

# Phoenix Rising



January 2016

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## MSR REPORT

CHAPTER:	USS Dark Phoenix
REPORT FOR:	Dec, 2015
SUBMITTED:	01/05/2016
SUBMITTER:	RADM Ralph Planthold
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CITY:	Lawrence
STATE:	Kansas
ZIP/POSTAL:	66047
COUNTRY:	United States
PHONE:	813-244-9733
CHAPTER TYPE:	MEETING
REGISTRATION:	NCC 74920
CLASS:	Prometheus
CO:	RADM Ralph Planthold
XO:	ADM Sunnie Planthold
NEWSLETTER:	Phoenix Rising
PUBLICATION DT:	12/15/2015

## FLEET MEMBERS

SCC	EXPIRE DT	RANK	NAME
44342	04/13/2016	ADM	Sunnie Planthold
46072	06/23/2016	COL	Patrick Malone
49691	04/13/2016	RADM	Ralph Planthold
55881	06/23/2016	CRMN	Michael Malone
61751	06/09/2016	PO3	Teague Banister
61754	06/09/2016	CDT	Ethan Banister
64850	06/09/2016	CDT	Emma Banister
70180	09/19/2016	ENS	Karessa Kow
70978	04/26/2016	LTJG	Rianna Melton
71621	03/03/2016	LTJG	Jeremy Schroeder
73140	01/26/2017	LT	John Bevan
73223	02/21/2016	CRMN	David Morton
73240	02/27/2016	CRMN	Carolyn Kaberline
73257	03/03/2016	CRMN	Ruth Lichtwardt
73283	03/07/2016	LTJG	John Buttimer
73652	06/05/2016	LTJG	Carrie Mills
73696	06/14/2016	ENS JG	EI Johnston
73697	06/14/2016	ENS JG	Jean Martin
73875	08/02/2016	PO2	Travis Jackson
73876	08/02/2016	CRMN	Jamie Jackson
73877	08/02/2016	CDT	Gabriel Jackson
73878	08/02/2016	CDT	Larissa Jackson
73879	08/02/2016	CRMN	Venita Jackson
73886	08/02/2016	ENS	KLar Batt
73954	08/20/2016	LT	Brent Barbee Mr
74062	09/19/2016	ENS	Josh Levering
74085	09/27/2016	ENS	Rezty Felty
74086	09/27/2016	ENS	Laura Felty
74087	09/27/2016	CDT	Tesla Felty
74088	09/27/2016	CDT	Sagan Felty
74089	09/27/2016	CDT4	Dyson Felty
74246	11/13/2016	CRMN	Nicole E Blackburn
74365	12/23/2016	CRMN	Jim Robinson
74366	12/23/2016	CRMN	Mary Robinson

## ACADEMY :

### Carolyn Kaberline

IOLS - Officer's Command College  
(IOLS:OCC)

#### OCC

**HONORS** 12/31/2015

### Rezty Felty

IOLS - Officer's Command College  
(IOLS:OCC)

#### OCC

**HONORS** 12/02/2015

IOTA - College of Law (IOTA:LAW)

### COL 101 - UFP Law

**DISTINCTION** 12/17/2015

### Laura Felty

IOLSS - College of Medicine  
(IOLSS:SACOM)

### COM-112 - Nursing Certification

**DISTINCTION** 12/17/2015

IOMS - College of Starship Operations  
(IOMS:COSO)

### CSO-102 - Medical Operations

**DISTINCTION** 12/28/2015

### Tesla Felty

IOCS - Cadet College of Spooky Friends  
(CCOSF)

### CM-ADM 101 - The Addams Family

**DISTINCTION** 12/31/2015

### CM-ADM 201 - The Addams Family

**DISTINCTION** 12/31/2015

## OTHER INFO

**MEETING DATE :** 12/19/2015

## PROMOTIONS :

SCC:	NAME	NEW RANK	EFFECT DT
73240	Carolyn Kaberline	LTJg	12/12/2015
74365	Jim Robinson	CRMN	12/23/2015
74366	Mary Robinson	CRMN	12/23/2015

## ACTIVITIES :

- 12/08 SO hosted the chapter's biweekly Game Night at his home.
- 12/18 CO, XO/OIC MSG 269 were out of town on business. SO had the conn.
- 12/19 Salvation Army bellringing, 2-4 PM at Hy-Vee Grocery in Lawrence, KS.
- 12/19 Kickoff meeting for new Topeka, KS Chapter-in-Training USS Arion, 5 PM at Perkins Restaurant in Lawrence, KS.
- 12/19 USS Dark Phoenix monthly chapter meeting, 6 PM at Perkins Restaurant in Lawrence, KS.



L-R: LTJg Kaberline; RADM R. Planthold; LTJg Melton; LT Bevan; CDT T. Felty; ENS R. Felty.; Cdt ENS D. Felty; CDT S. Felty; ENS L. Felty; guest Jasmine; ENS Levering; ENSJg Thornton.



L-R: LT Bevan; CDT T. Felty; ENS R. Felty.; Cdt ENS D. Felty; CDT S. Felty;

ENS L. Felty; guest Jasmine; ENS Levering; guests Jamie, Jackson; ENSJg Thornton; LTJg Kaberline; RADM R. Planthold; LTJg Melton.



ENS Laura Felty receives Willard Decker Award.



ENS Rezty Felty receives Willard Decker Award.

- 12/20 Followup meeting for new Topeka, KS Chapter-in-Training USS Arion, 5 PM at Godfather's Pizza in Topeka, KS.
- 12/22 SO hosted the chapter's biweekly Game Night at his home.
- 12/25 CO, XO/OIC MSG 269 were out of town -26 on family business. SO had the conn.

## FUTURE PLANS

- 01/05 SO will host the chapter's biweekly Game Night at his home.
- 01/16 CO, XO/OIC MSG 269, SO will have supper with DOIC MSG 269.
- 01/22 SO will host the chapter's biweekly Game Night at his home.
- 01/23 Crew individual photo headshots, 5 PM at McAlister's Deli in Lawrence, KS.
- 01/23 Meeting for new Topeka, KS Chapter-in-Training USS Arion, 5 PM at McAlister's Deli in Lawrence, KS.
- 01/23 USS Dark Phoenix monthly chapter meeting, 6 PM at McAlister's Deli in Lawrence, KS.

## COMMENTS :

- Congratulations to ENS Kaberline upon completion of OCC with HONORS, and upon her resulting promotion to LTJg as of 12/12/15!
- Congratulations to LTJg Kaberline upon receiving the Willard Decker Award as of 12/12/15!
- Welcome aboard to CRMN J. Robinson and CRMN M. Robinson as of 12/23/15!

*Ralph Planthold is the Commanding Officer of the USS Dark Phoenix and has been a member of Starfleet International since March 1999 and an avid fan since Star Trek first aired. During the regular day, he is an independent associate for LegalShield.*

## Second Officer's Report By Lieutenant John "Sparky" Bevan

Greetings, ladies and gentlemen!  
Happy New Year!

Well, we start off a new year with a great ship and crew. After all the wonderful changes and the spectacular growth we had throughout 2015, I look forward to what this year shall bring. Let's all make this year even better than last.

### Vessel Readiness Certification Program

First, let me mention a big project that we have undertaken for the past several months: the Vessel Readiness Certification Program (VRCP). When I joined the ship nearly a year ago, I learned about this program and spoke with our dear Skipper about it. He wasn't all that enthusiastic because he had never been on a ship that had successfully completed the certification process, so I thought it would be a nice idea to make the Dark Phoenix the first ship under his command to do so. I looked up all the qualifications for each department and started taking a slew of courses. By myself, I was able to get everything but the Cadet Corps completed. As I was getting ready to file the paperwork, though, I found that I missed a *minuscule* detail. As VRCP is supposed to encourage teamwork, it requires a minimum of four crewmembers to fulfill all the requirements for the program. So, while I had the credits that would qualify for all the departments, I could not singly get us the ship certification. This was a let-down but I figured that we would resolve it in time.

With the massive explosion in our crew manifest, **more than tripling in size in only eight months**, I started keeping tabs on the various tests that we could use toward the program. At this point, everyone who has taken at least one course in the Academy is helping toward the requirements in one department or another. In total, on our ship of 34 souls, we have fifteen of our crew (including all members of the Command Staff) who have Academy

coursework qualifying us for this distinguished honor! Well done, Dark Phoenix!

This is a prestigious program. In the fifteen years this program has existed, only thirty-two ships in service today in the entire fleet of 241 have gone through this process and only four ships in our region (out of 24) have done so. We are the fifth ship currently in service in Region 12 to become certified, the only ship in our region to go through this process in over two years, and we are the first ship in Region 12 to have all sixteen departments certified! As of today, January 11<sup>th</sup>, 2016, we have received the certificates for all departments and for the ship as a whole. Thank you, everyone, for allowing us to earn this honor!

### Region 12 Summit

As some have heard already, the Summit scheduled for April has been cancelled. Because of this, anyone who has paid registration fees is due a refund. The same is true for any amounts paid for the Saturday Night banquet. The cancellation of the Summit did cause a "cancellation fee" clause to be activated in the amount of \$1000 that our Region had to pay. Given the fact that our Region treasury did not have enough to cover that, our Regional Coordinator, Commodore Chris Tolbert, made up the difference out of his own pocket. To help get the Region back on its feet, rather than take the refund, I instructed Chris to keep my refund and use it to repay the amount that he used of his personal funds to keep the Region solvent. Others have instead requested for Chris to keep their payments "on the books" for having paid for the Summit when the next one is scheduled. In other words, the registration fees paid for this Summit would be kept and applied at least as partial payment (if not payment in full) for the next Summit that gets planned, wherever it may be. (Per the cancellation clause of the contract, we are not permitted to have another Summit in the KC metro area again for two years from the date the Summit was scheduled to occur, so the next Summit could be

scheduled anywhere else in the five states of our Region.)

So, for anyone who had paid for their Summit registration, please contact RC Tolbert at [rc@region12.org](mailto:rc@region12.org) and let him know if you want a refund, have him apply the money toward a future Summit, or if you want to donate it to the Region.

Also, because of this cancellation, we have decided to deviate from the standard policies as published in the Crew Handbook. Normally we require attendance at two Sector events to qualify for a one-step promotion while only one Regional or Fleet event is required. Since the only scheduled Regional event has been cancelled and we have only two known Sector events coming up on the schedule over the next several months, we are changing the rule for the year of 2016 so that attendance at a single Sector event will qualify one for a promotion. Be aware that you may go to both but we also have a policy in place--which has not been modified--that a promotion based on event attendance may be granted only once per calendar year. So, attend either or both because of the fun you will have hanging out with your fellow shipmates and members of other ships but remember that only one will help you with your pips.

### Memorial Service for Dennis Bain

On Monday, January 4<sup>th</sup>, our good friend and the Skipper of the USS Valiant, the ship we commissioned only two months ago, passed away. He had a minor heart attack on Christmas Day and had heart surgery (quintuple bypass). He was then scheduled for installation of an automatic defibrillator on January 4<sup>th</sup> but while in the hospital waiting for his scheduled operation, he had two additional heart attacks and did not survive the second.

A memorial service was held in Kansas City (MO) on Sunday, January 10<sup>th</sup> and it was very well attended by his friends from various fan, cosplay, and Live Action Roleplay (LARP) groups from around the Kansas City area. Those in attendance from the Dark Phoenix included Admiral Sunnie Planthold, Rear

Admiral Ralph Planthold, Lieutenant John Bevan, and Ensigns Laura and Rezty Felty. Ensign Jennifer Goerke also attended as did many from the Valiant. In total, there were about 50 people at the gathering. Other groups represented were the Imperial 501<sup>st</sup> Legion, GI Joe, Umbrella Corp., Dragomir, and others that I did not recognize.

Dennis leaves behind his beloved fiancée Crystal Rodriguez and son Dakota (Cody) Bain. His Executive Officer, Lieutenant Colonel Mike Calhoun, has been selected by Region 12 Coordinator, Commodore Chris Tolbert, to succeed Dennis in the position of Commanding Officer of the Valiant.

Recently while talking with Crystal, I let her know that from my point of view, Dennis has not passed away and left us. Instead, he has only left this dimension of the space-time continuum to transfer to another fleet and to explore the next dimension of the final frontier. He is on assignment elsewhere and shall be glad to have us rejoin him in that fleet when our times come. To that end, I wish him smooth sailing and exciting adventures.

#### Announcements

Our newsletter continues to grow and improve, as you can tell from the new format this month. Other than some tweaking here and there, this will be the final format that we will use for the foreseeable future. While this makes things look much more professional, it also does have some drawbacks. First, though previously we have accepted PDFs for article submissions (such as Lieutenant (junior grade) Buttimer's Active Shooter booklet last month), we will no longer be able to do that as there will not be a way to integrate them into the new layout template. Therefore, articles will have to be in an easily-edited format such as the traditional MS Word .doc or the more modern .docx format. Second, if you have any pictures that you wish to have accompany your article (and we **definitely** encourage this), we must receive them as separate attachments to the emails in which you submit your articles rather than embedded in the

article documents themselves. When they are embedded, they are "locked in place" and cannot be moved so as to fit the newsletter template. As such, we will have to decline any submissions that are unusable due to these two issues until such problems are corrected.

It seems that we are starting the year off right. We had two new crewmembers come aboard by what appears to have been a cloaked personnel shuttle: Crewmen Jim and Mary Robinson. They joined SFI on December 23<sup>rd</sup> and immediately docked with us without the Command Staff being aware that they were there until about a week later. (Considering that the Intruder Alert klaxon didn't sound off, we might need to get Chief Engineer Felty to look into why it remained silent!) In all seriousness, Crewmen Robinson, welcome aboard! We are glad to have you join us and thank you, Lieutenant (junior grade) Carolyn Kaberline, for sending them our way!

Moving to duty assignments, Ensign Jennifer Goerke has recanted her acceptance of the position of Acting Chief of Communications. She and the Command Staff had differing ideas as to how to develop the newsletter, so she declined to assume the role. As such, anyone who is interested in assuming this billet should contact me.

Just to be clear, the primary duty of the Acting Chief of Communications is to act as the Publisher of the newsletter. This duty is not all that time-consuming since the proofreading and preparation of the submissions shall be accomplished by me as the Editor-in-Chief. What the Publisher will perform is adding the articles in their accepted forms (as forwarded from me to the Publisher) to the newsletter template and insertion of any accompanying pictures. While this is not a difficult task, it will take someone who has the desire and willingness to perform this work in a timely fashion. For the first few months, the Publisher and I will work together to make this happen and resolve any "bugs" that crop up but in time the proverbial reins will be transferred over to said Publisher and I will focus primarily on the proofreading and pre-formatting of the submitted

articles before forwarding them to the Publisher.

Something to consider is that the template that we use does require MS Word 2007 or later since it is a more modern .dotx and loses some of its functionality when reduced to the traditional .dot format of Word 2003 and earlier. Therefore, please take this into consideration while you decide whether to toss your hat into the ring for the Acting Comms Chief billet.

Because of the continued growth of our crew, we are preparing another order for our ship uniform shirts. Those who are interested in seeing the men's shirts, please go to:

<http://www.apparefly.com/index.php/k147-tri-mountain-performance-elite.html>

and for the ladies, go to:

<http://www.apparefly.com/index.php/k147-tri-mountain-performance-lady-elite.html>

As you will see on the pages, the shirts start at a base price of a bit over \$27 apiece but part of the reason that we compile a ship-wide order is so that we can attain the discounts mentioned at the top of each page. Most often, we are able to reach the 10 percent discount level but on the last order we were able to put together a large enough batch to get up to the 15 percent discount, thus dropping the base price to about \$23 apiece. Please contact Ralph at [admiralr@bdcusa.com](mailto:admiralr@bdcusa.com) with the quantity, sizes, and colors of the shirts that you wish to order.

#### December Events

To review our past month of activities, we had a good turnout for the Salvation Army Bell Ringing at Hy-Vee. Lieutenant (junior grade) Buttimer and the Command Staff were there for the entire two hours while Ensign Levering--accompanied by his wife and daughter, Jamie and Jasmine, respectively--rang bells with us for the first hour of the event. We had a large number of people donate to the pots at either doorway and

many commented approvingly on the resounding proclamation of Buttimer's "Merry Christmas" to all who passed the western door where he was stationed. Thank you, volunteers, for supporting this noble cause.

At the same time as the bell-ringing event, we had a conflicting requested presence made by our friends at TopCon. Unfortunately, due to the conflict with our own event as well as other events that our crew had already planned individually, the turnout was quite minimal: only Lieutenant (junior grade) Batt. Despite being the only Dark Phoenix representative, he did us proud by being there all three days without fail, spending more time there than any of the others from the other groups (e.g. Umbrella Corp., 501<sup>st</sup> Legion, Zombie Response Team, etc). He demonstrated his devotion to our ship and to the sincerity under which we take our promises to assist. Thank you, Lieutenant Batt!

The December meetings brought a large number of us together to close out the year and to discuss the potential for a new shuttle in Topeka. For an hour prior to the ship meeting, the Command Staff met with Ensign Levering and his family and Lieutenant (junior grade) Kaberline. At this meeting, we discussed who may wish to serve as the CO and XO of the ship as well as what the name of the new chapter may be. Many ideas for the latter issue were presented but in the end, it seemed that the potential captain (Ensign Levering) liked the idea that he proposed out of all presented: USS Arion. The Arion of mythological fame is an immortal talking horse that is extremely swift and bred by divine intervention, foaled by either Demeter or Gaia, depending on which origin story you wish to consider accurate.

The ship meeting began at 6pm and we had a good crowd. In addition to the Command Staff, we had Lieutenants (junior grade) Carolyn Kaberline and Rianna Melton; Ensigns Laura Felty, Rezty Felty, Jennifer Goerke, and Josh Levering; Cadet Ensign Dyson Felty; Cadets Tesla Felty and Sagan Felty; and guests Jamie Levering, Jasmine Levering, and Tim Thornton. Tim is a former Dark

Phoenix enlisted crewman with the rank of Ensign (junior grade) whose membership lapsed when he moved out of the area to St. Mary's, a small town about 25 miles west and north of Topeka. It was grand to see him and welcome him back in our midst. We hope that he will become active in SFI once more, quite possibly aboard the USS Arion.

Many made comments regarding the newsletter with a couple of people mentioning the length as it was 49 pages for the December edition. One comment was that certain crewmembers may not have time to read through the entire newsletter. We thank everyone for their input and do take all commentary to heart but we also wish to remind everyone that the newsletter has only two articles that are considered required reading and those are the two placed at the very front: the Monthly Status Report authored by Rear Admiral Ralph Planthold and the Second Officer's Report authored by me. All other articles are there for interest and entertainment, so please feel free to view the rest as a typical group newsletter, magazine, or other periodical: read what you like and skip the rest. We promise that there will be no pop quizzes. ☺

The next evening, Ensign Levering wished to meet with the Command Staff to discuss the formation of the USS Arion and we also invited Crewman Nikki Blackburn to attend. Nikki brought along a friend of hers, Selena Juarez, who is interested in joining SFI but is not yet a member. At this meeting, it was decided that Josh will be the CO of the upcoming shuttle and that the paperwork and other requirements will start in earnest soon with the Dark Phoenix serving as her mothership and the Dark Phoenix Command Staff providing any desired and/or required support. So, everyone, the Dark Phoenix is pregnant once again with a new baby shuttle in its shuttle bay. When the Arion announces its first ship meeting, we will be sure to let everyone know. Whether you wish to transfer to the Arion or attend only as a visitor from the Dark Phoenix, you will be welcome.

Also, something that Josh wished to clarify and that I was happy to confirm is that even if he and others leave the Dark

Phoenix to form the Arion, they are still very welcome to attend our events such as our Game Nights. Unless an event is announced as being specifically for our ship, all are welcome to attend. As usual, of course, we ask that any who wish to participate in our events RSVP so that we can plan accordingly.

#### Technological Advances

Other developments this month have been the development of an email server for the USS Dark Phoenix. While it is not yet operational (due to technical difficulties caused by the cable company), we are nearly ready to bring it online. Therefore, we will soon be switching all Command Staff addresses to the [ussdarkphoenix.org](http://ussdarkphoenix.org) domain rather than using my business domain of [bdcusa.com](http://bdcusa.com). Also, all mailing lists will be at the same ship domain instead of my business domain, of course. When that occurs, we will send out an announcement. Thank you, Ensign Rezty Felty, for your hard work and continued efforts to make this happen for us!

Something else that we wish to mention is that all Senior Staff will also have new ship domain addresses through which to communicate with the ship. For example, our Skipper will be reached at [co@ussdarkphoenix.org](mailto:co@ussdarkphoenix.org). Anyone who is not a member of the Senior Staff may also have a ship email address upon request.

Access to email accounts is kept very easy in that we are setting up IMAP, POP, and SMTP access (just like standard email accounts) as well as a webmail system (such as GMail, AT&T U-Verse, Yahoo, WOW, and others use). When the email system is fully functional, we will provide details as to how to use the system for all who require or desire such accounts.

Further, Ensign Felty is implementing a calendar for our events so that we can all refer to it as desired for upcoming ship, regional, and Fleet events that are of interest. Please note that it is not yet operational either. Once it is online, if there are other events that you feel could be of interest to our crew, please feel free to enter your events and

we will review them. As with article submissions to the newsletter, we will not approve anything political, overtly religious, or otherwise exclusive or controversial in nature for addition to the calendar. Events that will receive approval without hesitation are conventions, movie premieres for big-budget films in the science fiction or fantasy realms (especially if there is to be a promotional event such as what TopCon did for the new Star Wars movie in Topeka in December), and parties that are hosted by our crewmembers to which the entire ship is invited.

#### Head Shots and ID Cards

An hour prior to our January ship meeting, we will start taking pictures--specifically head shots--of all our crew for the creation of ship ID cards (and the photos will also serve the double purpose of the head shots used for our newsletters), so please be sure to wear your ship uniforms.

We have negotiated the price down to \$4 per card. Also, as has been discussed in the past and is mentioned in the Crew Handbook, the ID cards will have the space for pertinent medical information on the back. This is for your safety and for the convenience of any emergency medical personnel who might need to know said information. While we encourage everyone to fill out as much as possible, the choice is yours. At a minimum, we ask that you list an emergency medical contact if you are not comfortable listing medical details on the card. The medical form is included with this newsletter as a separate file. It is an editable PDF, meaning that you can type and print out your form(s) and we ask that you do so in order for the information to be easily read and communicated to the ID card printers. All that must be handwritten is your signature at the bottom of the form.

For those who do not have printers, please feel free to email your completed forms to me and I will print them on my laser printer. You can sign the form at the meeting.

Our Chief Medical Officer, Ensign Laura Felty, will collect the forms. When you give her your form, please indicate how many cards you would like to order. For those with multiple family members, please indicate how many cards you desire for each person.

#### Annual Ship Awards

Reminder to all: the nominations for the various annual ship awards have been received and the Command Staff has made its selection as to who will be so honored. This year, there was no valid entry for the category of Enlisted Member of the Year, so we will be awarding only Junior Cadet, Senior Cadet, and Officer of the Year awards.

#### Future Happenings

With the arrival of 2016, as has been mentioned in various newsletters previously, we are now starting the new schedule for our Game Nights. The next Game Nights will be on Friday, January 22<sup>nd</sup>, followed by Tuesday, February 2<sup>nd</sup>, and Friday, February 19<sup>th</sup>. The nights are still approximately two weeks apart but the day of the week oscillates between Tuesday and Friday. If you lose track of which day it will be on that week, then look at our (soon-to-be-available) online ship calendar or at the current month's newsletter.

Our next event on the calendar is Academy Night, which has now been firmly scheduled for March 12<sup>th</sup>. As last time, this will be an all-day event with the hours of 12 noon to 12 midnight, so come when is convenient for you. We will have at least four workstations prepared for test-taking, so you will not need to bring your own laptops. Also, just like last time, anyone who is here when the doors close at midnight can stay and continue to work away at their tests as long as they wish. The time of midnight is only the latest that anyone will be allowed to arrive.

To prepare for Academy Night, be sure to get your lists of tests (a total of five is recommended) to me by the time of the February meeting so that we can place the requests with the College

Directors and have the tests and any documents prepared for you prior to your arrival. When submitting your lists of tests, please be explicit, such as "Institute of Life Sciences Studies: College of Medicine: COM-101" or "IOLSS:COM:COM-101," so that I can easily track which courses are desired. (It also makes it easier for me since there are courses that have very similar course numbers, such as FOS-101 and FOC-101. The more complete the course description, the easier it is for me to insure we get you the right test.) If you are having a hard time deciding what courses to request, feel free to let me know and I will help you decide from the vast numbers of choices.

As always, if anyone has any questions about the contents of this article, suggestions for future events, or wish to submit articles for publication, please feel free to contact me by email at [sosparky@bdcusa.com](mailto:sosparky@bdcusa.com) or give me a call at (785) 727-1355. Be aware this is a regular phone, so don't try to send it text messages. ;-)

*John Bevan is the Second Officer of the USS Dark Phoenix and has been a member of Starfleet International since January 2015. When not honoring our ship with his dedication, he owns and operates a computer sales and service firm he founded back in June 1989. The motto by which he lives is "Nothing changes until something changes."*

**STARFLEET Marine Corps  
Unit Report Form v3**

Date and time **Tue Dec 1 14:48:05**  
submitted: **PST 2015**

Unit: **MSG 269**  
Battalion: **3**  
Brigade: **12**  
Reporting month: **December**

**\*\*REPORTING OFFICER\*\***

Reporting **ADM Sunnie J**  
officer: **Planthold**  
E-mail: **sunniejap@bdcusa.com**

**\*\*BASIC UNIT INFORMATION\*\***

Type: **MSG**  
Branch: **Special Ops**  
Nickname: **The Black Bettys**  
Motto:

**\*\*OFFICER-IN-CHARGE  
INFORMATION\*\***

Unit OIC **ADM Sunnie J**  
(name and **Planthold**  
rank):  
Unit OIC e- **sunniejap@bdcusa.com**  
mail:  
Unit OIC **813-244-9666**  
phone:  
Private: **Yes**  
Unit DOIC **COL Patrick Malone**  
(name and  
rank):  
Unit DOIC e- **cowboypm@gmail.com**  
mail:  
Unit DOIC **816-721-2492**  
phone:  
Private: **Yes**

**\*\*CHAPTER DATA\*\***

NCC **74920**  
Number:  
Name: **USS Dark Phoenix**  
CO: **RADM Ralph F  
Planthold**

**\*\*UNIT PERSONNEL DATA\*\***

Unit strength: Active/Reserve: **1/2**

**Unit roster:**

Name: **Sunnie J Planthold**  
Rank: **ADM**  
SCC Number: **44342**

Active/Reserve: **Reserve**  
Expiration Date: **04/13/2016**

Name: **Patrick Malone**  
Rank: **COL**  
SCC Number: **46072**  
Active/Reserve: **Active**  
Expiration Date: **06/22/2016**

Name: **Morgan Hahn**  
Rank: **CAPT**  
SCC Number: **32367**  
Active/Reserve: **Reserve**  
Expiration Date: **03/15/2016**

**Changes to roster:**

Recruits/Discharges: **0/0**

**Changes in leadership:**

Type the changes to Strike  
Group/Battalion leadership here. **N/A**

**Awards issued:**

Type award name and recipient.

**Awards requested:**

Type award and nominee.

**\*\*UNIT MISSION DATA\*\***

**Unit activities:**

SUMMARIZE BDE, BN, and unit  
activities for the past 60 days.

Volunteered hair care for clients at local  
Hospice.  
Donated 50 pounds of dog food to  
Lawrence Humane Society.  
Donated items of clothing to the Salvation  
Army.  
Visited Marine Strike Group aboard USS  
Valiant.  
Organized a group to ring handbells for  
Salvation Army during the Christmas  
season.  
Contributing monthly article to chapter  
newsletter.

**SFMC Challenge Data:**

Please place any data regarding SFMC  
challenges here. Please list BDE, BN,  
and unit.

**\*\*COMMENTS/PROBLEMS/SUGGES  
TIONS\*\***

Comments/Problems/Suggestions: **N/A**

Actions taken to rectify: **N/A**

Marine OIC's Report  
By Admiral Sunnie Planthold

Marine Strike Group 269, The Black Bettys, donated towels and blankets to both the Lawrence and Leavenworth County Humane Societies. Admiral Sunnie Planthold, MSG 269 Officer in Charge, donated clothing to the Willow Domestic Violence Center.

The Salvation Army bell ringing on behalf of MSG 269 and the Dark Phoenix was *enthusiastically* attended from 2-4 PM on Saturday, December 19<sup>th</sup>. In addition to the Command Staff, we had Ensign Josh Levering, his daughter Jasmine, and Lieutenant (junior grade) John Buttimer, whose booming "Mer-r-ry Christmas!" could be heard throughout the Hy-Vee parking lot.

For January 2016, MSG 269 will collect gallons of bleach for the Lawrence Humane Society. Please bring donations of bleach to the January 23 monthly chapter meeting.

Following is a **CHOCOLATE** recipe for the ship's galley, taken from *A Betazoid Guide to Heaven*, or, *Better Living Through Chocolate! [The STARFLEET Way]*, published in July 1996 by Captain Candie Arnold of the USS Gemini Dream NCC-64739, a now decommissioned chapter of Region 12 of STARFLEET International, based in Mountain Home, AR. Try it!

To quote the USS Dark Phoenix motto:

"Damn the Photon Torpedos, Pass the **CHOCOLATE!**"

SEVEN STEPS TO BETAZOID  
HEAVEN

Set oven at 350 degrees.

Place 1/2 c. butter in 9x13" glass pan and place into oven to melt.

On top of melted butter, layer these ingredients:

- 1 c. graham cracker crumbs
- 1-6 oz pkg butterscotch chips
- 1-6 oz pkg chocolate chips
- 1 c. coconut
- 1 can Eagle brand milk
- 1 c. chopped nuts

Bake for 30 minutes and allow to cool before cutting into bars.

Submitted by Adrienne Paradis, USS Gemini Dream

WARNING: CHILDREN UNDER 18 MUST HAVE THE WRITTEN PERMISSION OF THEIR PARENTS OR GUARDIANS TO INDULGE IN THESE!!

It's never too soon to plan your next chocolate break...

*Sunnie Planthold has been a member of Starfleet International since February 1995. She holds the billets of Executive Officer and as the Officer in Charge of the 269<sup>th</sup> Marine Strike Group--The Black Bettys. When pursuing civilian life, she is an independent sales consultant for LegalShield (alongside her husband Ralph), performs community service for the Lawrence Humane Society and the Willow Domestic Violence Center, and interprets church services into American Sign Language each Sunday. The quickest way to befriend her is to offer her a bite of chocolate.*

Security

By Lieutenant (junior grade) John  
Buttimer

No Article Submitted.

*John Buttimer joined SFI in March 2015 and has been very active with the ship since that time. In his real life, he is an active-duty member of the US Army and is happily married to his wife Shelby. They are expecting their first child this Spring.*

## The Internet of Things & Security By Kroll

*The following is an article published by Kroll, the security and identity theft investigation company utilized by LegalShield. In this modern world, we need to be concerned about the prospect of identity theft, so here is an article that brings to light some things many of us may not consider as seriously as we should.*

It's that time of year when the latest technological advancements get a lot of attention and we see the expanding of the "Internet of Things" (IoT).

Perhaps you purchased a personal fitness tracker or read news about internet-connected cars--VW brand chief Herbert Diess recently referred to their new all-electric, internet-connected car as a "smartphone on wheels" when it was spotlighted at the Consumer Electronics Show.

Designed to share information with the purchaser, another internet-connected device or a service, a wide variety of these gadgets exist, including but certainly not limited to:

- A refrigerator that takes photos of its contents each time the door is closed so the owner can check the photos while shopping to determine if a particular item needs to be purchased. And, the fridge integrates with an online shopping app to allow for grocery purchases and deliveries.
- A home lighting system that analyzes your lighting use patterns and mimics them when you are away from home so it's not obvious to outsiders that you are away.
- A health/fitness tracking device that records your exercise activity and sleep rhythms while allowing you to connect with friends also using the device.

- A home monitoring system that allows you to lock/unlock doors and program your thermostat remotely.
- Children's toys such as Hello Barbie—a Wi-Fi-connected doll with which your child can have a fairly impressive conversation.

What's the goal of these internet connected devices? Supposedly, lives will be enhanced by what these devices can accomplish by sharing data between each other and with the consumer. But, let's look past the bells and whistles for a moment and ask what should be considered when purchasing an internet-connected device. Are there factors that could impact your privacy? Could someone other than you access the device or the data the device collects?

In a recent public service announcement, the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) warned that "weak security capabilities" and "lack of consumer security awareness" can provide criminals with opportunities to exploit these devices. The PSA goes on to list the theft of personal information as one of the potential risks of a connected device.

The primary tip that the FBI shares in their announcement is that you must change the default password that was assigned to the device by its manufacturer. Passwords supplied by the manufacturer may be discoverable on the internet. Create and use a new, unique, strong password as soon as you connect the device to your network. Other advice includes:

- Isolate IoT devices on their own protected networks
- Disable Universal Plug and Play (UPnP) on routers
- Purchase IoT devices from manufacturers with a track record of providing secure devices

- Update IoT devices with security patches when they become available
- If a device comes with an open Wi-Fi connection, only allow it to operate on a home network with a secured Wi-Fi router
- Consider whether IoT devices are ideal for their intended purposes

Keep in mind that you are the first line of defense. Heed this advice and see more helpful tips in the FBI's public service announcement at:

<http://www.ic3.gov/media/2015/150910.a.spx>

Source:

[http://www.kroll.com/getmedia/1b257104-78e9-40a3-a9e0-df90ddb9ca1c/mem126\\_inv\\_insight\\_iot.a.spx](http://www.kroll.com/getmedia/1b257104-78e9-40a3-a9e0-df90ddb9ca1c/mem126_inv_insight_iot.a.spx)

## Five Tips for Strong Passwords By Kroll

*Also of concern for personal security in our daily lives is the issue of passwords. We need passwords for just about anything and everything we do nowadays, so Kroll has published an article about how to develop a strong password to help you assure your access is safe and secure.*

Passwords are not passé as some would have you think. They are still vital to device and account security. And, they are effective when they are created to meet certain criteria.

Here, we review five tips from the United States Computer Emergency Readiness Team (US-CERT):

- Don't use passwords that are based on personal information that can be easily accessed or guessed. For example, if your birthday is October 19, 1980, then don't use 10191980 as a password or even as part of a password.
- Don't use words that can be found in a dictionary of any language. Hackers use a "brute force attack" in which they can run a dictionary's worth of words up against encrypted data in a password field to try to determine the password.
- Use a mnemonic (a verse or formula to aid in recall) to remember complex passwords. For example, "I like to play basketball" could help recall the password, "I1Tpbb" (using a "1" instead of an "L" for added complexity).
- Use a combination of letters (uppercase and lowercase), numbers, and special characters. Follow the parameters of the software or device for which you are creating the password but if you can, create a longer

rather than shorter password with a variety of character types.

- Consider using passphrases. A passphrase is a series of words and makes for an easy-to-remember and long password. Don't spell all of the words correctly which would make the password more vulnerable to a brute force attack. An example provided by US-CERT is "This passwd is 4 my email!" which would be a strong password because it has many characters--uppercase and lowercase letters, numbers, special characters, and spaces.

**Important Note:** Internet-connected devices (home gaming system, Wi-Fi router, home security system, for example) are assigned default passwords by the manufacturer. These look to be complex collections of characters that would not be easily guessed. But, they may be discoverable through internet research. Change the default password on any device during setup in your home.

Always remember that passwords are more effective when they've been built through a purposeful and creative thought process.

Source:

[http://www.kroll.com/getmedia/51115719-5077-420d-b0ed-827610c707cd/mem127\\_inv\\_tips\\_strongpasswords3.aspx](http://www.kroll.com/getmedia/51115719-5077-420d-b0ed-827610c707cd/mem127_inv_tips_strongpasswords3.aspx)

Chief Engineer's Report  
By Cadet Ensign Dyson Felty

## Jeffries Tube

Part of the ship that most of the crew never see are the maintenance crawlspaces referred to as Jeffries Tubes. These are arranged throughout the ship behind the corridors and in other less-frequently visited areas so as to provide access for engineering personnel to perform maintenance. They also have a secondary function as a way to access other areas of the ship in the case of emergency or when stealth is a necessity.

Given that they are not designed for everyday use, they tend to be cramped, have limited environmental control (read: none), and not conducive to more than performance of the work necessary. If the crewman suffers from claustrophobia, he might want to choose another job than engineering.

The idea of the Jeffries Tube first started with the NCC-1701 Enterprise during the episode "Journey to Babel," which took place on Stardate 3842.3 (Earth year 2268, broadcast date November 17<sup>th</sup>, 1967) in which the Tellarite Ambassador Gav was found murdered and stuffed inside a Jeffries Tube.



The term Jeffries Tube started more as an inside joke as a reference to the original designer of the NCC-1701 Enterprise, Matt Jeffries. It was first started when someone hung a sign on one of the access tunnels proclaiming it a Jeffries Tube for the first time. After a while, the name stuck and Jeffries started using the term even in his concept sketches for various episodes.

Since the NCC-1701, the Jeffries Tubes have developed and become much more complex both in utility and design, including the equivalent access pathways on non-Federation ships and installations such as Deep Space Nine (also known as Terok Nor). The Tubes in the original series oftentimes were little more than diagonally-placed accessways in which we would see Scotty or someone else manipulating cables or some other exposed technology. However, as time advanced, so did the designs. Rather than being just big enough to crawl through in a single direction and no space to have a companion alongside, the tubes in NCC-1701D as well as on DS9 were large enough to crawl through in tandem or turn around quickly if conditions required such action. Further, the cables were no longer left out in the open nor were any circuit panels. Instead, they were most frequently hidden behind access hatches, opened by hydrosponners or other tools when needed.



When one thinks about the complexity of the technology of a starship or space station, one realizes that the technology used to regulate its most basic functions (especially those that are necessary for survival) cannot always be accessed by a panel under a desk or countertop. Use the modern household as an example. While repairing or replacing a sink disposal unit is usually accomplished by opening the cabinet under that side of the kitchen sink, if there is a problem with the plumbing leading to the sink, more often than not the wall needs to be penetrated or, if one is fortunate enough to have this convenience, a crawlway between the

walls of the kitchen and the adjoining room or a crawlspace/basement access under the kitchen. While space is limited in a household, it is at less of a premium for something as large as a starship or space station. Therefore, having such crawlspaces for maintenance personnel is not only clever but practically an expectation out of necessity. This is just another way that we can see that the forethought of those who put together the universe in which we like to spend our free time really had a great grasp on life aboard a space-faring vessel.

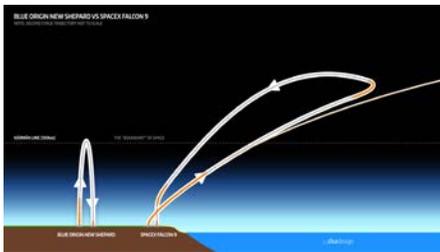


Until next time, remember to keep the warp reactant ratio at a constant mixture of 1:1!

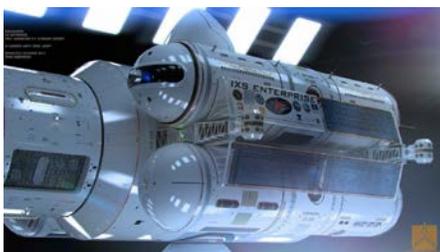
*Dyson Felty is the Acting Chief Engineer of the Dark Phoenix and is an exception to the rule of only Officers being in such responsible positions. He is a high school sophomore but has shown the same enthusiasm and dedication of any of the Officers, so his desire to serve has been approved by the Command Staff. Joining the crew only a few months ago, he has proven himself worthy of his title. As he challenges the same Officer training tests as his adult colleagues, he has been granted the rank of Cadet Ensign (abbreviated as CDT4) and will receive a commission to the rank of Ensign upon his 18<sup>th</sup> birthday.*

Propulsion News  
By Ensign Rezty Felty

This month SpaceX launched 11 OrbConn satellites into orbit using its Falcon 9 launch platform. This is the first time a Falcon 9 has flown since the catastrophic failure in June. SpaceX also accomplished a successful recovery of their used Falcon booster and are preparing it to be reused. NASA has ordered its first crewed launch to the International Space Station using the SpaceX Dragon platform, and the Falcon booster accomplished a controlled powered vertical landing at Cape Canaveral.



How much can we accomplish in 30 days? Last month Blue Origin was the only company to have accomplished this, and it was big news. Now another company has joined them.



Dr. Harold White of NASA continues to work on his Warp Drive concept based on the theories of physicist Miguel Alcubierre. Although no working prototype is available yet, he did release an artist's rendering of a ship using the drive this month, appropriately enough named Enterprise.



David Pares of Space Warp Dynamics claims to be building a Warp Drive based on Alcubierre's principles in his garage and that he is going to be a real-life Zefram Cochrane. While both Dr. Alcubierre and Dr. White say that negative energy is necessary to create the warp fields necessary for a drive of this type, Pares claims he can do it with electrical fields. He claims that using fractal circuits that simulate the electrical fields seen in lightning strikes, he has been able to compress coherent light in laser beams and alter the speed of light in lasers. His work has been endorsed by University of Nebraska at Omaha physics professor Jack Kasher, who said he thought Pares' idea was "ridiculously impossible" before he looked over the work and became a believer. I would have given him a very low probability of success but sometimes real ground-breaking science is done in garages and sheds, so we'll have to wait and see.

Until next month, keep those thrusters firing, and your nose pointed at the stars!

*Rezty Felty engages in Warp Core research on the USS Dark Phoenix, has been a Trek fan since the '60s, and has been a member of Starfleet since September 2015. In real life, he is owned by the CMO of the USS Dark Phoenix, 5 kids, and a variety of dogs, cats, and rats when not performing Linux Engineering.*

Transparent Aluminum?  
By ScienceRocksMyWorld.com

*Recently, I stumbled across this article and found it fascinating that, once again, something from Star Trek (or at least something fairly similar to it) is actually entering into our real world. So, I now present to you the article as published at ScienceRocksMyWorld.com (<http://www.sciencerocksmyworld.com/the-is-star-trek-substance-just-became-real/>) on November 10<sup>th</sup>, 2015.*



If you saw the 1986 movie *Star Trek IV: The Voyage Home*, then you may or may not have noticed the mention of a particular substance that was critical to the construction of the Federation starships: transparent aluminum. Like so many other Star Trek technologies, this one has now become real.

A detailed news release from the Naval Research Laboratory (NRL) tells the tale of this incredible invention:

Imagine a glass window that's tough like armor, a camera lens that doesn't get scratched in a sand storm, or a smart phone that doesn't break when dropped. Except it's not glass. It's a special ceramic called spinel (spin-ELL) that the US Naval Research Laboratory (NRL) has been researching over the last ten years. "Spinel is actually a mineral: it's a magnesium aluminate," says Dr. Jas Sanghera, who leads the research. "The advantage is it's so much tougher, stronger, harder than glass. It provides better protection in more hostile environments--so it can withstand sand and rain erosion." As a more durable material, a thinner layer of spinel can give better performance than glass. "For weight-sensitive platforms--Unmanned Aerial Vehicles (UAVs) and head-

mounted face shields, for examples--it's a game-changing technology."

NRL invented a new way of making transparent spinel using a hot press, called sintering. It's a low-temperature process and the size of the pieces is limited only by the size of the press. "Ultimately, we're going to hand it over to industry," says Sanghera, "so it has to be a scalable process." In the lab, they made pieces eight inches in diameter. "Then we licensed the technology to a company who was able to then scale that up to much larger hard plates, about 30 inches wide." The sintering method allows NRL to make optics in a number of shapes, "conformal with the surface of an airplane or UAV wing," depending on the shape of the press.

In addition to being tougher, stronger, harder, Sanghera says spinel has "unique optical properties: not only can you see through it but it allows infrared light to go through it." That means the military, for imaging systems, "can use spinel as the window because it allows the infrared light to come through."

The ceramic's manufacturing process currently makes it expensive for commercial uses like an unbreakable smartphone screen, but as the spinel making industry scales up, it's inevitable that we will see it used that way.

For more details, see the [excellent news release on the NRL website](#).

**Source:** [Navy.NRL.mil](http://Navy.NRL.mil) – "[Transparent Armor from NRL; Spinel Could Also Ruggedize Your Smart Phone](#)"

Chief Medical Officer's Report  
By Ensign Laura Felty, SFMD

Hi crew! This is your Chief Medical Officer. In light of the recent fact that one of our fellow Starfleet members suffered a mild heart attack last month, I felt it a good time to review what is a heart attack and what are the symptoms that may accompany a heart attack. These symptoms should not be ignored, and treatment should not be put off.

The medical term for heart attack is myocardial infarction. The most common signs and symptoms are pressure; tightness; pain; or a squeezing or aching sensation in your chest or arms that may spread to your neck, jaw, or back; nausea, indigestion, heartburn or abdominal pain; shortness of breath; cold sweat; fatigue; and light-headedness or sudden dizziness. Not everyone who has a heart attack has the same symptoms or has the same severity of the symptoms they do experience. While there are some people who have no symptoms at all in the beginning, keep in mind the more symptoms you have, the greater the likelihood that you are having a heart attack.

Do not confuse heart attack for sudden cardiac arrest. Cardiac arrest is where the heart suddenly stops beating. Cardiac arrest is usually caused by an electrical disturbance. In this case, CPR would need to be initiated immediately.

If you think you are having/experiencing a heart attack, get medical treatment right away. You will want to activate or have someone else activate the emergency medical services immediately. You do not want to drive yourself unless there is no other option. Driving while having a heart attack can put yourself and others at risk because symptoms can worsen. For some people, taking an aspirin during a heart attack can help reduce heart damage by decreasing the risk of your blood clotting. This should only be used if previously recommended by your physician since aspirin can interfere with other medications.

People who are at higher risk for a heart attack include men usually ages 45 or older, women ages 55 or older. People who smoke or have had long-term exposure to second-hand smoke increase the risk of a heart attack. People who have high cholesterol levels are also at higher risk for a heart attack. So discuss your risk with your primary care physician or your cardiologist.

*Laura Felty doesn't just play in the medical field in SFI: she has been employed in the nursing field for over 30 years and works as a Registered Nurse. She and her husband Rezty have five children and three grandchildren.*

Veterinary Specialist's Report  
By Lieutenant (junior grade) Rianna  
Melton

What's up with my hungry dog?

Does your dog wake you up early for mealtime or constantly beg if there is even a hint of food around? How about showing food aggression towards other pets in the house? Pushy, persistently hungry dogs can often be annoying for owners but what's really going on here?

Many times it may be a learned behavioral trait. If you are on a phone call or watching TV and your pet is nagging for attention, you may give him a treat to quiet him down. Dogs learn that if they make enough noise they get food! While it may be easier for us to toss them a bone instead of leaving what we're doing, we are encouraging that attention-seeking behavior.

And sometimes that is what dogs are really after: not necessarily your food but your attention.

We spend all day away from home and when we get back, we want to relax for the evening. On the other hand, your dog has been alone all day and wants to play! We are often our dogs' only sources of socialization and they get bored and lonely just as we do. So take him for a walk to the mailbox, go to the dog park, or even take him to your friends' houses for play dates. A lot of times this just seems like one more thing we have to do with our day but your furry friend is a living being too and needs more stimulation than just sitting at home alone all day. Oftentimes you may find that with increased attention and interaction with your dog, attention-seeking behaviors such as demanding food or house destruction may decrease dramatically.

Keep in mind though attention seeking may not be the only reason they seem hungry all the time. He may legitimately need a higher caloric intake. Depending on the breed and size of your pet, his caloric requirements may vary widely. A non-neutered working dog is going to need more than the Yorkie that sleeps all day. It is always a good idea to research what food you are feeding your

dog and how much your pet may need. Most foods have a feeding guide on the bag, but again, your pet's needs may be different than what's listed. Ask your vet what his recommendations are for your pet's needs so you can be sure he doesn't go hungry or get too much!

Other ideas for in-between meal snacks, if necessary, are nutritious low-calorie treats like apple wedges, carrots, or green beans. You may be surprised how many dogs love foods like these! If you feed your pet twice a day but he wants a bite of your food during lunch, set a few green beans off to the side and toss him one now and again. He doesn't really care that he isn't getting what you're eating. He just wants a bite too.

☺

But as always, please seek your vet's advice first to rule out any medical cause including, but not limited to, Cushing disease or hyperthyroidism. Many underlying medical conditions have increased appetite or increased water intake as a symptom and should be thoroughly investigated to ensure your pet's health!

Of course, I have done all these things (and more!) with my own little Chihuahua mix and he is still a little food hound. Sometimes that is just the personality he is stuck with and all you can do is laugh and toss him another bite!

*Rianna Melton is a member of SFI since June 2013 and is a former veterinary assistant who now works in the capacity of installation and maintenance field technician of veterinary diagnostic equipment. In her free time, she is mother to two dogs and two cats. One word of warning: under the human skin beats the heart of a proud Klingon warrior!*

Stellar Cartographer's Report  
By Lieutenant (junior grade) Carolyn  
Kaberline

Hopefully everyone had a chance to see the Quadrantids Meteor Shower, formed from left over dust particles from the extinct comet 2003 EH1. This meteor shower was the first of the new year occurring from January 1<sup>st</sup> through 5<sup>th</sup>. The second quarter moon was bright enough to block out some of the meteors, but those away from city lights should still have been able to see quite a few.

There are few astronomical events to note in this newsletter but the Sea and Sky website does note that the new moon on January 10 will provide a good time to view faint celestial objects such as galaxies and star clusters since there will be no moonlight to interfere. The opposite will be true on January 24 when the full moon will be located on the opposite side of the Earth as the Sun, thus allowing its face to be fully illuminated. Early Native Americans called this full moon the Full Wolf Moon because this was the time of year when hungry wolf packs howled outside their camps. This particular moon has also been known as the Old Moon and the Moon after Yule.

The only other noteworthy astronomical event before the next newsletter occurs on February 7 when Mercury will be visible low in the eastern sky just before sunrise.

Despite the few celestial happenings this time, astronomers have found a way for black holes to be observed with backyard telescopes. According to a *Business Insider* article astronomers have found that it is usually easy to see the activity in the vicinity of a black hole as the hole "gobbles up" the gases of nearby stars, leaving a visible trail. More information on this will be presented in the future.

Also in the news are some photos being snapped by the Mars rover Curiosity. Late last month new photos from Curiosity have highlighted the spectacular sand dunes on the red planet.

Be on the lookout for news of more space flights this year. While NASA now has its eyes on Mars, the European Space Agency is preparing for a return to

the moon. In addition, keep your eyes on Space X: With the successful vertical landing of Falcon 9 this past December, reusable rockets appear to be a real possibility. This event could lead to cheaper more accessible space travel for us Earthlings.

*Carolyn Kaberline is a semi-retired public school teacher, having retired from one school district after teaching high school English for 45 years and now is a substitute teacher in another school district. Additionally, she is a script consultant for Project: Potemkin, a fan-created Star Trek-themed web series. In her spare time, she is an amateur astronomer and member of the Northeast Kansas Amateur Astronomers' League (NEKAAL) as well as a freelance journalist.*

Fun & Frivolity

With last month's addition of a game section, we continue that with a bit more fun.

Trek Trivia

TOS: What four starships participated in war games with the USS Enterprise and the M-5 multitronic computer in "The Ultimate Computer?"

TNG: Where did the USS Enterprise-D dock for repairs after the defeat of the Borg ship in 2367?

DS9: What is the name of the substance to which all Jem-Hadar are genetically addicted from birth?

VOY: The USS Voyager uses what kind of processors in its computer banks?

Word Scramble

Name these rivers.

1. IOHO
2. PSPISISIMI
3. ZONAMA
4. BIAUMCOL
5. SOURMISI
6. SASKANAR
7. DUSIN
8. LGAVO
9. HINER
10. EUBNAD
11. NEOHR
12. NEEIS
13. EBLE
14. NDEARG
15. KONYU
16. COGNO
17. ELIN
18. GTZEYAN
19. RRAYMU
20. GERNI
21. NOSDUH
22. ZIEKENMAC
23. BEZEMAM
24. ODAROLOC
25. EANL

Now take the following letters and unscramble them to discover the name of the original Captain of our sister ship we commissioned in November 2015 and the name of that ship:

First name of Captain:  
First letters from 7, 10, 12, 13, 17, and 20.

Last name of Captain:  
Second letters of 2 and 18. Fourth letter of 11. Sixth letter of 4.

Name of Ship:  
First letters from 3, 6, 8, and 25. Second letter from 5. Fourth letter from 9. Fifth letter from 18.

Logic

1. Professor Herring (no relation to Admiral Herring) just returned from a six-month vacation in the Middle East. In one of the lectures she gave, she said the highlight of the trip was seeing many of the ancient artifacts firsthand. She made mention of having seen several mummies and tapestries dating as far back as 200 BC. She claimed to have seen coins dated 46 BC and weapons made of metal from approximately 500 BC. What is wrong with Professor Herring's claims?

2. This is a most unusual paragraph. How quickly can you find out what is so unusual about it? It looks so ordinary, you would think nothing is wrong with it and, in fact, nothing *is* wrong with it. It is unusual though. Why? Study it, think about it, and you may find out. Try to do it without coaching. If you work at it for a bit, it will dawn on you. So jump to it and try your skill at figuring it out. Good luck--don't blow your cool!

3. Gary Gladhand, the politician, was very tired after a long day of campaigning. He went to bed at 10pm, wound his alarm clock, and set it for noon the next day. Since Gary fell asleep almost immediately, how many hours did he sleep before the alarm woke him?

All answers can be found at:

<http://www.bdcusa.com/downloads/january2016.pdf>

