MINEPLEX
NEWSLETTER

Recapping the April Fool's Day Event
Suggestion Box: Builder Interviews, and more.

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Have any feedback? We'd love to hear it. Share with us on our feedback form!

From the Editor

Happy May! As of today, May 1, a third of 2021 has already gone by! Hopefully your resolutions have gone well over the past four months and are looking good for the upcoming eight. For those in the northern hemisphere, this newsletter might be coming at a time when you're looking ahead to the warm summer months and school break ahead. Though those in the southern hemisphere have a ways to go before that, hopefully you have settled into the rhythm of the school year and are not dreading the approaching winter too much.

This happens to be a time of year when scheduled and expected updates aren't as frequent as they are around the holiday months, such as October and December. Due to that, our selection of potential articles is particularly limited, which you may have noticed from this month's shorter edition. We want to continue bringing exciting and interesting content to you at the start of every month, which is why I'd like to remind you all to submit any ideas to our Suggestion Box! Even if you haven't fully parsed through an

idea or aren't entirely sure that it fits, I'd encourage you to send it our way anyways. Be sure that the ideas you're sending are article-related, though! In the past, we have received some ideas for the general server, which, while interesting, were not applicable for the Newsletter. For those who have submitted an idea and have not heard back yet, no worries! I read through each submission and pass them onto the rest of the team. Even if the writer does not end up working with you on the idea, you will certainly still be credited and notified if your article idea is published!

If you have any other non-article ideas, comments, or questions, feel free to send me a message on the forums or on Discord! You can also post any feedback or comments on this edition on our official feedback form or on the thread. Have a great May and enjoy this edition of the Mineplex Newsletter!

- AGLThree, Newsletter Program Manager

Recapping the April Fool's Day Event

By WowCaleb

April Fool's is a traditional day of playing practical jokes on others, a glorious 24 hours where everyone has the perfect excuse to prank their family and friends. What's better than entertainment derived solely from people's confusion and bewilderment? The answer is when Mineplex joins in on the trend! As always, Mineplex had players on the receiving end, with no shortage of wild and wacky changes to experience in this year's April Fool's Day event.

The first surprise most players encountered upon logging in was the dinosaur themed rebrand of their shiny ranks. Ultras turned into Stegos, Heroes became Triceras, Legends turned into Velocis, Titans transformed into Spinos, Eternals became Megalos and finally, Immortals evolved into T-Rexes. This was only the beginning, as there was much left to discover as players stepped off the spawn point.

Last year, the lobbies and game servers sported a Wild West theme. For 2021, the Build Team took a trip down memory lane, turning the clocks back 66 million years with the introduction of a Jurassic-themed hub! For a week, Mineplex as we know it no longer existed, for it had been replaced by "Jurassicplex." Players joining the lobby had a scaley T-Rex towering above them at spawn, its teeth bearing down on the detached hub tree! Fossils were found littered across the hub and flying pterodactyls occupied the sky! Instead of the standard mountain at the lava parkour, a gigantic volcano stood in its spot with lava streaming down its sides onto the surface of the land.

The hub was a project undertaken by the Build Team. Inspired by TheBlueComet, an ex-Builder responsible for the Western themed lobby last year, the team created the Jurassic-themed lobby in a similar fashion. For this edition of the Mineplex Newsletter, I sat down with joshuart_, one of our current MapLeads on the network, to ask him a few questions about his experience taking part in this project.

What was it like hosting the team builds for this project?

joshuart_: "The experience was great! It was a lot of fun coming up with the concept with the other Builders and determining what should go where. There were a few team builds needed to get this hub finished and it was a lot of fun listening to music and making sure the lobbies were fitting towards the theme and impressive to take in. Lots of effort went into making the builds for this event and I'm looking forward to hosting more for future seasonal updates!"

What's your favourite part of the Jurassic-themed hub?

joshuart_: "My favorite part of the hub is the giant T-Rex on top of the middle structure biting the Mineplex tree. The T-Rex was there from the start of the hub but the addition of the tree was a last minute decision made by teaisspilled. It really tired everything together and added a nice little spin to the centerpiece of the hub!"

Is there anything you would do differently if you were to undertake this project again?

joshuart_: "There actually isn't anything I would do differently if I were to undertake the project again. The Build Team works very well with one another and they all bring amazing ideas to the table every single time an event like this goes on. I enjoy hearing and seeing their creative processes and it excites me for our future projects. Keep an eye out for them! (:"

I would like to thank joshuart_ for taking the time to answer these questions!

The other major component of the April Fool's event this year was a special treat for everyone on behalf of dutty, our Build Team Admin here at Mineplex. For a week, players celebrated the return of long forgotten maps! A thread was posted on the forums showcasing which ones had been brought back for the duration of the event, bringing a wave of nostalgia for many community members.

For this article, I had the chance to sit down with dutty herself to ask a few questions surrounding the map update.

What was your favourite part of the update that you or the Build Team had a hand in?

dutty: "I would definitely have to say choosing the maps to push back to live. It's a huge nostalgia trip to take a look back at some of these maps, and choosing some of them which I know people are going to love being back on live, was really fun. It was also really exciting since I didn't tell the Map Testers which maps were going live before we tested, so they all relived memories on some of the really old maps too!"

What are some of your personal favourites among those re-added maps?

dutty: "I would have to say Forbidden Temple for Spleef. That map brings me back to really classic days of playing Mixed Arcade, and being scared for my life when the spider chose me to hunt down. Another personal favourite of mine was Mineplex National Park for Skywars. I used to love that map when it was live!"

A handful of community members have since been advocating for these maps to remain live. Can you address why this will not be happening?

dutty: "The fact of the matter is in order to keep up with the hype of Minecraft updates and the change in the way multiplayer minecraft is played nowadays, we also need to keep our maps new and exciting. Old maps from 2014/15, although massively nostalgic, just don't represent the server and its capabilities nowadays. There are some maps that arguably could stay, but there are over 1000 live maps on the server and that's already far too many, in my opinion. With new builders coming in, and the quality of maps increasing for most gametypes (in both aesthetics and gameplay), it is important to replace older maps to keep the server modern and fresh. It would get very boring if we continued to keep the same old maps in rotation forever. I understand a lot of the reasons people want to keep them is for nostalgia, but fundamentally, most of the removed maps were removed for a reason - whether it be that they're awful to play on, or that they're awful to look at. That's just the way things go!"

I would like to thank dutty for her time and providing Newsletter readers with more of an insight! For anyone who didn't get the chance to experience these maps for themselves, feel free to head over to the official Map Update thread.

Bedrock players were pleasantly surprised to find they had been included in the April Fool's Update too! Thanks to gyroninja, our Bedrock developer, the nutritional value of Cake Wars was improved upon. Fattening cakes were replaced with a healthy vegetable–carrots! Instead of eating cakes, each island had a patch of nine carrots that had to be munched on by opposing teams. The nutritional improvement was reverted after a week, much to the dismay of some community members who enjoyed the health kick.

The event may now be over, but this doesn't mean players can't still voice their thoughts and opinions on Mineplex's 2021 April Fools'. All feedback can be provided on the forums, or in the Mineplex Discord server in the #java-events, #java-ideas, and #bedrock-ideas channels. With southern cowboys one year and ancient dinosaurs the next, who knows what could possibly be in store for 2022?

Suggestion Box: Builder Interviews

By Marzie

Builders do a lot when it comes to making sure that every game on our network has playable maps that fit the gamemode perfectly. Even within the broader Build Team, there are smaller subteams that help the team run smoothly and efficiently. These teams include Builder Apps Team, Map Submissions Team, Map Issues Team and a community+ sub-team, the Map Testing Team. Though each of these teams play a significant role in operating the Build Team, this article will focus on general Builder activities. To learn more about Builders and their maps, we interviewed three of our Builders, CarterAimz_, Ocelotguyy, and xLeopard!

What map are you most proud of?

CarterAimz_: Currently the map that I am most proud of is "Frozen Falls" because I created it in 2017 and it was my first map live on Mineplex.

Ocelotguyy: The map I'm most proud of is 'Mesozoic' for Skywars because it went through the most change during the map testing phase. It was originally an apocalyptic, dirt theme which was quite unappealing to look at. Because of this, I decided to completely overhaul the visuals and change the theme to Jurassic/Dino, which gave the map a much more pleasant atmosphere. It's not a particularly impressive map at first sight, but the creation process makes it stand out for me.

xLeopard: The map I'm the most proud of is Nu Draconis for Runner.

How do you decide what gamemode you build a map for?

CarterAimz_: Sometimes I build for game modes just because I'm inspired by other builders and I have a clear visual on what I want to do for my map, but a majority of the time I stick to game modes I play often because I feel I have more most experience when it comes to gameplay.

Ocelotguyy: I normally choose gamemodes I am most familiar with. This allows me to make good gameplay

choices, and the maps usually have less issues when tested.

xLeopard: When I decide I want to build a map, I usually already have a theme in mind, so I look at the map database for a game that hasn't already used that theme. If I don't already have a theme, then I'll look at the recent updates for a game that hasn't received a new map in a while. If I'm still not very inspired by my options then I'll just pick a gamemode I think is fun to work with, like skywars, micro battles, or nano, and just try and make something fun or different to play on.

Why do you enjoy building and what keeps you motivated?

CarterAimz_: I enjoy building because it allows me to create maps that can be viewed by the Mineplex community and it's a skill that I can always strive to get better at.

Ocelotguyy: I find it very satisfying to build in Minecraft due to how simple it is in the sense that anyone can do it, but it takes a lot of skill and dedication to become talented. I always look for new ways to improve my building skills which is one of the reasons I applied for Builder at Mineplex. If you take a look at some of my first maps, it's apparent

that some improvement has occurred. I have all the talented builders who were on the team before me to thank for this. It is motivating to think that when a map of mine is released, I have made a positive contribution to Mineplex.

xLeopard: Building to me is just another creative outlet. I've always enjoyed being able to create stuff, and building in particular is fun because I'm working in 3 dimensions, and am able to interact with it after it's done. Checking for things like exploits, weird angles and overall flow of the build is what keeps it challenging and enjoyable. There's always something new to try when building as well, simply switching from 1.8 to 1.9 can be enough of a change for me to find new inspiration and to keep building.

How do you decide what theme to do for builds? Do you have a favorite theme?

CarterAimz_: I don't have a favorite theme to build for. Most of my maps are just dependent on things that I see and do everyday, and something I think of that brings something unique to Mineplex.

Ocelotguyy: Sometimes I become inspired by certain things I see in real life or in other games unrelated to Minecraft. I never make a map with the same theme as one that is already on the network for the same gamemode unless it's very different in some way. This keeps things fresh and makes it easy to distinguish the maps.

xLeopard: Usually, I'll already have some idea of what I want the focus to be, usually an animal, a type of tree, a skull, or whatever else I happen to feel like building. Picking the surroundings can be a little tougher, but typically whatever I've chosen as my focus already has a certain biome it'd be in, and it's just a matter of tweaking the typical look of that biome to be a little more interesting. For example, adding ruins to a desert or making a pine forest more overgrown, which is my favourite!

Thank you to CarterAimz_, Ocelotguyy, and xLeopard for participating and answering our questions! All of our Builders at Mineplex spend countless hours to bring functional and aesthetic maps to our network. Without their hard work, who knows what maps on the network might look like… we'd probably see more maps like the April Fools' joke maps! Though this article focused on the overall Build Team, we hope to further explore the inner workings of the team, including Builder subteams, in a future article.

Additionally, the inspiration for this article came from Cheezeburgerfan's Suggestion Box submission. Thank you to Cheezeburgerfan for sending this idea to the team! If you have an article idea that you want to see in the Newsletter, please send it to us via the Suggestion Box!

Caption the Image
By neotheater

Is it just us, or does it only feel like yesterday that we were pushing 2020 out of the door and welcoming in the hopeful new year? It seems that 2021 is going full-steam ahead, and we are all along for the ride. It is hard to believe that we're almost half-way through the year already, but here we all are--in May. Hurray? We hope you're all enjoying the 21st year of the 21st century so far because we sure are!

After a hard day at work, two builders are looking upon a job well-done and are proud of their efforts of the day.

As the sun sets, a calm aura fills the construction site as everyone else potters off home. The quiet, sombre feeling of the ending day is as silent as it is strong. The builders continue to look upon the site in awe as the final embers of twilight sink beneath the horizon. 'What will tomorrow bring for them?' they wonder in silence.

Think you're a psychic and can tell the future? Tell us their near future here: https://forms.gle/a3EQjHbG6hVqN2wt9

Last month we showed you two guards protecting an ancient Aztec Temple full of royal jewels from some horror upon the horizon.

Here are our 3 favourite captions from last month:

Skittol: "Douglas the Dragon got tired of guarding the supply drops, and proceeded to invade the Aztec temple to release his pent-up anger"

ShadowWolfZoe: "Guard Duty is boring, wanna go for a hot tub swim below?"

Mathuu: "nobody:
that one couple who's worried about COVID:"""

April Staff Statistics
By AGLThree

This month, we wanted to issue a huge welcome to all the new staff members who joined us and say thank you to all of the staff members who have sadly resigned for all of their hard work for the network.

Java Trainee
April 3: PlebAU, Coyly, siee

Bedrock Trainee
April 3: Zycodia (Cross-Platform)

Java Moderator
April 10: WowCaleb

Bedrock Moderator
April 4: TheJoshXGames1, whalkerr
April 10: CloudyDay1234, MarzieK, simbadefatdog
April 17: neotheatter
April 25: Asteiph

Senior Moderator
April 10: ItsFree, rilau, thejoshxgames (Community Management)

Resignations
April 3: Karrotz_
April 7: tricorder/MoldySucks
April 11: zflqre
April 17: Brayyyden
April 22: _ItsMusic_
April 30: dualkong, unsorrowful

1 Year Milestones
April 4: iKassy, pwess, Ruffybear, ShadowWolfZoe
April 11: Loofii
April 19: Ian923
April 25: Finova, ItsFree, Jylie, Stormiiee, Tours

2 Year Milestones
April 20: Evgeen

4 Year Milestones
April 16: intoxicating
April 21: Marzie

5 Year Milestones
April 8: Block2Block, joshuart_

8 Year Milestones
April 26: Tortelett

Meet the Team

AGLThree: Hola! I'm AGLThree and I lead the Newsletter Program! I'm currently a Sr. Mod on Recruitment and an RP mentor. I'm a Grey's Anatomy fan and enjoy doing ceramics. Somehow, I still haven't gotten the Connect 4 gadget, which feels statistically unlikely at this point.

Tortelett: 8 years!!

Arjun: Yo! I'm Arjun and I'm a Rules Committee member and Sr. Recruiter / manager under the Recruitment team. Other than Newsletter, I'm also on Reports Patrol, Game Insights, and the Content Creator Council. Some of my favorite hobbies consist of driving, hanging out with friends, and playing videogames. I hope you enjoyed this month's issue of the Newsletter!

Sophie_OGrady: Hi, I edit the newsletter.

Meet the Team

jacvb: Howdy, I'm Jacob! I'm a writer and an editor for the newsletter and a member of Community Management and Quality Assurance. Outside of Mineplex, you'll catch me listening to a lot of music and watching Netflix.

Marzie: I do waaay too much. Check my information tab on my profile via the forums to see everything I do! P.S.Oatmeal cookies are good when done right.

EmmaLie: Hiya! I'm Emily and I'm that one weirdo who loves lollipops and doing stuff for the community. I'm currently the admin of Community Management & the Event Squad, so you'll see me a lot in-game, especially in EVENT-1. Outside of Mineplex, a lot of my time goes toward family, friends, Netflix, and Overwatch.

Meet the Team

510bike: Hi! My name is 510bike, and I'm currently a writer and editor for the Newsletter! I'm also currently a Sr.Mod on the Social Media team, a cross-platform staff member, and I am a member of RA, RPA, and FM. Outside of Mineplex, I'm into martial arts, photography, and mock trial! Feel free to say hello if you ever see me around!

neosmileyface: :) not :(

WowCaleb: Wow, it's Caleb! Let's pretend I didn't say that and start over - I'm a recently reinstated Moderator and a writer for the Newsletter. You'll most likely find me in my natural habitat playing Nano Games, or posting over on the forums. If I'm not on Mineplex, I'm probably hanging out with friends or kayaking down the local river! Be sure to stop by and say hi if you ever see me around!
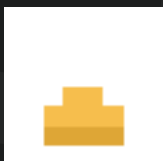
chhase: Hi!! I'm Chase, a Senior Mod & Forum Manager here at Mineplex! I'm also a member of Reports Patrol Assistance, the Map Testing Team and an editor for the newsletter!!! When I'm not busy, my favorite things to do are watching movies, going hiking, and going on drives with the windows down. Also, I'm very bad at PVP so don't even.