

MANDALORIAN MERCS

BATTLE CRY

ISSUE 11

DRAGON CON

A survival guide.

BUILDING A SET

We look behind the scenes of Celebration.

VIRTUAL TOUR

Looking at the final Celebration booth.

ANAHEIM 2015
**STAR WARS
CELEBRATION**

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KELDABE TALK RADIO

OFFICIAL PODCAST OF THE MANDALORIAN MERCS

Launched on December 1st 2007, Keldabe Talk Radio discusses all things Mandalorian and Mandalorian Mercs related. With a dedicated team made up of Mercs members, the show airs once a month and is ready to tackle the hot topics regarding Star Wars.

FIND US ON THE MERCS



WELCOME

We're coming up on the 3 month mark since Celebration Anaheim kicked off, and if you made the journey out then I'm sure you're also suffering from "Celebration Withdrawal" like the rest of us. Once again MMCC surpassed it's previous Celebration appearances, and set a new bar to reach for future Celebration appearances.

Now it's time to look forward to Celebration Europe 2016, and building up required to put on another outstanding show for the fans. We absolutely cannot do this without your support, and we'll have some great fundraising items for members to purchase soon.

I would also like to ask that you keep our brother-in-arms, Patrick Roberts from Oceahawks Clan, in your thoughts as he continues to recover and rehabilitate from a motorcycle collision on May 15th. You can keep up with Patrick's progress on his CaringBridge webpage at the following link:

<http://www.caringbridge.org/visit/patrickroberts>

OYA!

Tom Hutchens
Mandalore the Uniter
Founder/CO MMCC



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Battle Cry has a UK English Editor but all US English contributions have not been changed. The Mercs are an International club where all cultures and languages are respected.

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SURVIVING

DRAGON CON

Dragon Con can be fun, but can also be miserable if you aren't careful. Plan out what you want to do and follow this guide so you're somewhat prepared for what will happen once you get there. As long as you are aware of the potential issues you can sit back relax and enjoy one of the biggest con events of the year in the southeast.

1. Make sure that you are ready to take a long hike in kit during summer.

It's summer; when the parade happens it can only be described by lifetime southerners as "comfortable". For the rest of the Mercs it's hot, humid, and soul crushing long. Be prepared with fans in your helmet and get ready to take a long hike in your kit. Troop long southern parades in the summer with pieces likely to fall off during a long walk removed. With the traffic and prep time this can be close to 2 hours from the time you walk over to the starting area until the end of the parade.

2. Get your schedule planned out now.

Practical time management and preparation for delays is essential. Even with prior planning, things can go wrong, organizers will change routes and destinations on the fly, so even exits from rooms can be closed off.

3. Hydration is the key to everything!

The most important part of this con is staying well hydrated. It's summer in the south and there are lots of late night activities. If you don't stay hydrated you can easily end up dizzy and missing large chunks of the con.

4. Be ready to enjoy all the entertainment that is Naast Clan.

Naast Clan is full of all sorts of interesting characters whose only goal is to have a fun time at the largest con in the area. So get ready to stroke Krango's beard, play find the Stealth Detachment members, feed Darthdubious a banana, or get Ba'kuri to draw you a chibbi. Finally, be ready to miss them when you have gone home.

5. Be prepared to see things you can't unsee.

There are things we all see at cons that mess with our mind a little bit, and Dragon Con seems to be chock full of them. Be ready for the bearded Slave Leia, the uncomfortable hugging banana, the world's largest gathering of Deadpools and a whole lot of things that you don't even know will be there until you show up.

6. Do download the Dragon Con app (but don't update it).

It's useful and a great way to schedule things. It beats all other ways of looking at the con schedule. But do not update the Dracon Con App, as they have a history of royally messing up the app about a day or two before the event starts.

8. Plan out your Dragoncon after dark activities and costumes.

Put some effort into them, because almost everyone else there is going to do so. The con after dark events really make this con unique in its existence.

- Zexus

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Manda'galaar's goal for the MMCC Celebration 7 display was to create a series of rooms which would make the visitor feel as if they were walking through a spaceship. In addition to the sets themselves, the Clan included a variety of exciting hands-on elements to add realism and atmosphere to the display. Take a brief tour to discover the amazing environment created for C7.

The first room in the series was a cantina - a lounge where Mandos would go to unwind after duty. San Diego's Haran'galaar Clan built this bar and modeled it after the Cantina scene in a New Hope. There were tables to sit at and kick back with a drink or play a game of cards, and Star Wars drink advertisements covered the walls, for everything from Endor Ale to Rebel Cola.



Next, con-goers entered the bounty hunt room. Throughout the con, the MMCC ran a charity bounty hunt and this was the base of operations for this activity. Here the set included jail cells that the mandalorians could use for prisoners, safely locking away the con's most wanted rogues and scoundrels. The room also had 2 computer monitors mounted on the wall that displayed wanted posters. Matt Seinrich from Robot Chicken and Grant Imahara from Mythbusters were two of the celebrities who allowed the MMCC to use their images on the posters, and throughout the day different images were displayed on the monitors.





A separate room included jail cells for photo ops. Holorecords from C6 indicate that this was one of the most popular parts of the display. The room included Mandalore's throne and a Bossk in carbonite, both great photo ops, as well as the jail cells designed to look like Clone Wars cells complete with horizontal laser effects in photographs.

Continuing on, visitors come to the bridge. Here was another great photo op - people could sit down at the bridge counsel and command the ship. Another unique hands on feature for kids of all ages could be found at the two computer monitors mounted into the bridge. Each one ran the x wing vs. tie fighter game so that players could feel as if they were actually piloting the ship, shooting different enemies.



Finally, the tour ends in the hanger. Here the Mandalorian speeder was on display, along with a gonk droid and weapons wall. Visitors could pose with another control panel, or stand with a giant gun turret. This room also included the Mercs' outreach tables with all sorts of great items to showcase Merc Clans from all over the world. - Misha

SHRIEKHAWK

THE MANDO SPEEDER

LANDS

Whether you attended Star Wars Celebration Anaheim in person or saw the avalanche of photos from the event virtually, you have probably heard that the Mandalorian Mercs Costuming Club unveiled an incredibly unique prop at the event.

Thanks to the talent and hard work of our very own Mandalore, Tom Hutchens, and the contributions of the members themselves, the Mandalorian Speeder was completed on time and a huge draw at the con. But what did it take to create this vehicle and transport it to California? And what are the Club's plans for it in the future? Battlecry reporter Misha interviewed the Mandalore for an inside peek at the entire process.

Tom explained that the Mandalorian Speeder was a project that's been "in the works" for quite some time. "The thought process behind it started right after 2012 after C6," reasoned Tom. "I had built the one-man assault speeder we had on display at C6 and everyone kept wanting something a little bigger. They liked the speeder, but they wanted something that highlighted the mandalorians a bit better. Something that was our own. There wasn't anything out back then that was really mandalorian specific at the time, except the speeder bike and swoop vehicle, but the bike didn't really seem to be big enough. In late December, Lego came out with the Mandalorian Speeder Toy that was based on the vehicle that was shown in season 5 of the Clone Wars. I saw that and thought hm...THAT would be the vehicle we would need to do. If we're going to do a large prop like that, that's the one - it's so big! The only thing I could think about at that point was how can we do this and make something that would work, something that you could actually drive around? And that's how the idea was born."

As many of us who "dream big" when we plan our armor can relate, bringing that idea to fruition is equal parts research and problem solving. To create the speeder, it was necessary to not only plot out how to create the actual vehicle with its custom body but to also gather information on exactly how to make it drivable. Other considerations included how to be able to take it different places, such as both local and national events and conventions. Because the vehicle is something that had never been done before there were really no references to view besides the Lego toy and one concept image from the TV show. This meant the design and engineering of it would have to come straight from imagination, relying on Tom's skills and knowledge to bring it out into reality. So it required a great deal of research for both design and creation.

Research complete, our Mandalore was ready to build. The speeder started out as an old 1987 EzGo golf cart. This small cart would form the basis of the vehicle but would need heavy modifications to become "swarsy." First, it had to be modified so that passengers could sit in it and sit low to give the illusion of hovering. To accomplish this goal, the cart was cut in half and templates for a new chassis were created.



The templates were then all machined out, welded and bolted together, extending the frame by 32 inches. With the transformation of the frame complete, passengers could now sit on what was once the floor of the golf cart. But this structure needed to be safe and sturdy, so an additional support frame was created.

Already it may seem like there was a great deal of engineering that went into this project and Tom was very lucky to have access to people who could assist with that portion of the project. Once the frame was complete, Mandalore himself lent his years of knowledge of prop designing and building to the speeder too, building off the frame to create the recognizable shape of the vehicle. A plywood frame was created around the cart using hand-drawn templates with the curves to match closely to the speeder toy. Cardboard templates, transferred to wood paneling, were used that to make the ribs and support structure for the body. While matching the curved form was tough. One of the hardest parts of the build was carving down the body itself. For the front part of the speeder a 2 part spray foam (5 gallons worth) was used to pour over the frame and create a material to carve. It expands, hardens, and can then be carved down with a sander. Tom used a hand saw and a sander to cut and sand them down, in order to give the body the contours and rounded complex curves we recognize from the Lego toy.

So how long does it take to build this type of large prop? And how much did it cost? If you're thinking about trying to do so at home there are definitely a few considerations to keep in mind. The entire build for the prop took about a year and a half. Tom explained that the timeline for the build included almost every weekend and almost every bit of spare time he had away from work. He worked primarily outdoors, having to set up popup tents and working through extreme heat and high temperatures of summer and the frigid cold winter to keep the build moving forward. The build was both physically and mentally demanding, especially having to work for long periods of time in weather that reached over 100 degrees. There was also a monetary cost to the project, as anyone who chipped in for a Speeder Project patch will recall. The total cost of the project for materials was \$7,000. The members' donations and patch sales paid for the majority of the materials, but there was still a personal cost - about \$1,000 of the project was paid for out of the Mandalore's own pocket. It's important to understand that while this prop is absolutely amazing, there was definitely a cost associated with it and one that must be considered if we plan to create additional large scale props in the future.

One of the most exciting aspects of the speeder is that it is fully functional as far as vehicles on Earth go. Even though it's based on a vehicle in the SW universe it is actually drivable. According to Tom, "It's the only one of its kind in the world. As far as I know it's the largest fan made prop that's functional in the world. Definitely the largest speeder, fan built and possibly even movie built." Even Steve Sansweet, president of Rancho Obi-Wan, was impressed. At Celebration Anaheim he examined the speeder closely and talked about the actual props used in the movies. Only a few of those could actually run, and the static stationary move props cost \$50,000 or more to build! While there were some functional speeders in Episode 4, nothing like the speeder that's been built today making this vehicle quite the accomplishment for the MMCC.

What's next for the speeder? Tom hopes that it is a prop that will soon be seen nationwide, similar to Roxy the Rancor. However, taking the speeder to Celebration proved to be, unfortunately, not cheap. For the trip to Anaheim, the Mercs banded together to raise enough money for an 8.5 ft x 20 ft box trailer to transport the speeder, officially named "Shriek-Hawk" (or "Jai'galaar" in Mando'a), along with peripherals and other convention props. But how exactly do we get this trailer and speeder around the country? Currently, members of the club with capable vehicles are called upon to haul this trailer wherever it needs to go locally. But to get it around the country, the option of renting a truck becomes prohibitively expensive. So the next logical step is to raise the funds necessary to purchase a truck specifically to pull the trailer. Tom is hoping the Mercs will once again heed the call of Mandalore and raise enough money to purchase a vehicle that can take the speeder around the country to multiple cons and other big events.



Australia**Sandhawk Clan**

facebook.com/SandhawkClan

Brazil**South East - Vode An Clan**

facebook.com/vodeanbrasil

Canada**Alberta - Hett'ciri Clan**

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Manitoba - Vhetin'Ade Clan

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Quebec - Gaht Kyr'bes Clan

facebook.com/quebecmandos

Europe**Belgium - Twin Suns**

facebook.com/mmctwinsuns

Germany - Jai'galaar Clan

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Holland - Diryc Vhetin Clan

facebook.com/clandirycvhetinr

United Kingdom - Vok'chi Clan

facebook.com/VokChi

Mexico**BigFang Clan**

facebook.com/BigFangClan.Mexico

United States of America**Arizona - Shonare Vhekadla Clan**

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California (LA) - Manda'galaar Clan

facebook.com/mandagalaarclan

California North - Teren Clan

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California South East - Skirata Clan

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California (San Diego)

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Colorado - Cerar

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Florida - Buurenaar-Verda Clan

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Texas North - Murraan Clan

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Texas South - Zakkeg Clan

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Texas East - Arqet Clan

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Individual members - Freelancers Guild

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You can arrange a tour with master collector and author Steve Sansweet, plan a birthday party, or organize a corporate event at **Rancho Obi-Wan** by emailing info@ranchoobiwan.org

Rancho Obi-Wan depends on generous public support and your contribution may be tax deductible. Become a member, tour the museum or simply donate.

For more information, visit us at www.ranchoobiwan.org

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BEHIND THE SCENES

The task of hosting Celebration, whether it is the stateside event or the European fete, is a monumental undertaking. It all starts with the announcement of the location for the next Celebration. In 2014, Anaheim, California, was selected for 2015 and the wheels were set in motion for the MMCC's involvement with the world's largest Star Wars themed convention. But which Clan would have the honor of hosting the event? California is split up into four main sections: Northern California, San Diego, Greater Los Angeles, and the Desert, but as Anaheim is in the LA region that meant that Celebration would be in Manda'galaar Clan's territory.

With the host Clan selected, Manda'galaar's officers gathered together to determine a theme and design for the booth. The Clan's Ver'alor, now our Chief Administrative Officer, Kaden'Dha Runi, explained that the group spent a great deal carefully planning out how to create an experience that would not simply represent the Mercs but would provide con-goers with a unique immersive experience. Beginning with a discussion of what they'd seen at past cons, and what had been successful, the officers quickly established the booth's goal of having an interactive area. Kaden described the initial vision of the booth as to have an appeal and hands-on activities for kids of all ages, whether children or "big kid" adults, with places for them to push buttons, move levers, and shoot guns. The planners also hoped to create an experience that was bigger and better than anything the Mercs had ever attempted before; something that would eclipse past Celebrations while still being appropriate and linked to the Club.

Once completed, the MMCC's space at Celebration was far more than simply an information table and a few small scale displays. The planning team did an amazing job creating not one but FIVE rooms that seemed to pop right out of the Star Wars Universe. The rooms included a cantina, two rooms of jail cells, a bridge scene and a hangar. Each was planned to include a photo op or have a specific purpose, such as the location for the bounty hunt, and the booth was so popular it was packed with people from open to close each day of the event.



What did it take to make this large scale event such a rousing success? Kaden simply laughs heartily and says “a lot of blood, sweat, and tears.” But that simple statement barely begins to describe the hard work and perseverance that went into creating this memorable event. The displays themselves were the work of multiple members and Clans. A core group of 5-6 members of Manda’galaar Clan, working during nearly every armor party, along with a support team of members who helped out whenever they could. All in all it took the clan 10 months to build more than 30 6 ft by 8 ft walls and jail cells for the display, working first once or twice a month and up to every weekend for the last 4 months of the build. San Diego’s Haran’galaar Clan stepped in to build the cantina scene and its tables, and Southeast California’s Skirata Clan created the bridge counsel set. Individuals stepped in to help with the build too; our Mandalore created the speeder, throne, gonk droid, and hangar control panel while Western Regional Commander Hagen No’rak created the Bossk in carbonite. While Kaden supplied the computer monitors that were used in the sets, Riv Serulius assisted with the setup and running of these elements. In order to manage the various events and services provided at the booth, such as merchandise sales and the charity fundraiser bounty hunt, Kaden drew on members across the Country. These individuals became Team Captains, agreeing to manage each individual task. Corey, our Quartermaster, handled the merchandise sales, Ken Snaps led the Bounty Hunt, Ulrik ran the Death March, and Tal Greyheed managed the staffing of the booth. Each of these Mercs went above and beyond the call of duty by taking on these roles and each contributed to the success of the event. And of course multiple official members worked from open to close to staff the booth. Kaden notes he is especially proud of the members for this achievement as the MMCC never shut down during the day or had any restrictions; we were able to keep the booth running for the entire con even though it was extremely busy. Kaden emphasizes that “It’s important to remember that this achievement was not just Mandalagalaar Clan’s work. It was not just southern California convention. It took the whole club coming together to make this a living, breathing, fun activity for everyone.”

We can be particularly proud of not only the reactions from the booth visitors, who took lots of photos and clearly enjoyed the set, but also from the professionals. Dave Filoni, Mary Franklin, and several voice actors stopped by the display and all were very impressed and delighted with the atmosphere created by the Club. Clearly this was an event that showcased not only our Club’s creativity and build abilities, but also an opportunity to provide a fun atmosphere for everyone to share their love of Star Wars and Mercs. It was a great success thanks to the hard work of the many hands who worked together to make this event come alive!

Kaden’s Tips for a Successful Event:

- Get as many ideas from as many people as possible. You can always sift through them later.
- Spend time carefully planning the event. This will save time, energy, and money in the long run. This will also allow you to organize getting materials and the build plan too.
- Always plan for the unthinkable; mistakes WILL happen.
- And be sure to budget a little bit of extra money too, that way you will not have to depend upon one or two people if sudden expenses occur.



IRON CRUSADE

PART 6 - Blue flash!



Iron Crusade was the name of a Mandalorian-centric game that, as sadly seems to be the case with most great ideas, never saw completion. However, we at Battle Cry don't let a story go to waste, so we asked Kell Ordo to rewrite his script as a story and every issue we'll get to play the game in our imaginations!

Kael Reached down and felt at the padded neck of a fallen member of Tal'kara checking for vitals as Beviin and SI-83 repulsed an entrenched team of mercenaries. Throat clenched, Kael felt for movement, breath, anything that would say that his clan mate was still alive. When no sign came he sprang to his feet and joined the barrage of fire in complete disregard of cover or his own well being. All his rage poured into his weapon and then seemingly out the barrel in the form of bright red bolts of cohesive energy as he tried not to remember the name of the fallen, but the memories came anyway.

Wyver had started out as an immovable obstacle to Kael's well being, then was a pivotal force in his adoption into his new family. During the early months of armor and patrol training Wyver had gone out of his way to reassure Kael that not only would he survive the initiation, but that he would prosper beyond his wildest dreams. Tears rolled down Kael's cheeks as the victims of his rage attempted to fall back and retreat down the tight alleyway. Muscle memory doing exactly what it was supposed to do, he snatched a frag grenade off his belt and hurled it with more fury than skill. The canister came down short but rolled next to the cover of one attacker forcing them into a desperate dive.

The motion was cut short as one of Kael's blaster bolts caught him in the back of the head and the body flopped to the ground with a loud crack of plasteel. As the grenade exploded the rest of the mercenaries broke and ran and the blood raged mandalorian gave chase, trying to vault the makeshift barricade. He would chase them to the ends of Mandalore, of the galaxy, and take their lives with his bare hands. That would make his friend happy, a fitting memorial to the great warrior.

Half over the barricade, he suddenly fell backwards as something yanked on his belt. Gravity now in control, Kael dropped a short distance and came to a sudden stop as the dull pop of plate on plate rolled through his body. Elbows flew backwards as armored boots kicked out wildly.

Everything suddenly shifted sidelong as he slammed hard into what had to be a wall. Pain was dulled by his current state, but he could feel pressure on his neck and left forearm. Kael flailed with his right arm till he struck something hard. A target marked, he continued to strike that point. Impact rolled up his arm again and again until he finally opened his eyes.

Beviin stood before him, a hand on his left wrist and a forearm under his chin. Suddenly aware that he had been hitting the veteran's chest plates, Kael gained control of himself and unclenched his fist.

"Are you good?" Beviin asked, true concern marking his voice.

"No." Kael managed with a shaky voice. "But there's still more to do."

"We will honor them later." Beviin let him go and gave him a moment to collect himself. "I've got a location for the leader of this mess. Lets go give him the bill for his stay."

"Will that be in Galactic Credits or the more local Wupiupi?" SI-83 inquired.

"How 'bout you take point then and go find out for us." Beviin replied in a tone that oozed sarcasm.

"Right away Alor'ad!" And with that the war-droid smashed full bore into the barricade, shattering it into scraps. With a firm hand, Beviin clasped Kael's shoulder and gave him a firm shake.

"You can do this, and I need you." The veteran confided.

"I'm yours." Kael replied. He would see this through or die trying.

The team moved from the street into a large building with boarded up windows and a door hanging from broken hinges. Kael



couldn't tell if the state of this structure was from the battle or merely the common standard in Keldabe. Beviin and Kael found cover among the shelves stuffed with boxes and plasteel crates as SI-83 openly marched down the aisle. The shelves gave way to an open speeder dock where three people were waiting.

A figure wrapped in a dark gray, concealing robe examined a cylindrical power processor. The other was an older man clad in plasteel armor emblazoned with a gold bird circled by a chain, clearly the symbol of the mercenaries responsible. The third was Tal'kara's Ver'alor, Cassus. The middle aged Mandalorian looked strange to Kael as he had never seen him injured, but here he stood with his helmet off showing a bruised and bloody face as the mercenary twisted Cassus' arm behind his back restraining him.

"Make another move" The mercenary threatened. "And your friend dies." He pushed the blaster in his hand against the man's head, ensuring his point was made.

"What are your terms?" Beviin asked.

"Simple." The mercenary replied in a suddenly cheerful and approachable tone. "My friend and I leave with what we came for and this guy goes free. Is that agreeable?"

Kael tensed for action as he waited the long seconds for his leaders reply, but without warning Cassus lunged for the cloaked figure. In an instant his hand was on the cylinder, then in the air as it flew towards Kael. Job complete, Cassus turned back to the mercenary with a gauntleted back hand. Kael snatched the object from the air, then looked to Beviin for suggestions on what to do next.

Just as the blow was about to land the startling sound of a lightsaber hissed to life as a blue light filled the room. With a single, fluid motion the woman plunged the blade into Cassus' open flank.

"No!" Beviin shouted as he and SI-83 began spraying the pair.

"That's enough." The woman stated and waved a hand concealed in a billowing sleeve sending SI-83 into Beviin and them both into the wall with a loud clatter. "Now you," She turned to Kael. "Give me that."

An invisible hand suddenly yanked at the cylinder and almost pulled it out of Kael's grip. He clamped down with straining fingers and tried to hold on to his hard earned prize. Boots began to slide as Kael's footing gave, his heart froze as the exotic weapon began to loom closer.

The blue blade snapped up as bolts of energy began to assail her from Beviin's sidearm as he got to his feet. The pull on the cylinder disappeared giving Kael the chance to stow the item in a pouch.

A grenade arced across the room, exploded violently, and sent shrapnel everywhere. The mercenary who threw it stood from his cover and grabbed his ally by the wrist.

"Come on, we're leaving."

"But the item!" She protested

"We are about to have two dozen pissed of mandalorians descend on this place," He explained as he pulled the woman out the back door. "I would rather not be here when they arrive."

They were out of sight by the time Kael and his team recovered. SI gave chase as Beviin saw to his Ver'alor. Now having a free moment, Kael pulled the cylinder from his pack and examined it. The frame was a gunmetal plasteel with nicks and scrapes that told the story of common use. Its internal devices seemed equally ordinary. What made this thing so valuable that someone would attack Mandalore to get it?

"Ready to go?" Beviin asked as he stood up from giving solace to the fallen.

"Where?" Kael asked.

"To the spaceport."

"Why?"

"They want that thing, we have it, lets get it off world now." The old veteran shouldered his blaster carbine and went out the back door after SI.

Kael followed Beviin, "But wouldn't keeping it here with the Mando'ade be the safest place for it?"

"Yes. And we're going to let them think that it's still here while we find non-mandalorian transport off planet."

To be continued...





EAR GABBY...

PRACTICAL ADVICE FOR THE PRACTICAL WARRIOR

I'm wondering if I will ever pay off my debts! Here I am again, listening to you lot getting yourselves into trouble again. Why don't you just quit it?

Get a normal job!

Cutting the Competition.

Gear Gabby,

I am always professional when doing business, whether it be Hutt, Empire or Black Sun yet other bounty hunters keep getting jobs ahead of me. Should I be more personable, or should I just kill those other hunters.

Constantly second place.

Kill them. Next!

Who gives me the cash?

Gear Gabby,

I do contracts with both rebels and imperials, which one's a better "long-term investment?"

Briks

Cross that bridge when the money runs out. Next!

Good or bad?

Gear Gabby,

Are Death Watch considered dar'Manda? And is it okay to ruthlessly hunt them down?

Anger Issues

This depends on your point of view, but some would say the Deathwatch are evil, some would say they are heroes trying to bring a sense of purpose back to the people.

I'd say if the pay is good hunt them, but never take business personally.

Keeping it fresh!

Dear Gabby,

Dear Gabby, with summer starting (at least in the Northern Hemisphere) it's starting to get warmer for many of us Mercs. What do you recommend for keeping armor smelling fresh?

Schweaty Mando

It's called "a bath" dear!

Seriously, you should always wash your kit after a sweaty one to prevent the bacteria in your bodily fluids from stankin' up the camp!

Keeping it clean...

Dear Gabby,

While I realize I want to keep some of the dirt and grime on my armor, how do other mandos keep their own armor clean, yet weathered?

Squeaky Clean

Is this Mando hygiene week or something?

Look, whilst some of the boys think it makes you look more deadly to have dirty and scratched up armour, you should be at least getting most of the poodoo off it, or like the last writer will end up reeking like a Reek's backside!

GEAR UP



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FROM THE EDITOR



If you've spent the last few months, like me, dodging all the spoilers for Episode 7: The Force Awakens, then you'll be glad to know that Star Wars: Rebels will be back soon and, hopefully everyone will be talking about that Sith Lord, with that voice returning to the screen.

I'm personally looking forward to seeing how the Empire operate, we know already that they tend to bait and switch their opponents, so I'm readily looking forward to an opportunity being a trap and plenty of tracking devices being placed on ships.

What will that certain apprentice do to affect the show? Will Vader be the recurring villain or will we be seeing him for but a brief episode to really get the Star Wars juices flowing.

What it does mean is that we're all excited about Star Wars again, we have always loved it, but a lot of people got burnt by the prequels. In my case I only take issue with Episode 1, I'm not blaming anyone, I just felt that it was as far away from an adventure rather than a very long explanation.

Remember that the Mercs have had a direct influence with a lot of the things that have gone on within Star Wars, Mandalorians have become very popular and we see more and more of our influence permeate into Star Wars culture. Whilst Disney will want to separate themselves from the Clone Wars, Star Wars: Rebels still give a passing nod to some of the culture, Sabine's helmet and the apprentice come directly to mind, so it is obvious that a lot of the culture and storylines will come as a direct result of that show.

As The Force Awakens goes out, we may be a part of the celebration or we may not. This is where we have to be at our most grounded. We are a small niche of a small niche in the fact that we are not entirely canon and we don't really attract the attention that some of our colleague groups would with their focus on canon.

Things are changing though, I can't really go into it, but there is an acknowledgement that costume groups are becoming as big as Star Wars, I know that is the firm thought of Lucasfilm. If not, why would they approach Anvos with making Stormtrooper armour for both eras? Surely it means that the costuming market now have a viable solution for joining the 501st, without having to rely on the shadier side of costume making.

Will we be affected or even represented? Well, I know for a fact we are appreciated, even if we (by choice, mind) are not appearing at every canon-only event. Our display at Celebration Anaheim was a real head turner, as was the speeder. We are a creative group of people who really work towards a positive outcome.

Celebration London next!

Just a warning about London if you wish to travel, it's an expensive city and prices will only go up, sort your accommodation out as quickly as you can, the arena is not in the city centre, it is further down the Thames, so unless you want a long walk or a sweaty train/bus ride, you may want to get as close as you can.

Happy trooping!

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