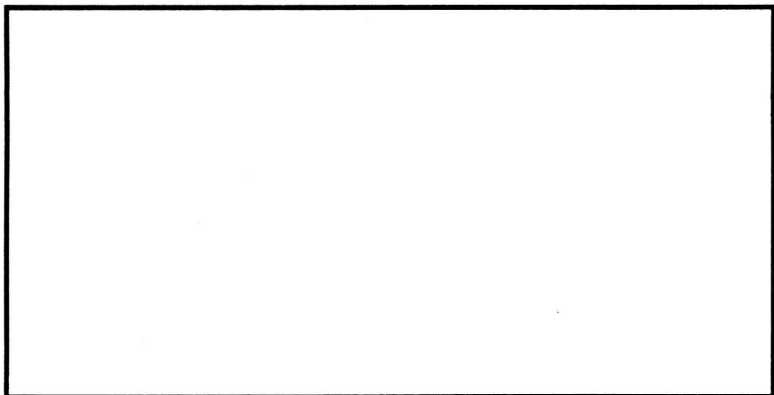


# N E W S L E T T E R

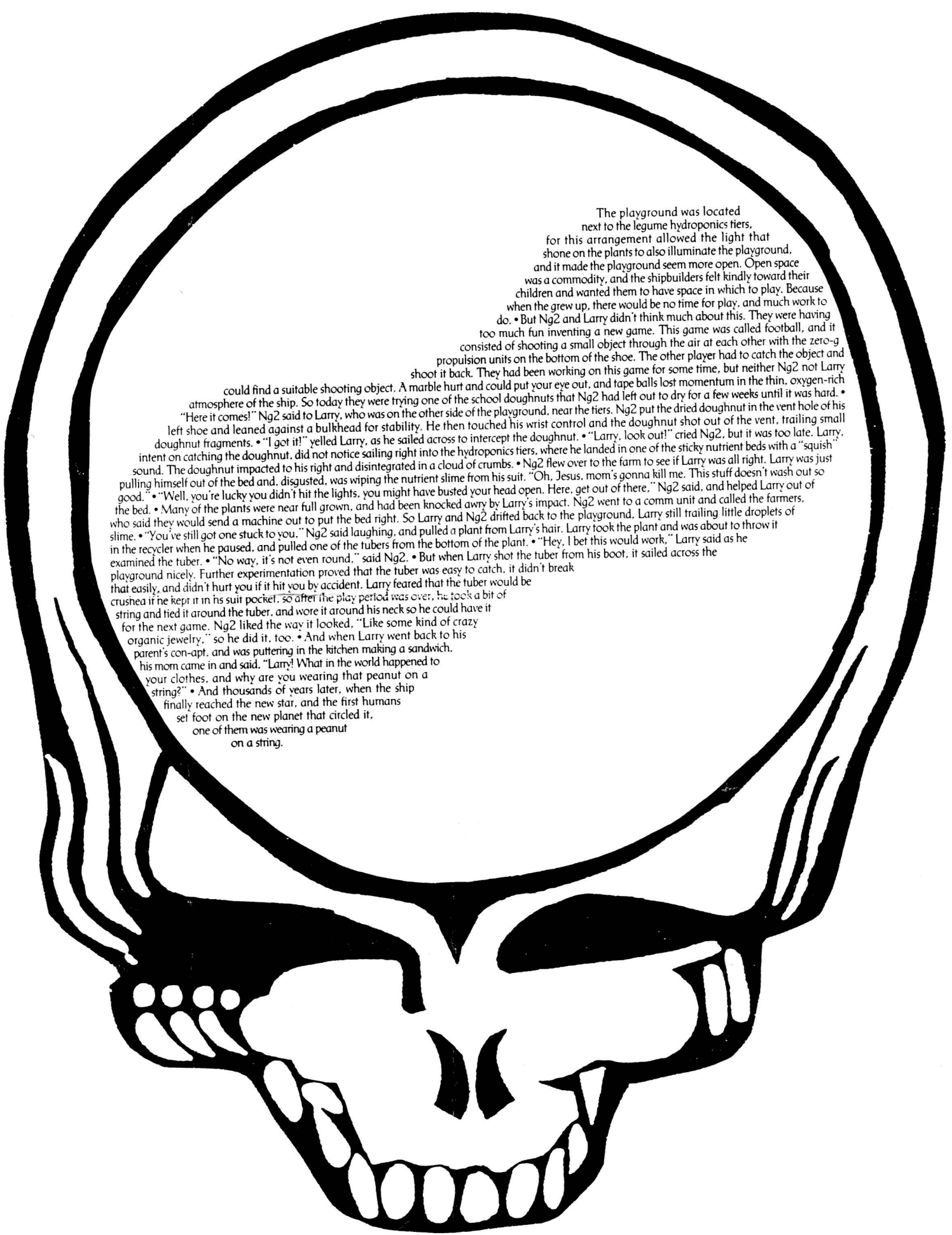
## WHAT? ANOTHER ONE?

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# NOT BONEHEADS

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The playground was located next to the legume hydroponics tiers, for this arrangement allowed the light that shone on the plants to also illuminate the playground, and it made the playground seem more open. Open space was a commodity, and the shipbuilders felt kindly toward their children and wanted them to have space in which to play. Because when the grew up, there would be no time for play, and much work to do. • But Ng2 and Larry didn't think much about this. They were having too much fun inventing a new game. This game was called football, and it consisted of shooting a small object through the air at each other with the zero-g propulsion units on the bottom of the shoe. The other player had to catch the object and shoot it back. They had been working on this game for some time, but neither Ng2 nor Larry

could find a suitable shooting object. A marble hurt and could put your eye out, and tape balls lost momentum in the thin, oxygen-rich atmosphere of the ship. So today they were trying one of the school doughnuts that Ng2 had left out to dry for a few weeks until it was hard. • "Here it comes!" Ng2 said to Larry, who was on the other side of the playground, near the tiers. Ng2 put the dried doughnut in the vent hole of his left shoe and leaned against a bulkhead for stability. He then touched his wrist control and the doughnut shot out of the vent, trailing small doughnut fragments. • "I got it!" yelled Larry, as he sailed across to intercept the doughnut. • "Larry, look out!" cried Ng2, but it was too late. Larry, intent on catching the doughnut, did not notice sailing right into the hydroponics tiers, where he landed in one of the sticky nutrient beds with a "squish" sound. The doughnut impacted to his right and disintegrated in a cloud of crumbs. • Ng2 flew over to the farm to see if Larry was all right. Larry was just pulling himself out of the bed and, disgusted, was wiping the nutrient slime from his suit. • "Oh, Jesus, mom's gonna kill me. This stuff doesn't wash out so good." • "Well, you're lucky you didn't hit the lights, you might have busted your head open. Here, get out of there," Ng2 said, and helped Larry out of the bed. • Many of the plants were near full grown, and had been knocked away by Larry's impact. Ng2 went to a comm unit and called the farmers, who said they would send a machine out to put the bed right. So Larry and Ng2 drifted back to the playground. Larry still trailing little droplets of slime. • "You've still got one stuck to you," Ng2 said laughing, and pulled a plant from Larry's hair. Larry took the plant and was about to throw it in the recycler when he paused, and pulled one of the tubers from the bottom of the plant. • "Hey, I bet this would work," Larry said as he examined the tuber. • "No way, it's not even round," said Ng2. • But when Larry shot the tuber from his boot, it sailed across the playground nicely. Further experimentation proved that the tuber was easy to catch, it didn't break that easily, and didn't hurt you if it hit you by accident. Larry feared that the tuber would be crushed if he kept it in his suit pocket, so after the play period was over, he took a bit of string and tied it around the tuber, and wore it around his neck so he could have it for the next game. Ng2 liked the way it looked. "Like some kind of crazy organic jewelry," so he did it, too. • And when Larry went back to his parent's con-apt, and was putting in the kitchen making a sandwich, his mom came in and said, "Larry! What in the world happened to your clothes, and why are you wearing that peanut on a string?" • And thousands of years later, when the ship finally reached the new star, and the first humans set foot on the new planet that circled it, one of them was wearing a peanut on a string.