

SOCIAL CLUBS

A chapter cut from the PARANOIA XP supplement *The Traitor's Manual*:

Alpha Complex social clubs

Mongoose Publishing staff writer and Famous Game Designer Gareth Hanrahan wrote the *PARANOIA XP* supplement *The Traitor's Manual*, a comprehensive 96-page treatise of all the major secret societies in Alpha Complex, the game setting. Gareth ended up giving us waaay too much great stuff to fit in the book, including this fine overview of the societies' principal recruiting ground: The Computer's approved Elective Activity or Pursuit clubs. Read about the EAP clubs, then look for *The Traitor's Manual* and other fine *PARANOIA XP* products at your friendly local game store. Or check them out on the Mongoose Publishing Web site: www.mongoosepublishing.com.

The Computer cares deeply for the happiness, well-being and hygiene of every citizen. The Old Reckoning ethos of grueling self-sacrifice—where all citizens were chained to cubicles and worked until they dropped from exhaustion or lead poisoning—are long gone. Now, after completing assigned duties at their service firms, Alpha Complex citizens have a median 4.45 hours of Mandatory Fun Time before the sleep gas is pumped into the INFRARED dormitories.

Many citizens spend much of this Mandatory Fun Time watching Teela-O reruns, the Friendship Lottery and the Daily Execution Show, but The Computer worries about citizens spending too much time alone. Solitude breeds aberrant behavior, and aberrant behavior breeds treason. A citizen alone is a suspect. (Also, the all-important citizen/camera ratio requires Internal Security to cram as many people as possible into one room.) Therefore, most people spend part of their Mandatory Fun Time in **Elective Activity or Pursuit clubs**.

These clubs are dedicated to a particular sport, hobby or pastime. The Computer assigns each EAP club an Activity Center, which it time-shares with other EAP clubs or other functions (this morning's R&D test firing chamber is tonight's 'Wallscrubbing Is Fun' meeting room). IntSec monitors the Activity Center, of course, but the level of surveillance is considerably lower than in other places, like dormitories, corridors or bathrooms. The Computer expects club members to cheerfully and loyally rat on their treasonous fellows, and to some extent they do—unless they're all conspiring together. Some clubs are hotbeds of treason; the rest are merely simmering mattresses of dissent.

The Computer allots EAP clubs a small budget for equipment, administration costs and so on—the budget is proportional to the number of club members, so most clubs recruit enthusiastically.

HPD&MC gives every club 100 credits per year, as well as use of an Activity Center room for two hours per week. The club earns an extra five credits per year for each member beyond the first 20, to a maximum of 1,000 credits. To ensure that a club actually has the stated number of members and is not trying to bilk money out of long-suffering HPD&MC, secret inspectors visit each club annually and count attendees. (HPD&MC is considering outsourcing this duty to a new EAP club, the Club Volunteers Volunteer Club.)

Fraud and theft of club funds are sadly common. The Computer has decreed that, to counter such unlawful theft, an EAP club leader must have at least RED Clearance. Should a large group of INFRARED citizens wish to form a local branch of an EAP club in their sector, they must accumulate the requisite number of signatures on HPD&MC Form 05/EAP/56430/A and must find a RED or higher-clearance citizen willing to volunteer as club leader. In rare cases where no willing citizen is available, The Computer brevets one of the INFRAREDs to RED Clearance for the duration of the meeting.

This does not, of course, lead to hordes of INFRAREDs trying to start every imaginable EAP club in hopes of forcing a promotion.

Approved EAP club types

HPD&MC maintains a list of approved club types. HPD normally approves one of each club type in each sector, although they make exceptions for especially popular clubs, overpopulated sectors or when the HPD&MC clerk really can't be bothered going through the bulging filing cabinet filled by HPD&MC/05/EAP/56430/As filed by hordes of INFRAREDs trying to start every imaginable EAP club in hopes of forcing a promotion.

IntSec periodically updates the Approved list; clubs that fall off the Approved list become treasonous and either die out or move underground as secret societies. In some cases, IntSec blacklists a sector's EAP club even when it still generally approves the EAP club concept. For example, all Creative Writing Club members must beware of displaying their badges in SRD Sector. IntSec encourages citizens to consult the ever-growing list of Unapproved EAP Clubs, available on request.

The list of Approved Clubs is also quite lengthy (in astronomical terms), but the various EAP clubs fall into a limited number of categories:

- ④ Sports clubs
- ④ Hobby clubs
- ④ Pastime societies
- ④ Community Observation Groups
- ④ Junior Citizen Brigades
- ④ Service firm sponsored clubs



Illustration by Jim Holloway

In *FunBall Tournament Variant #145a* (rev. 211.09.04.04 13:45), each team tries to persuade the FunBall's bot brain that their team is happier than their rival. Here, star standsmen of Sectors GYI and WQP face off in their 205th Annual Friendly FunBall Rivalry.



Sports clubs

The Computer expects citizens to maintain a minimum level of fitness, which can be difficult on a diet of Hot Fun—what it lacks in actual nutrients, it makes up for in Double-Plus Xtra-Sweetener. The Computer assigns citizens who fail HPD&MC fitness checks to a Sports EAP club; other citizens can go voluntarily if they have extra energy to burn off.

The Computer expects citizens to take pride in the record-breaking accomplishments of their athletes. HPD&MC elevates especially skilled sportsmen as role models for other citizens and puts them on a fast track to promotion. However, treasonous, unregistered mutants occasionally use their mutant abilities to win, so doing *too* well in a sport arouses HPD&MC's suspicions. The latest ad motto for athletes: Be the best you can be within a single standard deviation of average!

While most EAPs fit neatly into the standard Activity Center, some sports clubs need their own special centers. Not all clubs are so inconvenient—Extra Calisthenics Volunteers or Rubber Ball Bouncing Groups use standard Activity Centers, and kudos to them!

Rivalries among different sports clubs are common. The specialized equipment needed for sports often leads to theft, sabotage and long-running turf wars. Examples of common sports clubs:

Corridor Running: Hordes of track-suited citizens stampede down corridors, trying to beat their best time for getting from the Commissary to the Bathroom Complex. HPD&MC service firms post times and places set aside for Corridor Running on notice boards. They advise citizens not to stand in the path of three dozen overweight INFRAREDs charging full-tilt down a 10-foot-wide corridor, particularly when spoiled HotFun adds incentive for runners to beat their times to the bathrooms.

The similar sport of Transtube Running is also on the approved list, but has been depreciated due to clogs and cleaning delays.

Vat Swimming: Alpha Complex lacks any large, open areas of water, but swimming is still a vital citizen skill, as well as an excellent all-body workout. Vat swimmers use standard food/bio-organic vats filled with water or an approved chemical substitute. Following their enthusiastic club leader, swimmers circle the vat or swim down the connecting tubes to other vats. HPD&MC sometimes requires vat swim teams to serve their complex by acting as replacement stirring devices when the food vat Churn-O-Matics break down.

FunBall: Ancient records show that before Alpha Complex, citizens used to engage in a bewilderingly large array of ball-based games. Some games involved kicking a ball, or punching it, or carrying it, or hitting it with various implements. The rules for these games were

equally varied and obtuse. Even the balls varied in size and hardness. HPD&MC acknowledged the popularity of these sports and the desire of citizens to continue playing them, but the lack of large open spaces within the complex forced a compromise.

R&D engineers studied the various games and developed a new sport that combined the statistically most important and enjoyable aspects of all of them. HPD&MC depreciated the original name ('FootHandCrickTenBaseBasketHockBallPro') in favor of the modern term, 'FunBall.' The sport is officially wildly popular within Alpha Complex, and HPD service-firm-conducted surveys have placed tremendous pressure on HPD&MC for the construction of new FunBall arenas. When HPD&MC can't meet this demand, citizens sometimes construct impromptu arenas in dormitories or on factory floors.

The vid networks televise matches between the larger clubs, with HPD-sponsored subliminal ads encouraging citizens to support one club or another. MNU Sector boasts the current champion club, although the Service Firm Sponsored team from R&D's Steroid Combat Drug Development Group is mounting a surprising forceful challenge.

Electromuscular Sequencing: An innovation from R&D, Electromuscular Sequencing provides all the benefit of exercise with only 84% of the effort. HPD&MC service firm physiobots attach each participant to an Electromuscle Sequencer (called a 'rack' by aficionados of the sport), which directly stimulates each of the major muscle groups using precisely timed jolts of electricity. The resultant writhing gives a complete workout. Power Services firms enthusiastically sponsor many ES clubs.

Strangely, the injury rate in FunBall matches between competing service firms is some 800% higher than normal.

Marital Arts: A misprint in the Approved List led to the banning of the once-popular Self-Defense and Self-Offense classes. At Marital Arts clubs, pairs of citizens stand around looking confused and faintly embarrassed. In rare sectors where citizens have not properly applied their hormone suppressants, these clubs are considerably more active and popular.

PowerGolf: Golf's association with high-level executives endured even the disasters that led to the foundation of Alpha Complex, probably due to Romantic or Free Enterprise intervention. However, the same lack of wide-open spaces that blights FunBall also caused problems for PowerGolf. HPD&MC solved this problem by creating an indoor variant of the game. Instead of a simple, brutish club, the PowerGolfer uses a complex, reversible vacuum hose to suck or blow the ball around Alpha Complex.

The aim of the game is to get the ball into a PowerBall receptacle, which is normally mounted on the back of a convenient bot (or citizen in a pinch). The rules strictly state that a ball must be played where it lies, so low-clearance citizens are used to the sight of half-asphyxiated BLUE executives rampaging around and firing high-velocity balls at nearby scrubots. Another sport

FunBall rules

The Year 214 revision of the Official FunBall Commission FunBall Rulebook has been published. Some notable changes:

Rule #124/a: Only CNH Regulation funballs may be used. (CNH Regulation funballs consist of a bot-brain, audio sensors and ultra-high velocity gyroscopic guidance mechanism, all wrapped in a rubber composite and covered with a YumFeel coating that is soothing to the average citizen's grip. The shape is that of a Cartesian oval (egg shape) weighted toward the larger end. The bot brain responds adequately to audio stimuli that manage to make it through the various coatings and adjusts the gyroscope to lean or direct the ball toward the loudest source. The louder the source, the happier the ball is, with one caveat... if the funball detects sarcasm or anger in the modulation, it gyrates away from the sound. The end result is a ball that wobbles, bounces and strives to get to the happiest sounding thing out there by any possible means.

Past funballs used in impromptu games throughout the complex have been 'Any vat-damn thing we can throw around that can survive more than 20 minutes of such abuse.' Everything from 'official funballs,' to wadded-up sheets of PaperLyke portable writing surface, to small bots and even grenades have been funballs at one time or another. Such funballs are now banned.

Rule #213/c: A player is outside, and therefore in violation, when he is closer to the inner sanctum, or the outer stratum, without first being presented with an offered play, or where his current position means he is not on the opposite side of the opposing team's second last standsman or third outer kickback, or where his position is level with at least two left-handed, offset center-quarters making a play for the third quarter sixth.

once popular among high-clearance citizens is squash, but the name turns most sensible citizens off immediately.

Hobby clubs

Of all the EAP clubs, IntSec watches the hobby clubs most closely, the general consensus being they must be covers for *something* treasonous. In truth, most hobby clubbers are just very esoterically minded and actually do take interest in their insanely dull pastimes. Treasonous activity typically takes place half an hour into the club meeting, when IntSec surveillance agents have switched off out of mind-numbing boredom.

Chess Club: Two chess variants are in vogue in Alpha Complex. People still play standard chess, but rumors of its association with Communism have tainted enthusiasts in the eyes of most right-thinking citizens. The usual replacement is Clearance Chess, where each piece represents a security clearance and can only be taken by another piece of equal or higher clearance. The eight Troubleshooters are INFRARED, the Observation Towers are RED, the Things That Look Like a U-Bend in the Plumbing System Only With Eyes are GREEN, the Loyalty Officers are INDIGO, the Supervisor is VIOLET and The High Programmer is ULTRAVIOLET. Clearance Chess games can take a very long time to play out.

Technology Interest Groups: These study a particular field of science or technology. Nuclear physics, lasers, biochemistry, metallurgy, genetics and so on all have their EAP TIGs, all under extremely close IntSec surveillance. Meetings generally take the form of lectures, readings or supervised experiments. R&D is heavily involved with the TIGs, showcasing new developments to interested citizens.

INFRARED pressure in creating approved EAP clubs is especially noticeable in the list of EAP TIGs: The Physics of Scrubot Cleaning Bristles Appreciation Group, the Society of the Study of Vaporization Residue, the What's in Hot Fun Anyway Group, the Learning About Corridor Wall Fungi Is Fun Group, the Air Currents Within the Ventilation System Tracking Team and so on.

Creative Writing Clubs: Creativity, in general, is not terribly prized in Alpha Complex. Independent thought isn't suppressed, *per se*, it's just seen as, well, it's a little bit... troublesome. Still, the muse does strike even the lowly INFRARED, so the Creative Writing Clubs distribute approved Fiction Framework Forms. These forms each contain a specially formulated story, designed to be Educational, Morally Sound and Emotionally Uplifting. The Creative Writer fills in a number of blanks on the form. The club includes a list of approved words with each form; instances where club members attach the wrong list of words to a Fiction Framework Form are within an acceptable margin of club personnel shrinkage rates.

Fiction Framework Form

A _____-clearance citizen uncovered a nest of Commie _____ Traitors engaged in the _____ crime of _____-making using _____-bots with _____ intent, not to mention _____ and _____. Springing into _____, the _____ citizen drew his _____ and fired, terminating the Traitors in a _____ fashion. _____! 'I _____ My Friend, The Computer!' _____ the citizen.
The End.

Scale Model Enthusiasts: This EAP club enjoys making very small copies of things. The original SMEs built models of bots and other vehicles, or occasionally significant buildings within Alpha Complex. However, the current generation of SMEs have moved beyond such restricted subjects and now busily build smaller-scale models of everything, from termination booths to famous Troubleshooters to other SMEs. SMEs judge models on two criteria: miniaturization and accuracy. The best SMEs work on the nanoscale, and breathing too heavily in an Activity Center can earn you the undying hatred of an SME.

Pastime societies

The various pastime societies engage in activities that skirt the edges of Approved Behavior. Out of all the EAPs, the pastime societies have traditionally been the most likely to end up on the Unapproved List. They are also the second-largest subsection of EAPs, after the Community Observation Groups.

Amateur Dramatics: These societies produce and stage amateur versions of popular vidshows. Rarely do they perform original, uncensored plays; HPD&MC-censored scripts from existing vidshows reduce the risk of treason.

Props, sets and acting ability may be lacking, but members compensate through sheer enthusiasm. AmDramSoc members are sometimes overheard saying apparently treasonous things; citizens should ensure that these statements are actually treasonous and not just part of a rehearsal for the role of a traitor in an approved entertainment. (Valid methods of ensuring truth are available from IntSec's Truth Encouragement Division.)

Photography Society: As practically every square approved-unit-of-measurement of Alpha Complex is within view of either a security camera or a Recording Officer's CamBot, relatively few Photography Societies bother taking their own photos. Instead, they sort through the massive archive of declassified surveillance footage, looking for frames that are noticeably beautiful, harmonious, inspiring, artistic or just good blackmail material. Normally, it takes up to five years for a particular piece of footage to be

declassified, but especially non-essential areas take less time. Members therefore spend a lot of time going through 50,000 hours of surveillance of an empty corridor or inactive pipe factory. They project noteworthy photographs onto the wall of the Activity Center for admiration and appreciation.

Some branches of the society do purchase cameras and go out in search of scenes worthy of posterity. These branches tend to share Activity Centers with branches of the Collective Information Synthesis Friends.

Citizens United Through Song: This society promotes music and singing. As with AmDramSoc, most of the approved songs are taken from vidshow advertisements or programs. Of course, they also practice an extensive list of Computer anthems and loyalty-affirming songs ('Hail Computer,' 'Six Citizens Hanging On The Wall,' 'Die You Commie Mutant Traitors,' 'A Is for All Things The Computer Has Declared Begin With the Letter A,' 'I'm Happy That I'm Happy' and many, many more... *). Songsters rarely use instruments other than synthesizers and their own voices, although some branches have made great strides in the use of very large airhorns.

Debating Societies: These societies tackle the thorny issues of the day, like 'Hot Fun vs. Cold Fun' or 'Transbots vs. Walkways.' Occasionally, some well-meaning yet foolish citizen suggests a topic like 'Is it right for The Computer to drug and/or terminate us for the most trivial offenses,' but he is quickly shouted down and his next clone is usually much quieter at meetings. Rumor has it that some aberrant Debating Societies allow Free Thought, which is why many IntSec spies are irritatingly argumentative.

Fan Clubs: Level-headed citizens (and IntSec) justifiably fear the seething, roiling chaos of bitter love that is Teela-O fandom. If united, it would be among the biggest power blocs in all of Alpha Complex. Fortunately, Teela-O fandom is fractured into dozens of small, opposed factions. Still, every vidshow has its rabidly obsessive fan club, from *Shower Cleaning Time* to the *Daily Transbot Delay Report*. The fan clubs watch classic episodes of their favorite shows, discuss trivia, speculate about future episodes and collect information and souvenirs of the cast and crew.

Product or Service Appreciation Societies: These happy people really enjoy a particular product or service, such as Bouncy Bubble Beverage or Jumpsuit Cleaning. They try samples of the product or service, visit the places where the product or service is produced or serviced, discuss the production or service of the product or service and are generally enthusiastic in a rather creepy way. They ask those who do not have quite the same level of commitment to the product or service to leave the meetings.

A slightly saner variant of these societies is the Yummy Food Group, sampling fare from

*Not available in any stores. To order, call...



different sector commissaries and food dispensers. Membership in a Yummy Food Group means a citizen can discover where the best 'food' is available, a vital skill at low clearances. Some Yummy Food Groups even organize excursions to far-off sectors of Alpha Complex to eat at famous cafeterias.

Botspotters: They spot bots. No bot goes unspotted near a Botspotter botspotting spot.

Reams of Tech Services analyses actively wonder why anyone would want to spot bots; the eventual consensus was that 'it takes all sorts.'

Genuine Credit Opportunity Clubs: Currently under investigation, these clubs encourage citizens to contribute their credits towards senior club members. The citizens then recruit other citizens, who contribute their money towards the previously junior but now increasingly senior citizens. The largest of these clubs has several thousand members and is rapidly growing, as it attracts citizens through its genuine credit opportunities. The founder mysteriously vanished off to CBN Sector after winning The Computer's Choice Award for Happiest Citizen.

TopWare™ Parties: One of the more impressive R&D innovations, TopWare is a practically invulnerable, immortal and impenetrable storage container. At TopWare parties, hosts encourage guests to buy TopWare boxes and tubs to store foodstuffs. Given that Cold Fun is about the only thing that lasts longer than TopWare, the point of this is somewhat esoteric. R&D discourages storing Hot Fun in TopWare unless you have a burning desire to sear the lining of your lungs. And, while you can keep algae chips 'fresh' in TopWare, the chips taste just the same when fresh or stale. However, recent R&D service firm research shows that TopWare can serve as makeshift armor plating in the more troubled sectors. (It costs 100 credits to buy enough tubs, and gives Protection 2 against Impact and Energy attacks. TopWare armor may attract Armed Forces or IntSec queries.)

Community Observation Groups

The **hickspittles** concerned citizens of the EAP COGs selflessly volunteer their time to make Alpha Complex a *better* place to live. They watch fellow citizens constantly, making suggestions and reports on how fellow citizens could improve their work ethic, cleanliness, thought processes or loyalty index. Other COGs keep watch over the physical maintenance of Alpha Complex—if a painter misses a speck, he can expect to have a COG wagging its collective finger at him within the hour. COGs are high on the Approved EAP list. Be a part of Alpha Complex and become a COG!

Spontaneous Loyalty Demonstration Organizers: The Computer loves it when its citizens are so happy that they burst into song-and-dance routines on the spur of the moment,

or parade in perfect unison down the corridors carrying heart-warming banners sporting approved touching slogans. Such spontaneous demonstrations generally take weeks of planning and pressure to organize.

Collective Information Synthesis Friends: These clubs share information about other citizens, looking for signs of treason or disloyalty. For example, citizen John-G-ABC may seem unimpeachably loyal with his shiny new cone rifle—but if one Information Synthesis Friend tells the group that John-G got demoted at work, another advertises the correct salary level for a citizen of John-G's new pay grade, a third knows the price of a new cone rifle and the fourth has heard rumors of a Free Enterprise cell operating in the sector... well, it may be time to impeach John-G after all. Essentially gossip circles reporting to IntSec, Collective Information Synthesis Friends spy on all their dormitory mates and coworkers.

Volunteer Form Checkers: The Volunteer Form Checkers provide a vital backup to normal CPU Form Checkers and related service firms. While overburdened CPU and service firms can only check for the most important factors on a form (*Did the Troubleshooter fill out every item? Did he check the box marked 'Do not check this box'?*), the Volunteer Form Checkers review forms with the zealotry of the convert. VFCs scrutinize everything from poor grammar to graphology analysis for signs of subconscious treason. Normally, local CPU service firms ship them forms to check, but some overly trusting Troubleshooters have taken to dumping their half-completed forms at VFC meetings and hoping the society members fill in the blanks.

Smiling Club: A big, wide smile is the best and most obvious sign of a truly happy citizen. Members of Smiling Clubs study and imitate the best smiles. Stretch those cheeks—and if you can't, there's always the option of smile-enhancement surgery! Spin-offs of the Smiling Clubs include the Cheery Humming Teams and the Enthusiastic Little Hop-Skip as You Walk Down the Corridor Club.

Junior Citizen Brigades

Recently decanted clones spend most of their time being educated, but they too get to participate in EAP clubs. Volunteer(ed) RED citizens oversee junior versions of the various sports clubs. Some other forms of EAP have junior versions. Volunteered club leaders generally regard assignment to a Junior Citizen Brigade as cause to break out the extra-strong happiness pills, as young people tend to be surly, vicious, biting little brats who have not yet had their wills broken, yet harbor a fanatical desire to report others to The Computer. The Computer holds RED-Clearance club leaders responsible for the Junior Citizens in their charge, and requires them to bring the same number back to the crèche as they left

with at the start of the club meeting. Desperate club leaders sometimes kidnap young people as replacements.

Service firm sponsored clubs

The EAP/56430/B amendment that allows a service firm to create an internal EAP club was originally made as part of the 'Healthy Competition Has Been Deemed Non-Treasonous' initiative. The idea was that having workmates play sports or watch reruns together would build team spirit and increase productivity. This was somewhat successful, and inter-firm FunBall matches are common. (Strangely, the injury rate in FunBall matches between competing service firms is some 800% higher than normal.)

However, some bright citizen who doubtless has a future in the termination booth had an idea: Why not 'outsource' firm activities to eager club members? Instead of, say, checking the serial numbers of every guardbot in FAR Sector, why not use the EAP/56430/B amendment to form the FAR Sector Guardbot Spotting Society? The firm then just has one of its employees attend society meetings, write down the numbers, and the job is done. True, the firm (not HPD&MC) has to pay the club's costs, but this is normally a considerable savings over actually paying employees to do the work.

Not all firm-sponsored EAP clubs are dodgy credit scams; a few have valid reasons for existence:

Citizen's Home Guard: Sponsored by the Armed Forces, the Home Guard consists of volunteer citizens armed with cast-off, surplus or defective weapons. They drill constantly, knowing that they are the last line of defense against Commie takeover and that nothing repels a horde of evil Commie invaders like *close-formation drill marching*. The Home Guards (a.k.a. Vulture Reserves) are absurdly arrogant and self-important, but have the unstable firepower to justify some of this attitude.

Complex Laser Association: Believing every citizen has a right to bear arms and vaporize much of the scenery, the CLA meets to discuss and trade weapons. It also operates firing ranges in the Activity Centers. R&D sponsors the CLA and uses it to bypass testing regulation on newer, shinier weapons. IntSec closely observes the CLA to ensure weapon trading doesn't violate citizen clearances.

Power Conservation Brotherhood: A corrective measure that took on a life of its own, the PCB was sponsored by Power Services in an attempt to stop a series of troubling brownouts. Members were taught basic power conservation tips, like switching off lights when they leave a room and unplugging devices not in use. The PCB didn't stop there—now the members spy on dormitories to see if residents have left on lights, rush to unplug vidshow monitors the microsecond

a program finishes, turn magnetic containment fields down to the barest minimum level, cut power lines to industrial sectors...basically, the society is heading straight for Unapproval if anyone can actually find the PCBs in the lightless, unair-conditioned, eerily quiet Activity Centers they call home.

Clubs and traitors

It is a sad fact that an institution designed to reduce the opportunities for treason—Mandatory Fun at EAP Clubs—is actually the foundation for most of the conspiracies and secret societies within Alpha Complex. Consider the sorry tale of poor young INFRARED Joe-NIH, just out of Junior Citizen training. After a first day at his exciting new service firm assignment at Reactor Coolant Pipe Fracture Assessment, Joe-NIH goes down to the local Activity Center to join his assigned quota of Elective Activity or Pursuit clubs. Wanting to improve himself, he signs up for the Algae Appreciators Club, where like-minded citizens gather to talk about all the ways algae is our helpful friend. He pays the modest membership fee and agrees to go on the club's upcoming hike down to see some really fascinating algae pools in an outlying sector.

Can you see why Joe-NIH is a traitor?

Let's read that again, the way IntSec records have it:

Citizen Joe-NIH (file #NIH-535888392/c-INF) visited the NIH Sector Activity Center at 1943 hours, Oneday, 214.01.05. There, he joined the Algae Appreciators Club (file #HPD&MC/05/EAP/295543/NIH41) and made contact with four members of the traitorous organization 'Sierra Club' (file #IS/58/SC/1). Joe then contributed a sum of money towards the illegal activities of the society. Furthermore, he conspired to meet with the Sierra Club members during an unauthorized intrusion into a sensitive industrial sector. IntSec assessment is that Joe-NIH should be recruited as a double agent and used to infiltrate the society cell before mass corrective action is taken.

The EAP clubs are one of the few areas when a citizen's personality and choices actually matter to some minuscule degree; service firm, housing and so on are assigned, possessions are virtually identical from citizen to citizen, but the EAPs are *elective*—a person can freely choose which clubs he joins. Secret societies use the clubs as recruiting grounds and covers for their treasonous activities. Not every club is riddled with traitors, but the local meetings of COMINTERN are more likely to be held over TeaSir and NearChocoBiscuits in the Activity Center than in some lightless hidden cellar.

Some societies have organized recruiting. They assign one member to every EAP club in a sector, looking for citizens who share their ideals and choosing recruits based on a strict set of complex criteria. Others just recruit their friends or vague acquaintances who aren't openly wearing 'Hi, I'm spying for IntSec' badges.

Using EAP clubs in the game

Grip the club firmly in one hand and raise it to head height, bending your elbow at...oh, wrong sort of club. Apologies. The EAP clubs are the soft edge of treason within Alpha Complex, the path from loyalty to treason. Characters who want to rise in their secret society will probably end up using the clubs for making contacts and recruiting others; characters investigating treason will do the same.

For added cruelty, put the characters in charge of a club, like the Junior Citizen Campers or the OAP Sector Knitting Circle. Not every Troubleshooter mission has to end with explosions, chemical spills and recriminations, but

such a disaster will come as blessed relief after petty club politics, grubby little vindictive kids and backstabbing with knitting needles.

EAP clubs can also be an added background resource for characters to draw upon or trip over, just like secret societies. Every citizen is a member of at least one EAP club, which should be determined during character generation. An interesting **PARANOIA** variant, especially in Straight games, would be starting the characters off *without* a secret society affiliation, and having them be recruited over time via the EAP clubs they join.

In *The Traitor's Manual*, players and GMs can learn about all 16 major secret societies—their goals, recruiting methods, passwords, drop points, factions, advancement, current projects and likely missions.

The Traitor's Manual is available at your friendly local game store or on the Mongoose Publishing Web site: www.mongoosepublishing.com.

Random EAP club generator

There are literally as many EAP clubs as there are citizens with an avid interest or equally avid self-interest. The list above scratches the surface; a Troubleshooter wandering through an Activity Center could encounter groups like Happiness Through Synchronized Laughter, Finding the Inner You Society, Remedial Nuclear Safety, Boot Polishing for Beginners, Efficient Note-taking for Reporting Your Neighbors and so on. Roll on the following tables for a random club name, combining either components 1, 2 and 3 or 4, 5 and 6.

| Roll | EAP Name Component 1 | Component 2 | Component 3 |
|-------|------------------------|--------------|--|
| 1-2 | Algae Chip | Appreciation | Club |
| 3-4 | Bot | Cleaning | Society |
| 5-6 | Bouncy Bubble Beverage | Collecting | Organization |
| 7-8 | Camera | Spotting | Group |
| 9-10 | Corridor | Historical | Team |
| 11-12 | Dormitory | Touring | Union |
| 13-14 | Lightbulb | Discussion | -ers |
| 15-16 | Teela-O | Analysis | -ists |
| 17-18 | Troubleshooter | Enthusiast | -ismist |
| 19-20 | Sewer | Support | -ismisters |
| Roll | EAP Name Component 4 | Component 5 | Component 6 |
| 1-2 | Volunteer | Citizen | Exercise |
| 3-4 | Junior | Computer | Improvers |
| 5-6 | Special | Corridor | Scrubbers |
| 7-8 | United | Vidshow | Monitors |
| 9-10 | Sector | Commissary | Hobbyists |
| 11-12 | Official | Dormitory | Verifiers |
| 13-14 | Authorized | Mental | Reporters |
| 15-16 | Citizen's | Map | Analysts |
| 17-18 | Collective | Reactor | Focus group |
| 19-20 | Local | Loyalty | Agh! Troubleshooters! We are discovered! Get them! |