



DaVinci Pilot

Newsletter of the U.S.S. DaVinci
Columbus, Georgia

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FEBRUARY 2002

FROM THE CENTER SEAT

Greetings all! Well, I hope everyone has recovered from the holiday season and that the New Year is everything you expected it to be!

The turnout for the New Year's Eve get together and 10th anniversary Deep Space Nine celebration was not what I had hoped. Only two folks showed up! Still, the pizza was hot and the Deep Space Nine episodes we watched were great! Everyone was gone or asleep by 1:00 AM. I managed to stay up until 3:00 AM simply because I was not tired. Much thanks to Roger and Joe who came by to help usher in the New Year. Thanks also to Todd Kes, who did not come to the gathering but did attempt to stop by and found the house in darkness. Of course, had he gone to the back he would have seen that I was still up

I have scheduled a clean-up of our Adopt-a-Highway site for 2 February at 9:00 AM. As usual, we will meet at the McDonald's on Veteran's Parkway for breakfast before we begin the task of picking up trash. Please come and participate in this worthwhile event. I have been contacted by the Adopt-a-Highway folks who are ready to give our section to someone else. Last year we had a miserable turn-out. Of the five or six scheduled, all were cancelled except one because of low attendance. Make one of your New Year resolutions to help out more often at DaVinci events! Remember, whenever you attend any DaVinci event, you will receive two SPACE game pieces, thus increasing your chances to win fabulous prizes!

Commodore Freddy Heller

TREK AND SCI-FI BUZZ

For those of you who were looking forward to the Palisades Marketing Kirk/Roddenberry 35th anniversary set, it has been cancelled for the foreseeable future.

The Trek Today website has a story about Art Asylum's Enterprise figures, including release dates, and accessories. The deluxe figures will have personal bridge station, which will connect to the others to make the entire bridge. Check it out at:
http://www.trektoday.com/news/150102_04.shtml

Startrek.com finally has the Enterprise NX-01 virtual tour of the ship up and running. There are two versions, a high bandwidth version (requires Flash and Quicktime plug-ins on your browser) and a low bandwidth (requires Flash plug-in). The main difference is with the high bandwidth you can scroll a little up and down as well as left and right, with the low bandwidth, you can only go left and right and you can't zoom in. The link is below:
<http://www.startrek.com/launch/tour.asp>

The new 2002 Christmas ornaments have been announced by Hallmark. They are the Delta Flyer, the doctor from Voyager, and the USS Enterprise. Unfortunately when you visit their web site, they do not have a photograph of the Enterprise so you do not know which of the many versions will be released. Check it out at hallmark.com and follow the links (Dreambook 2002; Pop Culture; Page 3)

Star Wars Episode 2 comes out May 16th and already there are folks waiting in line for tickets! Check out all the latest information at:
<http://www.starwars.com/episode-ii/news/2001/11/news20011112.html>.

Paramount has finally issued the full press release and box art for Star Trek: The Next Generation on DVD, and it looks like fans won't have to wait all

that long to collect the entire series. Although not specified on the press release, there is no MSRP or MAP for the sets, so it is up to retailers to set the price, though it is expected to be under \$100. Release date set for late March. Here's a link to the box art: http://dvdfile.com/images/box_art/packaging/startrek_tng.jpg.

If you want to see the silliest ST-theme website ever, check out: <http://web.tampabay.rr.com/Insemsf/English/english.html>

STAR TREK 10 NEWS

Star Trek: Nemesis," the 10th installment in the sci-fi film franchise, has landed a beastly new villain, with Ron Perlman signing on to play a Romulan Viceroy. Perlman, best known for his TV work on "Beauty and the Beast," also recently appeared in the recent WWII movie "Enemy at the Gates."

Perlman joins the reunion cast of TV's "Star Trek: The Next Generation," including Patrick Stewart and Jonathan Frakes, in their fourth film. It is scheduled for a November 2002 release via Paramount Pictures. In the film, the crew of the Enterprise is diverted to the planet Romulus when the longtime Federation foes signal they are willing to begin peace negotiations. Once Picard and the gang arrive, they uncover a threat to Earth. "Nemesis" is produced by Rick Berman and directed by Stuart Baird ("Executive Decision"). John Logan ("Gladiator") and Berman penned the script.

The rumor is that they might kill off Data in the next installation of the Next Generation movies. It seems as if Brent Spiner is getting tired of playing the role of an android that does not age.

THE END OF "THE X-FILES"

From the Associated Press: "The truth may be out there but 'The X-Files' won't be. The television series about FBI agents tracking aliens and other unusual suspects will end its nine-year run on Fox in May with its 201st episode, the network said. The decision to wrap up 'The X-Files,' which became a signature show for Fox and turned David Duchovny and Gillian Anderson into stars, followed network discussions with creator Chris Carter. 'It's the ninth inning. We want to go out on top,' Carter told the Hollywood trade paper Daily

Variety. 'We wanted to go out as a strong show.' In a statement: Fox Television Entertainment Group chairman Sandy Grushow said: 'We respect Chris' wishes to end the show this season.' Duchovny bowed out of the series last season, leading to the introduction of new cast members Robert Patrick and Annabeth Gish as agents working with Dana Scully (Anderson). 'The X-Files' will end with a two-part episode, written by Carter, which he promised will tie up loose ends. He'd welcome Duchovny's return for the finale, Carter said in Variety's Thursday edition. The series' ratings had dropped this season, but Fox still sees life in Carter's eerie tales of conspiracies and otherworldly events. A second theatrical feature is planned. The first film, 'The X-Files,' was a 1998 box-office success."

HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

Many happy returns to the following DaVinci personnel and Star Trek celebrities and events who are celebrating birthdays or anniversaries in February!

Brent Spiner (Data)	2 nd
Ethan Phillips (Neelix)	8 th
CMDR Connie Heller	14 th
Andrew Robinson (Elim Garak)	14 th
CRMN Roger Wright	15 th
LeVar Burton (LTCMDR Geordi LaForge)	16 th
Michelle Forbes (ENS Ro Laren)	17 th
Gary Lockwood (LT Gary Mitchell)	21 st
Martha Hackett (Seska)	21 st
Jeri Ryan (Seven of Nine)	22 nd
Majel Barrett Roddenberry (Lwaxana Troi)	23 rd
Chase Masterson (Leeta the Dabo Girl)	26 th
Barbara Babcock (Voice of Loskene, Trelane's Mother, Isis the Cat, and others)	27 th

FINANCIALLY SPEAKING

Opening Balance	163.23
Pizza (New Year's Eve party)	18.00
Deposit	10.75
Closing Balance	155.98

CMDR Connie Heller

NIGHT OUT LOCATIONS

As selected at the Thanksgiving get together the following are the 2002 Night out locations:

February	Captain Tom's
March	Al's Schnitzel House
April	Country's Barbeque
May	Steak n' Shake
June	China Moon
July	NONE (4 th of July party)
August	Olive Garden (if finished)
September	Golden Corral
October	Speak Easy Pub
November	Ryan's
December	Bonanza (Phenix City)

SPACE

First—LET ME KNOW IF YOU DO NOT HAVE A SPACE CARD.

Now, the two game pieces are Bajoran (Aliens) and Saavik (Personnel).



CDMR Connie Heller

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AT THE CAPTAIN'S HOUSE.
COME ONE COME ALL!**

**THE NEXT NIGHT OUT WILL BE
AT 7:00 PM ON 4 FEBRUARY
AT CAPTAIN TOM'S (MACON ROAD)
PLEASE COME AND JOIN US!**

DaVINCI STAFF ROSTER

Commanding Officer Freddy Heller 562-TREK

Executive Officer Joe Perry 327-5888
 Finance Connie Heller 562-8735
 Community Service **VACANT**
 Publications Freddy Heller 562-8735

Science Officer **VACANT**
 Counselor **VACANT**
 Morale **VACANT**
 Medical **VACANT**

Engineering Officer **VACANT**
 Communications Gisela Stephens 689-4266
 Quartermaster Randy Dunn 291-0150
 Security Roger Wright 687-8052

Cadet Corps Commander **VACANT**

Master Chief Petty Officer **VACANT**

FINALLY...

Many of you do not know when your membership in the DaVinci is due for renewal. This is due primarily to the fact that most of the newsletters now go out via e-mail. If you get your newsletter the old fashioned way, your expiration date is on the address label. Those going via the Internet have no address label so to speak. So, to help those folks out who get the Pilot via e-mail, here are your expiration dates for the DaVinci (D) and Starfleet (S):

Steve Brown	May 02 (D)
Emma Certo	Jan 02 (D); Mar 02 (S)
Randy Dunn	Sep 02 (D); Feb 02 (S)
Karen Ferris	Sep 02 (D); May 02 (S)
Rose Hudson	Sep 02 (D)
Todd Kes	Sep 02 (D)
Doug Liverett	Sep 02 (D)
Lesh Mazur	Jul 02 (D)
Joe Perry	Jul 02 (D); Nov 01 (S)
Russell Ruhland	Aug 02 (D); Aug 02 (S)
Michael Walker	Mar 02 (D); Mar 02 (S)
Roger Wright	Nov 01 (D); Mar 02 (S)

At the Edge of the Federation

For those of you who came in late, the following is a novella written by our very own CRMN Todd Kess. Hope you enjoy and are enjoying it.

Part VI

Captain Morgan watched the stars fly by the main screen, as they cruised to the next planet. Sherrizin 12 was the fourth planet out from the secondary star in a binary star system. It was the most habitable planet in the system, but that was not saying much. The planet's atmosphere was over forty percent oxygen, and fifty percent nitrogen. The colony lived in a sealed dome, and extracted argon to mix with the atmosphere to allow the colonists to breathe without worrying about sparks.

The source of all the oxygen was the massive plant life present. Virtually every square meter of the planet's surface was covered with a plant that turned sunlight and carbon dioxide into oxygen. The colonists had to go outside every few days to clear off the plants from the exhaust vents, as the plants were all but ravenous in their search for carbon dioxide. A few small oxygen-breathing herbivores had developed, but the charged particle waves that the sun spewed out every few years kept their population down, while the plants simply out-reproduced them, with seedpods hardened against the effects. In fact, a few plants had been using the flares to trigger their seedpods to open, waiting for the rich soil to be ready for them to live in.

As a result, there was no need to worry about the plants choking each other out, as the solar flares and charged particles would kill off all plant life, and the seeds in the ground would be able to use the raw material from the decomposing plants to grow. The decomposition effect was caused by hardy xenobacteria that lived inside the plants, taking a little of the plant mass to sustain them, in effect a type of parasite. While the plant was alive, the plant could grow fast enough that there was no problem with the bacteria, but when the plant died as a result of the flares, the bacteria would rapidly destroy the plant that it lived in. The colonists had not found out yet how the bacteria got inside the plants yet, but they were still looking into it.

There was no need for breathing equipment if you went outside the base, and the colonists there were in the habit of keeping a small, slow-growing plant

in their room, to keep it smelling fresh, and providing plenty of oxygen. The plants worked better than any filter the Federation could produce so far, and at a far lower cost. The net result was that their plants were sent all over the Federation, as a cheap method of air filtration. The colonists had had some small success crossbreeding various plants with the local variety, and several variants had been produced. Some had a pleasant odor, others glowed in the dark via bioluminescence, and still others would have sealed bulbs where the flower developed inside, but would only open when carbon dioxide was exhaled on them. However, there was a strict quarantine system working, to prevent anyone from crossbreeding those plants with any of the toxic kinds, or fast growing kinds. One person had been a prankster, and had managed to crossbreed the plants with a native earth plant called the "Rotting corpse flower". The plant lived up to its name, and had forced the evacuation of an entire building when the massive flower opened during a speech.

According to the messages sent so far, the colony was having trouble with its fusion reactor. Without its reactor, the colony would not be able to communicate with the rest of the Federation; and even more importantly, there would be no way for the colony to survive the next solar flare. The colony also served as a center for biological research into plants, and exported various food crops to the Federation. By using small shuttles to extract the necessary biological materials from the local comet bodies and similar sites, the scientists would deposit the materials on the planet in pre-selected areas. The areas pre-selected were those that had hybrids that been bred to produce fruit and other similar crops.

The biological materials would land on those plants, serving the two tasks of clearing a field, and fertilizing the area. The seedpods in the area would use the raw organic material, and grow to titanic proportions. The old Earth records of defining bumper crops, and record sizes were considered barely acceptable amounts here. Each acre on this planet yielded over ten times the amount of crops as an acre on Earth, and that was per planting. Since each field could handle four plantings per year, this one planet was one of the most vital planets of the Federation.

Briefly Captain Morgan wondered why the Federation was shipping hyper growth seed stock to this sector, instead of having Sherrizin 12 export its crop to the local systems. But that was the way the Federation operated; all proceeds are to go to the local Starbase according to what the colony was able to produce, and the Starbase would disperse the items to each colony as to their needs. Anything left over would go up the chain of command for the Starbases, until a use was found for it. If a colony needed something that was not produced locally, it would send the request to their Starbase, and the request would be passed up the chain until somebody was found that had it, and then that item would be sent down to the colony that needed it. Most colonies kept a hidden supply depot, to use in case the items ordered weren't available for a few months, or years.

But that was idle daydreaming, and Captain Morgan knew that if any independent operators tried substituting themselves in here, they would be used by the Federation for more efficient distribution purposes. While on the way there another general quarters drill was held, to keep the crew in the right frame of mind.

When they arrived at Sherrizin 12, the communication section could get no answer to their hails. Investigating further with their scanners, they were only able to detect low-level battery power running, and extremely high levels of oxygen present in the base, indicating that the base's argon filters were no longer running. Sending down a shuttle to investigate, a standard complement away team was to investigate the base and report back what was going on.

The standard away team was composed of six security personnel, two medics, two engineers, an officer in charge, and a pilot and communications person. The security team would assign one member to each other person, and the engineering team would be responsible for finding out what was going on and get basic services running again. The medical team would be responsible for taking care of any injured personnel, while the officer would be in charge of the whole team, and any communication with the remaining colony personnel. Finally, the pilot would use the shuttle's communications to keep the team in contact with the Excellon, while using the shuttle's sensors to scan the area for anything interesting. The shuttle

could also request help from the Excellon's sensors in case anything unusual was found, and additional power was needed to identify.

Arriving at the colony, the shuttle team saw that the main landing areas were full of plants, and the pilot began using the shuttle's laser to slowly clear an area to land. The security team got out first, and began using their weapons to clear a path to the main colony buildings. Getting halfway there, they heard voices.

"Over here, this way, thank goodness you've arrived."

It turned out that the colony's main fusion reactor had failed due to proper maintenance, and had lost containment. With no gravitational field to pressurize the deuterium for fusion, the reaction had stopped immediately, and the batteries had been brought on-line to keep the colony going. Solar power had been useless, as the plants covered any solar panels within a few days. The local shuttles used more complex power storage, but still depended on the colony's reactor for recharging their power cells. The net result was that the colony was running out of power, and as the date for the solar flare approached, the people were getting more and more concerned.

To save power, the colony had decided to set all of the doors open, and run on minimal lighting. The bioluminescent plants had been planted, and were currently providing plenty of light inside the colony, though they needed to be brought out of the colony every few days to receive sunlight to recharge their chemical supplies.

The colony was doing quite well for food, as the food plants had gotten loose inside the station, and were thriving in the high carbon dioxide environment. The colony had been doing quite well, except for not having any communications with the rest of the Federation. However, with all the doors open, when the solar flare arrived, the colony would be incinerated, and that had been a definite damper on people's spirits.

The spare components had been among the supplies the Excellon was transporting, and soon the colony's main reactor was back on-line, and the respective leaders were talking to one another. Captain Morgan was talking to the colony's administrator, and their conversation went like this:

"Mrs. Prokelon, I'm glad to see your colony is getting better, but I have to admit I am curious

about why you didn't notify Starbase 121 about your situation."

"Simple Captain. We did. We sent four different communications attempts to them, and then stopped after it became clear that nothing was headed our way, even though Starbase 121 said that something would be sent. Also, the subspace communicators required a heck of a jolt to send a message, and we needed the power to run basic life support here. Recycling materials, running the genetics lab to breed the plants we needed here, and running the defoliants seemed more important at the time.

"I was curious myself, as Starfleet didn't send out any ships to pick up the food crops we had. We were wondering about it, as it seemed rather odd. Do you know why they haven't sent any ships out?"

"Yes I do. It seems as though one of the colonies out here is intercepting ships and shuttles. We are trying to find out who it is, and would appreciate any information you might have on that."

"I'll see what we can do, though without main power, all our sensors were unplugged, as we were trying to keep enough power to survive the solar flare. We kept the subspace receiver on a little longer, as it required less power, but we were forced to turn that off as well. But I will get together with my staff, and give you a complete copy of all our sensor records if you wish."

"That would be wonderful. I'll have my computer people standing by for your data."

The data was transferred, and the sensor people sat down, trying to find out anything useful out of the data given to them. But no matter how long they stared at it, there was nothing useful in there. There were the usual, nebulae, drifting hunks of rocks, and basic readouts on nearby systems. The data was filtered, and nothing that they could identify was there. Finding no new evidence to suggest the missing shuttles and ships were in the Sherrizin system, the Excellon continued its route.

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To Be Continued Part VII Next Month