



CHAPTER ACTIVITY REPORT

USS *Republic* NCC-1371

April 2007

Although Lt JG Marq Collins had been working on the second issue of the chapter's new newsletter, *The Sovereign Star*, throughout the month of March, as of the first weekend of April, CO Capt Eric L. Watts had not received a first draft from Lt Collins to proofread and approve for publication. Concerned that three weeks had passed since the original March 16 submissions deadline with no first draft in evidence, Capt Watts began working on assembling his own version of the second issue, in the event that Lt Collins had run into any difficulty with his version or would be unable to complete it. Capt Watts continued to work on his version during the second week of April and completed it the following weekend. In the meantime, Lt Collins informed Capt Watts that he had emailed a first draft of his version to Capt Watts the previous week, but it was determined during that conversation that due to its excessive file size (e.g., greater than 16 MB), the attachment was not received. Lt Collins continued his attempts to get his newsletter emailed to Capt Watts, which finally succeeded on Sunday, April 15. By that time, however, Capt Watts had completed the production of his version of the newsletter, including printing, collating, folding, trimming and binding 55 copies. Thirty-five of those copies were mailed to chapter members, as well as six courtesy copies to four key Region 2 personnel, the Zone 2 Coordinator and former *Republic* member Tonya Spanks, on Monday, April 16. The remaining copies will be reserved for new members who join before publication of the next issue, as well as for marketing and recruitment purposes.

The eight-page, full-color Spring 2007 issue of *The Sovereign Star* includes columns by *Republic* members Ens Brooke Perry and Cmdr Dave Slaughter, as well as a front-page story about the 2007 Region 2 Summit, Chapter Activity Reports for December 2006 through February 2007, an up-to-date Crew Manifest, a directory of our Member Benefits Program partners, a Quartermaster's report, recent STARFLEET Academy course completions by *Republic* members, a short list of upcoming chapter events and an editorial by Capt Watts, as well as photographs and illustrations throughout. The deadline for submissions to the Summer 2007 issue is June 30.

Because the USS *Republic* participated in three events during March 2007, only one event was planned for April—a Spring Dinner & Business Meeting, held Saturday, April 21, at the New Century Chinese Restaurant in Decatur. In attendance were Commanding Officer Capt Eric L. Watts, Ens David Churvis, Lt JG Marq Collins, Ensign Hal Doby, Ens Zannetta Law, Ens Mark A. Ozanick, Ens Theresa Parker and Friends of the *Republic* Kevin Parker and Will Dover.

After everyone had had a chance to enjoy the delightful and plentiful Chinese cuisine, Capt Watts called the business portion of the meeting to order at approximately 8:15 p.m., and asked each person at the table to introduce themselves, in the event that any introductions had not yet been made. He then asked if everyone had received their copies of *The Sovereign Star*, which they had; response to it was generally favorable. A brief discussion then followed about one Region 2 staff member's objection to Capt Watts' editorial remark about a former nonhuman member of the chapter. Capt Watts stated that he had made his objection to animals being members of the chapter well-known to the membership ever since he had taken command nearly a year ago (see Chapter Activity Report for June 2006 on the

Republic's web site), and disagreed with the accusation that the editorial remark was “inflammatory” or a “cheap shot.”

When asked about production of the next issue of *The Sovereign Star*, Capt Watts asked Lt Collins to prioritize his completion of the STARFLEET Academy Officers Command College course, which he has been pursuing since December 2006, so that he can be eligible for the Executive Officer and Commanding Officer positions when they eventually become available.

Capt Watts then reported briefly on the Region 2 Summit, held in Columbus, Georgia, in March. Although the front-page article in the newsletter reported all the relevant details about Capt Watts' receipt of the Commanding Officer of the Year award, he wished to offer two additional details that had not been included in the report. First, the 2007 Region 2 Summit had not been added to the *Republic's* official calendar of events earlier in the year due to Capt Watts' unfamiliarity with the event and his hesitance to promote attendance of an unfamiliar event two hours outside of metro Atlanta. Second, on the trip back to Atlanta after the awards banquet, Capt Watts, Lt Collins and Ens Law had mutually agreed to withhold any immediate announcement of the Commanding Officer of the Year award and to let that news be the lead article of the upcoming issue of the chapter newsletter. Capt Watts brought the framed award certificate to the dinner meeting and was delighted to share it with the membership.

Capt Watts then reported that he and Chris Jones (a longtime Friend of the *Republic*, chairman of Sci-Fi Summer Con and the Klingon Assault Group's Dark Phoenix Quadrant Commander) were currently working on a site bid for the 2008 Region 2 Summit. Capt Watts had personally visited more than a dozen different hotels, contacted several people as potential programming participants and held extensive discussions with Cmdr Jones regarding facilities, negotiations and pricing structures, and had begun putting together a comprehensive bid package. Capt Watts and Cmdr Jones, who are both aware that hotels with adequate facility space in the metro Atlanta area will be priced higher than similar hotels in other Southern cities, will emphasize their significant convention experience and ability to bring a strong programming schedule to the Summit in their bid package. Bids for the 2008 Summit are due to Region 2 by April 30, and the winning bid will be announced within two weeks thereafter.

Capt Watts then announced that one additional member had joined the *Republic* since the publication of the newsletter, bringing our roster up to 32 members, which according to his most recent information, made the *Republic* the second largest chapter in Georgia and the third largest chapter in Region 2. He announced that his personal recruitment goal for the *Republic* was a total of 40 members by his first anniversary as Commanding Officer, which, if achieved, would make the chapter the largest in the Region. He reminded the membership that they would receive a \$5 credit towards their chapter dues renewal for each new member they recruited. Towards the end of the meeting, Will Dover signed up himself and his wife, Katherine Akin, which brought the roster up to 34.

Capt Watts then addressed the issue of member attrition and retention. The *Republic* initiated an aggressive member recruitment campaign beginning with the 2006 Sci-Fi Summer Con last June, and has signed up at least one new member every month since. If the *Republic* actually manages to become the largest chapter in the Region before June, it will be important to work equally hard to keep those members on board as their dues renewals in both the chapter and in STARFLEET begin to become due. Capt Watts stated that he believes the best way to keep members on board is to ensure that their membership is a rewarding and valuable experience, worthy of renewing and continuing. To do that, the chapter must host and sponsor activities and events that the membership looks forward to participating in; however, as the crew roster grows, it becomes increasingly difficult to plan activities that appeal to, or is convenient to attend by, the greatest number of members. Ens Theresa Parker stated that she would like to see the *Republic* participate in more charity events, and Capt Watts replied that the chapter will investigate such opportunities. Ensign Hal Doby stated that he feels a disconnect between his member-

ship in the *Republic* and in STARFLEET, and questioned the necessity of renewing his STARFLEET dues. Capt Watts replied that the *Republic's* relationship with its parent organization had not been especially strong for a very long time, if ever, but that efforts were being made to improve that relationship, including plans to attend the commissioning of the USS *Robins* in Warner Robins, Georgia, later in the summer, as well as plans to attend next year's Region 2 Summit, wherever it is held. He also encouraged members to help recruit new business partners for the chapter's Member Benefits Program, which had proven to be very successful in member recruitment efforts.

Capt Watts informed the membership that he had been recently been informed that the *Republic* was the oldest chapter in the Region, and that 2008 will mark the chapter's 20th year. Everyone agreed that, although no current member had been on board for more than four years (Capt Matt Ebeling and Ens Tony Cade both joined in 2003), a celebration of some sort was in order to recognize the *Republic's* presence in Atlanta for the last two decades. Possible occasions to hold a 20-year celebration include next year's Region 2 Summit, next year's Sci-Fi Summer Con, next year's TimeGate, next year's Dragon*Con, or perhaps even a standalone event next May, our actual anniversary month. Plans for a 20th-year celebration will begin in earnest in the Fall, following this year's Dragon*Con.

Upcoming events discussed include "away missions" to the premieres of *Spider-Man 3* on Friday, May 4, and *Fantastic Four: Rise of the Silver Surfer* on Friday, June 15; a viewing of the new *Star Trek: New Voyages* episode, "World Enough and Time," sometime in late May; chapter tables at Sci-Fi Summer Con, June 8-10, and TimeGate V on Saturday, July 14; an "away mission" to the commissioning of the USS *Robins*, the newest STARFLEET chapter in Warner Robins, Georgia, on Saturday, July 7; a Summer BBQ & Pool Party at Ensign Doby's home in Conyers on Saturday, July 21; and a big chapter presence at Dragon*Con over Labor Day Weekend (at a STARFLEET fan table and the Happy Hour at Ten Forward event). Discussions included whether to make the "away mission" to Warner Robins an all-day event or a short trip down just for the commissioning ceremony itself; Capt Watts agreed to find out what their event schedule was, if any, and report back to the membership. Also, because there were three events planned for July and only one for August, Ensign Doby suggested that the Summer BBQ & Pool Party be moved back to Saturday, August 4. This would balance out the chapter calendar with two events each in July and August. Members in attendance agreed to this change.

Capt Watts then mentioned that it was becoming increasingly difficult to schedule chapter events that did not conflict with those of other fan groups, including KAG Atlanta, Stargate Atlanta, Atlanta Outworlders, the Galifreyans, etc. Capt Watts asked for the assistance of members who belonged to these other groups to keep him informed of their activity calendars so scheduling conflicts could be avoided or at least minimized.

The meeting concluded at nearly 10:00 p.m. Photos from the Spring Dinner & Business meeting can be viewed on the [Republic's web site](#).

Immediately after the dinner meeting, Capt Watts and Ens Doby visited the home of David Cambouris & Adam Rocca in Decatur, both of whom joined the *Republic* at that time. These new members bring the *Republic's* roster up to 36 members.

On Saturday, April 28, Capt Watts was informed by Adm Barbara M. Paul, XO of the USS *Robins*, that the date of their commissioning party had been pushed back from Saturday, July 7, to Saturday, August 11. This date change will affect the *Republic's* events calendar as well, but the exact changes have not yet been determined.

On Sunday, April 29, Capt Watts submitted the *Republic's* bid package for the 2008 Region 2

Summit to the Regional Coordinator, the Vice Regional Coordinator and the Summit Committee Chair. The Regional Coordinator announced that the winning bid was awarded to the USS *New Hope* of Montgomery, Alabama, twelve minutes past midnight on the date of the deadline, Monday, April 30. The announcement did not mention that the *New Hope*'s bid package was the only bid received by the Regional Coordinator prior to making his announcement. It appears that Capt Watts sent the *Republic*'s bid package to an email address that he believed belonged to the current Region 2 Coordinator, Comm Jack Eaton, but apparently actually belonged to the former Region 2 Coordinator, Jennifer Rosbury, who has not held the office since at least last November, if not before. The Vice Regional Coordinator, Fleet Capt Lucy Ferron, and the Summit Committee Chair, Capt Sandy Dolan, both informed Capt Watts that they had received the *Republic*'s bid package prior to the deadline. Capt Dolan informed Comm Eaton of the *Republic*'s bid on Tuesday, May 1, and in an email message to Capt Watts dated May 2, Comm Eaton stated that he and Capt Dolan reviewed the *Republic*'s bid package in anticipation of possibly "re-awarding" the bid. However, according to Comm Eaton, he and Capt Dolan still preferred the *New Hope*'s bid, basing their decision on the *New Hope*'s ability to secure a less expensive hotel room (\$73 per night vs. \$85 per night). Comm Eaton and Capt Dolan believe a less expensive hotel room will help "boost memberships to the summit." Comm Eaton did not offer an explanation as to why Vice RC FCapt Ferron was not included in his and Capt Dolan's review of the *Republic*'s bid or their decision. As of the date of this report, no announcement has been posted to the Region 2 COs' YahooGroups page that any bid from the *Republic* was received or considered.

Although Capt Watts has not seen the specific details of the *New Hope*'s bid package, he remains confident that the *Republic*'s bid offered a stronger track of programming that most Region 2 members would have found more valuable than a mere \$12 per night savings on the host hotel room. Nevertheless, the command and crew of the USS *Republic* congratulate the command and crew of the USS *New Hope* on their winning bid and look forward to what will surely be a spectacular 2008 Region 2 Summit in Montgomery, Alabama, next March.

In other business, Capt Watts has added the names of all STARFLEET members who have been a member of the *Republic* since January 2003 to the chapter history page on the chapter's web site. Also, no new orders were received during April for new chapter t-shirts to add to the four orders already received; a minimum of ten orders is required before a reorder can be placed.

In addition to new members Will Dover & Katherine Akin of Rockmart, Georgia, and David Cambouris & Adam Rocca of Decatur, Georgia, the USS *Republic* also welcomed aboard Clint Mull of Morganton, North Carolina, thanks to the recruitment efforts of Ens Lea Hepler; and Richard Otero of Tucker, Georgia, and Elisa Roper of Newnan, Georgia, thanks to the recruitment efforts of Capt Watts. These seven new members bring the chapter roster up to 37 members, which not only makes April 2007 our best-ever month for member recruitment, but which also (or so we believe) now ties the *Republic* with the USS *DaVinci* as the largest STARFLEET chapter in both the state and the Region. This information will be confirmed after the filing of this report.

Respectfully submitted,

— eric!

Captain Eric L. Watts
Commanding Officer, USS *Republic* NCC-1371