelling Tibetan monk, said as much in the 1948 book 'A Treatise on White Magic'.

The whole concept of 'Terror' will wither on the vine as we all now tune into the healing of the elders' words and live our lives through the eyes of the wisdom keepers.

To this end, locally

based group Hands Around the World <www.handsaroundtheworld.com.au> are facilitating and hosting a group of American and Canadian Indigenous people and others to our shores on a tour of sharing knowledge and promoting peace – particularly with the young in our communities.

The overseas guests arrive in June for 'The Dreaming' International Indigenous Festival, held at Woodford where the ceremony and healing will commence. They then plan a tour of universities, schools and communities throughout the country.

Hands Around the World have been invited to come to the communities around Uluru in Central Australia by Uncle Bob Randall of the film 'Kanyini' fame. Hands Around the World have also been eagerly

invited to many communities in most states - to places which only recently we were reminded, lack general respect and suffer family breakdown that is challenging everyone.

Hands Around the World are calling for the community to join them. Come to the Extravaganza being held in Nimbin Hall on 3rd June.

Drumming, ceremony and knowledge-sharing through Story in the afternoon, with a special appearance by Cherokee grandmother Pa'is'ha, gives way to music and dance in the evening.

It is up to the open hearts and future vision of us here in First Light country to dig deep in every way to ensure the elders can spread their healing energy around while they are here - bonding and strengthening connection with our Indigenous elders. In this way, we 'ground the land' and help grow healthy community again.

After all, we of First Light are the 'visionaires' aren't we? It is with all our help that this vision will become reality. Come and join hands in a circle. It's a powerful thing to do, particularly when we (at least figuratively) join Hands Around the World.



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