



DaVinci Pilot

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

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FEBRUARY 2004

FROM THE CENTER SEAT

Our Christmas party was a resounding success! Eighteen crew personnel and their guests feasted on the usual Christmas fare – turkey, ham, stuffing, and all of the fixings that go with it! We had door prizes galore, a hilarious gag gift exchange, and a well deserved promotion.

Lech received the best gag gift – an oral simulator (dang, I was hoping to get that one)! Say Lech, use it yet? Other gifts and their lucky (?) recipients include: Rose – a couple of Star Trek books on tape (wow); Russell – a sports cup (over large I assume); Gisela – an old car phone; Rusty – a musical Christmas mouse; Randy – a couple of mismatched traverse rod ends; Roger – a really nice 2004 Chinese wall calendar; Freddy & Connie – the same darn automatic Christmas tree watering device they pawned off on Randy last year (I wonder who will get it next year?); and one of our guests, Sky Cameron – the same ugly (she likes it) shell box we pawned off on Gisela 2 years ago!

Following all the fun stuff, I promoted Karen Pynenburg to LT(JG)! Karen, in a period of less than 2 weeks had taken both OTS and OCC!

After all the fuss had died down, Russell presented me with a much unexpected gift from the crew – a \$50 gift certificate to Wal-Mart. I wish to thank one and all for this very kind gift. I do not believe any ship in the Fleet could have a better crew than you. Thanks again. Just to let you know that thanks to your generosity, I now own “Firefly” on DVD. Say, anyone up for a Firefly marathon? Let me know!!

The Region 2 Summit is just around the corner! “Ride the Wave of the Future” is the theme of this year’s Summit. Sunny Summit IX will be held March 12-14 at the Holiday Inn Gulfport in

Gulfport, MS. Check out the Region 2 web site at <http://www.omnifacets.com/region2/> for all the information you need. Connie and I are planning to attend. I would like to see a good DaVinci turn-out if possible. Remember, the longer you wait, the more expensive it will be and the possibility that they will run out of banquet tickets is much higher

COMM Freddy Heller

EXECUTIVELY SPEAKING

With all the recent celebrations at NASA about the Spirit Rover landing, I thought I might bring to light some information I came across today regarding “Warming up to Living on Mars.” As we seem to get closer to what will undoubtedly be the first human mission to Mars there are those who have it in their minds that we will eventually inhabit the red planet.

It took billions of years before Earth could support life but scientists believe they can create conditions on Mars to do it in less than a century. Historically, it's always been a part of science fiction but there are those who would like to make it science. We already know that Mars has the three building blocks for life: carbon dioxide, nitrogen and water. Whether or not these elements are in high enough content we do not know, but scientists believe it does. First of all the temperature and pressure of the planet would have to be raised but speculation is that in order to do this, raising temperature is easy but making oxygen for us to breathe would be extremely difficult and to make oxygen we would need plants which Mars just doesn't facilitate. Even if plant life could be found or given a reasonable foundation on our providing some it might take as long as 100,000 years to

create enough oxygen for humans to survive naturally on Mars.

It is inevitable that we will leave Earth. Mars is the obvious first step which most would agree to be amazing when it comes to spreading life beyond its origin.

CMDR Russell Ruhland

COMMUNITY SERVICE

As we begin 2004, I thought it would be nice to look back at some accomplishments that were achieved in 2003. We have helped in many notable charities such as The Juvenile Diabetes Research Foundation on a Regional level and the American Lung Association with the Asthma Walk and the March of Dimes Walk-a-thon locally. These charities help with research and public awareness to make our lives better.

The DaVinci has also had a positive impact in our local community by "Clean-up" projects. "The Help the Hooch" and the "Adopt a Highway" program are two good examples of ways the DaVinci works to improve our own community. We usually have a good group show up and we enjoy each others company while doing something worthwhile.

These activities are by no means all that we do, but they are just a few of the ways we are involved in making our corner of the world a little better. As a chapter we have volunteered over 100 hours of community service. At this point I would like to thank everyone for their contributions and hard work. I am looking forward to this year being better. The Asthma Walk will be coming up soon.

Now for some exciting news! The Coca-Cola Space Science Center will hold their 1st annual Columbus Game and Hobby Expo on the 27th and 28th of March. This will be a mini convention for the Columbus area and some of the things that will be covered are (but not limited to) table-top games such as HeroClix, Mechwarrior, Mage Knight, and Lord of the Rings; role-playing games such as Stargate SG-1, Buffy, and Angel; CCG card games such as Magic, Buffy, and Star Trek; videos games; animation; sci-fi films; and many other activities! They also hope to have guest speakers. The best part of all of this is that they want the DaVinci to help out! They need volunteers to take tickets, monitoring the doors, answering general questions,

ushering, and what ever else they need. If you volunteer and wear your uniform, they will waive the admission fee. They will also give us space and a table so that we can have a membership drive! If you are interested in working either Saturday (9:30-6:00) and/or on Sunday (12:00-6:00) please let me know as soon as possible. Six volunteers is the limit, so volunteer today!

LT. Tony Fleming

HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

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

Space Shuttle Columbia is Lost (2003)	1 st
Brent Spiner (Data)	2 nd
Ethan Phillips (Neelix)	8 th
Jerry Goldsmith (Composer)	10 th
Philip Anglim (Vedek Beareil)	11 th
Chuck Yeager (Test Pilot)	13 th
CPT Connie Heller	14 th
Andrew Robinson (Elim Garak)	14 th
ENS Roger Wright	15 th
LeVar Burton (LTCMDR Geordi LaForge)	16 th
Maiden Flight of the Shuttle Enterprise (1977)	18 th
First American to Orbit the Earth (Glenn 1962)	20 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

**NEXT MEMBERSHIP MEETING
WILL BE FEBRUARY 5TH
AT 7:00 PM AT THE
RONALD MCDONALD HOUSE
COME ONE COME ALL!**

**THE NEXT DAVINCI NIGHT OUT
WILL BE AT
CARRABBA'S ITALIAN GRILL
ON MONDAY FEBRUARY 16TH AT 7:00 PM
PLEASE COME AND JOIN US!**

WELCOME ABOARD!

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

Joe Perry (S)
Gisela Stephens (D)

ATTENTION ON BOARD!

Starfleet Marine unit has been activated on board the USS DaVinci! All crew personnel are encouraged to join. My name is LT Frazier L. Smith, and I have been appointed as Officer in Charge (OIC) of the unit. The Marine unit is the 678th Special Operations Marine Strike Group (MSG). If anyone has a question about the Marines you can contact me at murock44@yahoo.com or you can see me at DaVinci meeting. The Marines will hold a meeting on the same night as the DaVinci. Hope to see you there!

LT Frazier Smith

TREK AND SCI FI BUZZ

Ever wonder what Genevieve Bujold would have looked like as Voyager's Captain Janeway? Well thanks to tvshowboards.com you can. Here are two exclusive photographs from the never-before-seen footage. If you buy Voyager on DVD, when it comes out later this year, you will see the actual footage.



Paris and Janeway on the Bridge



Janeway and Tuvok in the Captain's Ready Room.

FINANCIALLY SPEAKING

Opening Balance	481.20
Postage	4.90
Deposit	59.80
Closing Balance	536.10

CPT Connie Heller

NIGHT OUT LOCATIONS

At the December meeting, the 2004 Night Out locations were selected. We have some familiar locations and some new spots as well. And so, without further ado, here are the 2004 Night Out locations: (sigh....no pizza; no Hooter's)

February:	Carrabba's Italian Grill
March:	Captain Tom's
April:	Chili's
May:	Golden Corral
June:	Cheddar's
July:	Philly Connection
August:	Longhorn Steakhouse
September:	El Vaquero (Phenix City)
October:	Houlihan's (Inside Wyndham Hotel)
November:	Olive Garden
December:	Hunan's

ACCOLADES

Congratulations to Karen Pynenburg who recently completed OCC and was promoted to LT(JG). Guess who is now eligible to run for Captain! Way to go Karen! Wahoo!

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	Jul 04	Mar 04
Karen Baker	Jul 04	
Karen Ferris	Sep 04	
Tony Fleming	May 04	Jun 04
Rose Hutson	Sep 04	
Fred Kemp	Mar 04	Mar 04
Todd Kes	Sep 04	
Lesh Mazur	Jul 04	Nov 03
Joe Perry	Jul 04	Nov 04
George Pimentel	Jul 04	Jun 04
Karen Pynenburg	Jul 04	May 04
Russell Ruhland	Aug 04	Aug 04
Frazier Smith	Feb 04	Apl 04
Joanne Vazquez	Nov 03	May 04
Michael Walker	Mar 04	Mar 04
Patty Williams	Jul 04	
Roger Wright	Mar 04	Jan 04

DaVINCI STAFF ROSTER

Commanding Officer Freddy Heller 562-8735

Executive Officer Russell Ruhland 855-4146

Operations Officer Joe Perry.....327-5888
Finance Connie Heller 562-8735
Community Service Tony Fleming 568-6529
Publications Freddy Heller 562-8735
Morale VACANT

Science Officer Lech Mazur 596-9542
Counselor Russell Ruhland 855-4146
Computer VACANT
Medical VACANT

Engineering Officer Josh Ainsworth 989-0853
Communications Gisela Stephens 689-4266
Quartermaster Randy Dunn 291-0150
Security Roger Wright 687-8052

Marine OIC Frazier Smith 298-5047

Cadet Corps Commander VACANT

Master Chief Petty Officer VACANT

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!

Most Needed Items

Grocery Gift Certificates	Solid Queen Sheets
Styrofoam Cups (20oz)	Sugar
Spray Air Freshener	Trash Bags (35 gal)
Twin/Queen Mattress Pads	Heavy Paper Plates
Storage/Freezer Bags	Interior Flood Lights

Household Items

Tide Detergent	Ready to Make Desserts
Fabric Softener	Bags of Hard Candy
Bathroom Cleaner	Vegetable/Olive Oil
Pine Scented Cleaner	Cake Icing
Swiffer Wet Sheets	Cake/Brownie Mixes
Dryer Sheets	Lemonade
Sting Mops	Salad Dressing
Carpet Cleaner	Soups
Bathroom Cups	Box Dinners
Spray Starch	Brooms
Windex	409 Cleaner

Miscellaneous Items

Mailing/Scotch Tape	Sewing Kit/Scissors
Copy Paper	Clasp Envelopes (9x12)
Disposable Cameras	Phone Cards
White-Out Pens	Sam's Gift Certificates
Computer Lables (Avery 5160)	
AA, C, D, and 9 Volt Batteries	

NOTE: They currently have a need for canned soups, and perishable items such as bread, meats, cheese slices, fresh fruits, and snack foods.

**NEXT MEMBERSHIP MEETING
 WILL BE FEBRUARY 5TH
 AT 7:00 PM AT THE
 RONALD MCDONALD HOUSE
 COME ONE COME ALL!**

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 XXVIII

Again, in space, there is no way to see a laser in operation. The view screen provided a simulation of the lasers streaking out, but there was no simulation done on the slaver ship. The lasers had been trained on its nose, and the target's very movement allowed the beams to cut through the hull in a line extending from the nose to the tail. Atmosphere gushed from the seam, and the engines had a small explosion occur as they were badly damaged by the laser.

The War Leader gasped in shock as the reports came in. This ship had some sort of weapon that was gutting his ship from one end to the other. All of his defenses and tactics relied on absorbing an opponent's electron bolts with onboard systems, but this type of weapon required a different set of defenses and tactics. In fact, the best sort of defense against this sort of weapon was armor, designed to reflect and refract the photons hitting his ship. Other options for the armor would be something with a high thermal threshold, so it took a lot of time and energy to melt each unit of armor. That time could be put to use maneuvering his ship, to prevent the beam from resting on one part of the armor for too long.

But he had only a few moments for that series of thoughts as the air was escaping from the bridge quickly, and in a few minutes everyone there was unconscious from the vacuum. After that, it was only a matter of time for the moisture in their bodies to boil off.

Captain Morgan watched as all activity on the enemy Pirate stopped suddenly, and smiled. Even though the main lasers were hard to aim properly, whenever they hit a target, they always did a wonderful job. Getting in closer, he ordered the armed shuttles to disable all electrical activity as before, to make sure the Pirate didn't turn around and attack them, as they still had two other freighters to deal with.

The closer freighter had apparently seen what had happened to the Pirate, and was trying to get in close to use its guns before it too was destroyed.

But proceeding in straight towards the Excellon was a mistake. Although it was out of the fire arc of the main lasers, the other lasers were able to track it well, and it only took a couple more seconds before both electron gun sets were cut off from the ship. The shuttles again crippled it, before following the Excellon towards the planet. Here though, the remaining six shuttles and the freighter waited, determined to die before retreating an inch. The shuttles were ready for combat, and the freighter had managed to patch the biggest holes in its skin.

Deciding to not bother with closing against the shuttles, Captain Morgan asked for a close-up of the freighter. Seeing the larger electron gun on top, he told the lasers to shear that gun off first. They had managed to recharge their forward shields, so the two shots fired by the large ion gun only did fifteen percent damage before the turret lasers were able to cut it and the smaller cluster of guns off the freighter.

With its weapons removed, the freighter was unable to influence the fight that followed. For the shuttles were still active and they came in at their top speeds. Three alien shuttles and three Federation shuttles sped in toward the Excellon, firing their electron guns the whole way in. The alien shuttles became the highest priority for the laser turrets, as they carried two electron guns each while the Federation shuttles only carried one each.

The battle around the Excellon turned into a wild melee, as the six attacking shuttles swarmed around, trying to get a shot into a weakly defended part, while the four defending shuttles tried to pick off an attacker here and there. During the whole time, the Excellon's laser turrets were firing, in an attempt to take out an enemy shuttle by chance or skill.

Eventually, all six enemy shuttles were taken down, and Captain Morgan looked at his security chief. "Begin landing your troops. I want that colony secured, and if possible, I want prisoners. Ved can translate their speech, and we have a brig to store them in until we rendezvous with the Amemnon."

Lt Commander Vergan turned on her heels, and began barking orders for her security details. They were to go down and secure the colony, in case any of the slavers were still alive down there. Once that was done, or the colony's security force had taken over, they would be returning to the Excellon to take care of the ships and shuttles still in orbit.

The four armed shuttles from the Excellon dropped through the atmosphere, and began depositing their troops near the main colony buildings. The soldiers steadily moved forwards, checking out each room, and clearing it. The first sign of resistance came when they began approaching the largest building. Two shots were fired towards them, and they ducked low, staying behind cover. Knowing they had to get inside that building, as none of the colonists had been found yet, Vergan began ordering his troopers to advance in a leapfrog fashion, with one team covering another while they alternated advancing.

Several more shots were fired, and the Federation security troops returned fire, with the shuttles above firing electron pulses to try and keep the slavers' heads down. Finally, the troopers were at the doors to the main building, with a couple teams watching the windows in case any of the slavers tried to jump out and circle around.

Using a small override control, the doors were opened, and several concussion grenades were thrown in, to keep anyone inside from wanting to get close. Tossing glow-globs next, the troopers began moving into the building, trying to find all the intruders. With their night vision systems, they could easily see with and without the glow-globs, but they had tossed them in to make sure that any Federation personnel wouldn't attack them out of panic. They began moving from one room to the next, and the first attack came swiftly.

Two troopers were checking out a room, examining the corners, when suddenly two of the slavers dropped from the ceiling lights, and began grappling with them. The power suits the troopers were wearing allowed them some strength enhancement, but the slavers had reflexes and flexibility on their side. The two troopers attacked were slow and clumsy against the slavers, and they knew they had to do something to change the balance.

Fortunately, the next two troopers saw what was going on, and one of them tossed in another concussion grenade, causing the two slavers to fall to the floor from the blast. The troopers had been protected by their armor, and they quickly went to work securing the prisoners. Remembering how the slavers had been very strong, the usual restraints were tripled up to make sure neither of the slavers escaped.

Armed with the knowledge that the slavers might wait in the ceilings, the process of clearing the rooms took a little longer, and after several dozen more slavers were captured or killed, they finally arrived at the main gathering hall, and were shocked. Every one of the colonists still alive had been herded in here, and from the way they were huddled around each other, what the slavers had done wasn't pretty. A few of the colonists that had been selected for food had bites taken out of their muscles, and the medical personnel had made up crude bandages for them trying to stop the blood loss with pressure pads and tourniquets. Other colonists had been selected for strength, and their limbs showed stress from where the slavers had tried to pull them apart to see how tough they were. The result was that all of them had limbs dislocated, but the doctors and medics had been able to pop them back in properly. The final group though, had been selected for the slavers' 'entertainment'. The men selected had several deep cuts in their bodies from where the slavers had fought them and won, while the women were huddled together, afraid of anyone touching them because of what had happened to them. The troopers who saw the colonists first were horrified at the thought of what had gone on in the room, but then the feeling became one of rage.

While the troopers were expressing their rage in different ways, the medical personnel were escorted to the hospitals, in case of any more slavers, and they brought the injured patients with them. It took several hours for all the wounds to be closed up, and the patients stabilized, but the doctors and nurses worked wonders, even as tired and injured as some of them were. Even the nurses who had been 'tried out' by the slavers managed to shake off their cobwebs and do their jobs. But their actions were more robot-like than anything else, as their eyes still showed the horror of what had happened.

The security detail for the colony was finally assembled, and they spread out through the tunnels, checking them for any remaining slavers, and picking up the radiation filters and medicines as well. When the colony was finally pronounced secure, Lt Commander Vergan gave a report to Captain Morgan.

Everyone else on the bridge had become accustomed to Captain Morgan being a rock of solidity, but that day they saw the magma that lay

beneath. He said nothing, but his eyes burned with inner fire, and everyone there grew afraid. It wasn't because they were worried about him lashing out at them, but because of the rage that was all too evident. They had heard through the grapevine how the Federation planned to make peace with these slavers, and the thought of making peace with these slavers was too horrible to contemplate. After all, if they did try to make peace, the traditional Federation way of allowing for a race's unique characteristics meant that certain colonies would be selected to be the prey of these slavers.

But the rage passed, and Captain Morgan was again in control of himself. Looking around, he saw people working at their posts, and smiled, because their calm actions reminded him that he would have to fight the slavers, but not become one of them. He also remembered the other ships in the area that had been crippled, and the ground troops were recalled to take control of them.

To Be Continued in Part XXIX Next Month*

THE USS DAVINCI IN PHOTOS

I thought y'all would enjoy a look down memory lane. Each month I will show a series of pictures from our very beginning up until the present time. Many of you will remember these faces. To others they will be complete strangers. But, they made what the USS DaVinci is today. Enjoy! Reminisce.



The crew enjoying a meal at our second Night Out at Shoney's (08 January 1996).



Deniece, Randy, and little Rebecca (!) Dunn deciding what they want to eat.



Patty Williams, Joe Perry, and Connie and Freddy Heller pose for a picture. Well, three anyway!



Lovely Elizabeth Atkins smiles for the camera.