



DaVinci Pilot

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

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MAY 2002

FROM THE CENTER SEAT

There is a clean up of our Adopt-a-Highway location scheduled for the 11th of May at 8 AM. We are starting early because the weather will be much warmer and the sooner we can start the cooler it will be when we finish. Also, the more crew personnel that show up, the sooner we will finish! As always, we will meet at the McDonald's on Veteran's Parkway. Remember, when you show up, you will get two game pieces for "SPACE: The Game". Our last clean-up was very successful and I would like to see this be successful as well. In fact, I would like to see some new faces show up. Every clean-up brings the same crew personnel out to help and a few new faces would be a blessing!. Even if you cannot help pick up trash, stop by and join us for breakfast!

Speaking of SPACE: The Game, it has been going on for several months now and there has not been a winner! Keep track of your game card and brush up on your "Space, the final frontier" speech, because fabulous prizes await the winner. Naturally, we would like to see someone other than Roger win!

There has been a change in the Night Out schedule. Since the new Olive Garden has not yet broken ground, it is highly unlikely that it will be open in time for the August Night Out. So, it has been moved to December and everything else has moved up a month. I am not sure that the Olive Garden will even be ready for the December Night Out, but one can always hope. We shall see what the next few months bring. Dang, it looks like we may be going to Hooter's after all. Captain's prerogative after all (ah, what did you say dear?).

COMM Freddy Heller

SCIENCE STATION

As your new science officer I welcome you to explore with me the endless sources of fascinating topics related to science and its related philosophies. Most of us are not scientists in the traditional academic sense. Therefore I intend to write about the scientific world in a down to earth understandable format. I will try to make the subjects of our scientific explorations both varied and interesting. When I come across the latest scientific news of interest I will include such items in the monthly science letter. I intend to allow this article to evolve over time rather than remain in a static format. I would welcome any comments or suggestions as time goes by. My primary theme over the next year or so will be the history of science and the evolution of scientific methods. I will do the above by concentrating on biographies of history's greatest scientists, their discoveries and their contributions to our world.

As Trekkers I would think that it is fair to say that in our own ways we are all scientists. This is so because we all question or ask why things happen the way they do. In the early history of humankind, the Neanderthals and the Cro-Magnons asked themselves why does the sun rise every day, why does it rain and snow, where does fire come from and an endless set of questions related to their natural environment. The word "why" is the fundamental essence of our humanity that sets us apart from our animal instinctual element. In seeking the answers to "why" we choose to grow and expand in our universe. Prior to the nineteenth century, the word scientist was not used. Rather, scientists, as we understand the term, were called natural philosophers. In its most elemental

meaning, the word philosopher means one who seeks the truth. A natural philosopher means just that, one who seeks truth about the natural physical universe. A small child is a natural philosopher when he or she deluges us with endless questions all day long about everything that they see or hear. Consequently some of us go bonkers with all the questioning. As Trekkers, we are all scientists in the sense that we use our questioning, our fascination with the outer universe—the positive evolution of humanity—as a vehicle to (yeah, I know it sounds trite) boldly go where no one has gone before.

In my next article I will tell you about the Greek scientist, Eratosthenes, who around 200 B.C. very accurately measured the circumference of the earth among other extraordinary discoveries. I am very much looking forward to working with you all. Thank you.

ENS Lech Mazur

COMMUNITY PROGRAMS

Okay, I want to talk a little bit about the community and charitable activities the DaVinci is involved in. Many of you may not know just what the DaVinci does for the Columbus-Phenix City community, Starfleet, and other charitable organizations. You may be new to the club or a long standing member who just plain forgot. So, to introduce you to the programs or to jog your memory, what follows is a list of the programs that we actively participate in and a few that we have tended to let languish over the past several years. I would like to see these "forgotten" programs rise to the level of the more active ones. So, without further ado here are the programs we actively (and not so actively) participate in:

Overseas Coupon Project. This is the number one activity in the DaVinci. Although the amount of coupons we have accumulated has dropped in the past few years, we still have been the number one ship in Region 2 for the last 6 years! In 2000 we were also the number one contributor in all of Starfleet with nearly \$300,000 in donations! I would love for this trend to continue, but I need your help. Gather those coupons, clip them, sort them into food and non-food, add the total amount in

each pile, and drop them by my house. If you really do not feel like doing all that work, that is okay, but bring the coupons anyway and the job will get done. Since we first started participating in the OCP in 1995, the DaVinci has sent to various overseas Army Community Service (ACS) centers nearly \$500,000 worth of coupons! Help us reach one million before my hands get too sore to clip anymore!

Ronald McDonald House. The collection of tabs is the second biggest activity in the club. As of the 15th of April we have accumulated nearly 46,000 tabs! Once we reach the 50,000 mark, I will arrange for a turn-in. I have already made some preliminary contact with the folks at the RMH and they are quite excited about the donation. I will make sure that the paper knows when this will take place. Please save those tabs from your cans and drop them off at my house anytime or when we get together for meetings or at the Night Out.

Adopt-A-Highway. Our highway section does get cleaned, but the participation at those pick-ups could be a little more attended. The more that show up, the less time it takes to pick up the litter. Remember, the next is scheduled for 11 May, so mark your calendars and help keep the streets of Columbus a little more cleaner.

Starfleet Stampede. The donation of canceled stamps is not doing as well as I thought it would. What could be easier? All you have to do is cut out the canceled stamp on your letters and packages and bring them whenever the DaVinci gets together. We have had large donations from Lisa, but we cannot expect her to carry the whole thing. So, please save those stamps. You need not sort or count them. Now that Starfleet has a Stampede Coordinator once more, I believe you will begin to see more activity in the program. Remember, this program benefits Starfleet's various charities so clip those stamps today!

**THE NEXT MEMBERSHIP MEETING
WILL BE AT 7 PM ON 16 MAY
AT THE CAPTAIN'S HOUSE
COME ONE COME ALL!**

Caring for Babies with AIDS. CBA is the DaVinci's primary charity. Our donations to this worthy cause total \$100 over the last several years. The proceeds from the penny jar competition is supposed to go to CBA, but the amounts from several of the last competitions has not been that good (of course, any amount raised is highly appreciated, but I know we can do better). I would like to see this figure greatly increase. So, we need to look elsewhere for raising funds. There is so much that we can do to raise money and have yet to do. Some of these are a bake sale, a club garage sale, and holding a car wash. If you have other suggestions or are willing to lend a hand in any of the activities suggested, please let me know.

Columbus Battered Women's Shelter. For this worthy institution we collect soap, shampoo, and other items women may need during their stay at the shelter. So far we have amassed a large amount of soap and shampoo, but very little else. I have made contact with the folks at the shelter and just about anything is needed and will be greatly appreciated. You may drop any donations by my house.

Starfleet Trauma Buddies. This started out as a great idea and several club members jumped in with help and donations. However, since then, the program has pretty much stalled. To refresh your memory, Trauma Buddies are stuffed animals outfitted with Starfleet uniforms that are handed out to ambulatory children to calm their fears. They must be of a size to fit into a gallon baggie, have two feet and two hands (as opposed to four feet), and be non-intimidating. Bears, bunny rabbits and the like are great but "scary" items are not (monsters and just plain ugly). They need not be new as long as they are clean. Getting stuffed animals is not the problem (club members have come through), We have several dozen stored away. The problem lies in the lack of support to help sew and decorate the uniforms that go on the animals. Connie has cut out many patterns but cannot, by herself, sew them together and paint the communicator on. We need your help! When I contacted the fire department last year, they seemed quite thrilled about the program and our willingness to help out. They do work.

HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

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

Marc Alaimo (Dukat)	5 th
CADET Matthew Dunn	6 th
PO2 Lisa Neal	12 th
ENS Gisela Stephens	15 th
CADET Vincenzo Fleming	16 th
Joan Collins (Edith Keeler)	23 rd
ENS Russell Ruhland	25 th
COMM Freddy Heller	26 th
Harlan Ellison (Scrip Writer)	27 th
Colm Meaney (Chief Miles O'Brien)	30 th
Michael Piller (Executive Producer)	30 th

CONVENTIONS

The next convention will be 24-26 May in Atlanta! It will be held at the Atlanta Marriott Century City location. Guests include James Doohan in his last convention appearance ("Scotty" is retiring), Bruce Boxleitner (Commander Sheridan in Babylon 5), John Billingsly (Dr. Phlox in Enterprise), J.G. Hertzler (General Martok in Deep Space Nine), and Barry Morse (Victor Bergman in Space 1999). Boxleitner will appear on Saturday only and Billingsly on Sunday only so plan your visit accordingly. The others will appear both Saturday and Sunday.

Ticket prices are quite reasonable. A weekend deluxe is \$75.00; reserved seating for either Saturday or Sunday is \$40.00; and memberships for kids under 10 are free except in reserved seating when the cost is \$10 (no autograph). During the convention KAG and Starfleet will be hosting the Khitomer Conference. That should be a lot of fun. To order tickets and to learn more about the convention weekend log onto Vulkon.com. If you are going for the weekend or only on Saturday or Sunday and wish to carpool let me know.

Finally, some of the things that will be going on all weekend will be a gaming room, panels, filking, and a video room. There will also be a stocked con-suite hosted by the USS Yomato. The menu includes a pancake breakfast on Saturday and Sunday as well as a Saturday night dinner. This is place where all fans can meet in a relaxed setting to meet, eat and greet. Hope to see you there!

ACCOLADES TO:

Karen Pynenburg who brought over several hundred cans with tabs and 500 additional tabs! The tabs will go to the Ronald McDonald House and the cans we will turn in for the DaVinci coffers. A BIG Bajoran thanks to Karen the donation. Of course, if you ask my son, who has to de-tab and crush the cans whether the donation was appreciated, you might get a very different response! **NOTE: WE HIT 50,000!!!**

FINANCIALLY SPEAKING

Opening Balance	162.67
Deposit	32.50
Postage	7.27
Closing Balance	197.90

CPT Connie Heller

NIGHT OUT LOCATIONS

The following is a list of the remaining Night Out locations for the rest of the year:

June	China Moon
July	NONE (4 th of July party)
August	Golden Corral
September	Speak Easy Pub
October	Ryan's
November	Bonanza (Phenix City)
December	Olive Garden (if finished)

SPACE THE GAME

First, please let me know if you do not have a SPACE card and I will get one to you. Now, the two game pieces for May are:



SHIPS Enterprise-D and PERSONNEL Kira

CPT Connie Heller

DaVINCI STAFF ROSTER

Commanding Officer	Freddy Heller	562-8735
Executive Officer	Joe Perry	327-5888
Finance	Connie Heller	562-8735
Community Service	VACANT	
Publications	Freddy Heller	562-8735
Science Officer	Lech Mazur	596-9542
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 electronic version of the Pilot, here are your expiration dates for the DaVinci (D) and Starfleet (S):

Steve Brown	May 02 (D)
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)
Lesh Mazur	Jul 02 (D)
Joe Perry	Jul 02 (D); Nov 01 (S)
Russell Ruhland	Aug 02 (D); Aug 02 (S)
Michael Walker	Mar 03 (D); Mar 03 (S)
Roger Wright	Mar 04 (D); Mar 02 (S)

HELP HELP HELP!!

Connie has the 26th and 29th off. We need someone with a pickup that could help transport cans to the recycle place. They close at 4PM.

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 reading it.

Part IX

Five hundred kilotons of explosive fury vented itself on the space between the two ships, and the EMP effect raced out almost immediately behind the light from the explosion. The main screen in the Excellon automatically dimmed to protect the sight of the humans on board, but the Amemnon was not protected against the EMP as the Excellon was. Relays blew out in several sections, and lights flickered. But those apparently were the secondary systems, for the Amemnon charged through where the missile had detonated, and the five shuttles swerved towards the Amemnon.

"Captain, they're heading right for us."

"Very well then. If more than one shuttle approaches to within one kilometer, fire a turret laser to warn, then fire a second shot to cripple it. I want answers, and sifting debris won't give me enough of them."

But not only were the five shuttles approaching, the Amemnon was too. Even worse, the Amemnon began firing on the Excellon!

"Sir, incoming fire!"

"Return fire with the main lasers! Turrets, cripple those shuttles!"

Sensors told the weapons how far their targets were, and where they were heading. Computers calculated where the target would be, and minor adjustments were made. Lasers fired, pumping massive amounts of energy into thin lines that reached out to prevent those who would harm the Excellon from doing so. Gouts of vaporized metal flew from the sides of the shuttles attacking, and two holes were punched deep into the hull of the Amemnon. But the Amemnon and her shuttles were no less accurate, and twelve of their shots hit the Excellon's shields.

"Multiple hits Captain. They're savaging our shields. Forward shield down to 71 percent and the Amemnon is still closing."

"Target five missiles at the Amemnon, set for three megaton yield. Detonation range is 100 meters. Fire when ready."

More missiles received their orders, and the deadly

sequence repeated. The missiles launched, and homed in on the vessel they were ordered to kill. Five explosions dotted the space near the Amemnon, yet she still came on. She was venting atmosphere, and looked like a cripple, yet her weapons still had power, and they fired again.

"More hits Captain. Forward shields are down to forty nine percent, and two of the shuttles are still moving. I don't know what their weapons are, but they are nasty."

"Helm, 90 down, and Turrets fire on the Amemnon. If any shuttles get into a spot where they can fire on the forward shields, they have first priority."

"Sensors, you said there were two points of unusual power nexii on the Amemnon. Have the weapons fire been coming from them?"

"Um, yes captain."

"Feed those coordinates to the dorsal turret. Dorsal turret, fire on that location."

The turret on the top of the Excellon received the location, and fired both of its beams at the location. From the outside, the beams were invisible, but the effects on the Amemnon were noticeable. Sparks flew in the vacuum of space, as the weapons mounted there were subjected to torrents of particles burning away at their connections. A surge of sparks occurred as the beings controlling the Amemnon tried to fire the weapons, and the mount was silent.

"Nailed it sir. Incoming!"

More shots poured in from the Amemnon, but only from the second turret, and the impact knocked the dorsal shields down by 15 percent. Damage Control crews labored on the units that had overloaded in the bow, feverishly trying to get them reset and re-energized before anybody else targeted there.

"Sensors, feed the location of the other power nexus to the dorsal turret. Dorsal, can you hit around that spot, to try to cut those weapons off?"

"Will try Captain."

The gunner for that turret saw the site highlighted by sensors, on the bottom of the Amemnon's hull, and began tracking that point. Picking a spot one meter above and one meter to the left, the gunner began firing the laser, and guiding the beam to the right. The weapon mounted on the Amemnon was primarily outside the hull, and without its

supporting skeleton and power feeds, now needed only a minor twitch to be snapped off.

The sensor department gave out a small cheer as the power source disappeared from their screens, and Captain Morgan knew that the weapon was no longer a threat to his ship. While all this had been going on, the other turrets had managed to cripple the remaining shuttles, and there were a total of six weaponless craft floating near the Excellon. But the Amemnon still had its power plant, and the sensor department began to read a steady build-up of power from the reactor.

"Captain, there seems to be a massive build-up in the Amemnon's main reactor." The sensor operator was sounding puzzled as the data was reported, and the confusion showed in his voice. "What the-lifeboat launching from the Amemnon!"

But that wasn't the only thing to startle the sensor team, as the main reactor aboard the Amemnon had its containment pulled, and the plasma within was allowed to vent through the entire ship. The plasma raced through the passageways, vaporizing organic components and reducing the living and dead bodies on board to so much burnt organic material in the process.

The shuttles began to drift at the same time, though whether that was due to seeing what had happened to their ship or due to the damage inflicted on them by the Excellon's lasers was difficult to tell. Since there was no more action being taken by any of the six hostile vessels, Captain Morgan began issuing orders to begin a salvage and investigation operation.

"XO, connect me to the security team."

"Here Captain."

"Security? I want you to put together four teams. The first is to go down to the colony and find out what happened; the second is to go around to the shuttles and investigate them; the third to go out to the lifeboat and find out all you can from it; and the fourth is to go on board the Amemnon and find out what was going on there. Report back when your teams are complete and you are ready to go."

"Yes sir."

"Helm, get us closer to the planet, I want to get some more information for the security team to have for when they go down there."

"Yes sir."

The minutes passed as the Excellon approached the planet. The Amemnon was kept in sensor range

the entire time, and the data kept piling up. The colony's power plant had several scars on the outside that appeared to be similar to lightning strikes, and the main communication center had similar scars.

The security teams reported they were ready, and Captain Morgan gave them permission to use the four shuttles to complete their missions. The first team sped towards the planet's surface, intending to find out what was going on. The second team began going to the closest shuttle, while the third team headed towards the life pod and the fourth team went towards the Amemnon.

The module freighter during this time was also heading towards the colony, and her captain sent a message to the Excellon, for Captain Morgan. It was a private message, intended for Captain Morgan only, so he took it in his chambers.

"Captain Morgan, I would like to apologize for my comments earlier."

"Captain, is there any particular reason for that?"

"Essentially, I saw what you did to the Amemnon, and I'm guessing you were holding back. It's starting to sink in among me and my crew just how much firepower you're packing there. I don't think a Falcon class cruiser could have taken care of the Amemnon as quickly or as effectively as you did."

A Falcon class cruiser was a survey ship, designed to look for new systems, and survey them for useful materials and/or minerals. It had barely half the armament of the Excellon, so Captain Morgan knew the freighter captain was just trying to impress him.

In the meantime Captain, I would like to start transferring cargo to the colony. Do you mind if I start?"

"Actually Captain, I do. My security teams haven't even gotten to the planet yet to tell me what happened, and you want to start transferring cargo immediately? If your shuttles aren't loaded yet, you may load and launch them, but don't send them to the colony until I say so. After all, there may be more surprises down there."

"Um, ah, yes Captain. I'll send them down when you say so."

Captain Morgan broke the connection, and went back to the Bridge.

"Captain, the third team has reached the life pod, and reports three people on board. They are bringing them and the life pod back, but report that the environmental system aboard the life pod

seemed to be missing, sir. If they hadn't been using a reserve air supply, they would've only lasted half an hour in there.

"They also wish to give a full report, but only one of them is fit enough to do so. The other two look like they've been, well, whipped. All three are showing lots of bruises, and one person seems to have several broken bones. They are in bad shape, and the boarding commander has already asked for medical assistance to meet them at the boat bay."

"Very well then. I'm heading there too, and will want to talk to the team leader. Commander Verrin, you have the bridge."

*****To Be Continued Part X Next Month*****

**THE NEXT MEMBERSHIP MEETING
WILL BE AT 7 PM ON 16 MAY
AT THE CAPTAIN'S HOUSE
COME ONE COME ALL!**

**THE NEXT NIGHT OUT WILL BE AT
7:00 PM ON 6 MAY
AT STEAK N' SHAKE
PLEASE COME AND JOIN US!**