

AVENGER NEWS

The Official newsletter of the U.S.S. Avenger NCC-1860

<http://www.sfi.org/>

<http://www.usavenger.org/>

Meanwhile, Back on the Bridge...

By Judy Waidlich

Happy New Year to all! Welcome aboard to new members Leslie Cowen and Joseph Janus. The new year seems to have started off with an increase of interest in the organization. We had two guests to our January meeting at Wegmans and several email inquiries.

'FLEET has undergone a change of command, with Sal Lizard as our new Commander, STARFLEET and Gary Halverson as Vice Commander, STARFLEET. Avenger Associate Member Joe Horton was named fundraising director.

Region-wise, we will vote in a new RC later this year. Region awards are due in March. A new Electronic Services Officer was announced and all heck broke out on the list serves – in other words, business as usual.

Work is fine – at least I wasn't asked how many paper towels each student uses in a semester. Orders went in a week and a half after my initial request...after a thorough interrogation concerning quantities requested.

The ship has many events scheduled – official and unofficial (unofficial, i.e., no event coordinator. Feel free to volunteer; earn points; get promotions faster). By the time this is published, the Rutgers Geology Open house, Chocolate Festival, and Wicked Winter Ren Faire will have taken place, with the next ship meeting, Farpoint, and Polar Bear Plunge happening in February. Due to the closing of Borders in East Brunswick, we've moved the meeting to the North Brunswick Public Library. Moving on to March, we'll be seeing Patrick Stewart in "Macbeth". The month will also include a Creation Con, our monthly meeting, Lunacon, and our trip to Independence Mall. April brings Avenger flyers to Rutgers as we Wallpaper Rutgers, I-Con, and our meeting. We are planning a trip to Longwood Gardens in May, attending the IC in June, holding our Avenger Picnic in June, and Shore Leave in July. It is already shaping up as an action-packed year; feel free to attend something that interests you.

Need a resolution? Resolve to be an event coordinator! Feel free to take one of the events without a coordinator, or come up with one of your own, take point and e-mail the participants reminders, coordinate travel and meet-up plans, and submit paperwork on attendees and points – it's that easy. It's also fun!

Patrick Barnes has stepped down from the post of Chief of Security and returned to Engineering; we wish him well. Want to be more active? Become Chief of Security.

I hope to see you at some of the meetings and/or events. Here's to a happy, healthy, and prosperous new year to all.

Fleet Captain Judy

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

DIVISION REPORTS	_____	2-4
WHERE WERE YOU WHEN	_____	13 & 15
STARFLEET and REGION 7 NEWS	_____	5 -6
SHIP'S BBS	_____	7 -8
SCIENCE NEWS	_____	10-13
MISSION DOCKET	_____	15-16
AVENGER IN FICTION	_____	17-18

DIVISION REPORTS

by Dale Kagan

COMMUNICATIONS

The Communications Chief has been working over the past several months to find a challenging and new place for a trip. Several years ago, we visited the Museum of Television and Radio. It featured TV programs around a theme, Star Trek costume exhibit, and radio shows. Last year, the museum became an International Media Museum and changed its name to:

The Paley Center Media Museum

In 2006, it featured several panelists who were actors on "Battlestar Galactica". The interview is on the website (www.mtr.org).

There are also photo galleries from world news events and forums on world news and how it is being reported.

I think this would make a new and exciting trip.

We can discuss a date at the next meeting.

Reporting From Sickbay

By Commander Annie Slonski, CMO

MEDICAL

As the cold weather progresses, we slowly march through to, well, March! While this winter hasn't been too terribly cold by comparison with other winters, there are still things we need to be careful of. Make sure to keep yourself warm whenever doing outdoor activities. The hands and feet are usually the coldest, being that they are the farthest extremities from the body's core. Wear good knit or insulated gloves or mittens to protect your hands. Thick socks are a good source of warmth for your feet. Also, insulated boots for the coldest of days and of course, if we ever get snow (I know, shhhhhh!) to keep your toes nice and toasty. Besides keeping these extremities warmed, you need to keep your body's core warm, too. Layering helps to trap your body's heat warming your core (hence keeping the vital organs functioning properly). One more thing that a lot of people do not think of is wearing some kind of covering on your head, either a hood or a hat. We lose much of our body heat through our head and by wearing something protective, we prevent that loss. Just try it and see what happens: wear a hat for a long period of time on a very cold day, then take it off after a while and you'll feel the difference!

A good tip to remember if you're going to be out for a long while in the cold is to get yourself some hand warmers from an outdoor supply store. They're small packets that once activated and inserted inside your gloves or mittens, help to keep your hands much warmer than just by the coverings themselves. You can also put these little packet warmers into your boots, but be careful, keeping them in for long periods of time can result in the burning of your feet. Use them with care.

A word of caution: Diabetics should NEVER use these in their shoes. The reason is that if a diabetic with foot neuropathy has these warmers in their shoes, he or she will never know when the feet are burning and can possibly do severe damage to the feet and nerves.

Now that we're past that cold weather tip, on to the fun stuff! February is gearing up to be a fun month! We have one of our favorite cons to attend in Maryland over the Valentine's Day weekend . . . Farpoint! I attended Farpoint for the first time last year with Todd and we had a blast! I'm definitely looking forward to it this year as well. Then later in the month is the Annual Polar Bear Plunge in Seaside Heights to raise money for Special Olympics. Avenger's own master costumer, Patrick Barnes will be plunging along with Challenger's Commanding Officer Admiral Bob Vosseller and his trusty plunge sidekick Fleet Captain Dave Singleton, Chief Medical Officer. The costume theme for this year is Super Heroes! But from what I understand, not your usual Super Heroes. I believe that one of them will be Soup Man?? Leave it to Mr. Barnes!

On the subject of plunging into icy water, be careful boys! You remember last year, it was very, very, very cold! The weekend before was beautiful and almost short-sleeve shirt weather. Then the following weekend of the plunge was frigid temperatures! Let's hope for a warmer day this year.

D I V I S I O N R E P O R T S

MEDICAL (continued)

Also, we settle into our new home in February at the North Brunswick public library for our monthly meetings. Although we will not be able to purchase books, we will have at our disposal all the reference materials we could want or need!

And, I wouldn't be true to myself if I didn't mention this year's Super Bowl. Being a die-hard, loyal to the bone New England Patriots fan smack dab in the middle of Giants territory, well, you can imagine that life was a bit of a challenge for me in the days following. But, having lived up in New England for many a year, I've developed that New England stoicism and am firm in my beliefs that it will happen again someday! So, until the next football season starts, as the weather warms and a young man's or women's fancy turns towards . . . baseball . . . Go Red Sox!!

As I look around sick bay, there's only a few folks here with some minor sniffles, one case of pneumonia and another with bronchitis. I don't know, there must be something in the ventilation system that's affecting some of our crew. But, they're well on their way to recovery. So, with that thought in mind, I'm at the end of my duty shift and taking my New England Patriots football down to the holodeck to throw a few with Tom Brady, Randy Moss and the rest of the boys.

Until next time . . .

EXECUTIVE OFFICER

By Todd Brugmans

As we continue to move forward into 2008, we've seen quite a bit of change. I'd like to echo Judy's words of welcome to our newest members. I hope you come to find your experiences with USS Avenger as fulfilling and rewarding as I have in my participation.

As the Chief Medical Officer has noted, we have a new home for the next several months, with prospects at it running much longer than that. The North Brunswick Public Library is where we'll be holding the monthly shipwide meetings. While we used to meet at 3pm, it bears note that with the new locale comes a new meeting time as well: 2pm. The library does not stay open all night, so we want to be certain we've concluded our meeting, and moved on well before they have to come and boot us out.

I'm pleased to announce that USS Avenger is once again a proud "Mother ship". Our former Operations Chief, Antonio Lopes, III, is currently getting his new correspondence chapter underway, USS Odin. He's asked our chapter to serve as mentor and Mother Ship through the 'New Vessel Shakedown' period. USS Odin will join fellow carry chapter ISS Deliverance out in the Louisville, KY area.

I wish Tony well with his new chapter, and will offer the reminder that if he needs anything while the Odin is attempting to build its momentum, that's what we're here for.

February is an exciting month. The first big media convention of the year is upon us. Valentine's Day weekend, just a week after our February meeting, Farpoint convention comes to Hunt Valley, MD. This is an annual pilgrimage for many of us. This year's media guests include the new Battlestar Galactica's James Callis (Baltar), Star Trek TNG's Marina Sirtis (Troi), and Buck Rogers' Erin Grey (Col. Deering). Later in the month, our own Patrick Barnes, clad in superhero trappings, joins crewmembers from USS Challenger for a head-long dash into the frigid waters of the Atlantic Ocean down at Seaside Heights for the annual Special Olympics Polar Bear Plunge. There's always a lot going on with the chapter, check out our mission docket for more details on these and other events.

USS Avenger Roster Update

Additions--Welcome Aboard!

1) Ensign Leslie J. Cowan
Medical Technician
22140 Victory Boulevard, #B101
Woodland Hills, CA 91367-1907

2) Joseph Janus
Associate
125 Jay Place
Middlesex, NJ 08846-1612
(908) 425-5451
E-Mail: JoemanJJ2014@aol.com

Deletions--Farewell, and Good Luck...

1) Robert L. Harrison
2) Ensign Stephanie Dedovitch
3) Ensign Daniel Latini
4) Commander Robert Csuti

Welcome Back--Thanks for Renewing

1) Lieutenant Michael Rupprecht
2) Captain Carlos Maldonado, Jr.

DIVISION REPORTS

SCIENTIFIC METHODS

By Alex Rosenzweig

SCIENCES

Greetings, All!

Welcome to 2008, and the first edition of “Scientific Methods” for the new year! It’s been a busy holiday season, and I hope everyone weathered it well and happily. We’ve made it into the New Year, and there’s lots of fun and good times to come!

On the down-side, though, as most of you know, we’ve lost our Assistant Chief. Janek has chosen to switch her membership status to Associate, and while I support her decision as something that makes her happy, I hope she knows that she’ll be missed as my Assistant. Janek, you made a difference; don’t forget that.

I won’t be choosing a successor for Janek immediately, but I’ll be keeping an eye on SciDiv’s members to see if we have a standout who might merit the post. the basics that I’ll be looking for are: Avenger and STARFLEET membership in good standing, and a commitment to and enthusiasm for the sciences, both in the real world and the Trekverse.

In general, I hope that all members of Avenger’s SciDiv are, or would be willing to become, STARFLEET members. There’s a few reasons for this: 1] It helps Avenger out, as the more ‘FLEET members we have, the safer we are in continuing our existence. After all, too few STARFLEET members, and we get decommed! 2] STARFLEET membership brings not only the tangibles of a membership packet and a Communiqué, but also brings an individual into the greater community of not just our chapter or our region, but the entire international organization. And 3] It’s fun!

Now, looking ahead, 2008 looks to be an exciting year! The Big Event, Trek-wise, is now 11 months away, and that of course is the new movie, “Star Trek”. The film’s producers are working hard to make this not only something that we as fans will enjoy, but also that folks who aren’t yet fans can understand and be excited about. I guess we’ll know next Christmas if they’re successful, but I’m hoping for a great time at the movies, and a great opportunity for some new folks to get interested in Trek and find out what they’ve been missing all these years!

A little closer to home, we’ve set the dates for two Sciences trips in the first third to half of 2008, one to Independence Mall and the Constitution Center in Philadelphia on 29 March, and another to Longwood Gardens in Kennett Square, PA on 17 May. I hope lots of folks will join us on these trips, ‘cause they’re both very cool places. And, of course, I’m always on the lookout for other fun things to do, so if you’re reading this, whether you’re in Sciences or not, and you have an idea, please don’t hesitate to send a suggestion my way!

I’m looking forward to having a lot of fun with my friends and fellow members in 2008, and I hope you are, too. Here’s to a wonderful 2008!

And that’s all for me for this issue! As usual, check out “Science Highlights” and let us know what you think. Don’t forget the Events Calendar for some neat upcoming things to do. And if you’ve got any comments, suggestions or ideas, don’t hesitate to drop me a line. Take care, and ‘til next time...

Ad Astra!

Alex
ADM Alex Rosenzweig
Chief Science Officer

REPORTS Not Available at press time:

ENGINEERING



OPERATIONS



SECURITY



STARFLEET News:

**** Change of Command:** Sal Lizard took office as Commander, STARFLEET and Gary Halverson as Vice Commander, STARFLEET on 1 January 2008 for a three-year term.

**** The full STARFLEET Executive Committee is:**

Sal Lizard – Commander, STARFLEET
Gary Halverson – Vice-Commander, STARFLEET
Mike Urvand – Chief of Operations
Peter Christian – Chief of Communications
Peg Pellerin – Commandant, STARFLEET Academy
Warren Price – Chief of Shakedown Operations
Matt Moyer – Chief of Computer Operations
Mike Stein – Chief Financial Officer



**** Joe Horton** was named as **Fundraising Director**, serving in the Finance Department.

**** Chief of Communications CAPT Peter Christian** announced that the **Vice Chief of Communications** position has been filled by **FCAPT Eugene Schnitger**, CO of the U.S.S. Thunderchild in R6. He also announced the appointment of the Communiqué's new **Editor in Chief, FCAPT J. Unicorn Escobedo** from R4.

**** RADM Robert Westfall** has been appointed as Interim **Inspector General**, STARFLEET.

**** Greg Trotter** has been appointed as **Judge Advocate General**, STARFLEET.

**** ADM Michael Urvand resigned** as Regional Coordinator, Region 6, in order to assume the role of **Chief of Operations**. Senior VRC, **ADM David Kloempken**, has taken over as Acting Regional Coordinator until an election for RC can take place.

**** IC 2008** will be held on 27-29 June in Ithaca, NY. The website is at <http://www.ic2008.org/>

**** COMM Matt Moyer, Chief of Computer Operations**, is seeking **help** in his department. He distributed the following call for assistance: "To apply, please e-mail both compops@sfi.org and compops-vice@sfi.org with your relevant information, you may also apply by faxing your information to my attention at 216-255-5308. Finally, if you have questions please contact me directly so your message doesn't get lost in the sea of lists.

CompOps Current Position Openings

****GENERAL NOTICE TO ALL POTENTIAL APPLICANTS****

It is to be understood that all work done by personnel working in Computer Operations is the property of STARFLEET, The International Star Trek Fan Association, Inc. As such 'SFI' retains all intellectual property rights to any work created while on staff with CompOps. Personnel will be required to regularly backup their work to a secured location, which will include but not limited to all original files used to create any final products. For example simply uploading a PDF file or a graphic is insufficient, the original file used to create such pieces must be uploaded. Personnel may also be required to sign an intellectual property and/or confidentiality/non-disclosure agreement due to the sensitivity of certain projects and resources. Also due to the nature of the positions within CompOps all applicants are required to have reliable internet access and e-mail service. It should also go without saying this is a volunteer organization, however we might be able to see about some federation credits. :-)

Any potential applicant that can not fully agree to comply with this notice should not apply.

Web Team Member - General

Potential applicants should have some experience with CMS portals, knowledge of the e107 platform a bonus, and a minimum of a basic understanding of html and php. Each team member is not expected to excel in all areas but a strong skill set in a particular area would be beneficial, to develop a well rounded team. Web Team members will be responsible for assisting in the maintenance of SFI's main web sites, as well as help any department that requests assistance in site development and/or maintenance. Team members will report to the Web Team Lead. Applicants should provide a fleet and RL resume, and provide information on any relevant skill sets that may be of help. If the applicant has a portfolio of work, it would be a plus but not a requirement.

Web Team Member - PHP Specialist

Potential applicants should have a strong background and skill set in the PHP code language. Applicants should also have a workable understanding MySQL statements and queries, as this applicant will be developing code to interface with various MySQL databases. PHP Specialist will work closely with the Database Team on various projects. Team members will report to the Web Team Lead, and at times also to the Database Team Lead. Applicants should provide a fleet and RL resume, and provide information on any relevant skill sets that may be of help. If the applicant has a portfolio of work, it would be a plus but not a requirement.

Web Team Member - Graphic Artist

Potential applicants should have experience in digital art with an emphasis in use for web sites. Applicants should have a good understanding of a professional graphics suite such as Photoshop, Gimp, or equivalent. Artist will design graphics for use on various SFI websites and web resources, and may be called upon by other SFI departments to provide assistance. Team members will report to the Web Team Lead. Applicants should provide a fleet and RL resume, and provide information on any relevant skill sets that may be of help. If the applicant has a portfolio of work, it would be a plus but not a requirement.

Database Team Member

Potential applicants should have a strong skill set and knowledge of SQL databases, with preferred emphasis on the MySQL version 5.x platform. Basic knowledge of the PHP language is a bonus, but not a requirement. Applicant should understand database table construction, relational linking, SQL queries and statements. Team members will be partially split between two sub-teams, existing resources, and new resource development. There will however be some natural crossover between the two sub-teams. Team Members will be required to provide some basic documentation on their work and projects. Team members will report to the Database Team Lead. Applicants should provide a fleet and RL resume, and provide information on any relevant skill sets that may be of help. If the applicant has a portfolio of work, it would be a plus but not a requirement.

Infrastructure Team Member

Potential applicants should have at a minimum basic general knowledge of internet resources covering the spectrum of the 'web', ftp, sftp, ssh, pop, smtp, listservs, etc. Team member will conduct periodical security audits, and resource evaluation of our various systems. Also responsible for service and security patches to ensure our resources are up to date, and as secure as possible. Members of this team will be responsible for looking at the bigger picture and keeping our various broad resources in perspective. This will be a smaller specialized team, that will work closely with the other teams. The full scope of this team will develop over time. The emphasis in this team is not development but maintenance and security. As such this team is more of an administrative function. Team members will report to the Infrastructure Team Lead. Applicants should provide a fleet and RL resume, and provide information on any relevant skill sets that may be of help.

Infrastructure Team Member - Mail Systems

Potential applicants should have a decent understanding of electronic mail systems, and listservs. Applicant will be responsible for setting up e-mail accounts, forwarders, vanity names, and assist with list membership administration. Team Member may also assist members in accessing web-mail tools, or helping to walk a member through configuration of a local mail client. Applicant will be responsible for keeping spreadsheet records up to date, and accurate, and readily available access to Microsoft Excel or OpenOffice is a requirement. Applicants should provide a fleet and RL resume, and provide information on any relevant skill sets that may be of help.

**** RADM Jerry Tien and COMM Warren Price**, Outgoing and Incoming Chiefs of Shakedown Operations, welcomed the following **newly-launched chapters** to STARFLEET:

- U.S.S. Atlantis, currently based in Drayton, Australia
- U.S.S. Devron, currently based in Taylorsville, UT
- U.S.S. Serenity, currently based in Marble Falls, TX
- U.S.S. Thor's Hammer, currently based in Reykjavik, Iceland

**** ADM Johnathan "Gumby" Simmons**, Outgoing Chief of Operations, announced the following **newly-commissioned chapters** to STARFLEET:

- U.S.S. Antares, currently based in Kennewick, WA
- U.S.S. Genesis, currently based in Adelaide, Australia

**** STARFLEET Academy News:**

- **Peg Pellerin** is the new Commandant of the Academy.
- The **College of Star Trek Chronology** and the **College of European Studies** are temporarily closed.
- The **Institute of Sci Fi Studies** has spun off the **Institute of Star Trek Studies**, Jill Rayburn, director.
- COL Scott A. Anderson, Sr., Director of the **Flag Officer's School**, announce the re-release of the essay version of Flag Officer's School. The essay course has been split into three sections; Chapter Dynamics, Region Dynamics, and STARFLEET Dynamics.

Region 7 News:

**** RADM Angel Avery** has been appointed to succeed RADM J.C. Cohen as **Region 7 Awards Director**.

**** RC Joe Hoolihan** named **Larry French** to the post of Region 7 **Electronic Services Officer**.



**** U.S.S. Challenger's 20th Anniversary, October 11, 2008**, 7pm, Sheraton Eatontown Hotel, Eatontown, NJ. The cost for this event is \$50.00 and includes a three course buffet dinner, coffee, tea and soft drinks. A cash bar will also be available. Entrees include Chicken Saltimbocca, Sliced Beef Sirloin and Vegetarian Lasagna. Assorted salads, side dishes and dessert will also be served as well. As a special added bonus, since there will not be a regional conference next year, the U.S.S. Challenger has secured the hotel's state-of-the-art Amphitheatre for a Region 7 Meeting at 1:00pm. Attendees of the party can use this opportunity to schmooze, catch up and discuss regional business in a comfortable face-to-face setting. However, no one will be allowed to take advantage of this meeting without having registered for the dinner event and there will also be no "meeting-only" option offered. If you wish to stay the night, the hotel is offering our attendees a special rate of \$115.00 per room, per night.

**** The regional fundraiser** continues; return used inkjet cartridges for cash (<http://empties4cash.com>) Mike Stein has individual pre-paid mailing baggies bar-coded with the Region 7 account info. If you need any, please contact him at JusticeOC@aol.com



*** Look at this spiffy poster and go buy one!** The newest addition to our online repertoire is the Cutaway Poster of Avenger herself. Done by artist Chris Allan, this detailed poster matches up with the official Avenger Blueprints and gives a detailed look inside our vessel. Take a look! It's at our CaféPress store: <http://www.cafepress.com/ussavenger>

SHIP'S BBS

The Ship's BBS was first introduced in the novel Spock's World, written by Diane Duane. Like BBSs of today, it was a place where items of interest could be posted for the crew to read and respond to. This column is much like that. Things may change from time to time, so keep checking back each issue. <smile>

*** Do you have an idea for an event or activity?** We love to do stuff, that's for sure! Lots of stuff is based on ideas our members bring to the group, and can be as simple as something you enjoy and would like to share. How? It's easy! Just ask an Avenger Command Staff member for an Event Planner and begin your adventure today. Event Planners contain descriptions of events/activities, and both the Planners and sign-up sheets are passed around at each month's ship meeting. This is a way for everyone to find out the details of what's going on, or to share your ideas for what you want to do! We need your help, because if no one coordinates events, **they don't happen!!**

*** Internet Resources:**

The Avenger has a lot of opportunities to interact through the Internet! Check 'em out...

- The adventure begins with our spiffy website where you can find information about your fellow crewmates and read online logs from your division chief: <http://www.ussavenger.org/>

- Another great way to contact your STARFLEET buddies is through the Internet Relay Chat (IRC). Instructions can be found on the Avenger site. Go to the Internet Resources link on the navigation bar on the Avenger's main site, and follow the instructions about IRC. NOTE: the current IRC servers are:

destiny.fleetchat.org (Direct IP Address: 209.178.198.91)

karma.fleetchat.org (Direct Address: 70.96.227.44)

- The Avenger Yahoo Group is a great place to get updated news from the Avenger via email and special website features. Check it out at:

<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/avenger-sfi>

-Avenger News newsletters are archived in PDF format online : <http://groups.google.com/group/avengernews?lnk=li>

*** Our CaféPress Store:** You can buy Avenger schtuff online like T-shirts, sweatshirts, mugs, mousepads, etc at the CafePress Avenger Store, featuring our logo. The anniversary period is done, and the standard logo items have been restored, but there are still a couple of items to bear the anniversary logo, too. New for 2008, though, is the calendar. This time, it's a full-color graphic of our major insignia over time. The store can be found at: <http://www.cafepress.com/ussavenger>

*** CaféPress Store Feedback:** Is there something you'd like that we're not offering at the Avenger Store? Check out CaféPress's product list, and if you see something there that's not available in our store, contact Avenger Command and let them know.

*** And for all you gamin' freaks,** Avenger also has merchandising for its Hazard Team. Check it out at: <http://www.cafepress.com/1860hazard>

*** A STARFLEET Community of Particular Note:** Interested members are invited to join a community called Project SIMELE. "SIMELE" is short for "STARFLEET In the Movie and Early Lost Eras", and its focus is for members or chapters of STARFLEET who have an interest in, use the motif of, or are fictionally set in the timeframe of roughly 2270 to 2335 in the Star Trek Universe, to interact. (This, of course, includes the Avenger.) It's designed to provide a venue for members to share resources, exchange ideas and thoughts about playing in this era of Star Trek, possibly develop cooperative fiction, and so forth. Come check the group out at <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/SIMELE/>

*** Avenger Blueprints!**

Do you find yourself getting lost every time you're on duty while serving aboard your ship? Maybe you should get one of these spiffy blueprint maps!

From the Federation Frontiers publishing office, we are pleased to offer General Plans for the Avenger-Class Heavy Frigate. No starship, save the famous line of those named Enterprise, has received this much attention to detail.

The twenty (20) sheet set includes:

- Construction history
- Ship's directory
- Six (6) external views
- Full starship specifications
- Equipment listing (with system contractors)
- Four (4) cross-section views
- Plan views of all eleven decks at 1:600 scale
- Full-sheet details of the bridge, torpedo pod, main engineering, two-level recreation deck, Sickbay, transporter complex, and auxiliary control.

For more information e-mail the author, Mike Rupprecht, at MRupprecht@aol.com, or just visit the Federation Frontiers web site for this and other spectacular Star Trek technical documents: <http://members.aol.com/FdFrontier/>

The Avenger-class Heavy Frigate General Plans cost a mere \$10.00 for Avenger crew members, and can be purchased directly from Alex Rosenzweig. You can also buy the plans via mail order for \$12, which includes shipping charges. Money orders are preferred, and will speed delivery. However, personal checks are acceptable and should be payable to "Michael C. Rupprecht". Custom rolled sets are available for \$15.00 and deluxe poster-sized sets for \$40.00. To order, simply print out the handy order form at web site, or send your name, address, e-mail address, number and type of sets desired, along with your check or money order, to the following address:

Federation Frontiers
c/o Michael C. Rupprecht
3711 Bloomingdale Drive
Hillsborough, NJ 08844-5531

* Help Wanted!

Looking to contribute to the Avenger? If so, we need your help! The following positions are open:

- Press Officer: Write and distribute press releases to the ship's media list, interact with reporters and other media personnel, and help craft our club image to the world at large!

- Chief of Security: Serve on the senior staff, and be a leader of the members in the Security Division. Have a direct voice in the running of the chapter. Highlight security/police/safety-oriented interests, both in the Trek Universe and in real life. (This position requires STARFLEET membership in good standing.)

Contact FCAPT Judy or COMM Todd if you'd like to volunteer!

Available February 2008:

STAR TREK IN BOOKS

Klingon Empire: A Burning House (ST:KE), by Keith R. A. DeCandido

They have been the Federation's staunchest allies, and its fiercest adversaries. Cunning, ruthless, driven by an instinct for violence and defined by a complex code of honor, they must push ever outward in order to survive, defying the icy ravages of space with the fire of their hearts. They are the Klingons, and if you think you already know all there is to learn about them...think again.

From its highest echelons of power to the shocking depths of its lowest castes, from its savagely aggressive military to its humble farmers, from political machinations of galactic import to personal demons and family strife, the Klingon Empire is revealed as never before when the captain and crew of the I.K.S. Gorkon finally return to their homeworld of Qo'noS in a sweeping tale of intrigue, love, betrayal, and honor.

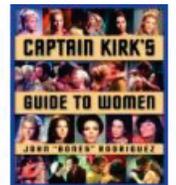


Slings and Arrows Book 4: That Sleep of Death (e-Book, ST:TNG), by Terri Osborne

The fourth volume of a six-e-book series covering the first year of the Enterprise-E.

In the wake of increased concern over the Dominion threat, Dr. Beverly Crusher has attempted to improve morale on the Enterprise by starting up her theater company—starting with production of "A Christmas Carol". But before opening night, a devastating malady starts striking down the crew.

Forced to rely on a piece of technology she despises—the Emergency Medical Hologram—Dr. Crusher must find a cure before it's too late!



Slings and Arrows Book 5: A Weary Life (e-Book, ST:TNG), by Robert Greenberger

The fifth volume of a six-e-book series covering the first year of the Enterprise-E.

A team from the Enterprise—Riker, La Forge, and Daniels—are sent to deal with the latest threat from the Maquis. For La Forge and Daniels, it's just another mission, but Riker must face the spectre of his transporter twin Tom Riker, who left Star Fleet to join the Maquis.

When the Enterprise team is caught between the Maquis and the Cardassians, Riker finds himself with an important decision to make—one that may affect his future in Star Fleet...



Captain Kirk's Guide to Women (ST:TOS, Trade paperback), by John "Bones" Rodriguez

Casanova, Don Juan, James Bond- These are men of legendary romance, but there is only one man who can boast that his seductive powers take him boldly where no man has gone before: **Captain James T. Kirk**

Played by the incomparable William Shatner (who is still charming their pants off on ABC's "Boston Legal"), Captain Kirk's status as an Interstellar Stud is proven by his ability to seduce any woman, in any situation, in any part of the galaxy. Women from high society princesses to insane asylum slave girls; from blood sucking shape-shifters to emotion-deprived androids—they all swoon, acquiesce, and malfunction from just one kiss. And a monologue.

But a single question remains in the minds of millions of Star Trek fans aboard Spaceship Earth:

HOW DOES HE DO IT?

Captain Kirk's Guide to Women is the first book to answer this question by probing deeply into Captain Kirk's character, charisma and seductive techniques, making it possible for any man to model the Casanova of the Cosmos. It is also the only Warp-Powered Romance manual written with enough wit, charm, and humor to help the female of the species better understand their men without a Universal Translator.

Employing meticulous research from Star Fleet's computers, along with fanatic-level detail from "Star Trek: The Original Series", and the kind of pointy-eared logic even a green-blooded Vulcan would find fascinating, Captain Kirk's Guide to Women shows YOU how to be as stunning as Captain Kirk- even if your love life is dead, Jim.

Available March 2008:

Vulcan's Soul, Book 3: Epiphany (ST:TOS et al., Paperback Reprint of the Hardcover), by Josepha Sherman & Susan Shwartz
Following their bestsellers Vulcan's Forge and Vulcan's Heart, Josepha Sherman and Susan Shwartz conclude their new trilogy chronicling the latter-day adventures of one of Star Trek's most beloved characters, shedding new light on his world's shocking history.

The distant past: The great ships have left war-torn Vulcan behind and, after a most arduous journey, have arrived at their destination. Two worlds become the new home of the exiles: Romulus is a verdant paradise, one much different from their desert home, while Remus is a barren wasteland, albeit one that is laden with natural resources. When Karatek and his family find themselves trapped on Remus with no hope of joining their brothers and sisters on Romulus, it sparks a conflict that leads the exiles into vicious civil war.

One year after the Dominion War: The Watraii are determined to destroy the Romulan Star Empire. Ambassador Spock is equally determined to learn their secret. With the aid of his wife, Captain Saavik, and the U.S.S. Alliance, his old comrades Scotty, Uhura, and Chekov, and Captain Jean-Luc Picard and the U.S.S. Enterprise, Spock executes a daring plan to bring about peace before the Alpha Quadrant is once again plunged into war...

The stunning conclusion to the trilogy that changes everything you thought you knew about the Vulcans and the Romulans!

Slings and Arrows Book 6: Enterprises of Great Pitch and Moment (e-Book, ST:TNG), by Keith R. A. DeCandido

The sixth volume of a six-e-book series covering the first year of the Enterprise-E.

A new Federation President has been elected, and his first order of business is to attempt to restore the alliance with the Klingon Empire. To that end, he sends Captain Picard to Deep Space 9, in the hopes that Picard's relationship with Chancellor Gowron might lead to a normalization of relations.

At first, things go well, as Gowron agrees to meet with Picard and Captain Sisko of DS9 on a neutral planet—but when their runabout is shot down, it's up to Commanders Worf and Data to find out the truth before their captains are killed!

COMMUNICATING THE NEED FOR SCIENCE EXPLORATION

By Dale A. Kagan

The need to communicate with each other extends to the atmosphere. NASA has a ring of 42 satellites for observing the Earth and its geology. Most noticeable are the effects of global warming. By 2010 these satellites will be old. 40% of them will be non-functional.

The logical thing to do, to use a Spock phrase, would be to design and launch new satellites. Last year, NASA wrote a purpose statement that included "protecting the Earth". The current administration deleted this line. They also shrank the Earth science budget. There is not enough money to replace the satellites.

Popular Science magazine posted an article about this in the "science" section of their online version. Communications between scientists and the public have been obscured by other issues. However, these satellites are vital and we need to ask Congress to expand this line item in the budget. Hopefully we can communicate this need.

SCIENCE HIGHLIGHTS: Interesting Stuff From the World of Science

Compiled By Alex Rosenzweig

Welcome to “Science Highlights”! In this column, members of the Sciences Division (and sometimes others, too!) speak out about something science related that they thought was of particular interest since the last issue of Avenger News. So, without further ado, let me turn the spotlight on... Science!

A “Death Star” Galaxy
Contributed by Mike Rupprecht

Think blowing up a planet is a big deal? Check **this** out!!

From HubbleSite:

“A powerful jet from a supermassive black hole is blasting nearby galaxy, according to new data from NASA observatories. This never-before witnessed galactic violence may have a profound effect on planets in the jet’s path and trigger a burst of star formation in its destructive wake. Known as 3C 321, the system contains two galaxies in orbit around each other. Data from NASA’s Chandra X-ray Observatory show both galaxies contain supermassive black holes at their centers, but the larger galaxy has a jet emanating from the vicinity of its black hole. The smaller galaxy apparently has swung into the path of this jet.

“This ‘death star galaxy’ was discovered through the combined efforts of both space and ground-based telescopes. NASA’s Chandra X-ray Observatory, Hubble Space Telescope, and Spitzer Space Telescope were part of the effort. The Very Large Array (VLA) in Socorro, N.M., and the Multi-Element Radio Linked Interferometer Network (MERLIN) telescopes in the United Kingdom also were needed for the finding.

“‘We’ve seen many jets produced by black holes, but this is the first time we’ve seen one punch into another galaxy like we’re seeing here,’ said Dan Evans, a scientist at the Harvard-Smithsonian Center for Astrophysics in Cambridge, Mass. and leader of the study. ‘This jet could be causing all sorts of problems for the smaller galaxy it is pummeling.’

“Jets from supermassive black holes produce high amounts of radiation, especially high-energy X-rays and gamma-rays, which can be lethal in large quantities. The combined effects of this radiation and particles traveling at almost the speed of light could severely damage the atmospheres of planets lying in the path of the jet. For example, protective layers of ozone in the upper atmosphere of planets could be destroyed.

It is possible the event is not all be bad news for the galaxy being struck by the jet. The massive influx of energy and radiation from the jet could induce the formation of large numbers of stars and planets after its initial wake of destruction is complete.”

Want to know more? Check out: <http://hubblesite.org/newscenter/archive/releases/2007/37/>



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This Just In... New Pics of Mercury!
Contributed by Tim Drude

“Scientists got a good look at Mercury for the first time since 1975 Monday when NASA’s Messenger probe beamed back 1,200 new images of the planet closest to the sun.”

For more about Mercury, take a look at...

http://news.aol.com/story/_a/spacecraft-beams-back-images-of-mercury/20080117164509990001?ncid=NWS00010000000001

Moon Rocket Parachute is Successfully Tested
Contributed by Alex Rosenzweig

“Waste not, want not,” as the saying goes. NASA is working on ways to ensure that they’re not wasting valuable rocket booster components.

From the NASA website:

“How do you bring a 200,000-pound rocket booster back to Earth after it catapults its payload toward the moon? Very carefully!

“It’s something NASA has to learn to do. The agency is laying plans to return to the moon in the next decade, and designs for the new Ares moon rocket call for reusable boosters. These massive side-rockets can’t just crash back into the ocean when they’re out of fuel – they’ve got to be lowered gently.

“NASA took an important step toward accomplishing this spectacular feat when engineers successfully tested the colossal parachute designed to bring the Ares I Crew Launch Vehicle’s first stage booster back down. The 46-meter diameter ribbon parachute passed with ‘flying colors’. Sporting broad, bright stripes of red and blue, the parachute drifted to Earth from 5,030 meters above and gently (relatively speaking) placed its huge passenger on the Yuma, Arizona ground.”



Want to know more? Look here: http://science.nasa.gov/headlines/y2007/15nov_parachute.htm?list938492

Can Liquid Crystals Lead to Life?

Contributed by Alex Rosenzweig

New research suggests that DNA has a phase in which it forms into liquid crystals, suggesting a new idea for how life may have emerged.

From Science Daily:

“A team led by the University of Colorado at Boulder and the University of Milan has discovered some unexpected forms of liquid crystals of ultrashort DNA molecules immersed in water, providing a new scenario for a key step in the emergence of life on Earth.

“CU-Boulder physics Professor Noel Clark said the team found that surprisingly short segments of DNA, life’s molecular carrier of genetic information, could assemble into several distinct liquid crystal phases that ‘self-orient’ parallel to one another and stack into columns when placed in a water solution. Life is widely believed to have emerged as segments of DNA- or RNA-like molecules in a prebiotic ‘soup’ solution of ancient organic molecules.

“Since the formation of molecular chains as uniform as DNA by random chemistry is essentially impossible, Clark said, scientists have been seeking effective ways for simple molecules to spontaneously self-select, ‘chain-up’ and self-replicate. The new study shows that in a mixture of tiny fragments of DNA, those molecules capable of forming liquid crystals selectively condense into droplets in which conditions are favorable for them to be chemically linked into longer molecules with enhanced liquid crystal-forming tendencies, he said.”

To discover more, look here: <http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2007/11/071122151148.htm>

Talk About a Mudslide!

Contributed by Alex Rosenzweig

A whole lot o’ dirt went a ‘sliding 60,000 years ago. It set all-time records, too.

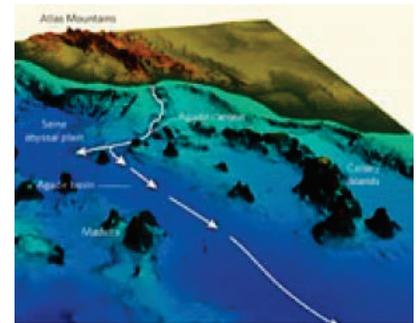
From Science Daily:

“An enormous submarine landslide that disintegrated 60,000 years ago produced the longest flow of sand and mud yet documented on Earth. The massive submarine flow traveled 1,500 kilometers -- the distance from London to Rome -- before depositing its load.

“Details of the landslide and consequent sediment flow are reported online in Nature by Dr Peter Talling from the University of Bristol, with colleagues from the National Oceanography Centre in Southampton and several other institutions.

“Dr Talling said: ‘The volume of sediment transported by this flow in the deep ocean is difficult to comprehend. It was one of the largest movements of material ever to occur on our planet. This mass was ten times that transported to the ocean every year by all of the Earth’s rivers. The flow was sometimes over 150 km wide, spread across the open sea floor.’

Perhaps the most remarkable thing about this giant submarine flow is that it traveled hundreds of kilometers without depositing any sediment on the vast expanse of sea floor that it passed over.”



For more info, hop over to: <http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2007/11/071121145010.htm>

From Whence Did Come the Whales...?

Contributed by Alex Rosenzweig

New research suggests that whales may have evolved from a raccoon-like creature.

From World Science:

“Whales, dolphins and porpoises—known collectively cetaceans—are believed to have evolved from land mammals around 50 million years ago. But who precisely their ancestor was, is a mystery.

“New research suggests it was a raccoon-sized, hoofed mammal from India known as a raoellid, which probably took to water in times of danger, scientists say. The study, by J.G.M. ‘Hans’ Thewissen of Northeastern Ohio Universities College of Medicine, appears in the research journal Nature.

“Scientists since Darwin’s time have known that whales are mammals whose ancestors walked on land. Thewissen and colleagues identified a series of intermediate fossils documenting whales’ dramatic evolutionary transition from land to sea.

“The key piece of the puzzle fell into place, they said, with the discovery of fossils of *Indohyus*, a roughly 48-million-year-old raoellid from India’s Kashmir region. *Indohyus* emerged as whales’ closest known fossil relative, the researchers said.”



Want to know more? Go to: http://www.world-science.net/othernews/071219_indohyus.htm

The Wall of Africa and Development of Man

Contributed by Alex Rosenzweig

Does environment guide evolution? Some geologists have a new argument for the answer being “Yes”.

From Science Daily:

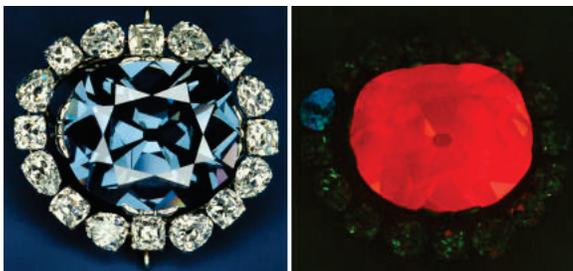
“Scientists long have focused on how climate and vegetation allowed human ancestors to evolve in Africa. Now, University of Utah geologists are calling renewed attention to the idea that ground movements formed mountains and valleys, creating environments that favored the emergence of humanity.

“‘Tectonics [movement of Earth’s crust] was ultimately responsible for the evolution of humankind,’ Royhan and Nahid Gani of the university’s Energy and Geoscience Institute write in the January, 2008, issue of *Geotimes*, published by the American Geological Institute.

“They argue that the accelerated uplift of mountains and highlands stretching from Ethiopia to South Africa blocked much ocean moisture, converting lush tropical forests into an arid patchwork of woodlands and savannah grasslands that gradually favored human ancestors who came down from the trees and started walking on two feet -- an energy-efficient way to search larger areas for food in an arid environment.

“In their *Geotimes* article, the Ganis -- a husband-and-wife research team who met in college in their native Bangladesh -- describe this 5,950-kilometer-long stretch of highlands and mountains as ‘the Wall of Africa’. It parallels the famed East African Rift valley, where many fossils of human ancestors were found.”

For more on this story, check out: <http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2007/12/071219082604.htm>



Shedding Light on Identifying Gems

Contributed by Alex Rosenzweig

Phosphorescence might yield up clues for identifying gems and minerals.

From Science News Online:

“The eerie phosphorescence displayed by a rare form of blue diamond can be used as an easy, cheap, and nondestructive way to identify individual gemstones and to distinguish natural blue diamonds from synthetic ones,

analyses suggest.

“Phosphorescence, a ‘glow-in-the-dark’ process in which energy previously absorbed by a substance is released slowly in the form of light, is common in a certain type of blue diamond. After exposure to light, these type IIB diamonds, which have boron- and nitrogen-containing impurities, softly glow in colors ranging from blue through pink to fiery red, says Sally Eaton-Magaña, a chemical engineer at the Gemological Institute of America in Carlsbad, Calif. The orange-red glow from the 45.52-carat Hope Diamond, a type IIB gemstone on display at the Smithsonian Institution in Washington, D.C., is visible for as long as a minute after the lights go out.

“Reddish phosphorescence in diamonds was thought to be rare, says Eaton-Magaña. However, the tests showed that all natural type IIb diamonds glow for several seconds at two visible wavelengths—a 500-nanometer, greenish-blue light and a 660-nm reddish one. The relative strengths of the phosphorescence at the two wavelengths dictate the hue of a stone’s overall glow. Differences in the peak intensities of those emissions and the rates at which they wane provide a virtual fingerprint for each stone, the researchers report in the January *Geology*.

Neither the synthetic stones nor the color-enhanced gray gemstone glowed at the 660-nm wavelength. The new technique’s ability to distinguish between artificial diamonds and the true blue gems ‘solves one of the big problems in diamond markets,’ says Stephen E. Haggerty, a geologist at Florida International University in Miami.”

Want to know more? Point your browsers to: <http://www.sciencenews.org/articles/20080112/fob2.asp>

New Directions in AI...Robot Liars?

Contributed by Stephan Dickinson

Some new directions in robotic development have resulted in robots that are heroes, and robots that have learned to deceive each other. It’s all in the name of survival.

From Discover online:

“Robots can evolve to communicate with each other, to help, and even to deceive each other, according to Dario Floreano of the Laboratory of Intelligent Systems at the Swiss Federal Institute of Technology.

“Floreano and his colleagues outfitted robots with light sensors, rings of blue light, and wheels and placed them in habitats furnished with glowing ‘food sources’ and patches of ‘poison’ that recharged or drained their batteries. Their neural circuitry was programmed with just 30 ‘genes’, elements of software code that determined how much they sensed light and how they responded when they did. The robots were initially programmed both to light up randomly and to move randomly when they sensed light.

“To create the next generation of robots, Floreano recombined the genes of those that proved fittest—those that had managed to get the biggest charge out of the food source.

“The resulting code (with a little mutation added in the form of a random change) was downloaded into the robots to make what were, in essence, offspring. Then they were released into their artificial habitat. ‘We set up a situation common in nature—foraging with uncertainty,’ Floreano says. ‘You have to find food, but you don’t know what food is; if you eat poison, you die.’ Four different types of colonies of robots were allowed to eat, reproduce, and expire.

“By the 50th generation, the robots had learned to communicate—lighting up, in three out of four colonies, to alert the others when they’d found food or poison. The fourth colony sometimes evolved ‘cheater’ robots instead, which would light up to tell the others that the poison was food, while they themselves rolled over to the food source and chowed down without emitting so much as a blink.

“Some robots, though, were veritable heroes. They signaled danger and died to save other robots. ‘Sometimes,’ Floreano says, ‘you see that in nature—an animal that emits a cry when it sees a predator; it gets eaten, and the others get away—but I never expected to see this in robots.’ “



To find out more, check out: <http://discovermagazine.com/2008/jan/robots-evolve-and-learn-how-to-lie>

WHERE WERE YOU WHEN.....

Compiled By Alex Rosenzweig

Avenger **December Meeting and Holiday Party:**

- 1) Norm opened his home for a delightful holiday get-together, with good fun, food, drink, and a big-screen TV? (AR)
- 2) Santa Claus conquered the Martians? (AR)
- 3) Amy attended and reminded Norm that it was a small world (she was a former student of his)? (AR)

Challenger **Cookie Exchange:**

- 4) A few hardy souls from Avenger, including Alex and Patrick, braved the weather to travel south and visit the Challenger for the event? (AR)
- 5) Annie also joined in, though she was a good deal closer? (AR)
- 6) Turnout was light, but fun and camaraderie were not? (AR)
- 7) Cookies were so plentiful that we were all literally exchanging batches so that everyone would take something home and none would go to waste? (AR)

New Year’s Eve at the Victors’:

- 8) Alex, Todd, Annie, and Matt joined friends from the Challenger at Jeff and Laura Victor’s home for a delightful New Year’s Eve get-together? (AR)
- 9) Jeff and Laura served a sumptuous meal—appetizers, hors d’oeuvres, a complete sit-down main course, and more desserts than we knew what to do with? (AR)

TREKKIN THE WEB

Exploring the multi-faceted world of the Internet

From Alex Rosenzweig:

Spacefleet Sektor 5 Homepage

A few years back, this was put up by the U.S.S. Jaguar as an April Fool's spoof on the website of STARFLEET Region 5. It's really quite hysterical, especially if you read the text aloud in a bad Russian accent. <evil grin>

<http://www.ussjaguar.org/fun/sektor5/index.html>

Free Rice

An organization has put up a website that lets you test your vocabulary and donate grains of rice to poor countries through the U.N. For each word you get right, FreeRice will donate 20 grains of rice. This is made possible by the sponsors who advertise on the site. It's fun to develop your word-power and help out the less fortunate at the same time!

<http://www.freerice.com/index.php>

The Elder Party

So people are always talking about voting for the lesser evil. This site, in true tongue-in-cheek fashion, wonders what's up with that. Why not vote for the greatest evil of all?? (Remember, folks, this should be taken in good fun. The staff of Avenger News endorses no political party or candidate, but recommends that all members who are of age to do so should vote. Democracy doesn't work without the participation of the citizenry!)

<http://theelderparty.com/>

Nexus Trek

Nexus Trek is a message board community filled with members from several different Star Trek sites. Come talk about Trek, other Sci Fi or whatever interests you!

<http://thestartrek-nexus.com/>

Keep Star Trek Alive

In December, CBS chose to fire the entire staff of their startrek.com website. While statements have been made expressing commitment to the site's future, some folks aren't so sure, and launched a website of their own to support startrek.com

<http://www.keepstartrek-alive.com/>

RiffTrax

Introduced to a few of us on New Year's Eve by Jeff and Laura Victor of the U.S.S. Challenger, RiffTrax is an innovative new site featuring the hilarious DVD commentaries of Michael J. Nelson - star of the legendary "Mystery Science Theater 3000"! At RiffTrax.com, you can download feature-length commentaries by Mike (plus other stars of MST3K and guest celebrities) and listen to these "RiffTrax" in sync with your favorite, and not so favorite, DVDs. It's like watching a movie with your funniest friend.

And it's super easy to do! Just play the DVD and RiffTrax MP3 together and Voila! The Matrix, Star Wars and others just got way funnier! Our new RiffTrax even syncs everything together automatically! We also have many titles available On Demand and already synced up! There are RiffTrax **for over 50 movies** and more are added frequently, so check back often!

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

Star Trek: The Official Movie Site

As you know, the new Star Trek film will premiere next December. The teaser trailer has just recently been released. And now, the movie's website is up and running, if still mostly under construction at this writing. Check it out, and be ready once again to explore "the final frontier".

<http://www.paramount.com/startrek/>

From Patrick Barnes:

Steam Trek: The Moving Picture

Courtesy of YouTube, we bring you this hilarious Star Trek parody in the style of the old silent films. Enjoy!

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=6Y39gHihP74>

Star Trek Meets Monty Python

Another hysterical YouTube vid!

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=luVjkTEIoJc>

WHERE WERE YOU WHEN.....

- 10) We watched "Star Trek VI: The Undiscovered Country" with a RiffTrax commentary, which Jeff and Laura had found on the web (see "Trekkin' the Web" for more details)? (AR)
- 11) Pat Comune got lost looking for the house in the wee hours, and ran out of fuel, necessitating Bob and Todd to go out as a rescue party, eventually bringing fuel to Pat and all concerned safely back to the house? (AR)
- 12) The chatter and good fun rolled on 'til 4 AM, after which time we finally scattered off, to bed or home? (AR)

Avenger **January Meeting:**

- 13) A late change to the meeting venue was compelled when Borders closed!?! (AR)
- 14) We returned to a now-traditional standby venue, the upstairs café area at the Wegmans in Woodbridge? (AR)
- 15) Some guests came to visit, after seeing our press release? (AR)
- 16) We were also visited by friends from the Challenger, who sat in the corner (we told them they didn't have to! ;))? (AR)
- 17) We accurately replicated that "briefing in the Officers' Mess" feeling? (AR)
- 18) A discussion of the history of video games was punctuated by sidesteps onto the topics of films and older computer systems? (AR)

Rutgers Geology Museum Open House:

- 19) Alex and Judy went to Rutgers for an afternoon of science geekery? (AR)
- 20) Talks on the Dawn spacecraft's mission to Ceres and Vesta, the evolution of early life on Earth, and the issues of energy and climate change combined to provide a sweeping look at Earth and space, past and future? (AR)

U.S.S. AVENGER MISSION DOCKET - UPCOMING EVENTS

10 February 2008 – Avenger **Ship Meeting**

North Brunswick Public Library, 880 Hermann Road, North Brunswick, NJ, 2:00 PM
Join us for the usual fun, chatter, and good times. Program: "Deep Space Nine": An Anniversary Retrospective.. Dinner to follow.
Event Coordinator: CAPT Judy Waidlich, waidlich@rutchem.rutgers.edu

15-17 February 2008 – **Farpoint**

Hunt Valley Inn, Hunt Valley, Md
Farpoint is a Baltimore-based Science Fiction Media Convention, held each February at Marriott's Hunt Valley Inn. It's a Fan-Run, Fan-Friendly Con, with a lot more to offer than your basic autographs-and-a-dealers-room "show". Guests include James Callis, Marina Sirtis, and Erin Grey.
Event Website: <http://www.farpointcon.com/>

2 March 2008 – **Intergalactic Food Festival**

Seaside Heights Community Center, Bay & Hancock Avenues, Seaside Heights, NJ
Come celebrate Federation Day with a taste of intergalactic cuisine from the Trek universe.

7-9 March 2008 – **Creation Convention**

The Crowne Plaza Meadowlands Hotel, Two Harmon Plaza (free parking), Secaucus, New Jersey
Friday, March 7, 2008
Event Website: <http://www.creationent.com/cal/stny.htm>

9 March 2008 – Avenger **Ship Meeting**

North Brunswick Public Library, 880 Hermann Road, North Brunswick, NJ, 2:00 PM
Join us for the usual fun, chatter, and good times. Program: The Latest on Battlestar Galactica. Dinner to follow.
Event Coordinator: CAPT Judy Waidlich, waidlich@rutchem.rutgers.edu

14-16 March 2008 – **Lunacon**

Hilton Rye Town, 699 Westchester Avenue, Rye Brook, NY
Lunacon is run by The New York Science Fiction Society – The Lunarians, a non-profit educational organization and one of the New York Metropolitan area's oldest science fiction and fantasy societies.
Cost: Room rates: \$128 a night for a 1-4 person room. When reserving a room mention discount code **LUN**. For suite information please inquire at LunaconCentral@aol.com
Event Website: <http://www.lunacon.org/>

29 March 2008 – **Independence Mall/Constitution Center Trip**

Independence Mall, Sixth and Market Streets, Philadelphia, PA, 8:30 AM (on Trains out of New Brunswick)
Independence Mall and the Constitution Center are a fascinating look into the history and government of the United States, perhaps the most dynamic and resilient democracy in human history. We'll explore that history and the workings of our government, studying some of the greatest symbols of America. Plan for an all-day event in the City of Philadelphia.

Cost: Independence Mall sights are Free of Charge, though pre-reserving tickets for tours of Independence Hall is recommended.

Tickets for the Constitution Center are \$12/Adult, \$8/Child (4-12), and \$11/Senior Citizen (65+)

Add Approx. \$12-15 (exact fare may vary depending on starting station) for the Train and Additional for Possible Dinner in the City

Event Website(s): <http://www.nps.gov/inde/index.htm> ; <http://www.constitutioncenter.org/>

Event Coordinator: ADM Alex Rosenzweig, alexr@tellurian.com

continued on next page

U.S.S. AVENGER MISSION DOCKET - UPCOMING EVENTS

4-6 April 2008 – I-Con

SUNY, Stony Brook, NY

Annual Stony Brook convention includes authors, media, gaming, medieval recreation, comics, anime, and movies.

Event Website: <http://www.iconsf.org/>

5 April 2008 – Operation Wallpaper Rutgers

Starting Point: College Avenue Student Center, New Brunswick, NJ

Help us spread the word about the Avenger to a college campus right nearby. Teams spread out across the Rutgers New Brunswick and Piscataway campuses, distributing and mini-posters wherever we can. We hit bulletin boards and other areas where material can be posted, and leave several hundred reminders in our wake. ☺ The more folks we have, the easier this is, but it can be good exercise and a fun game, too!

Cost: Negligible, but we might decide to go for dinner afterward.

Event Coordinator: ADM Alex Rosenzweig, alexr@tellurian.com

13 April 2008 – Avenger Ship Meeting

North Brunswick Public Library, 880 Hermann Road, North Brunswick, NJ, 2:00 PM

Join us for the usual fun, chatter, and good times. Program: Fresh Takes on Sci-Fi/Fantasy Classics. Dinner to follow.

Event Coordinator: CAPT Judy Waidlich, waidlich@rutchem.rutgers.edu

2-4 May 2008 – Chiller Theatre

Hilton Parsippany, One Hilton Court, Parsippany, NJ

Chiller is a New Jersey based Horror Convention held at the Parsippany Hilton Hotel. There are several dealers' rooms of merchandise and opportunities for autographs.

Event Website: <http://www.chillertheatre.com/>

17 May 2008 – Longwood Gardens Trip

1001 Longwood Road, Kennett Square, PA, Gardens open at 9:00 AM; Other facilities usually starting at 10:00 AM

In 1906, Pierre S. du Pont purchased the Peirce Arboretum to save its trees from being cut for lumber. Over the next nearly half century, Mr. du Pont developed Longwood Gardens into what it is today, a magnificent horticultural showplace. Longwood Gardens now encompasses 1,050 acres of gardens, woodlands, and meadows, with over 11,000 types of plants, more fountains than any other garden in the US, educational and visitor programming, and over 400 performances a year. Longwood Gardens is sure to delight anyone who loves exquisite flowers, majestic trees, and opulent architecture. Here, amid 1,050 acres with 20 indoor and 20 outdoor gardens, you'll find beauty at every turn.

Be prepared for quite a bit of walking, though there are also many places to sit down and rest.

Cost: Tickets are \$16/Adult, \$6/Student (5-22), and \$14/Senior Citizen (62+); Add Additional for Lunch/Dinner

Event Website: <http://www.longwoodgardens.com/>

Event Coordinator: ADM Alex Rosenzweig, alexr@tellurian.com

18 May 2008 – Avenger Ship Meeting

North Brunswick Public Library, 880 Hermann Road, North Brunswick, NJ, 2:00 PM

Join us for the usual fun, chatter, and good times. Program: Renaissance Faires and Medieval Fantasy. Dinner to follow.

Event Coordinator: CAPT Judy Waidlich, waidlich@rutchem.rutgers.edu

14 June 2008 – Avenger 23rd Anniversary Picnic

Babbage Park, North Brunswick, NJ

We've been around for 23 years! Party time! And we'll once again gather for our annual picnic. Food and fun in a pleasant wooded park, with a covered area in case of rain. And who knows when a water battle might break out? >:)

Hours: Noon to ???

Cost: \$7.00 per person

Event Coordinator: CAPT Judy Waidlich, waidlich@rutgers.edu

27-29 June 2008 – STARFLEET's 2008 International Conference

Ithaca Airport Ramada Inn.

The theme is **Back to School** and the IC will be taking full advantage of Cornell University and Ithaca College, two major institutions of higher education right here in town. We'll be joined by Rick Kline from the Cornell Astronomy department for a presentation, and have field trips to the Fuertes Observatory, the Ithaca Sciencenter, and the Museum of the Earth. Meet folks from around 'Fleet at this years International Conference. Plenty of panels, good food at the Meet and Greet on Friday and the Banquet on Saturday. Find out who some of the names that appear in the 'Fleet news look like.

Event Website: <http://www.ic2008.org/>

11-13 July 2008 – Shore Leave 30

Shore Leave is one of the premiere fan-run conventions on the East Coast. It has guests, panels, gaming, a Meet-the-Pros night, and much more!

Guests include George Takei and Malcolm McDowell, along with Diane Carey, Greg Brodeur, and Dave Galanter

Event Website: <http://www.shore-leave.com/>

11 October 2008 - USS Challenger's 20th Anniversary

Sheraton Eatontown Hotel, Eatontown, NJ, 7:00 PM

Cost: \$50.00 per person for dinner. If you wish to stay the night, the hotel is offering our attendees a special rate of \$115.00 per room, per night.

NOTE: Please, if you are planning to attend an event, let the event/project coordinator know of your plans, so he/she can make the proper arrangements. Thanks!

THE AVENGER IN FICTION: “EVA”

By Alex Rosenzweig

“Space, The Final Frontier... These are the continuing voyages of the starship Avenger. Her ongoing mission: to explore strange, new worlds; to seek out new life and new civilizations; to boldly go where no one has gone before.”

Many members' questions have dealt with the fictional Avenger. Since we call for members to make up personnel files for their characters, members want to know just how our fictional universe works. What does the fictional Avenger do? How does it fit into the Star Trek Universe as portrayed on TV and in the films, books, comics, etc.? To answer these questions, and to (hopefully) keep you folks entertained, this series of articles was born.

For this issue, we offer a new vignette. This type of fiction is relatively easy to write, simply because it's so short and can be as simple as just a scene or an idea, rather than a fully-realized plot arc. Any member is welcome to try his or her hand at it. It can be fun!

EVA

SD10801.17:

The Avenger lay becalmed, holding station in the outskirts of the planetary system of a white dwarf star not far from the Barlaz Nebula. When the upper sensor units had begun yielding strange and unexpected readings, and checks of the internal equipment showed that it was all operating properly, it was deemed necessary to undertake an unusual EVA to examine the units themselves.

On the starboard side of the primary hull, a square hatchway with rounded corners lowered slightly and smoothly retracted into the hull. From below, a platform rose upward until it came into position flush with the hull, and then stopped. Standing on the platform were Chief Science Officer Setak, Technical Scientist August Ciufo, Assistant Chief Engineer Mike Rupprecht, and Ensign Erika Lundberg, an Auxiliary Systems Specialist. The small team wore full environmental suits, the Sciences personnel in blue-gray and the engineers in mustard gold. Orienting themselves, they turned toward the back of the ship, gazing across the gently sloping upper surface of the primary hull to where the leading edge of the extended hull rose up for several decks. Roughly two-thirds of the distance out from the center of the hull, mounted on the forward edge of the raised hull section, was the nearest upper sensor unit.

Setak pointed toward the sensor unit. “Let us begin with this unit,” he said. The others acknowledged, and the group carefully walked along the hull until they reached the sensor unit. Leaning down, the Vulcan officer examined the sensors. A moment later, he unhooked his tricorder and took a series of readings. “Mr. Ciufo, Mr. Rupprecht, would you please scan this unit and verify my readings?”

The two other officers did as they were asked, and a moment later, the three were comparing readings. “I’m getting what you are, Mr. Setak,” Rupprecht said.

“I am, too,” said Ciufo.

“Commander,” Setak said to Ciufo, “please take Ensign Lundberg and examine the sensor unit on the port side. Advise us if you get comparable results.”

“Will do,” Ciufo acknowledged. “Come on, Ensign.” The two walked up the incline of the hull toward the bridge module, and then vanished around it. Setak watched them go, then allowed his gaze to sweep upward, taking in the weapons pod above and aft of where they stood.

“Setak.” It was Rupprecht. “Are those things what they look like?”

“That is one thing I am hoping that Mr. Ciufo and Ensign Lundberg to verify.”

“But if it is...”

“Then it would appear that we have encountered a silicon-based life-form.”

“So what do we do about it?”

“I am hopeful that there will be a way to contain and remove them.”

A few moments later, Setak’s and Rupprecht’s suit-coms chimed. “Ciufo here. We’ve got a match. A large number of very small, active objects. Inorganic in nature.”

“They don’t seem to be damaging the structure,” said Lundberg. “But they’re definitely interfering with the sensors’ operation.”

“A simple camera would not be affected,” Setak noted, “but given the precision of these sensor units, even so small a creature as these can be disruptive.” He tapped a control on the panel of his suit. “Setak to bridge.”

“Bridge. T’HoD here,” came the response from the Executive Officer. “What did you find out?”

“It would appear,” Setak said wryly, “that we have some hitchhikers.”

“Excuse me?” T’HoD said.

Setak explained what they had found. “I believe that we must recently have traveled through a free-floating cloud of these creatures, and some were close enough to the sensors to be attracted by their emissions. Based on this, I also believe that it should be possible to remove them using an EM emitter that is more powerful than the sensors’ emissions.”

“An EM broom, eh?” said Rupprecht.

“In effect, yes,” Setak replied.

THE AVENGER IN FICTION: “EVA”

“I’ll speak to Mr. Rielly about getting the right equipment and a clean-up team out there,” T’HoD said. “Is it just the two QIK-14Ks on the hull?”

“I’d recommend checking the sensor up on the pod, too,” Ciufo added, hitching a thumb in the direction of the weapons pod.

“I concur,” Setak said. “We shall do that, since we are outside, anyway.”

“Okay,” T’HoD answered, “but then I want you back in.”

“Acknowledged,” responded Setak.

“All right, bridge out.” T’HoD cut the channel.

“Let us gather on the pod,” Setak instructed. “Standard thruster usage protocols.” Even in the 24th Century, space walks were not taken lightly. That space was a hazardous environment had not changed.

The team quickly checked over their thruster systems, and then jetted to the top of the weapons pod, where the third auxiliary sensor unit was located. A quick tricorder analysis revealed a few of the creatures, but much less of an infestation than what they’d found on the hull.

With that information in hand and passed along to T’HoD and Rielly, and with the suggestion made to apply methods of capturing the tiny life-forms without harming them, the team prepared to go back inside the ship. Just before activating his thruster pack, Setak paused to take one more look at the Avenger, and appreciate the ship from a vantage point rarely occupied by members of the ship’s crew. It was, in effect, the “highest point” on the ship. Looking forward, he could gaze out over the bridge to the great circular expanse of the primary hull. The silver-white of the tritanium plating gleamed in the light of the ship’s self-illumination beacons, which had been lit to help out the EVA team. Aftward, the long nacelles of the ship’s warp engines stretched back, the low-level glow of the flux chillers the only sign of the power held within the drive units. Below and out of sight were the dual hangar bay doors.

“Commander?” Setak broke from his ruminations and turned toward the person who had spoken, Ensign Lundberg. The young woman smiled at him. “Ready to come in, sir?”

Setak nodded. “Indeed, Ensign. Let us proceed.” A few taps on control pads, and the team headed back down to the main hull and toward the awaiting airlock hatch.

END

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In future articles, we’ll continue to talk about what’s aboard the ship, how various systems work, crew specifics, etc. (Members are urged to suggest topics. If there’s something you want to know about the ship, chances are that someone else wants to know, too. So send in your questions, and we’ll try to get answers for you in upcoming columns.)

This column also supports short stories! Stories should be no more than 4 pages in 10-point type, and can be about anything in the Avenger Universe. (Serializations are also accepted, but the story must be submitted **complete**, and arrangements with the column editor and [Avenger News](#) editor for serialization will be made ahead of time.) We hope everyone will take the opportunity to contribute to the tales of the Avenger.

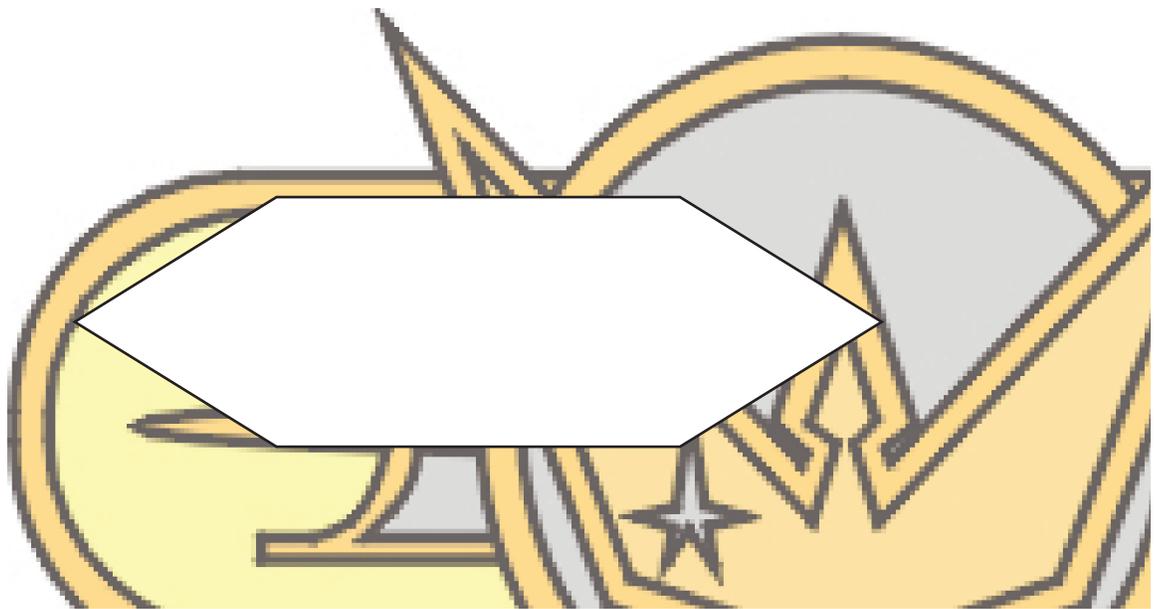
To help you out, we’re also running story ideas each issue. These aren’t fleshed out, but are jumping-off points from which stories may evolve. If you do see an idea listed here that you’d like to build a story from, let me know, so that we don’t get multiple members working on the same idea. And here we have the next suggestions...

1] A Romulan officer testing a new Warbird with an advanced cloaking device that will allow the ship to run at high-warp while cloaked takes the ship into the Neutral Zone. His course would have him exiting the Neural Zone only days from Earth at maximum speed. The Romulans contact the Federation, saying they fear he may be trying to provoke a war, but a Star Fleet Intelligence analyst thinks he might be trying to defect. The Avenger is sent to intercept...

2] The Avenger is sent to a colony with which contact has been lost. At first it appears that the colonists were killed by an undetected hostile life-form, but it becomes apparent that this life-form may be sentient.

Finally, as a part of this series, we include character-files of members of the crew. So, if you’ve made up a character-file, great! If not, why not try making one? We’ll try to publish one or two each issue, as space and contributions permit. We’re always looking for members to create files for their own characters. If you’re interested in creating a file for your fictional character, or updating an existing file, contact ADM Rosenzweig for help/information.

USS Avenger
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Linden, NJ 07036-5695



NOTE: Your Avenger membership is up for Renewal with Issue #



NEXT MEETING:

SUNDAY, MARCH 9th, 2008

2:00pm

at the **North Brunswick Public Library**

880 Hermann Rd

North Brunswick, NJ 08902

<http://www.northbrunswicklibrary.org/>

**Deadline for submissions for Avenger News # 108 is
MARCH 28, 2008**

This Newsletter accepts articles, illustrations and photos from all USS Avenger members. alex@tellurian.com