Alvy Ray Smith III
Born: Sept. 8, 1943;
Mineral Wells, Texas

Smith co-founded Lucasfilm's Computer Division [Sept 12] and Pixar [Feb 3] with Ed Catmull [March 31].

While at Xerox PARC [July 1] in 1974, Smith worked with Richard Shoup [July 30] on SuperPaint, one of the first raster graphics editor. Smith's major contribution was the creation of the HSV color space.

In 1975, Smith joined the new Computer Graphics Lab at the New York Institute of Technology (NYIT) [Aug 3], where he was given the job title "Information Quanta", and met Ed Catmull and several other future core personnel of Pixar. Smith worked on a series of paint programs, including Paint3, the first true-color raster graphics editor. As part of this, he co-invented the alpha channel.

As director of the Computer Graphics Project at Lucasfilm, Smith created and directed the "Genesis Demo" in "The Wrath of Khan" [June 4]. He also conceived and directed the short film "The Adventures of André & Wally B.", animated by John Lasseter [Nov 0].

At some point in the 1980's, a designer suggested naming a new digital compositing computer the "Picture Maker". Smith thought that the laser-based device needed a catchier name, and came up with "Pixer", which eventually became "Pixar".

After the spin-off from Lucasfilm of Pixar, he served on the board of directors and was executive vice president. According to one Steve Jobs [Feb 24] biography, Smith quit Pixar after a heated argument with Jobs over the use of a whiteboard. It was an unwritten rule that no one other than Jobs was allowed to use it, a rule Smith decided to break in front of everyone.
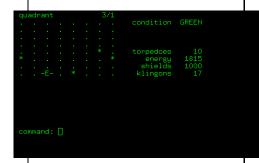
A quote: "After taking LSD, I realized that I could not be a programmer -- I had to do something that had art in it."

Star Trek Premieres
Sept. 8, 1966

The "Star Trek" TV show recounts the five-year mission of the starship USS Enterprise (NCC-1701) to boldly go where no man has gone before. It was broadcast for three seasons (a total of 79 episodes) until June 3, 1969. Some authors have argued that many of the series' fantastical technologies, including the tricorder and personal communicator, went on to influence actual engineeering developments in communications and computing.

"Star Trek" also became the basis for a popular text-based computer game, where the player commands the Enterprise on a mission to hunt down invading Klingon warships. Its success was greatly aided by its inclusion in David Ahl's [May 17] "101 BASIC Computer Games" .

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quadrant          3/1
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.  .  .  .  .  .  .  .
.  .  .  .  .  .  .  .
.  .  .  .  .  *  .  .      torpedoes      10
*  .  .  .  .  .  .  *      energy       1815
.  .  .  .  .  .  .  .      shields      1000
.  .  -E- .  *  .  .  .     klingons       17



command: []
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A Linux version of Star Trek written by James Gibbon. The Enterprise is represented by the "-E-". CC BY-SA 3.0

The game began life during a brainstorming session between Mike Mayfield and several high school friends in 1971. Over the holidays, Mayfield implemented it on an SDS Sigma 7 at the University of California, Irvine. Incidentally, another Sigma 7, at UCLA, was the first machine linked to the ARPANET [Aug 30].

Later that summer Mayfield purchased an HP-35 calculator [Jan 4 and often visited the local Hewlett-Packard sales office looking for help. The manager wisely offered him time on a HP 2000C if he'd port "Star Trek" to it. HP later distributed the game as "STTR1" as part of its "Contributed Programs" tape library. It was this version that David Ahl and Mary Cole eventually recoded in DEC BASIC-PLUS, and Ahl published in his book.

For more "Star Trek", see [June 4], [Nov 26], [Oct 28]. For some less obvious links, see [Jan 3], [Jan 7], [Jan 12], [Feb 14], [March 2], [May 00], [Aug 3], [Oct 11], [Oct 23], [Nov 12], [Dec 10], [Dec 19].

Louis James Montulli II
Born: Sept. 8th, 1970;
Los Angeles, California

During 1991 and 1992 Montulli co-authored the Lynx text web browser [July 22] with Michael Grobe and Charles Rezac. It was one of the first browsers, and is probably the oldest still in general use.

In 1994 he became a founding engineer at Netscape Communications [March 25] and implemented the networking code for the first versions of the Netscape browser. He was also responsible for several innovations, such as HTTP cookies, server push and client pull, HTTP proxying, and the infamous "blink" element. His reasoning for adding the last one was: "I remember thinking that this would be a pretty harmless Easter egg, that no one would really use it, but I was very wrong."

On June 30, 1998, Montulli was awarded a patent for HTTP cookies (US 5774670). He has said the name comes from the phrase "magic cookie" that he

heard in an OS course while at college. One notable appearance of this expression is in the man page for the fseek() function in the C standard library [Jan 1].

Montulli was a founding member of the HTML working group at the W3C [Oct 1] and was a contributing author to the HTML 3.2 specification.

While working on the Netscape browser, Montulli built the Fishcam, the second live image website [Aug 00].

DEC World Afloat
Sept. 8, 1987

DEC [Aug 23] opened the DEC World trade show aboard the "Queen Elizabeth 2" and the "Starship Oceanic" liners in Boston harbor for a 11-day sales pitch, with about 15,000 members of its sales force on hand.

To handle the crowds, the ships docked alongside the World Trade Center and Digital rebuilt the Commonwealth pier to accommodate the ships.

DEC's President Ken Olsen [Feb 20] headed a dazzling opening ceremony. including green laser beams spread out over 120,000 square feet of convention floor space, to visually represent DEC's worldwide network.

Killer Apps
Sept. 8, 1987

The first known publication of the phrase "killer app" was in today's issue of *PC Week*, on p.107, column 2:

"Everybody has only one killer application. The secretary has a word processor. The manager has a spreadsheet."

Most people point to VisiCalc [Oct 19] for the Apple II [June 5] as the first killer app. BYTE wrote in 1980, "VisiCalc is the first program available on a microcomputer that has been responsible for sales of entire systems", while *Creative*

Computing's VisiCalc review was subtitled "reason enough for owning a computer".

Other killer app possibilities include: EasyWriter [March 11] for the Apple II, Lotus 1-2-3 [Jan 26] for the IBM PC [Aug 12], PageMaker [June 15] for the Macintosh [Jan 24], Space Invaders [June 5] for the Atari VCS [Oct 14], Myst [Sept 24] for CD-ROM drives [Sept 1], Halo [Nov 15] for the Xbox, and Sonic the Hedgehog [June 23] for the Sega Genesis [Oct 29].

The exact meaning of the phrase came up during Bill Gates' questioning in the Microsoft antitrust case [Oct 19]. Gates had written an email in which he described Internet Explorer [Aug 16] as a killer app. In the questioning, he said that the term only meant "a popular application", not software that would fuel sales of a larger product (e.g. MS Windows) or one that would supplant its competition (e.g. Netscape [March 25]).

Apple's ARM
Sept. 8 1990

Acorn Computers' [Dec 5] ARM processor [April 26] offered performance comparable to the Motorola 68000 [Sept 26] used in early Macs, but with half as many transistors. This meant that it consumed less power and generated less heat.

On this day, Apple bought a 43% stake in the company for $1.5 billion, in a deal organized by Larry Tesler [April 24]. The intention was to use the chip in the forthcoming Newton [Aug 3].

ARM was split off from Acorn in 1991 and renamed Advanced RISC Machines, to concentrate on making ARM processors. It was a clever move, as ARM chips have come to dominate the mobile phone and PDA markets (e.g. they're used in the iPhone [June 29]).

Unfortunately, Apple sold their stake in ARM a bit too soon in the mid-1990s, netting only $800 million. Nevertheless, the

cash helped Apple keep going during its lean years before the return of Steve Jobs [Sept 16]. Indeed a large part of the money went towards buying NeXT [Feb 2].

Phishing
Sept. 8, 1995

Mike Langberg of the *San Jose Mercury News* published an article about AOL's [Oct 2] battle with users of a hacking program called AOHell. One component of it was called ''fisher'' which allowed someone to pose as an AOL official, and thereby obtain members' passwords and credit-card numbers. This may well have been the first appearance of "fishing" in its hacking sense.

However, the term "phishing" seems to have first appeared in the alt.2600 USENET newsgroup [Jan 12], in a post dated Jan. 2, 1996. The "f" may have been replaced by "ph" as a nod to phone phreaking [March 11].

However, the AOHell author (known as "Da Chronic") counter-claimed that the "phishing" spelling first appeared in some of the dialog boxes of his "fisher" program, and in its documentation.

RIAA Sues
Sept. 8, 2003

Grandmother Sarah Seabury Ward (aged 66) received one of the 261 lawsuits filed by the RIAA (Recording Industry Association of America). It claimed that she had illegally shared more than 2,000 songs through the Kazaa file-sharing site, and threatened to hold her liable for up to $150,000 for each song. Typical among them was the ditty, "I'm a Thug," by hard-core rapper Trick Daddy.

Ward claimed to have never installed file-sharing software, and no one else lived with her. Also Ward used a Mac, and Kazaa only ran on MS Windows.

The RIAA withdraw their suit against Ward on Sept. 19.

For more RIAA action, see [Feb 4; June 18].

KFC Keyboard and Mouse
Sept. 8, 2014

The Japanese arm of KFC released a startling collection of computing accessories in the likeness of their products, including a chicken drum-stick themed mouse and flash drive.

Winners of the associated competition could find themselves the owners of a red and white keyboard, with most of the keys (excepting K, F, and C) replaced by miniature replica fried chicken pieces.