



# DaVinci Pilot

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

Volume 9 Number 1

JULY 2003

## FROM THE CENTER SEAT

Well, the votes are in and the ballots have been counted! No Florida problems here! I have been re-elected as Captain and Russell has been elected as your new Executive Officer and my new trusty "Number One"! Thank-you for your support and confidence in Russell's and my ability to "steer a straight course" for the next 2 years. According to Gisela, 34 of the 35 ballots that were sent out were returned! That is a 97% return rate. Wow! It sure beats one election where less than half the ballots were returned. A very BIG Bajoran thanks goes out to all who participated in the election.

Our annual Fourth of July cookout is just around the corner! It will take place at 2:00 PM on Saturday, July 5<sup>th</sup> at our house. If you have not signed up to bring something, it is not too late. Just call Gisela and she will let you know what is needed. The DaVinci will supply the burgers and hotdogs and the rest will come from the crew. The cookout will take the place of the July membership meeting. Naturally, the DaVinci Store will be open where you can purchase—at greatly discounted prices—Trek and other science fiction memorabilia. So bring lots of money. If you are not sure you want to come because of the fill-in chef (sigh, I tried) from a couple years ago, have no fear because "cooking" Connie, our resident chef, will be there to flip the burgers and turn the hot dogs! Hurray! Please try to come, even if you can only stay a short time. Remember: There will be NO membership meeting on July 3<sup>rd</sup>, so do not show up at the Ronald McDonald house expecting a crowd. You may be alone (or with Roger).

If you were not at the June meeting, you missed the world premiere of Connie's "History of the USS DaVinci" series on CD. This first one entitled "USS

DaVinci 2002-2003", has photographs (with the Deep Space Nine theme playing in the background) displaying crew personnel attending DaVinci events from July 2002 to April 2003 and is available to anyone who wants one. Two versions will be available – one that is playable in your DVD player and one that is playable on your computer. Now, they are not free, but neither are they unreasonably expensive. All we are asking is \$3.00, which is to cover the cost of the disk, and the extensive amount of time Connie spent putting the disk together. All proceeds from the sale of the disks go into the DaVinci's treasury. The disks were a big hit and I am sure that if we all ask very nicely Connie will be willing to create other disks showing other years in the DaVinci's past.

I have some sad news to report. The farther of one of our newest members, Fred Kemp, recently suffered a heart attack. He is recovering but is very weak. Please keep the Kemp family in your thoughts and prayers.

Commodore Freddy Heller

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INSTEAD JOIN US AT OUR ANNUAL  
4<sup>TH</sup> OF JULY COOKOUT!  
WHERE: THE CAPTAIN'S HOUSE  
WHEN: SATURDAY JULY 5<sup>TH</sup> AT 2:00 PM  
COME ONE COME ALL!**

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## SCIENCE STATION

This month's science article will delve into the life of one of the most underrated scientific and inventive minds of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century, namely Nikola Tesla. He was born in Croatia in 1856 and died in New York in 1943 a poor and broken man - a sad tribute to his great genius. Among the things Tesla invented are alternating current or AC as it is known, that is used universally around the world. AC allowed for the smooth distribution of electricity over long distances. Tesla invented the Tesla coil which supplies high voltage for the picture tube used on your computer screens. The electricity for our computers comes from a Tesla-designed AC generator which is sent through a Tesla transformer and gets to your house through 3-phase Tesla power. He invented the hydroelectric generator that was used to develop the first hydroelectric power in Niagra, NY. He also invented fluorescent lighting. He invented the first wireless radio device prior to Marconi. Marconi used Tesla's previous work to invent the wireless, for which Tesla received no credit. He built remote control devices that were a hundred years ahead of time. The list is endless. Tesla delved into robotics, beam weapons, ball lightning, rotary engines and wireless transmission of electricity. Witnesses have described the actual lighting of light bulbs from 25 miles away without the use of wires. Mark Twain, who was a close friend of Tesla described an event in which Twain walked into a room in Tesla's laboratory and observed brilliant lighting that had no visible source.

Tesla was trained for an engineering career at the technical university at Graz, Austria and the University of Prague. In 1884 Tesla moved to New York City to work with Thomas Edison who was already transmitting electricity via the direct current DC system. The two inventors did not get along well and went their separate ways. Edison was a practical experimental type of inventor who spent hours of sweat and labor testing and retesting to come up with a practical invention. In his own right he still achieved wondrous things. Tesla had a research and science background which enabled him to imagine in his head the final product that he desired. Tesla was kind of like Michelangelo in his way of thinking in that Michelangelo visualized in

his head the completed sculpture and he viewed his job as chipping away the stone in order to liberate the sculpture or figure trapped inside it. Tesla's view of Edison is as follows, "If Edison had a needle to find in a haystack, he would proceed at once with the diligence of the bee to examine straw after straw until he found the object of his search. I was a sorry witness of such doing, knowing that a little theory and calculation would have saved him ninety percent of his labor." Tesla's problem was that he was not a good businessman and focused almost solely on his endless flights of imagination. Later some of his ideas were brought to fruition by the work of others long after Tesla died.

Next month, Part II of Nikola Tesla

ENS Lech Mazur

## COUNSELOR'S COUCH

Greetings and "tribblations" from your ship's Counselor. I see that the climate has become much hotter and I'm sure that most of us are already talking about how we can hardly wait for fall and winter to get here. Of course, when that time does arrive, then we will all be talking about how cold it is and that we can hardly wait for summer to get here. What, no mention of spring? Well, I thought I'd just forget about that one since we really haven't seen any spring like weather in the last few years and "Mother Nature" has just seemed to jump straight from winter to summer anyway. OK, let's see what subject I will advise you on this month. Ah-ha, I know! Since we're already in the summer mood, I believe it would be appropriate to mention a few reminders on how we can deal with the extreme heat and still enjoy ourselves too.

Increase fluid intake. Don't wait until you get thirsty. Also, avoid drinks that contain caffeine, alcohol, or large amounts of sugar as these will cause you to lose more fluid. Very cold beverages can cause stomach cramps and above all, don't chug! Take in fluids nominally; at least 2 glasses per hour.

If you are indoors make sure you have adequate ventilation. Fans, air conditioning, or even an open screened window will provide for air to circulate. When I got to my office today the temp gauge was reading 120 degrees so I had to cool things down before I even could get to this article.

If you MUST be outdoors then plan you activities before noon or later in the evening, the hottest part of the day is between 1PM and 6 PM. Wear lightweight, light-colored, loose fitting clothing and remember to keep those little Starfleet cadets in the shade as they have much less tolerance to the heat than we do. Wear sunscreen and please don't try to do anything too fast!

It's always better to wait and finish another day than cause yourself a heat injury.

Well, I hope that these few tips will insure you have the best Summer ever and for many years to come. This will be my final article for the Counselor's Couch. Look for my new article beginning in next month's Pilot called "Executively Speaking!" Thanks for all your support.

Live long & prosper!

LT Russell Ruhland

## **SAY IT AIN'T SO JOE!**

Joe is no longer my Exec'. Say it ain't so! That sounds a little strange saying that, because I always thought Joe would be the DaVinci's second in command. Joe has been a member of the DaVinci since the beginning and if you do not know how Joe became the XO I will tell you the short yet humorous story on how I hooked Joe into accepting the job.

Way back in 1995, when the DaVinci was in its infancy, I needed an XO who had both Officers Training School (OTS) and Officers Command College (OCC) for the DaVinci to become a full-fledged chapter. My XO at the time had neither but promised she would take both courses as soon as possible. That was great, but I still needed an XO, at least on paper, until Rita had completed her courses. I approached Joe, the only other DaVinci crewmember beside Connie and myself that had both OTS and OCC under their belt. He told me point blank that he did not want the job. "Of course you do not, but it is only temporary until Rita finishes OTS and OCC", I said. With great reluctance he accepted, but "only until Rita completes the courses", he said. Rita kept stalling and stalling and eventually let her membership expire and then faded into obscurity. By then we had been launched as the Shuttle DaVinci and on March 16<sup>th</sup>, 1996 we were commissioned as the

USS DaVinci, Starfleet's newest Intrepid-Class Starship! Joe has remained XO ever since.

So how was this reluctant XO as my "Number One?" Well, that is a difficult question to answer. Joe is always there. Anytime we need someone to help out at meetings, at membership drives, at clean-ups, whatever the event, Joe is there. Rarely does he fail to lend a hand. Ok, there was that time when he overslept and arrived quite late for a highway clean up, but heck, he showed up! Many others would have turned over and gone back to sleep, but not Joe. Then there was the Region 2 summit that Joe practically ran himself. Oh sure, he had help, but it was his baby, his idea, his dream. So what made him a "bad" XO? Simple. Damned if I could get him to write an article for the newsletter! In the 7 years Joe has held the position, I do not think he has written his "monthly" article more than a half dozen times!

So what do you do with a retired First Officer? Simple, you create a new position and offer it to him. Several years ago, the staff positions were reorganized and the Operations Officer position was eliminated. Well, I am pleased to announce that I am bringing Operations Officer out of the mothballs and giving Joe that position. Joe, now the Second Officer, will oversee Finance, Community Service, and Publications. Congratulations Joe!

I will miss you at my right side Joe, but am very happy you will still be a member of the crew. The DaVinci would not quite be the same without you.

## **ATTENTION ON BOARD!**

Greeting to one and all, this is Lt. Frazier L. Smith again. As the 4 of July approaches we should stop for a few minutes to think about all the good men and women who have come before us. The ones who fought, bled, and died for all of us just so we can get-together to have hot dogs, pie and all the goodies. For me I'm glad to be free. I just hope that in the future we will not need an armed force.

LT Frazier Smith

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## WELCOME ABOARD!

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

Heartiest congratulations to Josh and Renee Ainsworth on the birth of their son, Wyatt Mikel, who, on 15 May 2003, became the newest member of the DaVinci.

## TREK AND SCI-FI BUZZ

In May, a county human services procurement officer in Portland, OR, mindful of the sometimes-quixotic needs of the agency's mental-health clients, included in a list of potential resource requirements a person fluent in the "Star Trek" language Klingon (but later said no actual job openings are planned).

## HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

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

Dominic Keating (LT Malcolm Reed)	1 <sup>st</sup>
Rick Sternbach (Senior Illustrator)	6 <sup>th</sup>
CADET Gracie Walker	9 <sup>th</sup>
Linda Park (ENS Hoshi Sato)	9 <sup>th</sup>
Patrick Stewart (CPT Jean Luc Picard)	13 <sup>th</sup>
Robert Justman (Producer)	13 <sup>th</sup>
First Man on the Moon (Neil Armstrong 1969)	20 <sup>th</sup>
First Woman to Walk in Space (Svetlana Savitskaya)	25 <sup>th</sup>
FCPT Joe Perry	25 <sup>th</sup>
Nana Visitor (COL Kira Nerys)	26 <sup>th</sup>
Wil Wheaton (Wesley Crusher)	29 <sup>th</sup>
David Warner (Chancellor Gorkon)	29 <sup>th</sup>
CADET Hunter Ainsworth	31 <sup>st</sup>

## 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! And so, without further ado, here are the 2003 Night Out locations:

August:	CiCi's Pizza (Bradley Park)
September:	Golden Corral
October:	Cheddars
November:	Longhorn Steakhouse

## ACCOLADES

Although not members of the USS DaVinci, I would like to send out a BIG Bajoran thanks to Shawn Boutwell and Patsy Carey, teachers at Central High School in Phenix City, for donating 500+ tabs for the Ronald McDonald House!

A BIG Bajoran thanks to Roger Wright who donated several hundred tabs, stamps, and coupons to the cause.

A BIG Bajoran thanks to Lisa Neal who donated hundreds and hundreds of stamps for the Starfleet Stampede effort.

A very very BIG Bajoran thanks to Joe Perry who has served, with distinction, as my First Officer since the 1995 inception of the chapter.

## FINANCIALLY SPEAKING

Opening Balance	288.69
Deposit	35.00
Closing Balance	323.69

CPT Connie Heller

## CONVENTIONS

Joe Motes and Vulkon is presenting another fine convention on July 18-20 in Tampa, FL. This will be his yearly Buffy Convention and will have some exciting guests. No, Sarah Michelle Geller will not be there but the guest list is impressive with James Marsters (Spike), Mercedes McNab (Harmony), James C. Leary (Clem), Robin Atkins Downes (Machida), and Iyari Limon (Kennedy) from Buffy and Andy Hallet (The Host) from Angel all scheduled to appear. Tickets are going fast so take a look at the Vulkon web site for more information.

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## DaVINCI STAFF ROSTER

<b>Commanding Officer</b>	Freddy Heller	562-8735
<b>Executive Officer</b>	Russell Ruhland	855-4146
<b>Operations Officer</b>	Joe Perry.....	327-5888
Finance	Connie Heller	562-8735
Community Service	Tony Fleming	568-6529
Publications	Freddy Heller	562-8735
<b>Science Officer</b>	Lech Mazur	596-9542
Counselor	Russell Ruhland	855-4146
Morale	<b>VACANT</b>	
Medical	<b>VACANT</b>	
<b>Engineering Officer</b>	Josh Ainsworth	989-0853
Communications	Gisela Stephens	689-4266
Quartermaster	Randy Dunn	291-0150
Security	Roger Wright	687-8052
<b>Marine OIC</b>	Frazier Smith	298-5074
<b>Cadet Corps Commander</b>	<b>VACANT</b>	
<b>Master Chief Petty Officer</b>	<b>VACANT</b>	

## FINALLY...

Many of you do not know when your membership in the DaVinci is due for renewal because most of the newsletters now go out via email. If you get your newsletter the old fashioned way, your expiration date is on the address label. Those going via email have no address label. So, to help those folks out, here are your expiration dates for the DaVinci and Starfleet:

	<u>DaVinci</u>	<u>Starfleet</u>
Josh Ainsworth	Jun 04	Mar 04
Karen Ferris	Sep 03	May 03
Tony Fleming	May 04	Jun 04
Rose Hutson	Sep 03	
Fred Kemp	Mar 04	Mar 04
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
Frazier Smith	Feb 04	Apr 04
Joanne Vazquez	Nov 03	May 04
Michael Walker	Mar 04	Mar 04
Roger Wright	Mar 04	Jan 04

## 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!

### Non-Food Items

Trash Bags (XS and XL)  
Carpet Cleaner  
Spray Air Freshener  
Styrofoam Cups (L)  
Laundry Detergent  
Ziploc Bags  
Paper Plates

### Miscellaneous Items

Copier Paper  
Clasp Envelopes  
Light Bulbs  
Avery Labels 5160  
White-Out Pens  
Staplers

### Food Items

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 XXII

Even as they spoke, the officer saw the numbers between the excellent and the Amemnon decreasing. Calling out to the helmsman, he yelled, "Stop us!"

The helmsman had also seen the numbers start to drop, and her hand was already on the throttle control when the officer yelled. She immediately pulled back on the control, and the electronics told the engines to come to a crash stop, completely disrupting their warp field in an attempt to stop the ship's velocity. The engines strained, and a few circuits blew out, but the Excellon managed to come out of warp, and was barely two miles from the Amemnon's stern as both ships came to rest relative to each other.

Captain Morgan had felt the vibrations as the engines had strained, and was rushing up to the

bridge. While he was coming up there, Susan Verrin contacted the Excellon and began to fill them in.

"Sorry about that Excellon, but our sensors suddenly picked up a subspace distortion directly in our flight path. It would have been too strong for our engines to handle and it was too large for us to maneuver around, so we had to come out of warp quickly. I was watching the sensors behind us, and I was sweating as I watched the range between us drop. How are things over there?"

"Pretty good Commander. I've got damage control teams looking over the ship now, and they should have reports for me in a few minutes. I think we shaved a few years off our ship's lifespan, and a few years off mine too. In the meantime, I am going to take a good look at that subspace dis-

"Sir, incoming vessel! Bearing 238 by 015. Coming in at double impulse!"

"General Quarters! ETA?"

"It's within missile range right now, laser range in another five seconds. For those ion weapons, three seconds to large ion range, and eight seconds to small ion range."

"Full sensors. Tell me what you get on it."

"Active sensors on-line, awaiting return, there. No shields up, judging from the ion exhaust, it has two main thrust sources, each as powerful as our own, ship mass estimated near our own judging from the warp field strength and ion exhaust."

Captain Morgan arrived during that report, and waited for the end before saying, "Report."

"Captain, we have an unknown coming in from 238 by 015, it's in missile range, and we'll be in large ion range now."

As though to punctuate his report, the unknown ship began firing the ion bolts. Three locations were firing, and one was rapid firing.

"Impact, starboard shield, looks like three large ion weapons, one is repeating! Total five impacts."

"Starboard shield is down to forty percent."

"Yaw us ninety degrees to port. Lasers, open fire, full power. Lock in a missile solution for eight missiles at ten megatons each."

"Captain, the subspace distortion is interfering with our own warp field. Our maneuvering is a little sluggish, figure eighty percent of normal. Deeper in, we'll be even slower."

The warp field was not used just for traveling at faster than light speeds, but also for aiding the

impulse engines. By dumping most of their mass into subspace, a ship could easily triple its acceleration from its engines. But the subspace distortion was interfering with their warp field, causing their ship to have more effective mass than normal, leading to a resulting decrease in maneuverability.

"Looks like we're here for a brute force fight. All right, launch missiles."

Eight tubes were suddenly forced open, and the missiles within blasted forth, seeking their target. The slaver ship detected the sudden launch, and began targeting the missiles with its weapons. But it only had three guns, and two of them were slaved together, meaning that it could only target two missiles at a time. But their size was such that they could easily be missed, meaning that only one of the missiles was destroyed, and the other seven detonated their loads near the enemy ship.

The electronic interference from the missiles hammered the ship's electronics, but they were designed to handle high power surges, and they held. Many of them shorted out from the blast, but the ones deeper in the ship had reduced effects from the surges, and managed to keep operating. The thermal energy from the missiles detonating was another matter though, and several hundred square meters of the ship's hull was suddenly melted, and the heat began conducting through the entire ship. Including the cooling system for their main reactor, which told the slavers that it was having trouble.

"Captain, looks like they're doing a crazy maneuvering sequence. They're firing again!"

The slaver ship had managed to get its weapons back on-line, and it fired them. The two guns on the outer 'wings' of it opened fire in single shots, but the center gun mounted on the long neck in front fired a long sequence, ripping off six shots before running out of power.

"Impact, forward shields down to thirty-six percent. That gun in the center is a rapid fire one."

"Is the ship in the firing cone for the main lasers?"

"Almost there Captain. There!"

"Full power to main lasers, fire!"

The two lasers on either side of the spine of the Excellon had been waiting the entire time, with batteries at full power. The batteries began unloading their power into the coils around the lasing rods. The coolant systems went to full speed at the same time, trying to keep the rods from

shattering under the heat they produced. The mirrors at the ends began glowing; trying to dump the massive waves of heat going through the one at the firing end, and the one at the stern of the ship was glowing as well, from reflecting the numbers of photons and other particles that were impacting on it.

The twin beams lanced out towards the enemy ship, impaling it with massive flares of heat from the locations where they struck. The locations where it was struck glowed within a split second, and the metal began melting. But in space there was no gravity, so the heated metal simply stayed where it was, but the structure below was also getting heated massively. The structure underneath was what kept the neck of the ship from ripping to either side as the ship maneuvered, and to keep the engines of the ship from flattening the entire thing when they were at full power.

The engines were at full power this time, and the slaver captain saw the massive damage and heating reports at the spot. Immediately ordering a sharp turn, and effectively losing the battle right there. For the sharp maneuver required the ship's structure to be relatively intact to work and the structure had been badly weakened.

The neck of the ship simply snapped off as the slaver ship turned, and the beam began to play over the main hull as the slaver ship turned hard. The hull of the ship was melted as well, but was the only thing keeping the air in at some locations. Air pressure on the inside was kept that way only by the strength of the hull, and where the beam violated those places, the hull gave way.

"Looks like, yes. Air venting from the target. Looks like part of their hull gave way under the beam, and air pressure inside did the rest."

The venting air triggered many alarms on the slaver ship, but one location had a worse alarm than the others. For the beam had impacted directly on the cooling array for the main reactor, and the hull there was very conductive. The coolant was designed to absorb massive amounts of heat, but the system of pipes containing it was another matter. The surge of heat through them, combined with the coolant expanding suddenly, caused many joints to pop from the stress. Superheated coolant sprayed from them, incinerating anyone caught near them. The coolant itself was under pressure, and the entire system began relieving the pressure through those

holes, causing them to widen and release more of the coolant.

The main reactor had been powered by an antimatter reaction as well, but without coolant, it would soon overheat and the antimatter and matter would mix. The loss of coolant triggered a sensor, and the matter/antimatter stream began to slow down, vastly reducing the amount of power available. But the ship had heavy batteries on board, and the ion guns normally drew their power from them.

But the guns were designed to fire directly ahead, and the ship's turn had brought them off-target. So the two shuttles were launched, and those were the armed variant.

"Target is launching shuttles Captain. Unknown types."

"Have all turrets target them. If they open fire, cripple them."

The turrets on the Excellon began tracking the shuttles, and when they turned to face the Excellon, three turrets were tracking each. The shuttles closed into their range, and shots came out from each. Each shuttle mounted one of the ion guns, but they had the power to fire three-round bursts. Four of the bolts hit the Excellon's shields, reducing the weakened forward shields more.

"Captain, forward shields are down to forty percent."

"Turrets, open fire."

The dorsal and two left turrets targeted the shuttle on the left, and the ventral and two right turrets took the one on the right. Their beams flashed out, invisible in vacuum, but rendered on the screen by the computer. Two of the beams missed, but the remaining four beams hit, and the shuttles were ruined under their caress.

"Shuttles are no longer maneuvering Captain. Enemy ship is still moving, but impulse readings are down to roughly one-fourth impulse. It's still thrusting Captain, but not doing much else."

Captain Morgan smiled for a moment. "Cheng, are those armed shuttles ready to fly?"

"Um, yes they are Captain."

"Good. I want them launched, and target the main ship. Our lasers are going to do a lot of damage to it, and I want that ship. We'll keep track of the two fragments, and help keep them out of any possible fire arcs." Turning to the rest of the room, "I want four boarding teams set up. Team one and two will

secure those shuttles. Teams three and four will be fully armed. They will be leading the way into the nose that got snapped off, and I want them able to tackle anything in their way. They will only be going in after the first two teams are finished though."

The security teams began getting their gear together, and the two-armed shuttles were launched. They approached the nose section from the broken part, and began firing their ion guns at any locations that seemed to have lights, or had active power readings as detected by the Excellon. The shuttles proceeded around the nose, but stayed away from the area that had the ion gun, because it would ravage them if it fired.

**\*\*To Be Continued in Part XXIII Next Month\*\***

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