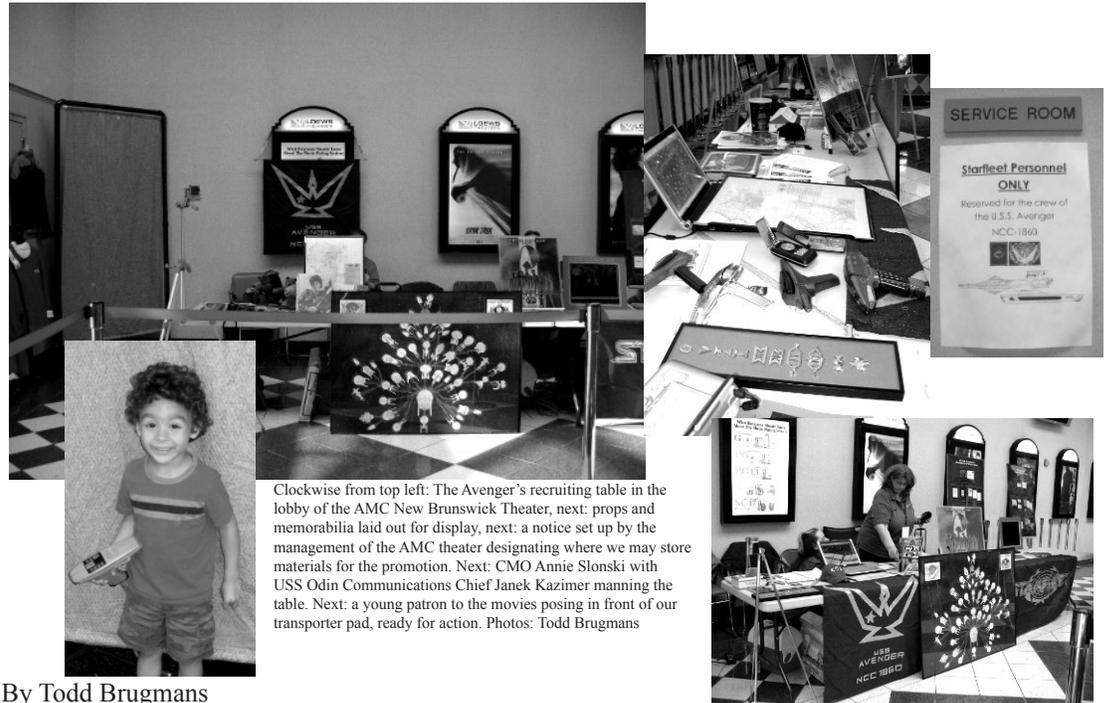


# “...TO SEEK OUT NEW LIFE...”

Recruiting opportunities abound as the new “Star Trek” feature premieres



Clockwise from top left: The Avenger's recruiting table in the lobby of the AMC New Brunswick Theater, next: props and memorabilia laid out for display, next: a notice set up by the management of the AMC theater designating where we may store materials for the promotion. Next: CMO Annie Slonski with USS Odin Communications Chief Janek Kazimer manning the table. Next: a young patron to the movies posing in front of our transporter pad, ready for action. Photos: Todd Brugmans

By Todd Brugmans

After a year and a half of planning, the U.S.S. Avenger set up shop in the lobby of the AMC New Brunswick movie multiplex on Route 1 Friday, May 8th.

“Star Trek”, as presented by famed director J.J. Abrams, opened to huge box office success its opening weekend, drawing impressive numbers when compared to previous “Trek” films, and setting box office records in IMAX ticket sales.

The film, which was initially slated for Christmas Day, 2008, was delayed until May, a decision made by the studios following a writers strike in Hollywood which lasted just long enough to derail studio filming schedules. “Trek” was one of the features which was moved to a later opening date because the studio felt it would yield greater box office sales in the new timeslot. A massive advertising campaign preceded the film’s release, bringing the entire “Trek” franchise back into the public forefront, and STARFLEET chapters benefitted greatly from the increased attention.

In the weeks leading up to the release for the film, U.S.S. Avenger was contacted by several news agencies requesting interviews.

An article featuring interviews with XO Todd Brugmans, CMO Annie Slonski, and Chief Science Officer Alex Rosenzweig got a lot of mileage, having been printed in the Asbury Park Press, the Courier News, and the Home News Tribune. Alex, Todd and CO Judy Waidlich were interviewed on camera by a reporter

for ABC news. The project was to build stock footage which ABC affiliates could use in their broadcasts. Unfortunately, this footage has not yet been used. Over the long, three-day opening weekend, the Avenger set up shop in the lobby of the AMC New Brunswick, with two tables displaying memorabilia, props, autographs, and recruiting information for prospective new members. A slideshow presentation covering Avenger’s rich 24 year history summarized some of the activities the chapter had engaged in previously, while members chatted with movie-goers informing them of activities we had planned in the near future.

Kids and kids at heart delighted in posing for pictures with our props in front of the Transporter pad mockup we had on display.

Members of the crew in attendance for this event were able to take in the film several times. It is entirely likely none of this would have been possible without Avenger’s own Carlos Maldonado, who is a manager at the theater.

He and his staff demonstrated the height of hospitality throughout Avenger’s stay, which resulted in seven new members joining over opening weekend. There is also the potential for an even greater number to seek the chapter out in the near future.

Some lively and enthusiastic conversations were had with patrons as they took in the new film, and Avenger made the very best of its opportunity to promote its presence in the neighborhood.

Thanks in part to this remarkable success story, U.S.S. Avenger’s future is bright as she sails into her 25th year of fanhood.

# AVENGER NEWS

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

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

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

# PLAY BALL!!



Clockwise from top left: The Avenger's recruiting table at the TD Stadium, home to the Somerset Patriots, next: USS Challenger's Ken Diehl throws out the ceremonial first pitch, next: Our own CO, Judy Waidlich with Ken Diehl posing with Patriots mascot "Sparkee". Next: Ken and Brenda caught dancing on the big screen. Next: Star trek images and the trailer for the new movie played on the large field display. Next: the crew of USS Avenger with USS Challenger, out on the field for pre-game introductions. Photos: Todd Brugmans

By Todd Brugmans

Riding on the success of the film's debut, the crew of the USS Avenger, joined by a representative from USS Challenger turned out to the TD Bank Stadium in Bridgewater, NJ on May 20th. The ship was invited out for an evening game pitting the home team Somerset Patriots against the Lancaster Barnstormers on what they dubbed "Star Trek Night".

Music from various Star Trek soundtracks played over the stadium's sound system while a display table had been arranged for the club on the main concessions concourse.

Clad in uniform, the members representing the two chapters took the field and stood along the first base line as they were introduced to the assembled crowd during opening ceremonies. Ken Diehl of the USS Challenger threw out the first pitch, and the crew of the Avenger took the field once more during the seventh inning to lead the crowd in singing "Take Me Out to the Ballgame".

While the home team was not victorious that evening, a great time was had by all.

Representatives of the ticket office are proposing another "Star Trek Day" event for later this summer, August 29th. More information to come as details are worked out.

## SOMETHIN' FISHY'S GOIN' ON AROUND HERE...

By Todd Brugmans

USS Challenger's Bob and Emily Vosseller joined the Avenger's away mission to the Adventure Aquarium in Camden, NJ on April 25th. The trip featured highlights including touch tanks in which visitors were granted an opportunity to reach in and touch sharks, rays, jellyfish, and an assortment of other sea creatures, a hippopotamus enclosure which also featured birds that may be found in their natural habitat, a pack of energetic penguins, and several seals lazing in the late April sun.

The aquarium has undergone renovations since the last time the chapter visited, and the new displays were captivating. An auditorium-sized window on the underwater world allowed a great view of these creatures as they swam about. Gazing into the huge tanks, we all took turns trying to get the best photo of the hammerhead shark, the sawtooth, the sea turtle, the large rays, and a host of other exotic animals. Included in the displays was a simulator for what it would be like to stand inside a shark cage with sharks all around.

All in attendance agreed the Adventure Aquarium was both educational and entertaining. See next page for photos.



Clockwise from top left: Entrance to the Adventure Aquarium in Camden, NJ, next: USS Challenger's Bob and Emily Vosseller join CO Judy Waidlich for a dip into the 'touch tank' where they have an opportunity to touch live sharks. Next: A larger shark can be seen emerging from the dimly lit large display tank. Next: making our way into the shark tunnel, a unique way to see the creatures as they swim all around you. Next: One of the friendlier little sharks at the touch tank. Next: the massive window to an underwater world at the aquarium. Center: XO Todd Brugmans becomes a hapless victim after mentioning 'lunch' near the Shark tanks... Photos: Todd Brugmans, Alex Rosenzweig

# CHILLING OUT FOR CHARITY!

PICS FROM THE 2009 POLAR BEAR PLUNGE BENEFITING NJ SPECIAL OLYMPICS



USS Avenger's Patrick Barnes (center) is flanked by USS Challenger's David Singleton (left) and Bob Vosseller (Right), all three dressed as escapees from the local insane asylum. A glance at the huge crowd tht assembled on Seaside Heights' beach for the plunge, and even USS Sovereign's mascot, Trek E. Coyote turned out for the festivities. For additional details, see article on page 11

# DIVISION REPORTS

## MEANWHILE, BACK ON THE BRIDGE...

By Judy Waidlich

Thanks to everyone who participated at the movie recruitment op. We had a great time and recruited five members from that. Welcome to all of our new members: Sarita, Stephen, Jonathan, Barbara, Olivia, Jason, and Nicole. Congratulations to Barbara, who was the winner of the autographed photo of Majel Roddenberry.

I enjoyed the movie, having seen it four times, and I may go once more to see it with some friends from the astronomy group. I thought the cast was great but had problems with some of the plot points.

Alex and I volunteered at the Franklin Institute on the opening weekend of Star Trek: The Exhibition. We got to wander around the museum and even got into the Galileo exhibit toward the end of the day. We were there in uniform, along with members of the U.S.S. Challenger, U.S.S. Odin, U.S.S. Sovereign, and U.S.S. Matrix. I enjoyed both exhibits. Afterward, Alex and I joined Janek and Joe for dinner at a diner. The staff was out to get me, dropping food near me twice.

We had a great time at the Somerset Patriots ballgame. We were on the field for an introduction after the Trek trailer was up on the big scoreboard. We stayed through the national anthem. Ken Diehl, from the Challenger, threw out a first pitch. We had a couple of tables on the concourse for fliers and some display items, and we stayed there even though we had tickets for a row of seats just a short distance away. Later, we went onto the field to sing "Take Me Out to the Ball Game". We gave out quite a few fliers and met a couple of young Trek fans in uniform.

By the time you read this, we will have been to the Intrepid and our picnic should have happened. Speaking of the picnic, it was switched to Babbage Park. Summer will be upon us, and we have events such as Shore Leave and the Franklin Institute trip. So enjoy the summer.

*Fleet Captain Judy*

## COMMUNICATIONS DIVISION

By Capt. Dale Kagan

Star Trek and the Avenger will be featured on or before May 8 in the New Jersey newspapers the Courier News, The Asbury Park Press, and the Home News Tribune. CO Judy Waidlich, XO Todd Bruggmans, Chief Sciences Alex Rosenzweig and Chief Medical Annie Slonski were interviewed for the article, and several pictures of Todd and Annie are circulating with the article.

This article is a great opportunity to reflect on how Trek has made an impression on us fans and how we think the new Trek movie will stand up in comparison.

The original Star Trek series went on during difficult world conditions including the Cold War. The main theme of the series was the optimistic message that the future would be better. The message still applies to today's world which has new issues and challenges and new demands for optimism for the future. It will be interesting to see whether the new Trek movie is equally as upbeat that we can solve our problems.

Second, the classic Trek tried to show a multi-national crew all working together. Uhura's name means "freedom" in Swahili and she is actually speaking this language in the salt monster episode of first season. The pilot episode features a Spanish navigator and the second season episodes featured our favorite Russian character, Chekov. And let's now forget Sulu, Scotty and others. In the Making

of Star Trek, a book by Whitman and Gene Roddenberry, Paramount reportedly resisted having an international crew, saying what is wrong with good old United States starship Enterprise?

Nowadays using an international cast makes movies more marketable in countries overseas. However, how it's done can make or break the concept of international cooperation. Enterprise had more British and American crew. (I know Hoshi was oriental but there is no back story). So let's hope that the movie has an international flavor in the background.

Third, classic Trek episodes were modeled on Science Fiction writing's What if-? concept. A science breakthrough is about to be made, and what if there is a computer war? What if a computer ran the Enterprise? What if a Doomsday machine left over from the last intergalactic war reached Earth? And, how would people react? Hopefully the movie will build on the shoulders of these writers.

Lastly, Trek built a believable universe with a home set and "home" crew that traveled to exotic and dangerous places. We hope the new Trek movie lives up to this theme. I am confident the movie will bring us the "home" crew. Let's go aboard.

# DIVISION REPORTS

## MEDICAL DIVISION

What a month this has been for Star Trek fans and for the U.S.S. Avenger! A little movie opened up the weekend of May 8th that some of you may have heard of, the long- and highly-anticipated "Star Trek". This movie, directed by J.J. Abrams, creator of the television shows "Lost" and "Fringe", just to name two, took Trek to new heights and gave us a familiar, yet brand new universe to play in. I for one, look forward to exploring these strange new worlds!

The publicity we got for this was nothing short of amazing! A reporter contacted a few of us for interviews for an article she was writing, which appeared in several area newspapers. Accompanying the article, was a photo of myself and Todd over at Todd's house with a lot of his Trek collectables. The photo came out extremely well. Then ABC sent a crew out to Captain Judy's house where they interviewed Judy, Todd, and Alex regarding the movie, STARFLEET Academy, and other Trek-related subjects. I don't know if any of the footage was used, but I do hope it was at some point.

Getting back to the movie premiere, I, along with shipmates Todd Brugmans, Judy Waidlich, Alex Rosenzweig, Joanne Perkins, Frank Warren, Brenda Bell, Augie Ciufu, Dale Kagan, and U.S.S. Odin's Janek Kazimer, collectively spent three full days at the AMC Loews Theater on Route 1 in New Brunswick for our movie recruiting op. We had a fantastic time. Yes, it was long, hard hours and very little sleep, but well worth the effort. We met some great people who just loved talking Trek with us. We even had individuals come up to us after they had seen the movie telling us that they'd never liked Star Trek before this, but that they're fans now! Yeah, we were happy to hear that. We also had some amazing conversations with fans. There were two young men whom we interacted with on Saturday night for a total of about two and a half hours. They were a lot of fun to talk to. Then there were the folks who just stopped by out of curiosity. We were more than happy to talk to them, as well, and some interesting conversations came out of those folks, too!

Theater manager and former Avenger CO Carlos Maldonado was excited that we were part of the Star Trek experience at his theater. Out of our efforts, Avenger gained some new members, and I am very pleased to report that my very own Medical Division has now increased to four! I finally have a proper medical staff! Please welcome Medical's new addi-

tions, Barbara Mullins and Sarita Amy Morse. More will be forthcoming about these two new crewmembers in later issues of Avenger News.

On the heels of the movie opening, we had a wonderful opportunity to attend a baseball game at the Somerset Patriots' baseball stadium in Bridgewater. The stadium decided to host "Star Trek Night", and contacted us to see if we were interested in participating. We sure were! On Wednesday, May 20th, we gathered at the stadium and had a recruiting table set up on the concession concourse level, not far from the stadium entrance. We had a lot of visitors come by and talk to us. Not only were we invited guests of the ballpark, but we were part of the evening! First, we were presented as honored guests on the infield prior to the game (along with at least two other organizations), but what was cool about it was that the ballpark played the Trek movie trailer on the large screen and immediately after that, we were all introduced. Then, during the seventh inning stretch, we were again on the field to lead the crowd in "Take Me Out to the Ballgame". Ironically enough, at last month's meeting, just as a throw-away comment, I had mentioned we should learn to sing it in Klingon. Don't you think that, prior to us singing it on the field, the announcer mentioned that maybe we would sing it in Klingon? Yes, folks, the universe does have a sense of humor!

And over the Memorial Day weekend, we had a small away team venture back to the AMC Loews on Saturday to take in "Night at the Museum 2: Battle of the Smithsonian". Attending were myself, Todd, Matt, Alex, and Joanne. Overall, we enjoyed the movie and thought that Hank Azaria stole the show. Afterward, we went to the Skylark Diner for an after-movie meal. Nice place, good food, and great conversation!

Our last away mission for the month will be on May 31st to the U.S.S. Intrepid, which has been refurbished and is now back in her home port after a long absence. I, for one, am looking forward to seeing her and checking out her sickbay.

Now, as the lights are dimming here in Avenger's sickbay, I've got some paperwork to do for my new recruits. Yeah, we're going to have some fun here in Medical going forward!

Until next time . . .

**Commander Annie Slonsk**  
**Chief Medical Officer**  
**U.S.S. Avenger**

## SCIENTIFIC METHODS

It's been a very high-gear time for the Avenger lately, so there's a lot to be excited about! Of course, the big news is the release of the new movie. "Star Trek" has proven to be a huge success in its first weeks, and many, many people are very happy with it. (I'm actually more lukewarm than most, and I still thought it was a fun watch, which should say something, at least. ;) ) There's been a big upsurge in interest in Star Trek, and everybody from local papers to the President of the United States is chattering about it. Locally, the Avenger was out in force at the AMC Loews in New Brunswick, promoting the movie, and the club, and meeting lots of new folks. We did very well, coming home with five new members at the end of the weekend, and two more as of this writing. I want to say "Thanks!" to the members who came out to help with the recruiting operation. We had 12 members come out to

# DIVISION REPORTS

help, including three from Sciences. Judy, Todd, Annie, Matt, Brenda, Frank, Augie, Joanne, Dale, Janek, and I were all there to help at the table, and while he couldn't man the table with us, Carlos was absolutely invaluable-and, along with the rest of the staff of the theater, extraordinarily generous. Todd's props and the transporter backdrop were big hits, and the "family tree" graphic that Janek created a few years ago-and recently updated-also attracted a lot of attention.

All-in-all, a tremendous amount of work went into making sure we made the most of the opportunity, and I think the crew of our fair ship deserve a big round of applause. Thanks, folks!

The next weekend had Judy and myself joining a STARFLEET team at the Franklin Institute in Philadelphia, serving as "local color" and walking attractions to help promote the opening of Star Trek: The Exhibition at the Institute, where it will stay until mid-September. We had a lot of fun talking to people, taking pictures with them, and circulating around the museum and the exhibition area. Word is that the museum staff were very pleased with us, and we had a great deal of fun.

All of this had come hot on the heels of the most recent Sciences Division-sponsored trip, to the Adventure Aquarium. Four Avenger members were joined by two members of the Challenger for a day exploring aquatic life, and we not only had a great time, we learned a lot, too. The Aquarium's been upgraded a lot since the last time I was there, and the changes have definitely been for the better.

'Course, you' think after all that that we'd stop for a bit. Nope, not us! It'll have happened as you read this, but as I write it, the trip to the newly-refurbished U.S.S. Intrepid is still a week and a half away. And after that, we'll be holding our 24th Anniversary picnic in June.

24 years... Oh, my...

That leads me to something you'll hear me talk about a lot more in the months to come. Next year, 2010, will be Avenger's 25th Anniversary. We'll have had a quarter-century of Trek (and sci-fi) fandom, friendship, and fun! Now if you'd told me, back in 1985, on that day when 25 or so of us left a ship called Constitution to

embark on our own path, that we'd still be doing it well into the 21st Century, I think I'd've imagined that as wildly optimistic. But here we are. We're planning a special celebration, too. Right now, we're still in the early planning stages, and are scouting venues, so if you have an idea for a cool place to hold an event somewhere in the Central Jersey area, feel free to suggest it. As time goes on, we'll be bringing our final plans into focus, and there'll be some cool announcements to come.

Finally, allow me to also take note of a real-life scientific event that's nearing its end as I write this. The final mission to service the Hubble Space Telescope has been underway this week, up in Earth orbit. Five EVAs (aka "spacewalks") were undertaken to swap out worn or malfunctioning components with new and upgraded ones. If all goes well, these repairs and upgrades will keep the telescope functioning until 2014. By then, if all goes well, the successor telescope, the James Webb Space Telescope, will be ready to go into service. The Hubble mission had at first been rejected as "too dangerous", especially in the midst of the schedule to finish building the International Space Station before the shuttles are retired, but NASA was convinced of the value of the mission and relented, allowing it to be flown. Given how much the Hubble telescope has contributed to our understanding of the universe, I'm sure glad they did!

And with that, I'll wrap up this issue's column. As always, if you've got ideas or thoughts for future SciDiv-sponsored trips or events, do feel free to send them along! They can be elaborate or very simple ones. Either's totally cool.

As usual, check out "Science Highlights" and let us know what you think. (And feel free to contribute your own suggestions for the coolest science events in the last couple of months!) 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!

ADM Alex Rosenzweig  
Chief Science Officer

## Avenger Roster Update

### Additions--Welcome Aboard!

- 1) Ensign Sarita Amy Morse - Medical Technician
- 2) Ensign Stephen H Schwegler - Communications Specialist
- 3) Ensign Jonathan Mullins - Security Specialist
- 4) Ensign Barbara Mullins - Medical Technician (Psychology)
- 5) Ensign Olivia Goodman - (Position TBD)
- 6) Ensign Jason Blackstone - Laboratory Technician
- 7) Nicole Escobosa - Associate

### Welcome Back--Thanks for Renewing

- 1) Captain Dale A. Kagan
- 2) Captain Joe Horton
- 3) Admiral Alex Rosenzweig
- 4) Captain Ann-Ruth Rosenzweig
- 5) Commander August Ciufu
- 6) Lieutenant J.G. Catherine Miller

### Deletions--Farewell, and Good Luck...

- 1) Ensign Leslie J. Cowan
- 2) Lt. Commander Patrick Barnes
- 3) Joseph Janus
- 4) Ensign Timothy B. Wickes

NOTE: if you find your name listed under deletions is in error, please contact CO Judy Waidlich or XO Todd Brugmans A.S.A.P., that we may take the appropriate steps to correct this listing.

## Where were you when...

Compiled By Alex Rosenzweig

### “Star Trek (2009)” Movie Recruiting Prep Workshop #2:

- 1) Todd channeled Majel (as the ship’s computer) while browsing IMDB? (BB)
- 2) Software discussions alternated with music appreciation as the creative process continued? (AR)

### Farpoint 2009:

- 3) A whole new location added variety to the event? (AR)
- 4) ADM Alex met Alan Tudyk in an elevator, and Alan wanted to take a picture of Alex’s shirt? (AR)
- 5) RADM Todd won the mascot contest quite handily? (AR)
- 6) A guy costumed as an Alien was a big hit of the con...and a heck of a nice guy, too? (AR)
- 7) The Alien caused quite a sensation during the Friday night karaoke? (AR)
- 8) Spinning triangles at 10-Forward led to a lot of silliness? (AR)
- 9) ADM Alex, Counselor Emily (of the Challenger), and Joe Horton (of the Top Gun) were up ‘til 5 AM, hnging out in the lobby and being very silly? (AR)
- 10) Harve Bennett told lots of stories of celebrities he’d met in his long career? (AR)
- 11) Harve Bennett was convinced RADM Todd’s name was “Inigo Montoya”, because of a T-shirt Todd was wearing that day...(TB)

### Intergalactic Food Festival:

- 12) Culinary delights from all over delighted the palette, not to mention the eyes? (AR)
- 13) Wacky-looking, but tasty, food and good friends made for a fun afternoon? (AR)

### Adventure Aquarium Trip:

- 1) We touched sharks and watched them play and show off for onlookers in a shallow pool? (AR)
- 2) The quest was on for good pictures of a hammerhead shark? (AR)
- 3) Tanks of jellyfish, anemones, and octopi fascinated onlookers in the Jules Verne gallery? (AR)
- 4) A glass tunnel through a tank provided amazing views of aquatic life? (AR)
- 5) Judy played guide, director aquarium visitors to check out several exhibits, and reminding them to wash their hands after touching various animals? (AR)
- 6) Todd found himself in the mouth of a shark? (AR)
- 7) Penguins showed off for onlookers, when they weren’t looking for food or a cool spray of water? (AR)
- 8) Some seals relaxed in the sun, while others went swimming all around their pool? (AR)

### “Star Trek (2009)” Movie Premiere Recruiting Operation:

- 9) Todd had Matt nearly rolling on the floor by his interpretation of a political debate between Roger Rabbit and Boss Nass? (JW/BB)
- 10) “17 Again” - not a chick flick, a little-chick flick -- a Chicklet flick!?! (BB)
- 11) Todd looked at Alex’s yellow Avenger polo amidst the purple ones and started singing, “One of these things is not like the others”? (BB)
- 12) At the end of Saturday night, when a punch-drunk Matt said, “Tomorrow, we do it ‘one more time’,” and we all started singing, “I’ll take you home again Kathleen”? (BB)
- 13) Frank saw Brenda texting, and asked, “Are you twittering again?” and she answered, “No, I’m where were you whenning”? (BB)

### Star Trek Night at the Somerset Patriots Game:

- 14) At TD Park, Todd said, “This is a lot of fun! They haven’t done anything yet, but this is fun!”? (BB)
- 15) Judy, Brenda, and Ken Diehl were shown dancing on the Jumbotron at TD Park? (BB)
- 16) Every fourth fan at TD Park wanted to purchase our display models? (BB)
- 17) Annie won a phaser at the TD Park raffle? (BB)
- 18) The Patriots’ customer service rep told Todd to stand in the corner? (BB)
- 19) Judy turned to ask, “Should we yell, ‘Your mother’s got a smooth forehead’ and other Klingon insults”? (BB/AS)

ADM Alex Rosenzweig, this column’s compiler, would like to thank everyone who sent in contributions to this column. Of course, more are always needed. If you want to share something that happened at an Avenger, STARFLEET, or Star Trek event, please send your contributions to Alex at: 980 Linwood Place North Brunswick, NJ 08902-2267  
email: alexr@tellurian.com

## Science Highlights

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!

### Where Have All the Bats Gone?

Contributed by Alex Rosenzweig

*Startlingly, there has been a major die-off of bats in the U.S. Northeast. This could have significant effects.*

#### From Earthfiles:

"As of February 2009, bat deaths have spread to at least eight states and the exact cause is still not proved. But the one persistent symptom on the sick and dead bats is a white substance around the noses and faces of the sick and dead bats. In October 2008, lab analysis confirmed the white stuff is a fungus in the genus, *Geomyces*. That fungus loves cold temperatures in the Arctic and apparently in Northeastern winter caves. However, no one had ever heard of the fungus killing bats before now. The mortality rate is nearly 100% and there is nothing in the global scientific literature about bats dying with white fungus rings around their noses."

**Want to know more? Browse to:**

<http://www.earthfiles.com/news.php?ID=1529&category=Environment>



### Four-Color Mapping: Is That All that's Necessary?

Contributed by Alex Rosenzweig

*There's an interesting theorem that says that only four colors are needed to color any map. Mathematicians continue to find new answers to explore this theorem.*

From Science News:

"In 1852, botanist Francis Guthrie noticed something peculiar as he was coloring a map of counties in England. Despite the counties' meandering shapes and varied configurations, four colors were all he needed to shade the map so that any two bordering counties were different colors. Perhaps, he speculated, four colors were enough for any map.

"Little did Guthrie know the load of trouble he unleashed with his innocent conjecture. It took mathematicians nearly a century and a quarter to prove him right, and even that wasn't enough to close the Pandora's box Guthrie had opened. Mathematicians pulled out their markers and tried to color everything in sight.

"The particular things mathematicians wanted to color were graphs: dots connected by lines. Such graphs can be used to describe everything from friendships to the Internet to gene interactions. They can even describe maps, if the countries correspond to dots and bordering countries are connected by lines. Graphs from maps have the special property that the lines will never cross, though other graphs can form hairballs as nasty as you please. How many colors, mathematicians wondered, would it take to color any graph so that connected dots are always different colors?"

**Want to know more?**

**Have a look at:** [http://www.sciencenews.org/view/generic/id/41486/title/The\\_four\\_color\\_problem\\_gets\\_a\\_sharp\\_new\\_hue](http://www.sciencenews.org/view/generic/id/41486/title/The_four_color_problem_gets_a_sharp_new_hue)

### Another Use for Buckyballs: Filter-Cleaners!

Contributed by Alex Rosenzweig

*Water filters coated with buckyballs are proving to be bacteria-resistant.*

From Science News:

"ChaeaSoccer-ball-shaped carbon nanoparticles called buckyballs may keep water flowing through filters, new research shows.

"As water passes through treatment plants, communities of bacteria called biofilms sometimes stay behind and gum up the works, a harmful process known as biofouling. Biofouling costs the United States billions of dollars each year in equipment damage, contamination, energy loss and medical costs stemming from bad water, according to the Center for Biofilm Engineering at Montana State University in Bozeman.

"In the new study, researchers led by Claudia Gunsch at Duke University in Durham, N.C., found that bacteria don't stick nearly as well to water filter membranes that are coated with buckyballs. The researchers ran bacteria-laden liquid through treated or untreated filters and then counted how many bacterial communities stuck. After three days, the buckyball-treated membranes had an average of 16 to 18 bacterial colonies per 17 square centimeters, the team reports in the March 5 Journal of Membrane Science. Untreated membranes had too many bacterial colonies to count. The researchers don't yet know how buckyballs do their antimicrobial magic."

**Want to know more?**

**Hop on over to:** [http://www.sciencenews.org/view/generic/id/41476/title/Buckyballs\\_do\\_antimicrobial\\_magic](http://www.sciencenews.org/view/generic/id/41476/title/Buckyballs_do_antimicrobial_magic)

## Science Highlights

### Who Were the First Horse Domesticators? Look to Central Asia...

Contributed by Alex Rosenzweig

*Evidence suggests that the first folks to domesticate horses lived in what's now Kazakhstan.*

From Science News:

“Central Asia’s vast grasslands hosted a prehistoric revolution in transportation, communication and warfare, thanks to the humble horse. Remains from Kazakhstan’s more than 5,000-year-old Botai culture have yielded the earliest direct evidence for domestication of these versatile beasts, scientists report.

“The Botai people were hunter-gatherers who lived in large settlements for months or years. Their culture lasted from 5,600 to 5,100 years ago. Researchers have long suspected that the Botai rode domesticated horses while hunting for wild horses to eat, but did not domesticate other animals or cultivate crops.”

To learn more, check out: [http://www.sciencenews.org/view/generic/id/41446/title/Horse\\_domestication\\_traced\\_to\\_ancient\\_central\\_asian\\_culture](http://www.sciencenews.org/view/generic/id/41446/title/Horse_domestication_traced_to_ancient_central_asian_culture)



### Dinosaurs Appear to have Birdlike Hands

Contributed by Alex Rosenzweig

*New fossil clues suggest that inward-facing palms evolved much earlier than previously recognized.*

From Science News:

“Fossil handprints made by a crouching theropod reveal that those meat-eating bipedal dinosaurs had palms that always faced inward, a sign that these creatures abandoned the use of their forelimbs as legs early in their evolution.

“Theropods include the tiny-armed Tyrannosaurus rex, which lived between 68 million and 65 million years ago, and Allosaurus, which lived about 150 million years ago and was also poorly endowed in the bicep department. Because most theropods’ arms were very small, there are very few scenarios where those forelimbs could have touched the ground, says Andrew R.C. Milner, a vertebrate paleontologist at the St. George Dinosaur Discovery Site at Johnson Farm in Utah.

“Of the half-dozen examples known where theropods crouched down and left impressions in soft ground - dents that were ultimately preserved as fossils - only two also include possible handprints, and those are faint or smudged, he notes.

“Now, Milner and his colleagues describe what they say is a clear set of theropod handprints, two inch-deep impressions preserved among hundreds of dinosaur footprints at the Utah site.”

To find out more, check out: [http://www.sciencenews.org/view/generic/id/41389/title/Dinosaur\\_handprints\\_reveal\\_birdlike\\_arm\\_anatomy](http://www.sciencenews.org/view/generic/id/41389/title/Dinosaur_handprints_reveal_birdlike_arm_anatomy)

### Physics... Physics Will Bring Us Together

Contributed by Alex Rosenzweig

*It turns out that even in the deep ocean, there's an equivalent of wind-shear, and the result is sometimes a group, or even a colony, of plankton.*

From Science News:

“Phytoplankton sometimes come together in the ocean because they can’t tell which way is up, new research suggests.

“Oceanographers have long known that certain species of phytoplankton often form kilometer-wide layers only a few centimeters thick. Researchers have sought an explanation because these layers are often the source of toxic algal blooms known as red tides.

“Now researchers have one idea for how the layers form: Lab experiments hint that conditions inside the thin layer of water separating a surface current from a deeper one flowing in a different direction can disorient the phytoplankton, disrupting their swim to the surface and causing them to accumulate in profusion at a single depth.

“These microscopic and typically single-celled algae at the base of the sea’s food chain often migrate to the surface in the daytime to take advantage of sunlight. Then they drop back to the safety of the depths at night. Because the individuals in many of the species are lopsided either in body shape or in weight distribution, they can discern up from down, says Roman Stocker, a microbial ecologist at MIT. But lab tests indicate that an organism’s simple sense of direction can be easily confused in certain circumstances, Stocker and his colleagues report in the February 20 Science.

“The researchers investigated marine conditions that mimic wind shear in the atmosphere, a situation that arises when the speed or direction of the wind at one altitude is dramatically different from that of an adjacent layer. As organisms pass through the narrow interface between such layers in water, the sharp change in velocities causes individual plankton to tumble, Stocker says.”

For more on this story,

check out: [http://www.sciencenews.org/view/generic/id/41048/title/Physics\\_could\\_unite\\_plankton](http://www.sciencenews.org/view/generic/id/41048/title/Physics_could_unite_plankton)

### Found: One Mini-Dinosaur

Contributed by Annie Slonski

*A new discovery has been made, of the smallest meat-eating dinosaur ever found in North America.*

From the Asbury Park Press:

“Imagine a vicious velociraptor like those in ‘Jurassic Park’, but only as big as a modern chicken.

“That’s what Canadian researchers say they have found, the smallest meat-eating dinosaur yet discovered in North America.

“This pint-sized cousin of velociraptor, weighing in at 1.8-to-2.3 kilograms, ‘probably hunted and ate whatever it could for its size - insects, mammals, amphibians and maybe even baby dinosaurs,’ according to Nicholas Longrich of the University of Calgary.

“The creature lived 75 million years ago in the swamps and forests of southern Alberta, Longrich and colleague Philip J. Currie report in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences.”

# FROM THE BELLY OF THE BEAST

By Matthew J. Rielly

## Bye-Bye “Galactica: - Will All This Really Happen Again?”

After five long years, after all of the comparisons to its earlier incarnation, and after four seasons of intrigue, heroics, conflict, and countless what-the-frak moments, the ride is finally over.

Or is it?

For Executive Producers Ron Moore and David Eick, at least, the new “Battlestar Galactica” has sung its swan song. Fans and other viewers were treated to the closure of the saga on the night of Friday, March 20th, 2009 on the Sci-Fi network. For those who read our bi-monthly publication, some have already weighed in with their impressions of the series finale. I was among the fortunate to see the closing chapter. Being a long-time viewer, I have to give the last installment an unequivocal two-thumbs-up, five-star, two-snaps-in-a-circle rating. Considering the carnage that has ensued during the last part of the final season, I was afraid this would all end in tears...or in some sick, twisted fashion which R&D (Ron and Dave) have let their evil genius manifest throughout the run of the entire series. Despite the initial violent indications, I have to agree with my fellow fans that the storyline of the humans’ flight from the Colonies was brought to a satisfying, albeit curious, conclusion. At the same time, it left me wanting more.

When I mentioned earlier that the ride was finally over, I do mean it was a ride. It was a veritable roller-coaster. Once I got used to the re-imagining of the original 1978 series produced by Glen Larson, including the decision to make the character Starbuck a female and give everyone human-sounding first and last names, I decided I was going to strap myself in and enjoy what would follow. After seeing Caprica and the rest of the Colonies nuked by the Cylons, many of which evolved into human-looking models (aka “skin jobs”), I knew this was going to be good; not the same as it was in 1978, but still good.

If you recall the original series, the character Baltar, played by the late, great John Colicos was for the most part a straightforward, outright, over-the-top classic villain. Such was not the case with Gaius Baltar, which James Callis gave more depth of feeling and ambiguity. He was self-centered and somewhat arrogant, yet proven to be emotionally haunted by his betrayal of humanity by allowing military secrets to fall into the hands of the slinky blonde Number Six, one of a multitude of incarnations portrayed by Tricia Helfer. We saw him evolve from fellow refugee to outed traitor to accidental cult figure to humble survivor.

Lorne Greene would have been proud to see Edward James Olmos lead humanity to its final destination as Admiral William Adama. Olmos’ portrayal gave the character far more depth than its ‘70s predecessor, showing both strength and grace under pressure, while sometimes giving into despair and madness when the fates dealt him a major blow...like finding out that his Executive Officer and best friend Saul Tigh was one of the final five Cylon models. Kudos should be given to the rest of the cast:



Sci-Fi Channel’s re-imagined Battlestar Galactica, a 4th season cast poster.

Credit: Scifi.com

Jamie Bamber (Lee “Apollo” Adama), Katie Sackhoff (Kara “Starbuck” Thrace), Aaron Douglas (Galen Tyrol), Grace Park (Sharon Valerii, aka Boomer, Athena, etc.), Michael Hogan (Saul Tigh), and Mary McDonnell (Laura Roslin). Let’s not forget other fine performances from Alessandro Juliani as Felix Gaeta, Richard Hatch (the only holdover from the original series) as Tom Zarek, Lucy Lawless as D’Anna, and veteran Dean Stockwell as Cavil, among others.

The theme that emerged during the latter episodes of the new “Galactica” was all that was going on had happened before, and it would all happen again. In a way, that has become a self-fulfilling prophecy. The producers will be giving us a taste of what life was like about 50 years before the humans fled the Colonies to escape Cylon annihilation. We now have the storyline under the title “Caprica” to consider. With two of the key leads being played by Eric Stoltz and Esai Morales, it looks like it will be an interesting start to witness the early genesis of the Fall of Caprica. Not only that, Sci-Fi is tantalizing us with another look at the events that made up the beginning of “Battlestar Galactica” with an interesting twist: the fall of the Colonies as seen from the Cylons’ point of view. This movie or miniseries goes under the subtitle “The Plan”. And let’s not forget four seasons of episodes to collect on DVD.

If only space would allow, I could practically write a book on my impressions of this classic space opera which began as a one-season cult favorite and found itself revitalized into a gritty drama with far superior visual effects. You can thank the Lords Of Kobol that at no time whatsoever did we see Lee, Kara, Helo, Boomer, or any other Galactica officers tooling around on cheesy-looking flying jet cycles (Remember “Galactica 1980”? I shudder to think about it). Who says you have to have socialators and mechanical daggits? Who knew that a battlestar would look way cooler with retractable landing bays? Who would figure the song “All Along The Watchtower” would take on a whole new meaning? Considering that the “Galactica” saga came upon us only a year after the first Star Wars film, and has found new life in the first decade of the 21st century, we truly have to admit that all this has happened before...and many are glad that it happened again.

# CHILLING OUT FOR CHARITY!

THE 2009 POLAR BEAR PLUNGE BENEFITING NJ SPECIAL OLYMPICS

By Annie Slonski

It takes a certain kind of dedication to want to immerse oneself into icy cold water for a good cause. Guess what? I just happen to know three such dedicated people!

On Saturday, February 28th, 2009, intrepid plungers and spectators alike gathered on the Seaside Heights boardwalk for the 16th Annual Polar Bear Plunge to raise money for Special Olympics.

The day started out with us meeting at Bobber's in Seaside Heights for a hearty breakfast. Once we were all gathered, there were a total of ten of us. Sharing laughs at the breakfast table were myself and Todd, plungers Dave Singleton of the U.S.S. Challenger, Bob Vosseller, also of the U.S.S. Challenger, and the ring-leader himself, Avenger's own Patrick Barnes. Joining us at the table was Dave's wife, Mary Francen, Challenger's Ken Diehl, Sovereign's Jay Ansky and two of Patrick's friends who were there to help support him. Breakfast at Bobber's (at the corner of Sherman Avenue and The Boulevard) was quite good and I highly recommend it as a nice, quick, tasty and relatively inexpensive place to eat.

Once we finished with breakfast, Bob, Patrick, Jay, Todd and I went back to Patrick's room at the Hershey Motel so that the plungers could change into their outfits and also for Jay to don his new furry alter-ego, Trek E. Coyote.

The theme for our fearless trio for this year's plunge was "They're Coming to Take Me Away". Let's start with Patrick. He was an explosion of colors that never should be combined together, like say, pink and orange? Patrick put his hair up in pigtails, complete with cute pink hair ties, a pink tutu, and what can only be described as a traffic-cone orange pull-over smock with the words "Happy Acres Funny Farm" stenciled on in silver and backwards (on purpose). Patrick came complete with tambourine and bubble-making machine.

Bob, also sported the same one-piece orange smock, but with Happy Acres Funny Farm stenciled on the correct way, and an EXTREMELY large Napoleon hat with a very large silver "N" on the front. Dave, once again wearing the same orange smock, had an industrial bucket over his head (with the front cut out for his face) that said all kinds of outrageous things such as Area 51, Roswell, NM, Klaatu Barada Nicto, and other things following the theme.

Once up on the boardwalk, Patrick had his bubble-making machine going and was banging his tambourine in tune with the ever-popular and oh-so-catchy tune of "They're Coming to Take Me Away", written by Napoleon the 14th. Now does Bob's hat make sense?? They attracted attention almost immediately! In fact, while we were all walking down to the boardwalk from the Hershey, folks were stopping their cars to take pictures.

There were other plungers in equally interesting costumes. Some were men dressed as ladies. One in particular looked like a French maid. I spotted the Crash Test Dummy from a couple of years back, a few superheroes, and others that defied explanation. But, needless to say, our trio of psychiatric ward escapees were quite the attraction!

Jay Ansky, who was not plunging, debuted his new furry costume for this event, Trek E. Coyote. Unlike his wolf costume, which is a partial costume, this one was a full-body suit. Unfortunately, due to the shortened snout and the rounded ears, more people thought he was a bear, but no matter what they thought he was, Jay was a hit with the crowd as he strolled the boardwalk stopping for photo ops with Todd as his "official" photographer and bodyguard!

According to the official site for the Polar Bear Plunge (<http://www.njpolarplunge.org/>), there were a record 3,700 registered plungers and the Seaside Heights event raised a total of \$632,996 for Special Olympics.

The actual plunge event took a while because of the huge crowd. The plungers went in the ocean in stages, with our Terrific Trio plunging after a good many of the others took their turn in the water. Patrick went in the ocean a total of eight times. As he explained, once for each year he's done the plunge (five), one for luck, one for absent friends, and one for next year's plunge! Yes, he was quite cold while we were all walking back to his hotel room.

After a round of warm showers for Patrick and Bob, and a quick trip back to Bob's bungalow for Jay to shower and change, we retreated to Atlanta Bread at the Toms River Plaza on Route 37 for some hearty sandwiches and warm soup.

Overall, it was another fun, successful day in the life of Starfleeters who get involved to make a difference in not only our communities, but in the lives of others.

## Science Highlights

(Continued from page 9)



### Raise the Dark Matter Shields!

Contributed by Alex Rosenzweig

*It seems that galaxies are protected from gravitational stresses by dark matter...a LOT of dark matter.*

From SPACE.com:

“NASA’s Hubble Space Telescope has uncovered new evidence that galaxies are embedded in and protected by halos of dark matter, the invisible form of matter that accounts for most of the universe’s mass.

“Dark matter is invisible and nobody even knows what it is, but it is evident by the fact that

galaxies hold together at all. Some unseen substance lurks in space - concentrated in galaxies - and generated gravity in amounts well beyond the visible matter.

“Peering into the tumultuous heart of the nearby Perseus galaxy cluster (located 250 million light-years away), Hubble discovered a large population of small galaxies that have remained intact while larger galaxies around them are being ripped apart by the gravitational pull of neighboring galaxies.

“‘We were surprised to find so many dwarf galaxies in the core of this cluster that were so smooth and round and had no evidence at all of any kind of disturbance,’ said astronomer Christopher Conselice of the University of Nottingham in England, and leader of the Hubble observations. ‘These dwarfs are very old galaxies that have been in the cluster a long time. So if something was going to disrupt them, it would have happened by now. They must be very, very dark matter-dominated galaxies.’“

**Want to know more?**

**Discover it here:** <http://www.space.com/scienceastronomy/090312-hubble-dark-matter.html>

## SO EASY A CAVEMAN COULD DO IT?

### New Theories Regarding Neanderthals



By Annie Slonski

For decades upon decades, it has been thought that Neanderthals were a “dead-end” branch of our evolution. They had been portrayed as stooped creatures with shuffling gaits and were accredited with cannibalistic tendencies. From all the evidence that had been found up until very recently, there was no reason to discredit these many theories.

Neanderthals were first discovered back in 1856 when two limestone caves in the Neander Valley near Dusseldorf, Germany were dug into by quarry laborers who uncovered a truly startling find. They found remains of an unusual looking skull, which was observed as being lower and longer than that of modern human skulls and had thick, overshadowing brow ridges.

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Ever since that fateful day back in 1856, Neanderthals have been the subject of controversy in the scientific community right down to their names. In keeping with modern German spelling, their name will appear as Neandertal, not Neanderthal.

Were Neanderthals just some creatures that lived in parts of Asia and Europe between approximately 200,000 and 28,000 years ago? Or were they really a part of our family tree? Or, as is common in the evolutionary history of species, were they evolutionary dead-enders who were doomed to failure by possibly more modern, smarter, successful ancestors?

For the past 150 or so odd years, controversy has been swirling around Neanderthals. Were they societal? Did they have a language? How did they live? The theories have abounded, flip-flopping every decade or so.

A major discovery came in Belgium in 1886. There, Neanderthal remains of two nearly-complete skeletons were found along with stone-age tools. It had at one point previously been thought that Neanderthals were not tool-users, a modern-day gauge of intelligence among animals. An example of animal tool use is chimpanzees that have been observed inserting sticks into termite mounds to bring the insects up for a tasty simian treat. These Neanderthal skeletons were confirmed as bona fide types of ancient humans and dispelled the fact that others thought that the remains were of more modern victims of any variety of maladies.

By the late 19th and early 20th centuries, newspapers had taken to calling “Neanderthal Man” as a possible ancestor. Anthropologists were loathe to agree with that idea. Discoveries in Croatia from 1899 to 1905 of some Neanderthals revealed remains that were shattered and looked like they had been exposed to fire. This led anthropologists to conclude that “Neanderthal Men” were cannibals.

Early errant analysis hindered the conception of Neanderthals. According to “Neanderthal Code”, a National Geographic broadcast,

“The most egregious example was French Anthropologist Marcellin Boule, who published an influential monograph on Neanderthals in the early 1910s. Boule incorrectly reconstructed Neanderthals’ anatomy, giving them a stooping posture, a slouching gait and a protruding, thrust-forward head.” Boule made further, erroneous assumptions that went beyond anything found in all of the fossil evidence. “It is probable that Neanderthal Man must have possessed only a rudimentary psychic nature, superior certainly to that of the anthropoid apes, but markedly inferior to that of any modern race whatsoever,” Boule concluded. “Without doubt he had only the rudiments of articulate speech.”

Another anatomist, Arthur Keith, a Scotsman, viewed Neanderthals “as a race of primitives who’d been wiped out by ‘more virile’ modern humans, just as European colonists had overwhelmed native peoples in the Americas and Australia.”

Another shift in thinking about Neanderthals happened in the 1930s. Graveyards were discovered in Italy and France. These Neanderthal burial grounds revealed evidence of complex burial rituals with carefully placed animal bones, tools, and even a crown of stones surrounding one male Neanderthal’s head. Could this actually mean that instead of Neanderthals being seen as nothing more than animalistic brutes, they were truly intelligent creatures possessing spiritual beliefs?

A French paleontologist in the 1940s, Camille Arambourg, compared an x-ray of his own neck to those of a Neanderthal. He found striking similarities. This helped to prove that Boule’s theory of Neanderthals was indeed quite wrong.

Theories changed yet again in the 1980s. In 1987, biochemists Rebecca Cann, Mark Stoneking, and Allan Wilson used analysis of mitochondrial DNA from over one hundred people around the world to prove that the first anatomically modern humans developed in Africa over 200,000 years ago. Africa has long been credited as being the cradle of human life. Their findings were published in the scientific journal, *Nature*, which rejected the idea that Neanderthals were among our ancestors. The spread of modern humans out of Africa to the other continents helped drive the Neanderthals to extinction, as they could not successfully compete.

As with any theory, there are always those who will disagree and try to prove previous theories wrong. Skeletal remains of a four-year old boy were discovered in Portugal in 1998. The interesting thing about this skeleton, was that he displayed both Neanderthal and modern human features. This only helped to bolster the theory that Neanderthals were among our ancestors. But there was no clearcut way to prove it.

Fast forward to 2006 and scientists at the Max Planck Institute for Evolutionary Anthropology in Leipzig, Germany, who partnered with a Connecticut company called 454 Life Sciences. They collaborated on a project to actually map the Neanderthal genome using fragments of DNA extracted from Neanderthal remains.

Work on this project is still ongoing. But a fascinating early analysis of Neanderthal DNA may suggest yet another shift in our perceptions of Neanderthals as ancestors. The joint research team has discovered that Neanderthals had exactly the same version of a gene called FoxP2. This is the gene that is associated with language. Now, this would be very hard to reject while still maintaining that the two groups evolved separately. The conclusion is coming fast that there had to have been interbreeding between the two populations. Could modern humans have acquired their language gene by interbreeding with Neanderthals? And if interbreeding did occur, it would account for why there are no Neanderthals today. They were simply assimilated into our family tree.

Source Material: <http://channel.nationalgeographic.com>

“Neanderthal Code”



Look at this spiffy poster and go buy one! 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>

## AVENGER FICTION

*“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 take another peek at the Avenger's chronology, as chronicled in the many tales written by our members. In this segment, we look back to 2300 to 2304, as the Avenger moves into the 24th Century...

### TIMELINE OF AVENGER HISTORY, PART VII

(All Years - Terran Calendar)

2300 (March):

Lt. Commander Leslie Pearson resigns as Second Officer, and is repositioned as Assistant Chief of Communications. She is succeeded as Second Officer by Lt. Commander Gor, who continues to double as Chief of Security. [Avenger Status Report--SD10004.05]

2300 (June):

Commander Se'ele is recovered from Iskdraan. She is remanded to the care of Star Fleet Medical for extended rehabilitation. [Personnel File--Se'ele]

2300 (August):

Commander Zachary Zulkowski leaves the Avenger abruptly, and under mysterious circumstances. The reason for his departure remains unknown to the vast majority of the crew. [Club Happenings]

2300 (October):

Lt. Commander Matthew Rielly is assigned as Chief of Engineer. [Avenger Status Report-SD10011.07]

2301 (September):

Dr. Imhotep Arudis is transferred to the Avenger to aid in combating an outbreak of Spontaneous Deltan Pheromone Syndrome. Following his successful containment of the disease, he remains on board Avenger, where he and Dr. Ann Marie Reilly resume their relationship from years earlier. [“Love in the Lab”]

2302 (January):

Commander Dalek Kagan resigns as Chief of Communications for personal reasons, and takes a three-month leave from Star Fleet. [Avenger Status Report--SD10201.08]

Avenger Executive Officer Commander Keahi Uhma is promoted to captain and assigned to the command of the U.S.S. Ascendant. She is succeeded by Commander Se'ele, who has recovered from her prior ordeals and has been approved for return to active duty. [“Scene 24”]

2302 (February):

Commander Se'ele is unable to continue as Executive Officer of the Avenger, and spends approximately a week in the Star Fleet Behavioral and Psychological Services Center in San Francisco. Following this period, and a brief time in a step-down facility with friends, she returns to the Avenger, but in a much less stressful role as a Medical Officer (Recreation). [“Iso”]

2302 (April):

Commander Judith Waidlich is assigned as Executive Officer of the Avenger. [Avenger Announcement--SD10204.23]

2302 (June):

Admiral Rosenzweig is transferred back to command of the 7th Fleet. He retains his position as a Fleet troubleshooter, but moves his base of operations to Starbase 7. Shortly after his arrival at the starbase, a work bee loses control in the dock and smashes into the bridge of SH 2264 Timocuan. Joining the incident investigation, Rosenzweig discovers that the work bee has an unexpected “passenger”, an alien life-form of a type first seen aboard the NX-class starship Enterprise 151 years earlier. Making contact with the creature, the investigation team learns how and why it got there, and Rosenzweig orders the ST 587 Albany to return the creature to its homeworld and DD 4347 Sun Tzu to locate the civilian vessel that picked the creature up in the first place. [Club Happenings/“Back in the Saddle Again”]

Dr. Ann Marie Reilly and Dr. Imhotep Arudis are married in a ceremony by a stream on a planetary surface. [Skit at Avenger's 17th Anniversary Party]

## AVENGER FICTION

2302 (September):

Captain Maldonado has Avenger's Chief of Recreation, Lourdes Courtesan, start preparations for a reception for the deployment of the 769th Marine Strike Group ("Avenging Angels") aboard Avenger. ["Caramel Spice"]

2302 (October):

By order of Admiral Tolwyn, the 769th Marine Strike Group (Spec Ops) ("Avenging Angels") is deployed aboard the Avenger under the command of Marine Captain Enric'a Brugman. The Avenger picks up the Strike Group at Station Independence. ["War Crimes, A New Beginning"]

2303 (April):

Lt. Commander D'HamYu T'HoD is assigned as Chief of Communications of the Avenger. [Avenger Status Report--SD10305.05]

The Command Staff is as follows:

Commanding Officer: Captain Carlos Maldonado, Jr.

Executive Officer: Commander Judith Waidlich

Second Officer: Commander Gor

Chief Science Officer: Lt. Commander Setak

Chief Medical Officer: Captain Ann Marie Reilly

Chief of Operations: Commander Lauren Milan

Chief Engineer: Commander Matthew Rielly

Chief of Communications: Lt. Commander D'HamYu T'HoD

Chief of Security: Commander Gor

[Avenger Personnel Roster--10304, Adjusted]

2303 (July):

Commander Lauren Milan is promoted to Captain and leaves the position of Chief of Operations, transferring to PA 1069 Archer as Second Officer and Squadron Liaison. She is succeeded as Chief of Operations on the Avenger by Lt. Commander Huz'Yur S'H'I. [Club Happenings/"The Survey Begins"]

2303 (October):

The Avenger embarks on a survey of the planet UFC-18249 IV. On the planet, it discovers stone ruins resembling Stonehenge. When a system of caves is discovered near the ruins, a landing party goes into the caves to explore. Upon descending, they discover a city inhabited by a humanoid species who call themselves the Foroon. ["The Survey Begins"/"The Circle"/"Descent into Wonder"]

2303 (December):

The Avenger is assigned support and monitoring duties for the recently-completed CA 3063 U.S.S. Hathor, which has begun a shakedown cruise under Captain Elsa Blair. Major Enric'a Brugman begins training for Operations duties. The Hathor will report regularly to Avenger, which will assess performance and file reports back to Star Fleet Command. [Club Happenings]

2304 (January):

Captain Carlos Maldonado, Jr. is transferred from command of the Avenger and reassigned as Base Operations Officer at Starbase 29, where Chaym n'Maldonado had previously been transferred with their children to continue her advanced holotechnology research. He is succeeded by Captain Judith Waidlich. [Club Happenings; Chaym's Transfer at Heidi Maldonado's Request]

The Klingon bird of prey Juk'Ma attempts to enter the area of Klingon space known as Feklar's Furnace, and is destroyed. The Avenger responds to the Juk'Ma's distress signal, and witnesses the ship's destruction. ["Shakedown of the U.S.S. Hathor"]

2304 (February):

Captain D'HamYu T'HoD is assigned as Executive Officer of the Avenger. He continues to double as Chief of Communications. [Avenger Status Report--SD10403.01]

2304 (April):

Captain Dalek Kagan is reassigned to the position of Chief of Communications, freeing Captain T'HoD to focus exclusively on his duties as Executive Officer. [Avenger Status Report-SD10405.04]

2304 (May):

Captain Gor resigns as Chief of Security, but continues as Second Officer. He is succeeded as Chief of Security by Lt. Commander Gregg Bergeron. [Avenger Status Report--SD10405.04]

2304 (June):

Captain Ann Marie Reilly takes extended leave for personal reasons. Commander Imhotep Arudis serves as Acting Chief Medical Officer.

[Avenger Status Report--SD10406.03]

Admiral Rosenzweig leaves command of the 7th Fleet, and returns to his position as a Fleet troubleshooter and strategic deployment specialist at

## AVENGER FICTION

Star Fleet HQ. [Club Happenings]

2304 (July):

CA 3063 Hathor completes its shakedown cruise and is commissioned. Avenger completes its duties as shakedown monitoring vessel, and Lieutenant Susanne Smite and newly-promoted Major Enrique Brugman transfer to the Hathor. [Commissioning of Hathor Chapter at Shore Leave 26/"Shakedown of the U.S.S. Hathor"]

2304 (August):

Lt. Commander Gregg Bergeron leaves the position of Chief of Security, transferring to DD 4024 Jaguar. [Club Happenings]

2304 (October):

Captain Ann Marie Reilly is promoted to Fleet Captain, and at the end of her leave, transfers to Starbase 7. Commander Arudis is appointed as Chief Medical Officer of the Avenger (no longer acting). [Club Happenings]

2304 (November):

Admiral Alex Rosenzweig and his team visit a Star Fleet base on a planet in the Kematon Star System on a troubleshooting mission. On the way home, Rosenzweig tells the others a story of an early mission of his. ["Star Survey"]

The Avenger arrives at the Telawab Star System to begin a survey and mapping assignment. As the ship approaches the star, they encounter an alien vessel called the Adventurer, crewed by a race from the far side of the galaxy called the Ss'teens. The ship is stranded in Federation space due to a malfunction of its experimental propulsion system. The crew of the Avenger assist the Ss'teens crew in repairing their ship and making it secure for the trip home using a standard warp drive, as well as developing a cryosleep system to give the short-lived race a chance at surviving to reach their home. The Adventurer departs on its journey, carrying information to contact the Federation, when they are ready. ["The Other Foot"]

[Most of the stories referred to herein may be found on the Avenger website. Hop over to the Fiction Logs section and take a look! If you don't find what you're looking for, contact ADM Rosenzweig.]

\* \* \* \* \*

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.

## MOVIE REVIEW: "STAR TREK" (2009)

By Alex Rosenzweig

**(Note: This review contains significant spoilers, for anyone who still hasn't seen the film yet.)**

This new film represents a first for Star Trek, and had been long-awaited in many circles. For the first time ever, it involved a recasting of characters first established by previous performers, and it returned to a time before the beginning of the historic 5-year mission under James Kirk, a portion of which was presented in the original Star Trek TV series. I'd followed it from its original announcement through to the day of release, and have had a lot of feelings built up about it, over many months.

Release finally came, and I think it fair to say it was highly anticipated. <grin>

So... After all that, what did I think?

Overall... About a 7 on a 1-10 scale.

Parts of the film I really, really liked. Other parts, not so much. I'll start out by admitting one bias: I hate reboots that tell the audience, "Yeah, that stuff you've known about this property for however long? Forget it." Hate 'em. I think that sort of reboot, no matter what clothing you dress it up in, is the worst form of creative bankruptcy. So I went into the film knowing I'd have fanboy issues, and I carefully set those aside in a separate box when I watched. What took me by surprise was the degree to which the movie's story logic broke down, even just viewed on its own terms. More on that in a bit.

Probably the best aspects of the film were the writing and portrayal of the characters. Here's where the movie was spot-on. The writers have a good grasp of the characters, and it showed in the film. It worked, and worked very well. And the casting team deserve tremendous praise, because pretty much without exception, the cast were able to capture the essence of the characters, and bring them to us in engaging and enjoyable ways. Special note goes to Karl Urban for his portrayal of McCoy; he often seemed to be just plain channeling DeForest Kelley, and he really brought out McCoy's flair, even in a more limited role than McCoy usually gets. Special note also goes to Bruce Greenwood for his portrayal of Pike, fleshing out that character and giving us a peek at what Pike might have been like later in his command than we'd seen him during "The Cage". Finally, a tip of the hat goes to both Spocks, Zachary Quinto and Leonard Nimoy. I'd long believed that Quinto would make a fine Spock, and he does, showing us the struggle that Spock had as a younger man to find the balance between his "logical" and "emotional" sides. And Nimoy, as a vaguely Kenobi-esque older Spock, still delivers the goods, with a mix of intensity and sardonic wit that has been a hallmark of all his later performances of Spock. The scene between the two men late in the film has some of the best lines in the movie.

I thought that the cinematography was effective, though



occasionally a touch overdone, especially with lens flares and related glare. But it did what it needed to do, which was to put the viewer into that world, and it did so effectively. Additionally, the film is just visually rich, and gorgeous to look at. The studio spent a great deal of money on the film, and one can see the effort that went into putting the money on the screen, as it were.

The film's pacing was excellent, as well, as was the overall direction by Mr. Abrams. The film moves quickly, and so much is going on that there's barely a chance to catch one's breath until almost at the end.

For the most part, too, the dialogue was solid on a line-by-line basis, with a lot of good lines and a great deal of humor. It's not slapstick humor, either; it fits organically with the situations, and it often serves to highlight the characters and who they are. Well done in that respect.

The visual effects were also really excellent, though the exterior of the Enterprise--which wasn't awful, and looks better in motion than just sitting still--was still such that I didn't for a minute believe that the original version of the Enterprise, upgraded to a comparable level of detail, wouldn't have worked just as well, and maybe better. Other ships, like the Kelvin, which didn't have to deal with comparisons of that sort, stand out very nicely. Many of the space and planet shots are very rich and beautiful, and even more subtle things like the window/viewer overlays and such, work well.

Some other aspects of the film were more hit-and-miss, though. Production design was very much a mixed-bag. Some of it was quite slick, notably the Vulcan scenes, lots of San Francisco and the Academy, and the Narada interiors (although the latter were really quite confusing about just how the interior of that ship worked). On the other hand, I thought a lot of the Enterprise and Kelvin were really a bit overdone, including the bridges and in the corridors, but they still didn't bother me too much (except for the bridge windows, which are a just plain bad idea, even though the viewer overlays were pretty cool!). But... the lower decks/engineering/shuttlebay areas... Yuck! Okay, we know they were shot in buildings. Problem was, they looked it! They just didn't look or feel like parts of a vehicle, and they certainly didn't look like the advanced sorts of hardware an interstellar spacecraft would be using, and that tended to break the believability of that aspect of the film. It also looked really obvious that in those areas, the interior spaces didn't seem at all to match

continued on page 18

continued from page 17

the exteriors of the ships. For next time, it'd be worth it to spend some money to make engineering and shuttlebay sets that would maintain the verisimilitude.

Then we get to the stuff that just wasn't so good. First off, the whole alternate universe thing... I pretty much hated it. It wasn't necessary, and in many ways, it took away some of the power of the story, because it no longer leads into the rest of Star Trek at all. It made the entire film a giant "What if...?" story, and that weakened it. The temptation to go that route should have been resisted.

That said, what actually startled me about the film was now many times the plot asked me to suspend disbelief in ways that it really shouldn't have. A big example was how minimally-defended Earth and Vulcan are portrayed as being. Admittedly, there's a bit of reference to the Fleet being mostly gathered in the Laurentian System (cute "Transformers" nod, by the way!), but if it was a big enough crisis that a StarFleet of several hundred starships was all gathered there, with only a couple of ships left near Earth and a squadron of eight vessels sent to Vulcan, there really would need to be a lot more suggestion that whatever was going on in the aforementioned Laurentian System was huge! Otherwise there'd have been a number of ships in both the Sol and Eridani Systems. And I guarantee you, after Vulcan was wiped off the galactic map, all the other core worlds of the Federation-Earth, Andor, Tellar, etc.-would have been on major military alerts, and by the time the Narada got to Earth, it would have been staring at 50 ships, all waiting for it, weapons hot, shields primed, and with 50 captains saying, "Yeah, come on, bring it." The thing is, a whole lot of the story depends on the Narada being able to do its thing relatively unbothered, and even though

it's powerful, it's not invulnerable, as we saw even when the Kelvin collided with it in 2233. And without that suspension of disbelief, the story logic starts falling apart. The frustrating thing is, it wouldn't have been that hard to fix all that, really. Ahh, well.

(BTW, a really big giant raspberry goes to whichever of the writers decided that blowing up Vulcan was a good idea. Wrong! I hated that aspect of the film. I was willing to go with almost all the rest of the changes, but that was a real showstopper for me.)

So, there were a lot of good points, and some serious bad points, too, which prevented me from really rating the film as more than a 7. Still and all, I had fun with it. An important thing that the film succeeds with is that it's exuberant and energetic, the way TOS was, and the way that most of the other movies (both TOS- and TNG-based) were not. It really doesn't surprise me that the audience has responded so well to that. It's been sorely needed in Trek for a long time. I just feel that the fun and exuberance works better if I don't think too much about the plot-logic, or about the long-term ramifications of the story, and I don't feel I should have to put that qualifier in to consider a movie fun.

In closing, I said months ago that I felt that this story could have been told in such a way as to result in a universe functionally indistinguishable from that of TOS, if the writers had cared to do so. (Yes, I know full-well that they deliberately chose not to do that, and I disagree with that creative choice most strongly.) After watching the film, I am now quite certain that that feeling is true. As of my third viewing, I'm pretty sure I've figured out how to resolve all the conundra involved with supporting my assertion. Took some thought, but it worked well. Partially it's a testament to the work that did go into the script that it was fairly easy to solve what I felt were the film's serious problems. On the other hand, if I could figure it out in two days, why couldn't two very talented screenwriters do so in a few months? (Or was it just that they didn't care to do so?)

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## TREKKIN' THE WEB

From Alex Rosenzweig:

### Digitally EFX'd Geometry - TOS.5 Enterprise

A digital modeler and artist named Douglas E. Graves became the latest to take a shot at modeling a new version of the starship Enterprise, as seen in the original Star Trek series. His work is superb, and totally worth a look. This should have been in the movie!

[http://deg3d.biz/splash\\_TOS.5\\_E/TOS.5\\_E.html](http://deg3d.biz/splash_TOS.5_E/TOS.5_E.html)

### Star Trek Gallery

But speaking of the new ship for the movie, a theater in Los Angeles called the ArcLight has a display of several physical models of the new version of the Enterprise from the film. A site called QuantumMechanix.com took a bunch of really good images of the ship, and while it's not quite the digital model, these physical models are authorized and approved by Paramount, so 'til the movie comes out, they're probably the best we'll see.

[http://www.quantummechanix.com/Star\\_Trek\\_Gallery.html](http://www.quantummechanix.com/Star_Trek_Gallery.html)

### The Venus Project (and the Designs of Jacques Fresco)

Last issue, I introduced you to the Drex Files site. Well, one of the other sites I discovered via the Drex Files is the Venus Project site, which features the designs and art of futurist Jacques Fresco. The imagery alone is amazing, and the ideas are pretty darn cool, too. Here's some of the introduction:

"The Venus Project presents a bold, new direction for humanity that entails nothing less than the total redesign of our culture. There are many people today who are concerned with the serious problems that face our modern society: unemployment, violent crime, replacement of humans by technology, over-population and a decline in the Earth's ecosystems.

"As you will see, The Venus Project is dedicated to confronting all of these problems by actively engaging in the research, development, and application of workable solutions. Through the use of innovative approaches to social awareness, educational incentives, and the consistent application of the best that science and technology can offer directly to the social system, The Venus Project offers a comprehensive plan for social reclamation in which human beings, technology, and nature will be able to coexist in a long-term, sustainable state of dynamic equilibrium."

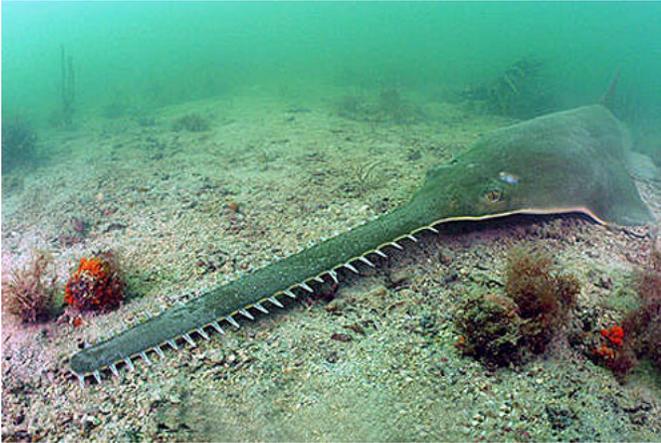
Pretty neat, huh?

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

# “Admiral! There Be Whales HERE!”

## LIONFISH, TIGER SHARKS AND . . . SAWFISH? OH, MY!

By Annie Slonski



On Saturday, April 25th, members of the U.S.S. Avenger (Judy Waidlich, Alex Rosenzweig, Todd Brugmans, and myself) along with two members of the U.S.S. Challenger (Bob and Emily Vosseller) met up at the Adventure Aquarium in Camden, NJ for some “undersea” exploration.

We were impressed by the recently-renovated aquarium. The exhibit that fascinated all of us, and that we found the most interesting, was their extensive shark exhibit. The sharks’ habitat was enormous and teeming with not only sharks, but rays, fish of varying species, sea turtles, and one lone sawfish. This got me to thinking that very little is known about this unique denizen of the ocean.

The sawfish, which is actually a ray, is one of the largest and most distinctive species of rays in the world. Once plentiful and found throughout the Gulf of Mexico and up and down the Atlantic coastline, these animals have recently become an endangered species. Currently, sawfish are found most frequently in the waters off of Southwest Florida. Their decline is attributed to decades of capture, the loss of their habitat due to coastal development-as so many other marine species have encountered-and a low reproductive rate. Extinction in this country has become a real possibility. Due to this fact, in 2003, the National Marine Fisheries Service listed the sawfish as endangered under the US Endangered Species Act. There are currently seven species of sawfish, but due to limited research, a taxonomic review may reduce this number. The most likely inhabitant of the Southwest Florida waters is the smalltooth sawfish, *Pristis pectinata*, a member of the family Pristidae (which refers to all sawfish).

In regards to their reproduction, sawfish are “ovoviviparous”, which means that they produce embryos that mature internally and are nourished via a yolk sac. The average gestation period for a sawfish is approximately one year, with anywhere between 15 and 20 offspring, or pups, per litter. Saws of pups are fully developed and sheathed. The saws are malleable, thereby preventing injury to the female during birth. As with so many other ocean-dwelling juveniles, sawfish are prone to predation. By producing multiple offspring, at least one or more will survive to maturity to continue the propagation of the species.

Unfortunately for the sawfish, they are not only valued as a

food fish, but also for their livers. The oil from their livers is used in medicines, soaps and various leather tanning products. Their saws are sold for the curiosity factor and adult sawfish are mounted for display. Because the smalltooth sawfish is a fighter when caught on the fishing line, it is considered a prize gamefish.

We have to remember that sawfish are unique in their own right. They possess a large-toothed rostrum which is commonly called a saw, hence their name. Sawfish bodies are flattened, much like skates and rays, and they spend much of their time lying on the ocean floor. Sawfish have the ability to breathe while lying on the ocean floor by drawing water in through their gills, much like other fish. But, unlike other fish, they breathe through large holes that are located behind their eyes.

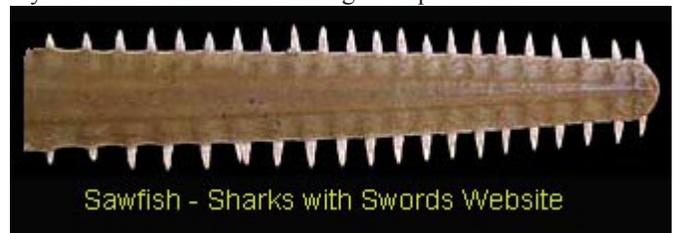
Like skates and rays, their mouths are situated underneath their bodies. Sawfish catch their prey using at least two different methods. For crustaceans buried under the sand, they will sweep their saws from side to side, disturbing the sand and routing out their prey. Sawfish will also swim through schools of fish swiping their saws back and forth through the school, thereby either stunning or impaling the fish. On occasion, sawfish have been observed wiping their saws on the ocean floor to dislodge fish that have been impaled on their rostrum’s teeth.

Fossil evidence suggests that the sawfish evolved from extinct primitive sharks. In fact, there were various families of sawfish that exhibited a wide array of body modifications who once swam in primitive oceans the world over. It is from these extinct, diverse sawfish families that the modern sawfish emanates. Dating back to the Eocene Period (65 million years ago), many of the species within the family of Pristidae are represented only by their fossil records.

The sawfish’s size is impressive. They can be anywhere from approximately 5 meters up to a maximum length of 7.3 meters. Their saws are also used not only for feeding, but also for defense against other predators such as sharks.

Sawfish pose no threat to humans if left undisturbed. Also, as potential prey, humans are too large a target. Caution is advised when approaching a sawfish because, when threatened, they will use their rostrums to strike from side-to-side, using considerable force. The outcome is not always guaranteed to be in the human’s favor.

With careful conservation efforts, the sawfish can hopefully one day be removed from the endangered species list.



Sawfish - Sharks with Swords Website

Sources:

Mote Marine Laboratory - <http://www.mote.org>  
 Ichthyology at the Florida Museum of Natural History - <http://www.flmnh.ufl.edu>

# TREK BOOK NEWS

Here are the highlights of the next few months in Star Trek books...

## Available May 2009:

**Star Trek (ST:TOS, Trade Paperback), by Alan Dean Foster, based upon the screenplay by Roberto Orci and Alex Kurtzman**

The novelization of the new Star Trek film! Torn by tragedy, a Romulan from the future goes back to try to change the past, with potentially dire consequences!

## **Open Secrets (ST:VAN), by Dayton Ward & Kevin Dilmore**

The Taurus Reach is in turmoil.

With tensions mounting between the Federation and the Klingon Empire, Ambassador Jetanien works frantically on Starbase Vanguard to halt the escalation toward war. Commodore Diego Reyes, the station's former commander, awaits trial for treason, while the shattered mind of his intelligence officer, T'Prynn, becomes the battlefield in a fight for her very life.

But even as matters deteriorate, the discoveries made in the Taurus Reach have attracted one of the Federation's most promising scientific minds: Dr. Carol Marcus believes she is close to solving a puzzle that will transform her life's work. Meanwhile, an unexpected defection brings a new perspective to the investigation, and Vanguard's Lieutenant Ming Xiong is confronted with an artifact that could be the key to decoding the Taurus Meta-Genome.

With Operation: Vanguard teetering between its greatest breakthrough and a conflict that could engulf two quadrants, its future may depend on the man Star Fleet has selected to replace Reyes as base commander: Admiral Heihachiro Nogura.

## Available June 2009:

### **Troublesome Minds (ST:TOS), by Dave Galanter**

While exploring the unmapped frontier, the starship Enterprise responds to a distress call from an unknown ship. Captain James T. Kirk turns first contact into a threat of interstellar war-by saving the life of a man his own people abandoned. Berlis, colony leader of a telepathic race calling themselves the Isitri, claims not to know why those from his homeworld want him dead. Now Kirk must either find a way to wrench billions from the grip of one man, or be responsible for the destruction of two planets.

## Available July 2009:

### **Losing the Peace (ST:TNG), by William Leisner**

Continuing the events detailed in "Star Trek: Destiny": With the displacement and devastation wrought by the Borg, can the Federation survive?

The Borg invasion has left the Federation reeling. Countless people have been killed or displaced by the wanton destruction, and now seek solace on planets that struggle just to feed their own. The ideals wrought in the paradise that was the United Federation of Planets now seem to be a distant dream. Star Fleet is shattered, giving old enemies a chance to gain the upper hand. The question now is, what can one ship, and one captain, do to prevent humanity from losing the peace?

## Available May 2009:

### **The Soul Key (ST:DS9), by Olivia Woods**

Continuing the events from Star Trek: Fearful Symmetry, a new novel in the ongoing Deep Space Nine series set after the end of the critically acclaimed television series.

Captain Kira's lookalike, Iliana Ghemor, dreams of fulfilling a prophecy that will mark her as the one true Emissary of the mirror universe-a messianic figure who will lead her followers into a war that could trigger the cleansing of countless alternate Kiras in countless parallel realities. But the stakes are higher than anyone imagines, for the pull of destiny tugs at other souls who are swept into the vortex of the Prophets, remote and timeless beings who have set these events in motion. Yet the outcome of this struggle for the fate of one universe will ripple across many others, giving shape to a future that will prove to be greatest trial yet for the heroes of station Deep Space 9.

**U.S.S. AVENGER - MISSION DOCKET****13 June 2008 - Avenger 24th Anniversary Picnic****Babbage Park, Edison Ave., North Brunswick, NJ**

We've been around for 24 years! Party time! And we'll once again gather for our annual picnic. Food and fun in a pleasant park, with a covered area in case of rain. And who knows when a water battle might break out? >:) Hours: 12:30 to ??? Cost: \$7.00 per person

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

**14 June 2009 - 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 TBA. Dinner to follow.

Event Coordinator: FCAPT Judy Waidlich, waidlich@rci.rutgers.edu

**10-12 July 2009 - Shore Leave 31**

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 Jason Momoa, Rachel Luttrell, Robert Picardo, Ethan Phillips, Kevin Sorbo, Adrienne Wilkinson, Christopher Heyerdahl, and Vanessa Angel, along with lots of authors Event Website: <http://www.shore-leave.com/>

**26 July 2009 - Franklin Institute Trip****Philadelphia, PA****Trip to the museum to check out the regular exhibits and special exhibits.**Event Website: <http://www2.fi.edu/>

Event Coordinator: CMDR Annie Slonski, piperangus@gmail.com

**6-9 August 2009 - 2009 STARFLEET International Conference**

Greensboro-High Point Marriott Airport Hotel, Greensboro, NC

STARFLEET's annual get-together. This year's conference celebrates the 35th Anniversary of STARFLEET, and the 40th Anniversary of the first manned landing on the moon.

Cost: Registration is \$30 until 20 June 2009, and \$35 in advance thereafter, and \$40 at the door, for the weekend. The banquet cost is \$35. Event Website: <http://www.ic2009.org/>**9 August 2009 - 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 TBA. Dinner to follow.

Event Coordinator: FCAPT Judy Waidlich, waidlich@rci.rutgers.edu

**13 September 2009 - 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 TBA. Dinner to follow.

Event Coordinator: FCAPT Judy Waidlich, waidlich@rci.rutgers.edu

**19-20 September 2009 - Star Trek: The Exhibition Closing Weekend**

Franklin Institute, Philadelphia, PA

Regional event for closing weekend. Volunteers needed in uniform. Coordinate with members of the U.S.S. Sovereign.

Event Website: <http://www2.fi.edu/>

Event Coordinators: ADM Beryl Washington, KapnKitty@aol.com or LT Stacey Wright, gulana94@yahoo.com

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.

Scenes from STAR TREK: The Exhibit’s Opening weekend at Philadelphia’s Franklin Institute



STARFLEET’s Region 7 turned out in force and in uniform to support the opening weekend of the traveling “Star Trek Exhibit” which is showing at the Franklin Institute through September 2009. Photos: Judy Waidlich

# “Admiral! There Be Whales HERE!”

By Annie Slonski  
“Of Kings and Queens and Unicorns”

As far back as the age of the Renaissance, and probably even farther back in human history, images of a majestic, ethereal, and elusive beast were a large part of man’s mythology. It was commonly thought that this wondrous animal known as a unicorn looked like a horse with a magnificent spiraling horn on its noble head. But was it? All mythologies have their basis in reality. As much as we WANT to

believe in unicorns, we can't be too hasty. Let's explore!

Where did these slender spiraling horns come from? If they did not come from a unicorn, then where did they come from? Well, for starters, we can look as far back as the Vikings, the mighty people of the north. Vikings depended on the ocean for their livelihoods. And as we know, the oceans contain some very unusual animals, some of which we are still discovering to this day.

When Vikings traveled over the oceans to distant lands, they brought with them valuable items for trade, including these horns. The traders who bought the horns from the Vikings, in turn brought the horns to more widespread areas around the globe, thereby enhancing the mythos of the unicorn. The horns were traded without any specific description of the animal it came from, so this unusual spiral appendage created a great deal of fantastic stories.

But that horn first traded by Vikings did NOT belong to any unicorn. It belonged to an arctic dweller, and a strange one at that.

Enter the Narwhal. The Narwhal is a medium-sized cetacean with no dorsal fin, only a dorsal ridge which made it easier for the whale to swim under the polar ice, unusually-shaped tail flukes, and only two teeth in their upper skulls. In males, one of those teeth (always the left)

erupts through the upper lip and grows straight out and just happens to be a long, slender, spiraling horn or, more accurately, an ivory tusk. These tusks were once traded for ten times their weight in gold.

Females, on the other hand, do not have tusks, but as with any species, there are exceptions. Some females exhibit a much smaller protruding tusk, not nearly as long as the up to 2.7-meter tusks males grow. A Narwhal's tusk is the only straight tusk to be found anywhere in nature. If you think about elephants and walruses, their tusks are curved and smooth. Compare it to the Narwhal, which is straight and spiraled.

It is unusual to observe a two-horned Narwhal, but a few specimens have been found, and many of these skulls are on display in natural history museums scattered throughout the world.

The word Narwhal comes from the Old Norse word "nar," which translates to "corpse",



and "hval" meaning "whale". The corpse description of its name refers to the Narwhal's grayish mottled pigmentation, which can resemble that of a man drowned at sea. It may also be because male Narwhals have been observed laying at the surface upside down for many minutes on end.

Even their scientific name, *Monodon monoceros*, meaning "one-tooth, one-horn", is a misnomer because the Narwhal has no horns and two teeth! So, even scientific names can be misleading.

Male Narwhals are typically about 4.6 meters long (not counting the tusk) and females are about 4 meters long. Their life expectancy is generally thought to be approximately 50 years, but a study done on Narwhal eyes revealed one of the subjects at 115 years old. It is not known if this long life expectancy of one hundred plus years is typical. Much is still unknown about this shy and unusual animal. But we

are slowly learning.

Their elongated tooth is actually the opposite of our teeth when examined closely. Our teeth are incredibly durable and able to survive things like fire and outlast our bodies well after death. Human teeth are hard, which makes them useful for what they were designed for, chewing food. The hard enamel encases the sensitive pulp and nerves, which when exposed, can cause severe pain.

A Narwhal's tooth has the sensitive parts on the outside and the dense, hard material on the inside, or the middle. We as of yet cannot understand why their most sensitive part of the tooth is on the outside. It was once thought that it was because their tooth acted like a sensor, gauging temperatures, water pressure, and salinity. If this were the case, then why do only the males have them? Wouldn't the females need that kind of sensory information as well? That theory has all but been discounted. Do Narwhals use their tusks to do battle with one another? Narwhals have been seen "jousting" with their tusks, but not to any degree of aggressiveness. Evidence also does not support another theory, that the Narwhal uses its tusk to break through the polar ice. No such occurrence has ever been documented. It is more commonly believed that the male's tusk is for the purposes of mating, acting as a flashy sexual characteristic, much like a male lion's full mane, or a male peacock's long, luxurious feathers. It is also thought that the tusks are used to establish social dominance amongst males much like the antlers of an elk, moose or deer.

Narwhals are deep divers, and feed mostly on cod. They augment their diet with squid, shrimp and other assorted fish, but cod seems to be their food of choice. Arctic cod live in extremely deep waters. Narwhals have been known to dive down to over 1,800 meters to find cod. Like all toothed whales, Narwhals find their food through the use of echolocation, an ability to locate objects using sound, similar to the sonar used on submarines. During the warmer arctic months, Narwhals feed on fish that do not dwell as far down.

To go in search of their main food, Narwhals travel into small bays from the open ocean through the ice floes where the cod are commonly found. Narwhals usually travel in small groups, or pods, of anywhere between four and 20 individuals. They have been observed in pods of one hundred animals or more when the food is plentiful. But swimming into these small bays has its own risks. At any time, the shifting polar ice can cut them off from the open ocean and they are all forced to bob up and down and share the same very small opening in the ice to breathe. If the small area becomes iced over, the Narwhals would be forced to swim under the ice trying to find another source of air.

One of the Narwhal's close cousins, the Beluga whale, has been kept in captivity for many years. Unfortunately, attempts to keep a Narwhal in captivity have proved to be unsuccessful. Any Narwhal brought into a captive environment has only lived for a few months, at best. Unfortunately, there is no understanding as to why. So if you want to see a Narwhal up close for yourself, get out your warmest gear and set out on an expedition for the arctic waters near Russia, Greenland, or northern Canada.

Source Material: Narwhal.Info <http://www.narwhal.info/>

HowStuffWorks

NOAA Ocean Explorer <http://oceanexplorer.noaa.gov/>

**STARFLEET News:**

\*\* The new and improved sfi.org website is officially LIVE!

\*\* VCS Dave Blaser announced that STARFLEET has set up a Twitter account. If you'd like to follow us on Twitter, you can view the STARFLEET Twitter feed at: [http://twitter.com/sfi\\_org](http://twitter.com/sfi_org)

\*\* STARFLEET Operations has announced the commissioning of the following chapters:

- U.S.S. Leonidas, NCC-71801, based in Region 1
- U.S.S. Blackheart, NCC-2327, based in Region 7

\*\* STARFLEET Shakedown Operations has announced the launch of the following chapters:

- U.S.S. Buchanan, NCC-71833, based in Region 7
- U.S.S. Pinguin, NCC-53777, based in Region 5

\*\* Chief of Computer Operations, John Halliday, announced two new corporate partners: Fandango and Office Max.

For those who wish to get a fantastic discount on the printing of promotional materials, consider using the STARFLEET Office Max (MPress) discount at any Office Max store. Here is the excerpt from the sfi.org website under the Member Benefits section:

OfficeMax - ImPress  
 ID: 888800010491754033  
 Plain Paper 2.8c / image  
 Color Paper 3.4c / image  
 Folding 2.0c / image  
 Personalized Address Stamp \$15.00 - small; \$21.00 - large

STARFLEET also recently partnered with Fandango in order to provide visitors to our sfi.org site a means of purchasing tickets for the Star Trek film which opened on May 7th (7th in some areas). Please note the new link below the Star Trek film icon on the lower-right side of the main page.

Any tickets you purchase through this link will yield a small commission that will be paid directly to STARFLEET. All funds received through the partner, Commission Junction, will go directly to our scholarship fund.

\*\* STARFLEET Academy News:

- ADM Mark Vinson has stepped away from Academy activities so he can move on to other pursuits.
- FCAPT Ros Haywood has been appointed to fill the role of Dean of the Institute of the Arts.
- There is a new school: College of Special Ops Training.
- Victor C. Swindell has stepped down as Director of the School of Cryptography, and BGN Sean Niemeyer has taken the reins.

\*\* Staff Changes, Office of the Vice Commander, STARFLEET:

- Michael Soucy has resigned as the VCS Communications Director due to work and family obligations. The position will be handled internally within the VCS dept.
- Jeff Schnoor, the Director of the Fleet Resource Center, is presently taking some leave and Anthony Dowling has been selected as Interim Director.

\*\* VADM Jeffrey Higdon has been appointed to the position of Regional Coordinator of Region 12.

\*\* IC 2009 will be in Greensboro, NC on 6-9 August 2009. Les Rickard, IC 2009 chair, announced retired astronaut Fred Haise as a special guest for that weekend. Haise is best remembered as a member of the Apollo 13 crew. He will attend the Friday evening Anniversary celebration, a Saturday panel, and an autograph session, and will be a guest and speaker at the banquet.

\*\* IC 2010 will be in Wagoner, Oklahoma in the Sequoyah State Park, on 29 July - 1 August 2010. There is a lodge and cottages/cabins.

**Region 7 News:**

\*\* 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](mailto:JusticeOC@aol.com)

## U.S.S. AVENGER - SHIP 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.

\* 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: To access the IRC servers, use:

[irc.fleetchat.org](http://irc.fleetchat.org)

Port 6667

The main STARFLEET channel is #starfleet, and Avenger maintains its own channel at #avenger

For additional information, visit <http://www.fleetchat.org/>

- The Avenger Yahoo Group is a great place to get updated news from the Avenger via email and special website features. <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/avenger-sfi>

- Avenger News newsletters are archived online, in PDF format, in a dedicated, members-only Google Group. <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.

\* CaféPress Store Feedback II: It'll soon be time for the 2009 calendar! We'll be looking for suggestions for next year's calendar art. Any ideas, contributions, or stuff you'd like to see us do? If so, contact Avenger Command.

\* 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](mailto: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!

Please submit all articles, illustrations and/or photos to Alex Rosenzweig:  
alex@tellurian.com

**July 25, 2009**

Deadline for submissions for the next issue of Avenger News, AN-116:

<http://www.northbrunswicklibrary.org>  
North Brunswick, NJ 08902  
880 Hermann Rd.

North Brunswick Public Library

2:00pm

**SUNDAY, August 9, 2009**

**The Next Meeting of USS Avenger will be**

**USS AVENGER  
331 ACADEMY TERRACE, APT 17  
LINDEN, NJ 07036-5695**

**NOTE: YOUR AVENGER MEMBERSHIP EXPIRES WITH ISSUE #**