



DaVinci Pilot

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

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FROM THE CENTER SEAT

Do not forget that on the 4th we have our annual cookout. This will take the place of our monthly night out. If you have not been contacted about attending and you wish to come, please give Gisela Stevens a call (her number is listed below). If you are planning to attend remember to bring your own chair. I have enough table space but not enough chairs to go around. The festivities will begin at noon. Oh, if you have young cadets make sure to let them bring their swimsuit and squirt guns for some water fun.

Thanks to the efforts of Randy and Gisela, the DaVinci is on the verge of topping last year's effort in coupon clipping. As you recall, last year we sent over \$105,000 in coupons to the various ACS organizations in Germany. As of the 12th of June we will have donated over \$80,000 worth of coupons and the year is not even half-gone! Hey! I say we go for first place this year! So, I need all crewmembers to collect, clip, and count those coupons! Remember to separate them into food and non-food and no more than \$500 in each stack.

Also thanks to Randy, our effort to collect stuffed animals for the "Trauma Buddy" program is well under way! One day he called me and said he had some stuffed animals he had picked up at various places. "Some" indeed! Nearly three bags full and containing a couple dozen stuffed animals! WOW! Now we have to get busy making uniforms. Once we have enough I will arrange a time for us to make a formal presentation to the fire department. We will need help! Call me if you can cut patterns, sew, and prepare the animals or if you have a uniform and care to be part of the final presentation.

FCPT Freddy Heller

THOUGHTS FROM AFAR

A theme common in many Star Trek episodes is that of extra dimensions. You know the one where Captain Kirk gets pulled into "interspace" and keeps floating around the ship in that funky space suit? Or when Worf is traveling from a Klingon tournament and ends up jumping from one life story to the next in different dimensions? Or how about when Kirk, McCoy, and Uhura meet the goateed Spock and then the DS9 crew later find themselves in the same dimension. Or how about when...well you get the idea!

Until recently, talk of extra dimensions has mostly been science fiction. However, now scientists are taking the idea more seriously. The idea comes from "string theory" which suggests that the universe is made up of tiny loops, or strings, of energy vibrating in a space-time. These loops create six or seven extra dimensions beyond the three familiar dimensions of space and one of time. However, the extra dimensions are squished up in space so small that they are unobservable.

Information for this news came from various articles. I have read this stuff three or four times and still do not even pretend to really understand how these extra dimensions could exist. Sure, I can imagine traveling to or through dimensions (e.g., Worf's experience, or the Mirror, Mirror episode). But these dimensions themselves still operated in the three dimensions (plus time) that our universe operates under. To really try to think about adding another dimension to our own three dimensional world (i.e., up, down, horizontal) plus time, is very hard.

Nonetheless, scientists are developing tests to determine if extra dimension do exist. One such test deals with measuring the energy given off from

gluons. A gluon is an elementary particle that holds quarks together, which in turn hold protons, neutrons, gravitons, and other particles together. When a graviton escapes from a gluon, the energy spikes outward and the graviton disappears. This is because the graviton moved into another dimension. If this doesn't sound like something from Star Trek, what does!

Black Stars are Real!

This doesn't seem like news anymore, since black holes are parts of our collective consciousness, but astronomers are becoming more and more convinced that super-massive black holes are real, and they lie at the centers of most large galaxies.

Many of you may remember the TOS episode in which "black stars" were described. It seems that the truth about black holes seems very science-fictionary. Scientists now think that huge disks of gas swirl around black holes that lie in the center of galaxies. The black holes weigh millions or even billions time more than the mass of our solar system. As gas in the disk falls into the hole it heats up and burns so brightly in x-rays that can be detected a billion light years away.

In some cases, this heat produces narrow beams of energetic particles and magnetic fields. These are ejected away from the disk at near the speed of light. When these beams hit the Earth, they are called blazers.

Cygnus X-3 is a black hole that sucks in matter from an companion star. This black star has a deep gravity well and a huge amount of energy is released in x-ray and gamma ray energy beams. Once in a while, most recently in 1997, galactic blazers hit the Earth. Cool!

Counselor Troi's True Love

We all know that Counselor Troy loves chocolate, especially when she was bummed out about something. She explained in one episode that chocolate activates the opiate receptors in the brain, giving the consumer a good feeling. This is true, and has been noted in the press since about 1996.

Now it seems that chocolate might actually be good for you (beyond giving you an emotional boost). Some of chocolate's components contain antioxidants, which help neutralize free radical molecules which damage cells and might cause cancer.

So there you go: a medical reason to enjoy that extra piece of chocolate cake!

Of course, the idea that chocolate was good for you is not actually new. Researchers have found European medical texts dating back to the 1520s, suggesting that chocolate was used in the New World for various remedies.

They report healers pounded cocoa beans into a paste, diluting it with water, and giving it to people suffering from fevers, liver disease, dysentery, and kidney disorders. In fact, the emotional link to chocolate is not that new either. In a 1631 publication by the Spanish physician Antonio Comenero de Ledesma, for example, the good doctor wrote that chocolate makes people amiable, and "incited consumers to lovemaking."

Enough said!

LTJG Mike Walker
Lehi, Utah

TREK BUZZ

Production has begun on the new series Gene Roddenberry's Andromeda (Zap2it.com). The show's web site has opened at <http://www.andromedatv.com/>

Michael Piller and son Shawn are developing a science-fiction pilot Day One for the WB network. The show would follow the adventures of a group of survivors 60 years after an asteroid hits Earth.

The campaign to get Paramount to do a Captain Sulu series marched around the country on April 22nd, mustering 500 people in 12 cities, but only 30 outside of Paramount itself.

Commenting at a book signing on the Captain Sulu campaign, Leonard Nimoy noted "If another one of us can get another series, then why not? Sure. My only concern is that they do good work, that's all it's about".

And among Sulu campaigns, the letter-writing campaign to get 1,000 individual letters supporting a new Captain Sulu novel fell around 180 letters short.

Roswell, produced in part by Jonathan Frakes (Riker), was renewed by the WB Network for another season.

Avery Brooks is in a new IBM television campaign. Among various shows, look for the ad

spots during Voyager.

Robert Beltran co-stars in the film Luminarias, now open in selected cities.

Garrett Wang hosted this year's Media Action Network for Asian Americans' media achievement awards ceremony. Garrett was also a guest at the opening of the VC Filmfest 2000 LA Asian Pacific Film and Video Festival.

Thanks to Dateline: Starfleet for the info!

HAPPY BIRTHDAY!

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

Rick Sternbach (Senior Illustrator)	6 th
CADET Gracie Walker	9 th
Patrick Stewart (CPT Jean Luc Picard)	13 th
Robert Justman (Producer)	13 th
VADM Mike Henigan	20 th
CPT Joe Perry	25 th
Nana Visitor (MAJ Kira Nerys)	26 th
Wil Wheaton (Wesley Crusher)	29 th
David Warner (Chancellor Gorkon)	29 th
CRMN Alan Certo	31 st

FINANCIALLY SPEAKING

Opening Balance	168.47
Postage	19.66
Postage	8.87
Deposit	25.00
Closing Balance	164.94

CMDR Connie Heller

**THE NEXT MEMBERSHIP MEETING
WILL BE ON 20 JULY AT 7:00 PM
AT THE CAPTAIN'S HOUSE.
COME ONE COME ALL!**

**THERE WILL BE NO NIGHT OUT IN
JULY!! INSTEAD WE WILL BE
HAVING OUR ANNUAL 4TH OF JULY
COOKOUT AT NOON! Y'ALL COME!!**

SURFING THE WEB

Interested in great space sites? Well, here are just a few of the hundreds of sites that are probably out there. Enjoy!

1) "Today at NASA" is the official press release web page. It's updated nearly every day.:

<http://www.nasa.gov/today/index.html>

2) If you're really interested in U.S. manned space flight, make sure to bookmark this page. From it, you can access much of the best stuff throughout the NASA web. This is a MUST SEE SITE!

<http://spaceflight.nasa.gov/index-n.html>

3) During shuttle missions, NASA maintains a "home page" for the mission in progress. You can obtain tracking data, see the NASA TV schedule, see new photos, etc:

<http://spaceflight.nasa.gov/shuttle/archives/sts-101/>

4) Most likely, the next shuttle mission will be STS-106, which will also fly on Atlantis in August. The home page for that mission is already available here:

<http://spaceflight.nasa.gov/shuttle/archives/sts-106/index.html>

5) If you're interested in downloading official NASA photos—thousands upon thousands of them--then go here. Check by every few months to update your stash of desktop pictures:

<http://spaceflight.nasa.gov/gallery/index.html>

6) Here's another NASA photo archive. This one is administered directly via the Kennedy Space Center in Florida. Last year, NASA attempted to bring all of its photo archives under one umbrella, but they seem to have missed this one:

<http://www-pao.ksc.nasa.gov/kscpao/captions/index.htm>

7) If you're primarily interested in the Apollo missions of the 60s and early 70s, this is one of the better archives of information and images:

http://www.retroweb.com/apollo_archive.html

8) Interested in Russia's MIR space station? Here's one of the most authoritative sites on the 'net:

<http://www.maximov.com/Mir/homepage.asp>

9) If you're building models of Apollo spacecraft and are looking for decent reference for details and painting, here is one you'll want to see:

<http://www.apollosaturn.com/>

10) If you're more of an unmanned space travel buff, then all of the Jet Propulsion Lab's stuff is accessible though this page:

<http://www.jpl.nasa.gov/>

11) A favorite JPL venture was the ultra-cool Mars Pathfinder mission from a couple of years back. All that stuff is archived here:

<http://mars.jpl.nasa.gov/default.html>

12) The JPL mission I'm currently following is the Galeilo mission. See the project home page here:

<http://www.jpl.nasa.gov/galileo/index.html>

13) I don't pretend to understand a tenth of this stuff, but some very high-end astronomical observations are being made by the Chandra X-Ray Observatory, which was placed in orbit last year via shuttle and is operated by folks at Harvard. At the moment, they're excited about one million miles per hour "wind" they've detected near a giant black hole.

<http://chandra.harvard.edu/>

14) Want to know more about satellites and how they work? Check out this easy-to-read guide posted by Hughes, a company that builds the darn things:

<http://www.hughespace.com/sat101.html#orbitdia>

15) Or, just go directly to the Hughes Space and Communications homepage:

<http://www.hughespace.com/>

16) Smithsonian Air & Space Magazine is one of the best aviation/space magazines available. I've subscribed for more than ten years now. Here is their web site:

<http://airspacemag.com/>

17) "GOES Hot Stuff" is a place where you can download really cool satellite images such as hurricanes or other weather phenomena:

<http://rsd.gsfc.nasa.gov/goes/>

CONVENTIONS, ETC.

Great news! There will be a convention in Atlanta this year after all! Joe Motes (Vulkon) has secured a hotel and is in the process of obtaining guests. Okay, here are the facts:

When: September 1-3

Where: The Sheraton Buckhead (across from Lenox Square!!)

Guests: To be determined!

Cost: Saturday & Sunday Reserved Seating - \$50

Saturday & Sunday Open Seating - \$40

Saturday Only Reserved Seating - \$35

Saturday Only Open Seating - \$25

Sunday Only Reserved Seating - \$30

Sunday Only Open Seating - \$20

You can order tickets online at: <http://www.vulkon.com/index.htm>.

FINALLY

Help! Okay, devoted readers I need some help in the way of articles for the newsletter. It does not necessarily have to be Trek oriented. It can be on anything you have an interest in. I would prefer something in the science fiction genre but I will take anything about now. So, get your writer's cap on and send your words of wisdom my way! You can email me at <davincico@earthlink.net>

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DaVINCI STAFF ROSTER

Commanding Officer Freddy Heller 562-TREK

Executive Officer Joe Perry 327-5888
Finance Connie Heller 562-8735
Community Service Teri Massoud 568-9943
Publications Freddy Heller 562-8735

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Counselor JoAnne Vazquez 563-9185
Morale VACANT
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Engineering Officer VACANT
Communications Gisela Stephens 689-4266
Quartermaster Randy Dunn 291-0150
Security Zach Farley 682-0140

Cadet Corps Commander VACANT

Master Chief Petty Officer VACANT