



DaVinci Pilot

Newsletter of the U.S.S. DaVinci
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FROM THE CENTER SEAT

Happy New Year! It will not quite be the New Year when you read this but it will be close enough. I hope everyone will have a prosperous and joyous New Year.

The last five weeks was quite a busy one for the DaVinci. We had our annual Thanksgiving and Christmas celebrations, a scheduled clean up of our Adopt-A-Highway location, our monthly membership meeting, and a membership drive at the premier of Star Trek Nemesis!

The membership drive went great. The drive was originally scheduled for Hollywood Connection, but was moved to the Peachtree complex. The folks at Carmike wanted as many seats for the premiere of The Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers. Although there was a lot of interest shown in the DaVinci, no one filled out a membership application on the spot. We did, however, pass out quite a few membership applications with several promises of sending it back. If we can just get one new member, the membership drive was worth it. All those who helped out were either in their uniform, Klingon costume, or DaVinci shirt and it sure did draw some attention from those in the theater. Many folks, Trek fans and not, dropped by our table to chat, get further information, or to find out what was going on. Even a couple of the ticket girls wanted to have their picture taken with the men in their uniforms. Sure did make three "old" men feel a little younger! The jury is still out on what the DaVinci crew thought of Nemesis, but it looks as if it is leaning toward 3 stars – not the best, but certainly not the worst either. A BIG Bajoran thanks to all who lent a hand: Joe, Russell, Gisela, Rose, Travis, Ariana, and of course, Connie who was dressed to the hilt in her Klingon costume!

Both the Thanksgiving and Christmas get together were resounding successes! At Thanksgiving, nearly 20 crew personnel and their families feasted on turkey, ham, sweet potato casserole, stuffing, salad, home-made bread, green bean casserole, broccoli casserole, mashed potatoes, deviled eggs, and various cakes and pies! Whew, it is sure was not the best time to go on a diet!

The Christmas get together was similar when it came to the attendance and the food, but different in that we also had our yearly thank-goodness-that-I-was-finally-able-to-get-rid-of-that-piece-of-junk gift exchange!

Okay, the recent clean up of our Adopt-A-Highway site did not go well. Only three personnel showed up and that is not enough for the large intersection we are responsible for. I need at least four to even consider picking up the trash. I will be rescheduling the clean-up for Saturday 11 January at 9:00 AM. Please try to come. A BIG Bajoran thanks to Tony Fleming and Joe Perry for coming out on a chilly Saturday morning.

Commodore Freddy Heller

**THE NEXT MEMBERSHIP MEETING
WILL BE AT 7 PM ON
THURSDAY 02 JANUARY
AT THE RONALD MCDONALD HOUSE
COME ONE COME ALL!**

**THE NEXT DAVINCI NIGHT OUT WILL
BE AT 7 PM ON
MONDAY 20 JANUARY
AT COUNTRY'S ON WEEMS ROAD
PLEASE JOIN US!**

COUNSELOR'S COUCH

Infinite Diversity in Infinite Combinations or IDIC for short. If you look at a basic concept of IDIC, one might approach the idea that we live in a Murphy's Law governing universe. After all, when you look at all the diversity within the realm of trek and the combinations thereof then our modern day society has grown to accept that "if it CAN happen, it WILL happen." Some have given in to giving up by stating that the concept of IDIC is dead but I completely disagree and offer the following example to support that IDIC is alive and well within our universe.

We face everyday of our lives with infinite decisions. Do I get up or stay in bed? What clothes will I wear today? Did I remember to let the cat out? Should I drive a different route to my destinations today? Will I stay up late tonight to watch the latest episode of "Enterprise?" You see there are no boundaries or limits to the countless paths we choose to follow.

Now when it comes to diversity it is an established fact that although we are all born human (well, maybe not all of us), our own self-designed personalities and conscience develop as unique individuals. Even with all the infinite influences being pounded into us daily, we ourselves can only determine the final outcome. It is that infinite diversity as individuals that allow us, when brought together with the final ingredient, that create and maintain our very humanity. If we all talked the same, walked the same, thought the same, then there would be no diversity or combination and the world would be inhabited by machines.

I believe all would agree that Trek has created over the years an infinite and diverse combination of ideas and culture based upon the concept that we are not alone in this universe. My final thought is that if we have the capability of creating these infinite diverse combinations on the television and theater screen, then it is entirely possible within the infinite and diverse galaxies in our universe that there could be others waiting for the moment when first contact will become a reality. Come to think about it, I believe I made a few first contacts when I joined Starfleet and all have been very rewarding. Remember, if it CAN happen, it WILL happen!

LT Russell Ruhland

NIGHT OUT LOCATIONS

At the Christmas party, we selected the restaurants for the 2003 DaVinci Night Out. Several locations were chosen that we have never been to before. It looks like a pretty good year! Oh, a BIG Bajoran thanks to Margaret for suggesting Hooter's! None of the males present had the nerve! And so without further ado, here are the 2003 Night Out locations:

January:	Country's (Weems Road)
February:	Hooter's (Oh Yea!)
March:	Chili's
April:	Hunan's
May:	Olive Garden (At Last!)
June:	El Vaquero
July:	Texas Steakhouse
August:	Primo's Italian Buffet
September:	Golden Corral
October:	Chedders
November:	Longhorn Steakhouse

REGION 2 SUMMIT

The Region 2 Summit is just a few short months away! The 2003 Region 2 Summit will be held 7-9 March in Huntsville, AL and a mere 3 hours from Columbus! If you have not yet bought your tickets or more importantly, made your hotel reservations, I would strongly suggest you do so! Rooms at the hotel are going fast and you may not be able to get a room if you wait much longer. If you are interested in attending or need more information on the Summit, surf on over to the Region 2 web site at: <http://www.omnifacets.com/Region2/summit/index.htm> for all the latest information. I am sure we can work out a car pool scheme if enough folks want to go. So far only four personnel have actually signed up to attend, although several more have made their intent to go known. Come on DaVinci, I know we can do better than that!

REGION 2 ELECTION

In a few months Region 2 will be electing a new Regional Coordinator. The Captain, who gets input from his crew, casts the vote for the Regional Coordinator. Continuing from last month's Pilot are a couple more questions asked by Region 2 personnel for the two candidates.

CANDIDATE QUESTION #1

The Region 2 Summit is the most important 48 hours in the region each year. It finances all of our activities, allows us to donate to charity and to send the RC to the Starfleet International Conference. It is also by far the single biggest gathering of R2 members each year, and has become well known throughout Starfleet as the best Summit in Starfleet. Therefore, a thorough familiarity with the planning and execution of the summit is critical for the Regional Coordinator. What involvement have you had with the summit in the past four years?

Danny Potts

I am the current Region 02 Summit Chief. I've held that position for two years now, and rather than focus on 'jobs done' during that time, I think I'll instead offer the impact I think I've had on the Summit, and the process of hosting a Summit over those two years.

Prior to my taking the position of Region 02 Summit Chief, many of the details related to the Summit (finances, attendance, programming, etc...) were largely mysterious to most Summit committees. The prior Summit Chief was a talented and experienced conference host, and just 'knew' these things. As a result, the nature of Summits was that the Chief directed them, since the Chief had the lion's share of the knowledge.

When I took the position, my first priority was to take the financial records from the previous chief, and perform a Profit/Loss analysis, and determine exactly how much a Summit truly makes, what they truly cost, and where money tends to be spent. Once completed, This information was turned over to the Regional Coordinator, who used that information to develop a budget for future summits. It was also published in the Region 02 Update.

Each year, I have continued this practice of financially analyzing Summits, and releasing the information to the membership (through the Region 02 Update) and to the Regional Coordinator. Each year, this information is used to better prepare budgets for future Summit committees.

As a result, we now have a public knowledge of what Summits cost, how much they typically make, and can plan for costs, rather than react to them.

The second impact I feel I have made in the Summit process is helping to delegate as many responsibilities as possible to the Host Committees.

By putting much of the decision-making and legwork in the hands of the host committee, the committee feels much greater ownership over Summits than I feel they did in the past. The success of this has been a balancing act, as some committees feel they received too much responsibility in some areas, while others feel they didn't receive enough. Regardless, I think there's universal agreement that the delegated model is a better fit than a top-down one. The overall goal is to see the host committees feel ownership of the Summit, while still keeping it a Region 02 Summit.

Another area I have introduced into the Summit is PayPal. Actually, I introduced the Regional Coordinator to PayPal, and he's accepted it as a financial method for various Regional transactions (Summit, Merchandise, Donations, etc...) but it's biggest impact is probably felt by the Summit. Through the PayPal system, we can now accept credit card registrations/auction bids/etc, and the person sending the money has an online receipt of the transaction. Prior to taking the position of Chief of Summit, I was still very active in the Summit process, having co-hosted two summits on the Hephaestus and being an attendee and panelist at every Summit since they were created by Kelly Hilliard. I have pitched in at every Summit I've attended to help with any job that a committee felt they could use help with. I've helped committees decorate... I've printed certificates on-site... I've negotiated with a hotel for space at a Summit where I was just an early arriver.

You get the idea. Even before it was my responsibility to make Summits fun and profitable, I was helping to do exactly that.

Jennifer Rosbury

To list my achievements in the Region in the past 4 years would require several days of relating different situations and experiences that the Region has gone through. The simple answer to your question is that I don't have a shining list of crowning achievements. I have served on the committees and participate in the processes of voting, recruiting and representing this region at functions within the Region itself and Fleet.

My "achievements" if you wish me to list them have been along the lines of what some consider the grunt work. I am the peacekeeper, the problem solver, the listener, the diplomat, the Region Human

Resources Department and in my eyes these are "achievements". I've worked hard at them and if you ask most I do it well. My time spent has been on the phone, chats, email, snail mail and in person achieving small goals which add up to resolutions. Again I bring to light that unlike many other Regions we resolve problems and concerns internally and that is primarily done by the Vice Regional Coordinator position. The VRC position is not a glamour position it is a position of action. A major portion of the VRC position is to support the office of the Regional Coordinator and as such many things go on behind the scenes and are never truly actions which receive merit. Those actions might not always be visible or something one would be commended for but never the less are there.

My greatest joy in this position over the last 7 years has been being able to make the contact with the people of this Region and to count them among my family. As many people could attest to the fact that I have been a key player in a myriad of situation through two Regional Coordinators. If given the honor of representing this Region it will be a chance to use the knowledge earned and learned while in my present position.

It has always been my hope and wish to serve this Region and in so doing enrich my life and the lives of those around me. Anyone who knows me knows that I have what it takes to run this Region and make it better.

CANDIDATE QUESTION #2

The job of RC typically takes about 20 hours per week out of my time, much of that answering emails (as many as 200 some days), telephone calls, reading and writing postal mail, and helping at all levels - from individual members, to chapters, to regional events, to working with the EC/AB in governing Starfleet. Does your real life allow you this much time to spare? Do you foresee any demands on your life (family, work, etc.) taking away from that availability in the future?

Danny Potts

Absolutely. Currently, I hold three very active positions in Starfleet. One Chapter-level, one Regional and one International. I serve as the Commanding Officer of the USS Hephaestus, the Region 02 Chief of Summit and the Assistant

Inspector General to Region 02.

These three jobs, combined, easily take 10-40 hours a week of work (depending on the time of year), and I believe I have performed all three jobs well. I have performed all three jobs at the same time for over two years straight.

December 2002 marks the end of my three-year assignment as Commanding Officer for the USS Hephaestus, and should I be selected as the next Regional Coordinator for Region 02, I would automatically be relieved from the positions of Chief of Summit and Assistant Inspector General.

So, I would be replacing three big jobs with one *very* big job, but I believe the time constraints would be similar. I've obviously been able to keep these hours for several years thus far, so I don't anticipate any reason I couldn't continue.

Jennifer Rosbury

I know there are a few who have expressed their concerns that with a baby on the way I would not be able to dedicate the time needed for the RC position.

To smooth these concerns over let me fill you all in on what's what in the Rosbury residence. Steven and I have been living with my mother in law waiting to move into a new residence. I have been told that I am to be kept here for at least a few months after the baby is born. The cradle has already been erected and is ready. Steven is working doing consulting work for his clients, selling Sci-Fi Collectibles on eBay and other computer related tasks to make money. We are saving up for the move to our babies new home. His Uncle is running a security camera company in Melbourne and we have contracts with him to bring in some extra savings. Due to the promise of help from my mother in law, I will be an at home mother.

The most I can expect to be doing outside of caring for the baby and keeping house is doing some craft work, which again I can do from here. We are looking if all goes well in February we will be moving into a unit here in the same complex where we are living right now. As you can see I will have the time to dedicate to this Region and be able to be available for what need to be done. At the most I will have to be more limited in my involvement during the course of the babies birth and recovery from the delivery in May. Also

knowing no matter how the election turns out, that the region has Jo to back us up and make the region continue its long running presence in Starfleet. I am confident that I can recover and adjusting some things to allow her to handle a bit more of the duties during that time.

SCI-FI BUZZ

ARRGG! Fox in its infinite wisdom has decided NOT to order any more episodes of Firefly. If you watch the series and like what you see, then join the effort to keep the show on the air! Go to the following site to help: <http://fireflysupport.com/>.

There is a fantastic Star Trek screen saver available for free download at www.mewho.com. It has the appearance of helm or navigation display panels and also has a sequence with Enterprise E schematics. It can be downloaded with sound or without. It is really well done and I am certain any Star Trek fan would appreciate it.

This article will blow you away! Check it out at: <http://filmforce.ign.com/articles/380/380136p1.html>

Star Trek: The Magazine will stop publishing the magazine after the April 2003 issue. Too bad it was an excellent publication.

If you're a big Andorian fan, the sequel to the Star Trek Voyager Elite Force computer game, aptly titled Star Trek Elite Force II, will feature Andorians. Elite Force II is set aboard the TNG-era Enterprise, so it should be great fun. You can find out more about the game by checking out this site: <http://www.ritual.com/EF2/>.

Romulans will invade 1,750 Safeway-owned supermarkets to promote Paramount's "Star Trek: Nemesis". Safeway joins Del Taco, McAfee software, game developer Activision, and direct mailer Val Pak as partners for the movie cut. In its first multi-brand movie deal, Safeway will break a five-week promotion and sweepstakes on 2 December across its eponymous stores and sister chains Dominick's (Chicago), Vons and Pavilion (Southern California), Randall's and Tom Thumb (Texas) and Genuardi (based in Philadelphia). Naturally, there is nothing in our area.

Fans of Star Trek will be in seventh heaven with the opening of the biggest Star Trek exhibition ever staged. Check it out at: <http://www.cnn.com/2002/WORLD/europe/11/30/trek.london.reut/index.html>.

WELCOME ABOARD!

Welcome aboard to the following crew personnel who have recently joined or renewed their membership in the DaVinci (D) or Starfleet (S):

Randy Dunn (D)
Deniece Dunn (D)
Mathew Dunn (D)
Rebecca Dunn (D)
Christopher Dunn (D)
Gisela Stephens (D)

FINANCIALLY SPEAKING

Opening Balance	272.89
Deposits	134.00
Christmas	20.74
Closing Balance	321.15

CPT Connie Heller

HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

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

Deep Space Nine Premiers (1992)	2 nd
Aron Eisenber (Nog)	6 th
Mark Allen Shepard (Morn)	7 th
Kirstie Alley (LT Saavik)	12 th
Voyager Premiers (1995)	16 th
DeForest Kelley (Dr. Leonard McCoy)	20 th
David Gerrold (Author & Script Writer)	21 st
LTJG Michael Walker	25 th
James Cromwell (Zephram Cochrane)	27 th

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PASSAGES

Glenn Quinn, former co-star of the supernatural drama "Angel," died 3 December in North Hollywood. He was 32. The Dublin-born Quinn was found dead from a possible drug overdose at a friend's home, Los Angeles police said Friday. Detectives said the case will remain open pending the completion of toxicology tests, but no foul play was suspected. Although most of his roles required him to hide his Irish accent, "Angel" was his first role in an American series in which he could speak naturally.

"When you get to speak Irish, you become more at one with yourself, you kind of have a spark when you use it, and I think it's a great dialect," he said at the time. Quinn was born in 1970. He played in local bands before moving in 1988 to the United States. He is survived by his mother, Bernadette, and two sisters, Sonya and Louisa.

DaVINCI STAFF ROSTER

Commanding Officer Freddy Heller 562-8735

Executive Officer Joe Perry 327-5888
 Finance Connie Heller 562-8735
 Community Service Tony Fleming 568-6529
 Publications Freddy Heller 562-8735

Science Officer Lech Mazur 596-9542
 Counselor Russell Ruhland 855-4146
 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**

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FINALLY...

Many of you do not know when your membership in the DaVinci is due for renewal. This is due 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 and Starfleet:

	<u>DaVinci</u>	<u>Starfleet</u>
Randy Dunn	Nov 03	Feb 03
Karen Ferris	Sep 03	May 03
Rose Hutson	Sep 03	
Todd Kes	Sep 03	
Lesh Mazur	Jul 03	Nov 03
Joe Perry	Jul 03	Nov 03
Karen Pynenburg	Jul 03	May 03
Russell Ruhland	Aug 03	Aug 03
Michael Walker	Mar 03	Mar 03
Roger Wright	Mar 03	Mar 02

RM HOUSE NEEDED ITEMS

Although The Ronald McDonald House needs quite a variety of items, the items needed most are listed below. Pick something from the list and bring it with you to each meeting. This is strictly voluntary. Thanks!

<u>Non-Food Items</u>	<u>Miscellaneous Items</u>
Trash Bags (XS and XL)	Copier Paper
Carpet Cleaner	Clasp Envelopes
Spray Air Freshener	Light Bulbs
Styrofoam Cups (L)	Avery Labels 5160
Laundry Detergent	White-Out Pens
Ziploc Bags	Staplers
Paper Plates	
<u>Food Items</u>	
Sugar	
Bags of Hard Candy	
Snack Foods	
Non-Dairy Creamer	

NOTE: Right now, they do not need canned goods, but always need perishable items such as bread, meats, cheese slices, fresh fruit, and snack foods. Gift certificates to local grocery stores, Sam's Club, Wal-Mart, and K Mart are also welcomed.

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 Kes. Hope you enjoy reading it.

Part XVI

The shuttles assigned to the Amemnon performed the trip to the orbiting fuel plant, and managed to refuel the Amemnon in a matter of hours, after Commander Verrin had arrived. The Excellon was operating with zero radiated energy, and all external electronic components in the aft half of the ship were dialed down to minimum levels, or off.

Antimatter was a delicate beast, and nobody wanted to anger it. They knew that there was no real safe way to handle antimatter, and as each pod was carefully moved into place, nobody was taking it easy. Each pod was fully drained of antimatter by the Excellon's power system and the antimatter was transferred to another pod, then the empty pod was jettisoned into space. A shuttle caught it, and attached the pod to itself. Taking the pod into a higher orbit, the shuttle was responsible for making sure that the pods didn't endanger anyone as they orbited the planet.

That was the easy part. Dealing with full antimatter pods was a far more sensitive job. The containment fields were working, and the pods were in zero gravity, but the antimatter inside each pod still had its inertia. The antimatter was kept in place with gravity fields, using gentle nudges to keep the antimatter from developing any sort of momentum. After all, if the antimatter contacted the container walls, it would not be healthy for anyone nearby.

Each pod was slowly guided into position by the shuttle, and as the electromagnets anchored the pod to the ship, the gas tubes were rewarmed. To keep the gas tubes from continuously pushing the pod away from the ship, the gas inside them was chilled down to fifty degrees Kelvin, causing the gas to shrink down to less than one fifth its normal volume. This resulted in the rods being short enough to allow the antimatter pod to contact the electromagnet, and after being securely attached, the gas would be slowly re-warmed to resume its pressure.

Each person operating near the pods carried a small hand torch, in case a pod started to fail, and the gas needed to be re-warmed quickly. The torch

was a small oxygen and gas torch, and could actually provide a flame in space. The reason to use the gas torch, instead of a laser or other electrical heating system, was that the gas system would provide the heat, without providing any electricity to interfere with the tank's containment.

The fueling was completed in five hours, and when the final hatch was closed and the equipment put away and safed, there was a general sigh of relief. Captain Morgan looked on as the antimatter factory got started, and received a communication from Commander Wilson.

"We have antimatter! The fusion plant is providing the power, and the antimatter collector is working properly. You'll now be able to refuel your ship here, so there's no need to worry about making sure there is an antimatter freighter on schedule. Besides, there are still over sixty full pods remaining after your fueling, so even if this plant goes off-line, you can still get fuel."

"Are you going to be okay as far as collecting hydrogen goes?"

"No problem Captain. The hydrogen collectors weren't being fully used, so I'm bringing it to normal operating level. There's enough hydrogen being collected to supply two antimatter factories like that, along with being able to collect enough hydrogen so we can keep eight module freighters full of deuterium. The collector was simply overpowered compared to what we needed here, and it is working perfectly."

"Sounds like you'll be busy then. Have fun with your new toys."

"Who knows what I'll have here next time Captain. See you in a few weeks, and good luck."

"Excellon out." Captain Morgan smiled as he leaned back in his chair, and sighed. 'Only in the Federation would they be so casual with a valuable antimatter plant like that and demand exact records of what we spend our credits on. Sheesh.' Excellon and the Amemnon moved back out, ready to complete the next round of cargo transfers.

During the next few weeks, the data from the shuttle records was examined, looking for any patterns. There had been a little data from each shuttle, mainly dealing with where it was in space at all times. Each shuttle's record was the same; it was cruising along in subspace, it would come out of warp, and then it would record a few seconds of wild maneuvering, then the electronics would be

knocked out. When the computer was brought back on-line, the shuttle would be heading in a new direction, and would stop soon after.

The directions the shuttles went in were random, and an engineer suggested that what was happening was that the shuttle was being flown into the boat bay of the ship that had captured it. It seemed to make sense, as the shuttle's log would always record the shutdown of the main systems a few seconds after the shuttle stopped accelerating and decelerating. So there was no way to trace where the shuttles went, in an attempt to find the slavers' base. The data on the Potenton was still being gone over, both on the Excellon and at Starbase 121, but there was no result from that yet.

For those who had passed the Starfleet exam, all five of them had wanted to go back into space. The basic reason given was that they wanted to be on a ship that could survive if they got into a fight, and the Excellon was the only one that had done so, not once, but twice. For the others that hadn't passed the test, half of them were on board the Amemnon and the rest were back at Starbase 121. The choices had gone in order of score result, with the higher scoring ones choosing their assignment first from what was available.

Ved was one of the ones that had chosen to go with the Excellon. He had been selected to go with the Amemnon because he could speak any language, and if they came across any new races, he could translate for them. In the meantime, Ved was having fun learning the new languages that the Excellon had on file. He considered it a fun activity, and felt he was learning new things about humans by learning their language.

When Captain Morgan talked to him about that, Ved replied, "When one cannot understand the other, one cannot ever be truly at peace. Ved and Ved's people know this. To prevent misunderstanding over a minor thing, learn about the other.

"But when slavers come, we soon understood, understood that there would be no peace among equals."

"What can you tell about the slavers, from their language?"

"Slavers use war language. Is language made for telling of battles, of victory, and of glory? No easy way to tell of defeat, or losses. Slavers seem as warriors, wanting to fight and conquer."

"Why would they take slaves then?"

"Ved not know exactly. Just guesses. Slavers are warriors, work beneath them. When conquer others, get victory, and slaves to do work. As you say, 'two for one'?"

Captain Morgan thanked Ved for his insight, and went on thinking. 'So these slavers want mainly to conquer others, for glory? Perhaps when they lose, they are shamed in some way. That fits with when they self-destructed their reactor, and their suits on the ground. It also means that whoever is in charge of the slaving in this area has had two major losses, with the freighters. This means that they will probably want revenge.'

His thoughts kept him company on the way to the next colony.

After arriving at the next colony, Captain Morgan watched as the shuttles did their three-dimensional dance, transferring supplies to and from the colony. Captain Morgan and the colony's administrator were talking over a communications link, and were relaxing on their respective ends, as their subordinates were well able to handle a simple cargo transfer.

"Administrator, is your colony doing well these days?"

"Much better since you started doing the freighter runs Captain. For a while there we thought the Starbase had forgotten about us, until we started picking up communications about how none of the standard shipments were getting through to or from anyone. That's when we started getting worried, as even though we can grow our own food here in our hydroponics, we would still need certain minerals and vitamins that we weren't able to grow here. I'll bet Sherrizin 12 had a fairly easy time of it though; plenty of food, lots of sunlight, and no need to worry about oxygen. Just worrying about a plant choking you in the night to get to your breath."

"They were doing okay. Sweating while waiting for when the next solar flare occurred, but once we arrived, they were getting back on their feet."

"Um Captain, if I may ask, about how long until your little group returns with the next load?"

"We'll probably be back roughly every four months. That's why we're unloading such a large amount this time. These supplies should help you to get through the next four months until the next freighter shipment.

"If I may ask Administrator, how does this

compare with before the raids started?"

"Well Captain, what we would do before is sending the request to the Starbase, but we would also talk with the other colonies here to see if they had the materials we needed. If they did, we would send a shuttle over, along with some goods that they needed from us, and we would swap."

"But aren't those sort of barter illegal under Federation law?"

"Captain, I knew that every time I did something like that. But I also knew that it took three to four months to get the items we needed from the Federation. As a result, a sort of informal barter is set up between us. Nobody is profiting off it, which is the most important thing. Shuttle pilots get more practice time, and we get to exchange people between colonies. All the population transfers are logged of course, so we know where everyone is, so except for the barter, everything is legal."

"How do you determine if someone can be trusted in something like this? I mean, what's to keep me from turning you over to the Federation authorities?"

"Two things Captain. One, we don't initiate the bartering with a new Administrator. He or she must come to us first, and we tell them that the procedure is illegal. Once we have them admitting that they know that, then and only then do we start the process."

"So you only let others start the process. What if an Administrator refuses to do so and loyally continues to wait for the Federation to supply the material?"

"We do nothing. We will only work with the authorized leader of a colony. Most administrators out here care more for keeping their colony alive for Federation politics actually. There are those who will follow the letter of the law absolutely though, and we do nothing about them. That is another colony. Of course, the local population will quickly change the leader, and we can often deal with the replacement. So we only do the bartering with someone who contacts us first."

"You mentioned two reasons about why I wouldn't turn it you over to the Federation Judicial branch. The first is that each Administrator here would have to be turned in. What is the second?"

"Well Captain, according to the articles of the Federation, if a military officer removes an Administrator of command, the officer then has to

step in as acting Administrator until the local population or the Federation send a replacement. And I don't think you want to deal with all the paperwork of running a single colony, not to mention every single colony out here. But if you wanted to, I wouldn't mind getting eight hours of sleep in a day for a change." The last was said with a grin on the administrator's face, as he had already figured out the Captain's answer.

"You're right, in that regards. However, I want to make sure that there is no evidence of this in any database that the Federation Judicial Branch could find. After all, if they discover that there is a barter system at work out here, they will remove you, and have me and my ship back to Starfleet headquarters so fast you won't believe it."

"Captain, I assure you, there is no way for them to find any evidence. We've had them come out here before, and they have found nothing each time."

Captain Morgan and the Administrator parted ways, each alone in their thoughts; one wondering how much was actually going on out here, and the other thinking that he had found a new ally. Captain Morgan was busy wondering exactly how much was done out here that actually obeyed Federation law, while the Administrator was busy figuring out in his head exactly what supplies a Federation warship would want, and how to provide it. He knew that his fellow administrators were doing the same thing, so he needed to provide something here, and trade for other goods using it.

Returning to his ship, Captain Morgan looked over the various status reports from the divisions on his ship. The crew of a Federation starship knew that they would be on board for months, if not years, and they were willing to live with that. Everyone knew that if you joined Starfleet, you were signing up for a six year tour, and except for the last few months, you would be in some distant corner of the Federation. During the last few months, the Federation made a special compensation. The crewmember would specify where they wanted to be when they left the Federation. This could be any colony, planet, or other location, and the Federation would transfer you to that location so you would be there when you left. Since the distances were so vast, and warp speeds so slow, the time at the end was used to transfer the person to a freighter, and the person would be a crewmember on that freighter until it reached the person's destination. With

freighters going to each planet in the Federation, it was often a simple matter to schedule the appropriate changeovers when the freighters met, and the crewmember would be at the colony by the time the term of service was over.

There were no people on board his ship currently coming up on their end of service, but Captain Morgan noticed that there would be one large batch of them leaving in a year. He would have to send the appropriate requests to Federation personnel department for replacements soon so their replacements would arrive in time for the retirees to be able to leave. Seeing which departments they worked in, he began typing out a memo to Starfleet headquarters for replacements in the selected areas and numbers for each. He knew what types of people Starfleet would send him, but was determined to do the best he could with what he was given. What Starfleet didn't realize, was that the people sent to him were also freethinkers, and those were the kind of people he wanted.

*****To Be Continued Part XVII Next Month*****

**THE NEXT MEMBERSHIP MEETING
WILL BE AT 7 PM ON
THURSDAY 02 JANUARY
AT THE RONALD MCDONALD HOUSE
COME ONE COME ALL!**

**THE NEXT DAVINCI NIGHT OUT WILL
BE AT 7 PM ON
MONDAY 20 JANUARY
AT COUNTRY'S ON WEEMS ROAD
PLEASE JOIN US!**