

Message from the chair

"In the absence of The Senior –"
Most of the work of the Heinlein Society's Board of Directors is dull routine, but at the end of 2002, the Board made a policy decision that will (we hope) affect every member.

A few years ago, when we bent our thoughts to what we could do together that we might not be able to do individually, to "pay forward" Heinlein's legacy, we came up with a program that worked with both literary and social aspects of Heinlein's legacy, based on what you told us was personally important to you, individually. We would work with libraries, to keep his books on the shelves; we would sponsor a national high-school essay contest, to keep fresh the ideals of personal responsibility and public

duty he wrote about; we would perpetuate his interest in blood drives; we would sponsor a Space Studies conference in his name to keep his influence alive in the field as the engineers and scientists he brought into it begin to retire; and we would work toward new media for his works, into the digital age and, where practical, into film.

The most practical place for us to start, it seemed to us, was with blood drives at science fiction conventions, where Heinlein had been personally known during his lifetime. Dr. Barry Berman organized the first major blood drive in conjunction with the World Science Fiction Convention in Philadelphia at the end of August in 2001, and the 67 pints of blood we collected were sent to

New York City to help out after the destruction of the World Trade Center less than two weeks later — an immediate and practical demonstration of why we need to do this. Since then, Mike Sheffield has continued to direct our efforts, assisting conventions that already sponsor blood drives and organizing drives where they didn't already exist — three in 2002, more planned for this year.

But Heinlein did not confine his efforts to science fiction conventions, and neither should we. Beginning in 2003, the Heinlein Society will carry Heinlein Memorial Blood Drives into the local communities. These blood drives will be the first and most enduring contact the Society has

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