

THE MIGHTY MAX

SIXTH ANNIVERSARY EDITION

"Reach for the stars,
and grab the future."

USS MAXIMILLIAN
(NCC-74997)
STAR TREK FAN
ASSOCIATION

Serving central Ohio since
1992.

May 1998

1992 - 1998

Volume 6, Issue 4

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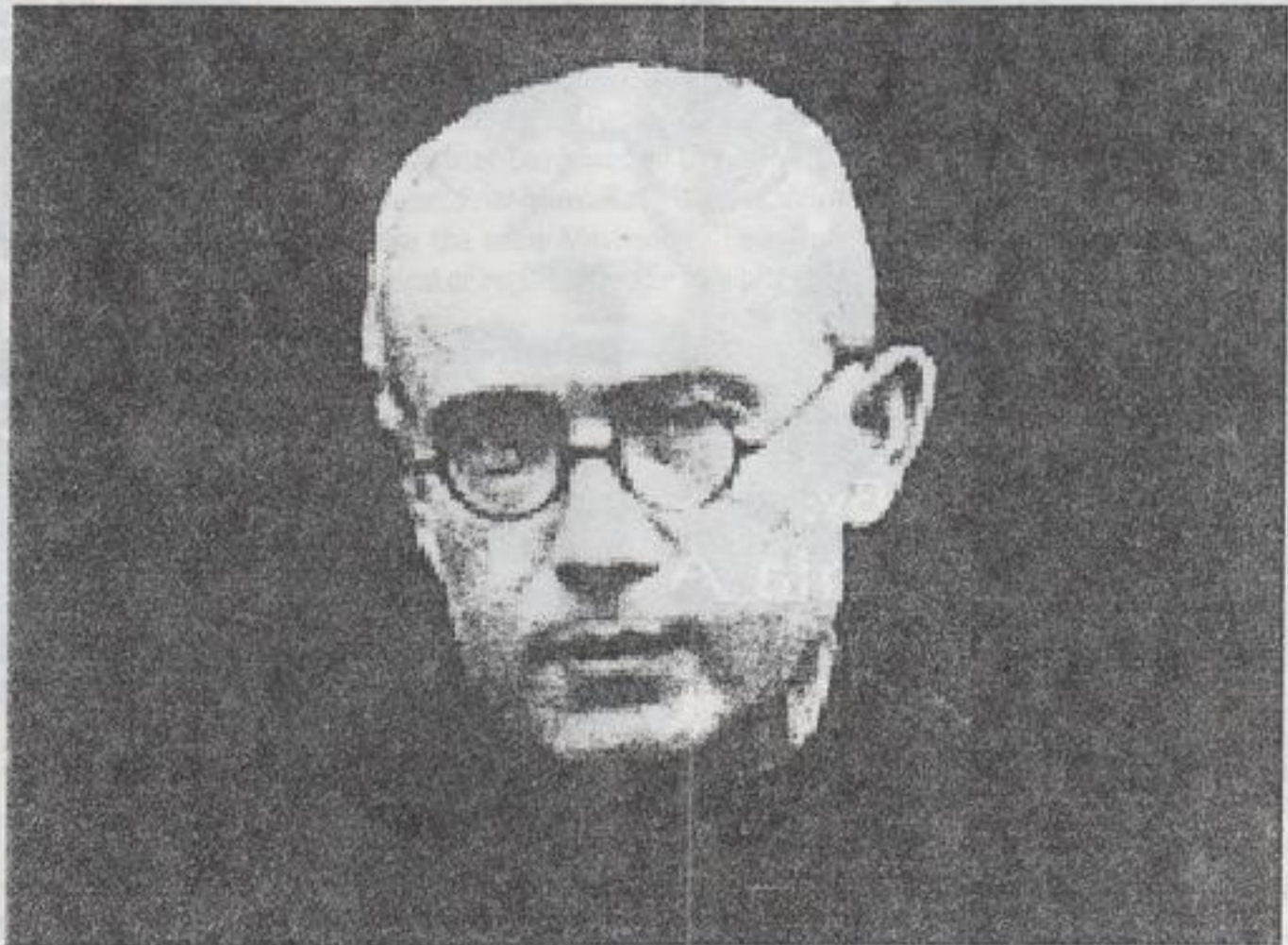
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ST. MAXIMILIAN KOLBE

NAMESAKE FOR U.S.S. MAXIMILLIAN (NCC-74997)

St. Maximilian Kolbe was a Franciscan priest who volunteered his life for a fellow prisoner in the Auschwitz concentration camp in 1941. One of the prisoners had escaped and 10 other prisoners were to be starved to death. St. Maximilian stepped forward and replaced one of the men. After fourteen days, only four men remained alive. Remarkably, the only one of the four who remained fully conscious was the weak and tuberculosis-ridden Father Maximilian Kolbe. To end his life, he was given a lethal injection of carbolic acid. Shortly after the injection, the guards found him sitting against the wall, his face radiant and his eyes open staring as if transfixed by a vision. St. Maximilian was canonized in 1982. His feast day is August 14th.

—Text from St. Maximilian Kolbe Church homepage at www.stmax.org.

Anniversary Edition Cover Story:



THE LIFE
OF ST.
MAXIMILIAN
KOLBE, PART I

Article Written By:
LCDR Cynthia Ayers

I just read a wonderful biography about our ship's namesake, Fr. Maximilian Kolbe. It was entitled *Our Lady's Fool*, and was written by Maria Winowslea in 1951. It was simply a delight to

read and gave me so much appreciation for the man who is truly a saint! His story is so inspiring. Also, it was special how aspects of his life could be connected with the ideals of *Star Trek*. I am even more proud of his being the namesake for our ship!

Fr. Kolbe was born on January 7th, 1894 in Zdunska Wola (near Lodz), Poland to Julius and Maria Kolbe. His birth name was Raymond, his parents were weavers and were very poor. They had five sons—two died very young—and Francis, Raymond, and Joseph lived into adulthood. Their parents worked ten-hour days and only the oldest boy, Francis, was able to go to school.

Raymond planted trees around the neighborhood and worked at home for his mother during the day. When he quoted Latin for a prescription to the local pharmacist, he volunteered to teach Raymond for free. Because of this man's instruction, Raymond was able to pass exams for school, enabling him to enroll.

Raymond Kolbe had the joy of a saint from a small child. He prayed often to Mary as most Poles do. As a very young child, he often prayed to Mary at a small shrine in his home. One time, Mary appeared to him in a vision and offered him two crowns—a white one for purity and a red

one for martyrdom. He accepted both of them and from that day on was a totally transformed person.

When Raymond was thirteen years old, Franciscan fathers came to their town to talk about mission work and to inspire people to join their order. Francis and Raymond answered the call and were admitted to the Minor Seminary at Lwow, Poland, to study for the priesthood. Their father accompanied them to Cracon in the Austrian zone. To reach

Cracow they had to cross the frontier secretly (as they were in Russian held Poland). From there, they took a train to Lwow traveling alone. It was 1907.

Raymond was very, very smart and had a deep interest in math and the sciences. He especially loved astronomy! (One of the brothers of his order remembered that one clear night, Fr. Kolbe named every star and planet that was visible in the sky. He explained the Milky Way and system of galaxies. He had read and studied books by astronomers, especially Kepler.

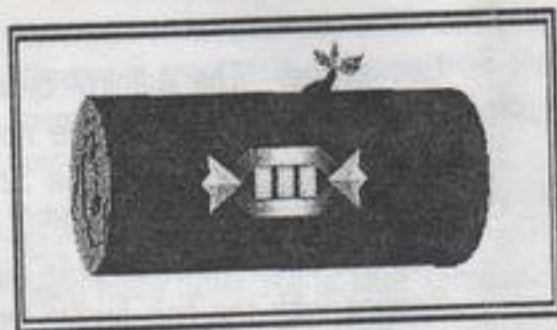
Raymond studied hard at the Minor Seminary in Lwow. On September 4th, 1910, Raymond entered the novitiate at the Friars Minor Conventual in Lwow, Poland, and was given the name, Friar Maximilian. It is not known exactly why he chose the name Maximilian. Perhaps it was the name of a local or regional hero or holy person in

that area of Poland. Maximilian was a popular name for men throughout the Holy Roman Empire area. Fr. Maximilian almost didn't enter the seminary as he had an interest and a gift in military strategies and maneuvers. He felt that he should use this gift to free Poland from Russian domination. His mother came for a visit and convinced him to enter the novitiate. From then on, he became a "soldier for God."

CAPTAINS LOG: STARDATE 51317.8

Captain Terry A. McPherson, commanding officer

Greetings to the crew of the U.S.S. *Maximilian*. As you well know, we are celebrating our sixth anniversary this year, and I am very glad to be part of it. It is an honor to me to be the new commanding officer of this fan association, and I am looking forward to our anniversary dinner. This past Saturday, April 25, 1998, Lieutenant Debbie Ouellette, Lieutenant Commander Sidley Howard, Major Manny Medina, and Lieutenant Chris Stephenson, attended the Dover Peace Conference. This was the first time both Debbie and I attended Dover. Watarush! I never saw so many Klingons in one place in all the



one-hundred four years of my life! I was one of the few Vulcans there.

At the banquet, there were many, many promotions for many, many Klingons; one wedding proposal—the bride to be was very very shocked; and Admiral Joe Manning

and his lovely wife, Judy, re-exchanged their wedding vows (Admiral Joe had no clue to what was going on). It was a good time had by all, and I was very glad to be a part of it. Next year, I hope to attend the Dover Conference Again—but this time, for the entire weekend. In conclusion, you haven't lived until you've been to a Dover Peace Conference. Debbie and I had a great time, and I thank Debbie for helping out with the banquet. Until next month, Live long and prosper.

--Your friendly neighborhood Vulcan.

Captain Tamak

FIRST OFFICERS REPORT:

Commander Elaine Jackson, first officer

Greetings to everyone. I have been pretty busy lately. I hope that many of us had made it to the anniversary. By the time you read this, Brandy will have received her second certificate for making the honor roll at

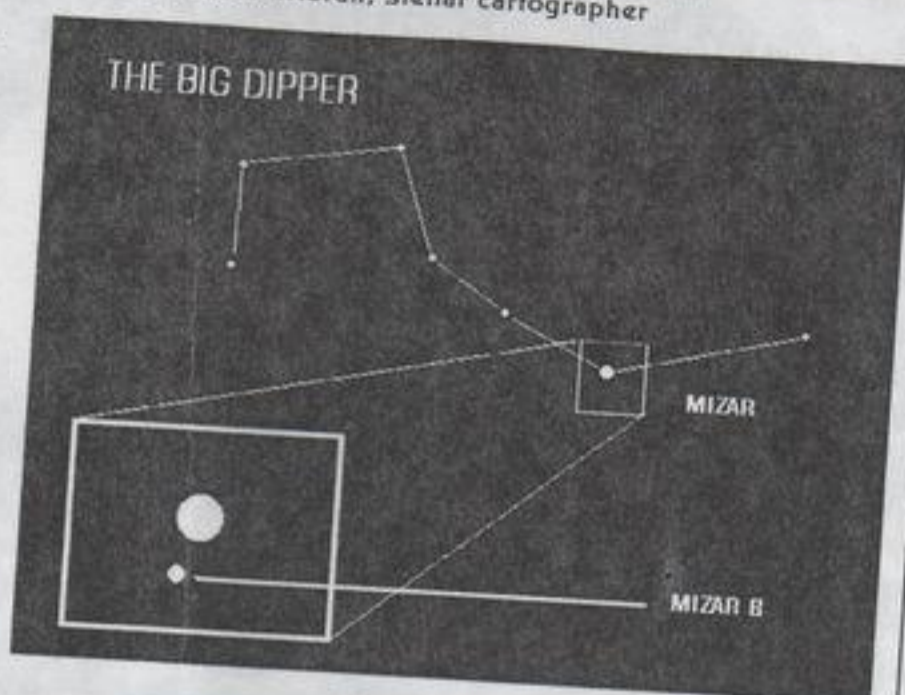


oodward Park. Many of us are busy going around to conventions and other events on *Star Trek*. May everybody have a good, safe Memorial Day, and I'll have more to say in June.

CELESTIAL VIEWPOINT

Lieutenant Junior Grade Susan Moran, stellar cartographer

The celestial event for May is the double star Mizar. Mizar can be located in the Big Dipper constellation. It is in the middle of the dipper's handle, where the handle bends. By using a telescope, you should be able to discern a second star near Mizar, a smaller, companion star called Mizar B. This companion star was first observed in 1650 by the Jesuit astronomer Giovanni Battista Riccioli. Mizar was the first double star ever recorded.



MUSINGS FROM THE PUDDLE:

Rear Admiral Greg Dunn, deputy commissioner

Hi, all. I'm back again! Sorry I haven't been able to write the last couple of issues, but I've been busy with my studies in order to graduate. Now I'm back as the ever happy, always pudgy, and somewhat soft and cuddly Rear Admiral of Fun and Joy. I have an idea for a fundraiser. You know those cute beanie baby buddy things? I think if we made and marketed a cuddly Rob beanie buddy, we could make a mint! Just picture it—a smiling little Rob face sewn into each buddy head! Every child would want one, *NO! NEED ONE!* They wouldn't be able to sleep at night without their cuddly Rob beanie buddy! It would come in

two styles: The Admiral Lyon dressed in monster maroons; and the not-so popular Admiral Lyon dressed in the *Star Trek: The Motion Picture* uniform. (DISCLAIMER: Children had been known to poke out eyes while sleeping with the belt buckle from the *Star Trek: The Motion Picture* uniformed cuddly Rob beanie buddy). Not available in Montana due to litigation. In one out of every three cuddly Rob beanie buddy boxes comes a free tribble. That's my report.

ADAKAB KORNER

LCDR Adelyn
Upp, Logistics
Support Officer

Now that the style show is over, I am back in business for taking new orders, and filling orders that have been requested. Larger sizes will cost a little extra.

MEDICAL REPORT

Doctor Nathan
Cobaugh, chief
medical officer

Another month with the medical department, and not much going on, except splicing genes and nothing else. A couple of specimens broke loose from the petri dish, and I don't know whether to Blame The Brain, or myself. Seeing that I'm genetically perfect, I doubt it's my fault (He,He). Pinky, on the other hand, is getting more annoying each day. He's still trying to dance to *Lord of the Dance*, getting everyone in sickbay to kicking up their heels. Don't be surprised, captain, if half the crew is sedated after reporting to sickbay to keep them from dancing on the ceiling.



COMMISSIONERS ADDRESS:

Founding Admiral Robert S. Lyon, commissioner

AND NOW FOR SOMETHING COMPLETELY DIFFERENT. Happy anniversary to one and all aboard the *Maximillian*. Things have been extremely chaotic for me on this end—and it has been a very difficult time in my life, so if this newsletter isn't up to its usual standards, please bear with me.

Here we are, finally six years old! I find it kind of hard to believe.

First of all, I would like to welcome Cynthia, Ben, and Kurt Ayers back to the United States. I talked to them about their vacation, and I found it very fascinating.

Secondly, I would like to extend my deepest appreciation to Lieutenants Commander Cynthia Ayers and Adelyn Upp for the preparation of this year's anniversary dinner. Both have put their blood, sweat and tears into the making of this event. Cynthia had graciously volunteered her home as the site for this annual tradition for our ship, and Adelyn has been working hard for the last few months planning for the food items for this event. Both



have worked hard for this event, and they deserve a great deal of thanks from the membership for their work. Well done and thanks, Cynthia and Adelyn.

Congratulations to Ben Ayers and Brandy Jackson. Both have once again made honor roll at their respective schools. It is always good to see the youth members of our organization succeed in their academic endeavors. Both have worked very hard for what they have achieved, and it says something about their dedication.

Special thanks to Lieutenant Ju-

-nior Grade Susan Moran in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Though she is not always able to be with us here in Columbus, she has been very active with our ship, and very instrumental in the publication of not only our recruiting flyers, but also for this newsletter.

Congratulations to Debbie Ouellette for her promotion to the rank of lieutenant.

I would also like to announce that we now have a "sister ship" (for us 'retired' folks like me, Greg, and Matt) started by our illustrious and

somewhat happy deputy commissioner, Rear Admiral Greg "Blobbin" Dunn. It is the U.S.S. *Julius II* (named after the Catholic pope who commissioned the painting of the Sistine Chapel at the Vatican). The *Julius* is an *Excelsior* class starship (similar to *Enterprise-B* or *Maximillian-14238*), Starfleet registry NCC-42760. This is the second ship in what he refers to as "Robfleet." The *Julius* is based out of Marion, Ohio.

Well, that's all for this month. Until next time...

TOBYS TIOBITS:

Tobias Jock Ubercat

Greetings from the feline. I'm sorry I haven't talked with you for a while, but I've been busy finishing my courses at the Art Institute. Now I'm back in Ohio, so now I plan on writing my little column every other month just to let you know what's going on in my life. My typical day consists of sleeping, eating, using the facilities, and driving everyone around me nuts. I promptly wake up at 4 AM, and annoy my master until he wakes up to feed me. He stumbles downstairs and puts some nice cat

food in my bowl, and then I have breakfast. After breakfast, I take a nap. Then it's time for lunch. After lunch, I stare out the window and look at all the birds and squirrels that I can't catch because I'm stuck inside. Since I can't kill any prey, I just plot the death of my master. If anyone would like to be included in the privilege of having their death plotted out by me, please let me know, and I can write about them in future columns. Plotting the death of my fellow crewmembers makes me hungry, and normally, it's time for dinner. I dine on

some fine tuna and water. And then off to bed. I wake up around 11, just in time to annoy my master while he's trying to sleep. I send out secret messages by playing with the loudest thing in every room, hoping to receive an answer. No luck so far. Then to bed at 3AM, so that I can be up promptly at 4AM for breakfast. Be loyal. Your Loving crewmate, Toby Ubercat.

OPERATIONS REPORT:

Lieutenant Chris Stephenson, operations manager

Hello, salutations and greetings to all of the Maximillian. You will be pleased to learn that I have recently acquired a Camcorder. I hope to use this to make a visual record of our group functions, such as the MaxOlympics and various conventions, such as MARCON. Other possible

uses include a visual record of the meetings. I have also acquired a pager, and can be reached at 1-800-950-5050, then at the prompt enter 6015037, and then at the next prompt enter your phone number. Now anyone can get ahold of me anywhere. Elsewhere in my little world I recently attended the Camp Dover Peace Conference, and saw Klingons, Romulans, and Bajorans. (Oh, My!) I hope that I will be able to attend the Akron Convention featuring The guy that plays Odo (I can't spell his last name right now.) for at least Saturday. (They'll kill me if I miss

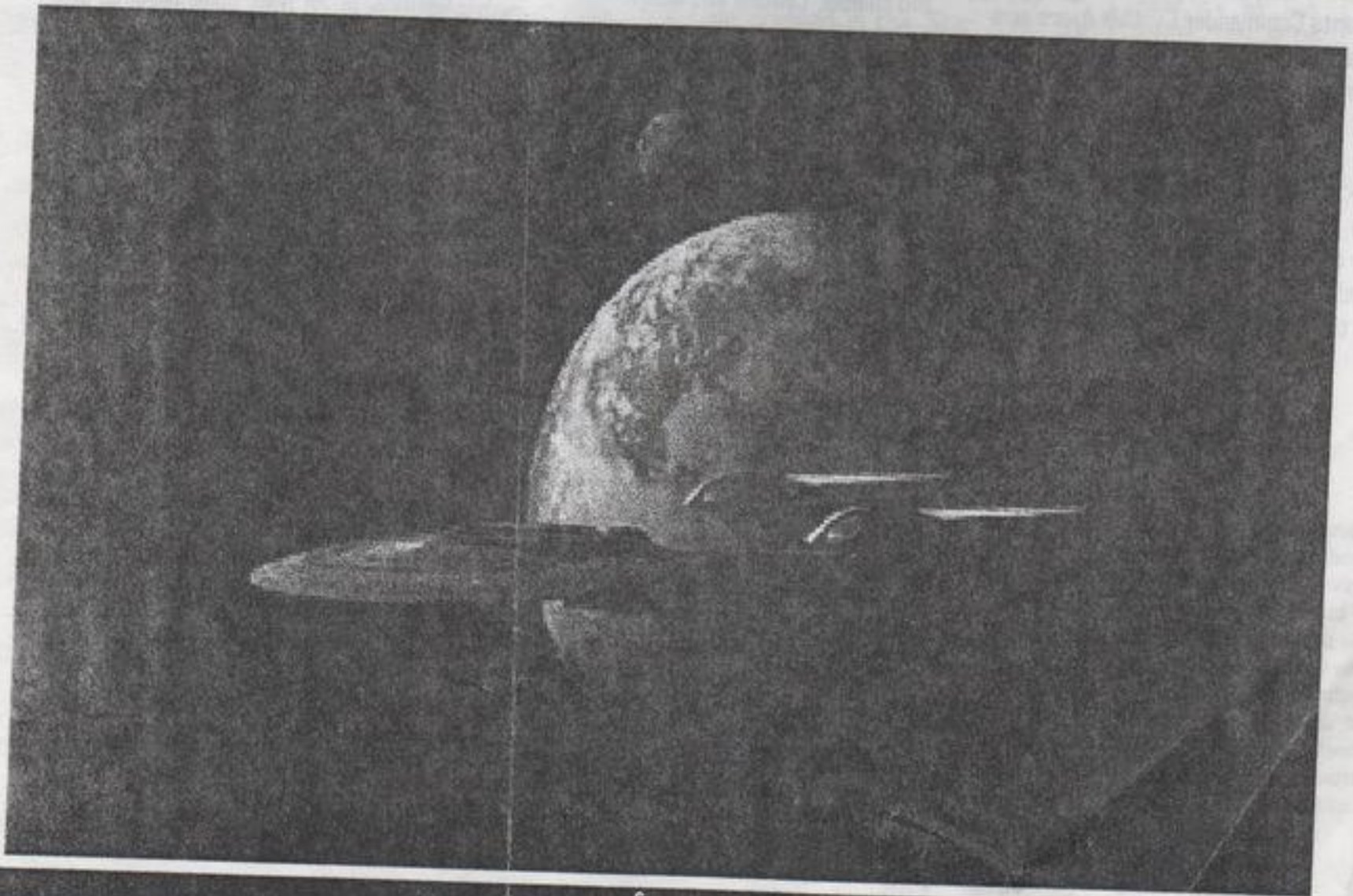
any more work.) That's about it for me. But before I go, I will share information from the movie world.

The Tim Burton directed/Nicolas Cage starring SUPERMAN movie has been canned due to lack of a good script. And GODZILLA comes out May 20th. Adios, and bye.

SCIENCE REPORT

Lieutenant Commander Robin Kulas, science officer

Greetings and salutations. Things have been crazy around my house, so this will be a short report. I can get reduced Kings Island tickets for \$18.25 per ticket. I should have the money at least a week before the trip to make sure I can get the tickets. If anyone is interested in Cedar Point or Wyandot Lake tickets, I can get those too. See you next month.



WHAT THE MAXIMILLIAN MEANS TO OUR MEMBERSHIP

Whenever anyone asks me, "Why do you like *Star Trek* so much?", I always reply, "It's like this. The one word that sums up *Star Trek* for me is family." Family is always the foremost word in my mind and heart whenever I think of *Star Trek* in the U.S., in the world, and in the U.S.S. Max, our wonderful ship.

So, U.S.S. Max is family to me. It's a place where I can have fun, enjoy being with friends, and be accepted for who I am. During the meetings, I feel at home and believe that my ideas and concerns are appreciated.

Many members of the Max have been very accepting and encouraging of my son. That means a lot to a Mom, of course!

Finally, I think of our ship as being on a quest of exploration for the advancement of humanity. We are not a part of this ship just for our own enjoyment. We are here to give words of encouragement and support to other members of the ship.

Encouragement is one reason why I like the awards given out so much. We are also here to make guests feel important and to support other *Star Trek* ships.

But, we are also on the ship for a wider concern. We are called to offer support to the *Star Trek* family outside our ship. We are called to be ambassadors for *Star Trek*. That is one reason why it is so wonderful that we are helping to put on conventions now. We also have a mission to give to others outside of *Star Trek* who need our support. We all have a heart to do that.

So, on this anniversary occasion, I say "Hats off!" to all of us. May we continue to grow in love for each other and for the world!

Love long and rejoice always!
--LCDR Cynthia Ayers
Chief Communications Officer

I have met a very nice bunch of people, and had I would not have enjoyed the friendship and fellowship I have gained with this ship.

--LCDR Adelyn Upp
Logistic Support Officer
U.S.S. MAXIMILLIAN (NCC-74997)

Being a member of the Mighty Max is an honor and a pleasure. It is a chance for me and my wife to do something together that we both enjoy. It's a chance to meet new people and make new friends, not just on the Max, but all over. To exchange new ideas and thoughts on various topics. To do things I wouldn't normally do such as putting on a Starfleet uniform or any other science fiction or fantasy clothing and go out in public to do a recruiting drive. It's a chance to go out and have fun but then again, that's the whole idea, isn't it?

--LT James Sebastian Fuzzy
Chief of Security
U.S.S. MAXIMILLIAN (NCC-74997)
Also known as James T. Waters, Jr.

Greetings fellow crew members of the U.S.S. *Maximillian*! I am writing in response to the

Founding Admiral's request that every member contribute something to the anniversary issue of the *Mighty Max*. My name is T'purr Meyowran, Lieutenant Junior Grade, stellar cartographer. I am Caitian. I was assigned to the *Maximillian* in June of 2373 after completing my training at Starfleet Academy. This is my first assignment and all of the crew members have been very friendly, especially RADM Blobbin. He offered to show me and my daughter, Feleen, around the ship and introduce us to the crew and the various activities available on board. RADM Morris even favored Feleen by allowing her to participate in the flag ceremony at the recent officers installation.

This is not the first time I encountered RADM Blobbin. I first met him in 2371 when he participated in a panel discussion on Starfleet Intelligence held at the Academy. I found him to be pleasant, refreshingly candid and witty. I am very happy to be serving with him and the other fine members of this crew. I believe this will prove to be an invaluable experience for Feleen and me.

--LTJG Susan Moran
Stellar Cartographer
U.S.S. MAXIMILLIAN (NCC-74997)

The *Maximillian* means a great deal to me, and I hate to repeat myself again, but this bears to be repeated—that Admiral Lyon, Admiral Morris, and last, but certainly not least, Admiral Dunn, have put their blood, sweat and tears into this organization, and I assure you, if it weren't for them, the *Maximillian* would not be where she is today—and I certainly wouldn't be as prepared for the responsibility for the position of commanding officer either. At the anniversary dinner, please make sure that you thank these three gentlemen. We've all had a hand in building up the *Maximillian* to where it is today, but the three admirals had a lot to do with it also. It is a team effort, and no one person stands alone. And anytime you need to discuss anything with the admiralty board, or the command staff, please feel free to give us a call. Again, I want to thank you one and all for making the U.S.S. *Maximillian* what she is today. As always, Live Long and Prosper.

--CAPT Terry McPherson
Commanding
U.S.S. MAXIMILLIAN (NCC-74997)

I can't begin to even describe what the *Maximillian* means to me. Since the fall of 1992, I have lived in Columbus, Ohio—mainly because of school. The *Maximillian* at that time was in Marion, Ohio, but was moved to Columbus almost two years later. Since those early days with the *Maximillian*, the membership had changed almost completely, however the spirit of camaraderie Greg and I intended from the very beginning still exists today.

The *Maximillian* is far more than just a fan organization for me. Like with many members, the *Maximillian* is like another family to me—though the Max is under the command of someone else, this ship is like my own child, her members like my brothers and sisters. I have come to know some members better than others. I consider each and every member of the *Maximillian* among my friends, but I do not have enough time or space to cover everyone in this article. I do have a few things to say to those that I do know well,

those that have been with the ship for some time; those whom I consider among my closest of friends:

Rear Admiral Matt Morris—As rough as you can be at times when you have to, you have a heart of gold. Your dedication to this ship and her members is beyond reproach. You treat the crew in a fair manner, and everyone is treated equally by you. Your command insured the growth and survival of the *Maximillian*, and I am eternally grateful for that. The transition from command is often difficult for officers who have been captain, I know; however I feel you are becoming an outstanding advisor for the ship's posterity, and you will always be an invaluable asset to the ship, as I have been, and as Greg has been. The *Maximillian* would never be the same without you, Matt, for so much of you has been put into her.

Rear Admiral Greg Dunn—You have got to be without a doubt the only individual who can get me to laugh even when I am down for the count. Without you there would be NO *Maximillian*. Though you never have been a true *Star Trek* fan by any definition of the word, your service to the ship has been essential to her creation. Our differences have often been a foolproof means for checks and balances in the establishment of our By-Laws and Regulations. As far as the establishment of the *Maximillian*, I have to give you the same credit as many members give me for it. After all, you were the original first officer. No one picks on me more than you do, and in all honesty, I enjoy every minute of it. If I see an entire marketing line of merchandise with my likeness, I will by no means be surprised. I mean, how many *Star Trek* fans have their own action figures? Your humor brings life to the *Maximillian* to me—and when you are not there, it just doesn't seem the same. You have always looked out for the best interest of the *Maximillian*, and you often catch things I might overlook. This makes you invaluable. This ship will always be your baby as well.

Captain Terry McPherson—Your dedication and loyalty to the *Maximillian* is admirable (no pun intended). You have come a long way in a very short time. Being captain of a starship is perhaps the hardest, most challenging posting aboard the *Maximillian*. You are new to the arts of command, but you are doing well so far. Use the Regulations as a guideline, seek the advice of myself, Admiral Morris, and Admiral Dunn—for each of us have been where you are. You are still learning, and are doing well. Don't be discouraged by mistakes or if things don't always go as planned. In those instances, chalk it up as experience and learn from it. After all, experience is the best school in anything. When Greg and I started, we didn't have the resources at our disposal that you do, so use them wisely. Incorporate the talents of the membership—there's a wealth of resources available to you there as you have found in the short time you have been in command.

Commander Elaine Jackson—You have always been a good friend, not only to me, but to everyone else on board. Your heart and spirit have become an integral part of this ship. You always held an even keel in any situation, and you always look out for the better good for the ship and her members. When the *Maximillian* was in dire straits, you stood by Matt. Doing so, literally saved the *Maximillian* to allow her to grow to what she is today.

Lieutenant Colonel Randy Jackson—You are one cool dude, man. Like Elaine, you hung in there when there when things got tough with the *Maximilian*. The ship owes both of you a big debt of gratitude. The *Maximilian* would not be here today without your dedication to the ship. You personify one of the top directives of the *Maximilian* that Greg and I have set down for the members of this ship—to have fun. You are the fun lover of this ship, if I were ever to name one. I know how much you *hate* responsibility with the ship, but you know that often comes with rank and experience. So far, you are doing well in that area. You've got at least four members in your department for the Mobile Ground Force. Make something of it—mold it to how you see fit. I know you can do it, and I know you can do it in a way that hasn't been thought of before.

Lieutenant Commander Robin Kulas—You, without a doubt, have served as a major part of the backbone of this ship. Your knowledge and experience with the *Maximilian* makes you an invaluable member. You look at things objectively, and reason things out methodically—and your conclusions are well heeded by the captain and the rest of the command staff. You have done so much for the members of this ship, even when time and circumstances get a little tight. A great deal of credit to where the *Maximilian* is today lies with you. Like with Elaine and Randy, you have been there for Matt when things were rough, and I know he, as well as I, am very grateful for that. I always enjoyed the conversations we've had. It's refreshing to talk about things like computers, history, archaeology, etc.

Lieutenant Commander Cynthia Ayers—When I first met you, you were perhaps one of the quietest members on board at the time. I have found in my experience it is those people who speak loudest. I have learned when it comes to making some very difficult decisions for the *Maximilian*, I would often ask myself, "What would Cynthia do?" You have a wisdom about you which I listen to and respect, and you have an inner peace unlike any I have ever known in others. You do so much for people, and care so much for people—I don't know where you find enough time in the day for everything you're involved with, be it the *Maximilian*, or work with the church, or work at the Ohio Historical Society. Your enthusiasm with the *Maximilian* is inspiring to me, your input is invaluable. I greatly value our friendship, and I only wish the world had more people like you. It would be a far better place to live.

Lieutenant Commander Adelyn Upp—Your talent in making uniforms and costumes for our members has not only been a great asset to the *Maximilian*, but to the entire *Star Trek* community here in Columbus, Ohio. I've always enjoyed our conversations about *Star Trek* uniforms and costumes, and how they are designed. Your wisdom

and input is greatly valued by our membership and our command staff. You are a good judge of character, and you have always been there for me when I was troubled with something. I cannot imagine the *Maximilian* without you.

Lieutenant Commander John Upp—You have always been a good friend to talk to. I've always enjoyed our discussions about model building, starship technology, and the like. You were always there for me to talk to whenever I felt alone. You are a good man, and a valuable member of the Max.

Lieutenant Commander Sidley Howard—You, like Randy, Elaine, and Manny, personify the directive of this ship to have fun. You serve as a reminder to this one basic fact when things get a little hectic in the upper echelons. You tend to make the command staff think, which is a good thing, in my opinion. Fellowship and fun have always been very important to the survival of any *Star Trek* fan organization, and I feel you do a good job of reminding us of that fact when it's needed. I value your company, your advice, and your friendship. I've enjoyed our conversations greatly. You are a very fun person to be around. You are one of those who makes the *Maximilian* fun for me.

Major Manny Medina—You are very fun-loving, and I have always enjoyed your company. I also found you to be very wise and experienced in many things, and your advice I take very seriously. Many of times have you made me step back and look at the big picture. Even admirals need that from time to time. I enjoy working on the computer with you, especially those times we were dragging those pictures off the net. You have been with the *Maximilian* for only a short time now, but in that time, I have found you to be a very valuable part of the ship, and I have found you to be a very good friend.

Lieutenant Debbie Quелlette—I cannot even begin to describe what your friendship means to me. I have been going through some very difficult times in my life, and you have always been there to keep me from going under from the stress. I don't really know where I'd be now without your friendship, your understanding, and your support. I don't even want to imagine that. You have been a member of the *Maximilian* for a little over a year, and already, you serve as a major component of our command staff. Your enthusiasm, your dedication is contagious (a good thing). I am glad we have you with the Max.

Lieutenant Chris Stephenson—You are a very close friend to me. Like Debbie, you have helped me in ways I cannot begin to describe. You are one of the busiest young men I know—one of the most responsible and honest. Your ideas for the *Maximilian* are original and very useful to the ship as a whole. In that sense, you are pretty much a "trend starter." When we started our webpage, guess what? Half a million other ships did the same in the area. You come up with amazing ideas to further the goals of the *Maximilian* and her crew. As little time you have, you dedicate quite a bit to this ship. You have more than earned your place on the ship, and I feel you will go far with the Max. You are very bright, and very talented. Take advantage of the opportunities which come about for you. Don't pass up a good thing, and don't burn any bridges. You have the mind to do whatever you want in life, so choose your way wisely.

Command Chief Ben Ayers—It is very rare honor for me to meet someone like you. You may be only fourteen years old, but I do admire you. You have so much raw intelligence, so much talent, so much going for you—I am thoroughly amazed by it. Not one in a thousand young men your age are as gifted as you are. You are very talented in your music, sports, and academics—these things, and perhaps even more, come very easily to you. In addition, you have a very good heart—something I consider very important in life. When I first returned to the ship a little over two years ago, Admiral Morris showed me a flyer you designed, and told me about you. I never even met you, and I was impressed by what Matt showed me. There is no doubt in my mind whatsoever that you can achieve anything in life you want. Quiet as you are, you have what it takes to be a leader, you are eager, you know how to handle responsibility, and you carry out your tasks to the best of your ability. You are willing to do take on responsibility—sometimes even on short notice. If this ship is still around in ten or fifteen years, I have no doubt that one day you may serve as captain. I've always found our conversations and your company very enjoyable. I know our command staff and the membership thinks highly of you, and they too believe that you have much to offer the *Maximilian*. Don't be afraid to come up with ideas for projects or activities. You might come up with something no one else had even considered. You have a lot of talent, Ben. Use your abilities and talents to the fullest and you'll go far—not only with the Max, but also in life. I consider it a big honor and privilege to know you, and I am very proud count you among my friends.

Crewman First Class Brandy Jackson—You are without a doubt one of the most loving children I have met. You care so much for those around you. So much happiness in such a small package. You are truly a credit to your parents, and your success in school pleases me to no end. You are one blessed individual, and you will do well in the future.

In essence, each and every member is very special to me in their own unique ways. Most of my friends are here on the Max. It is here where I am most happy. My passion for *Star Trek* and science fiction were initially the reason why I joined fan organizations, but since that day in 1988, I have found perhaps the closest friends I have are here. I learn something from each and every one of you, and I feel blessed to have so many good friends. Never in my wildest dreams six years ago did I imagine Greg and I would have started a fan organization that touched the lives of dozens of people in the way that it had.

I consider Columbus, Ohio more my home than Bucyrus, Ohio (my hometown) now—for not only do my blood-related siblings live here, so do those members of my other family—my brothers and sisters who are the crew of the *Maximilian*. God bless each and every one of you.

—FADM Robert S. Lyon
Commissioner.