

AVENGER NEWS

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE U.S.S. AVENGER NCC-11860

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#147 - DECEMBER 2014

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REGION 7 GATHERS



AVENGER JOINED THE FUN AT THE 2014 REGION 7 CONFERENCE IN BINGHAMTON, NY

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CAPTAIN'S LOG

BY DAVID LYNCH



Hi, all,

At this time, I would like to thank everyone for their confidence in me over the last three years, allowing me to serve as your Commanding Officer. It has been an interesting time. I know that the club will go on. I will remain a member of the chapter, but I will be taking some time off once the change of command is completed.

I continue to encourage everyone to come out to events, meetings, anything that the chapter does. The chapter exists as an outlet for members to exchange ideas and share their fandom. Please come out and support the chapter, meet fellow members, and join in on the fun that is *U.S.S. Avenger*.

I also encourage everyone to participate in the planning of the upcoming 30th Anniversary of the *U.S.S. Avenger*. This is a

milestone that few STARFLEET chapters reach. The *Avenger* would not have achieved such a milestone without you, the members!

Finally, I would like to thank those who participated in the Command Staff Training Program over the course of this year. I developed the program to instruct anyone interested in what it takes to run the chapter at a number of levels. I hope that this program will be used again in the future. I encourage that it be used again, and revised as needed.

Until next time,

Dave

Fleet Captain Dave Lynch

IMAGE GALLERY



"The Minefield", by J.J. Belar (from DeviantArt)
[Submitted by Alex Rosenzweig]



"Aftermath", by Dave Metlesits (from DeviantArt)
[Submitted by Alex Rosenzweig]

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EXECUTIVE THOUGHTS

BY ALEX ROSENZWEIG



Greetings, all!

Happy Holidays! As this sees print, the holiday season will be upon us. It's a time of happiness and joy, and also a time of transitions, not only the ending of one year and the movement to the next, but preparations for a new Congress in the United States, and a new command aboard the *Avenger*.

Aboard the *Avenger*, as most of you know, we have held a vote of confidence for the position of Commanding Officer. At the time of this writing, the results are not yet known, but the only candidate is RADM Judy Waidlich, so I am confident that by the time this issue sees print, she will have been confirmed to return to the center seat. I hope you'll join me in supporting Judy as she retakes the reins of command, and in thanking FCAPT Dave Lynch for his service as *Avenger's* CO for the past few years.

Recently, I had an opportunity to meet Mr. Bill Nye, "The Science Guy". He has recently published a book on evolution science and its contrast with "creationism" (aka "intelligent design"). This got me thinking about the state of science in the United States, and the perils that potentially lie ahead. Among our leaders on matters of science and technology are people who do not believe that climate change is even real, or who are interfering in the process of the National Science Foundation's review and award of research grants, or who reject (or don't even understand) the concept of net neutrality (critically important for the free flow of information), or wish to prevent independent, qualified scientists from advising the EPA on the subjects of **their own research**. Also among these leaders are those who claim they are unqualified to answer a question like, "How old is the Earth?", or those who firmly believe it is only 9,000 years old.

The reason this is a concern is that in a society that relies heavily--and increasingly--on science and technology, to ignore or reject science is positively dangerous. We rely, for economic reasons as well as for the pure value of learning about the world--and the universe--in which we live, on understanding the world around us. Our knowledge has saved countless lives, improved the quality of countless more, and preserved untold billions of dollars of property. And it has expanded human understanding in ways we can still scarcely imagine. I can't even imagine a world in which we reject all that, even, and maybe especially, if what we learn makes us uncomfortable.

After all, no one says that the quest for knowledge and understanding will always be easy or comfortable.

As Star Trek fans, we have embraced a fictional world in which science, technology, and reason have huge influences on the lives of every character we know. Some, like Spock or B'Elanna Torres or Deanna Troi, couldn't exist without them! Moreover, without science, technology, or reason, almost none of what happens would be possible. And if we, as fans, aspire to a future reality like the one in Star Trek, we should be very uncomfortable with leaders who have stances like the ones I listed before. Obviously a lot of choices go into how we choose to vote for our leaders, but in my not-at-all humble opinion, I think that science gets short shrift in many people's views about candidates, and the result has been that we end up with leaders who not only don't understand science (and least of all how important it is to our economy, and to creating good jobs for everyday people), but are taking great pride in that ignorance. I agree with Bill Nye; this has to be unacceptable, and it's up to us to refuse to accept it. I'm not going to tell you who to support, but I do urge you to ask candidates for office where you live where they stand on matters of basic science and the role it plays in our society and our future. I believe that the science deniers and the "know-nothings" do not merit our support, but whatever choices each of you make, please at last be informed.

Meanwhile, back aboard the *Avenger* herself, a new command doesn't change the basic imperatives: to make the organization as fun and engaging for everyone as possible. I'm sure that Judy and the whole staff will be looking into new ideas for 2015, so now's a great chance to chime in with anything you might want to do. I can tell you that I have some ideas, myself, but I sure don't want to be the only one with suggestions! So don't be shy, okay? Suggest away!

And that's it from me for now! Enjoy the rest of this issue of *Avenger News*! Have fun, and don't forget "Mission Docket" for neat upcoming events. Take care, and 'til next time...

Ad Astra!

Alex

ADM Alex Rosenzweig

IMAGE GALLERY

Pennine Alps Near Zermatt,
Switzerland; Photographer Unknown -
[Submitted by Alex Rosenzweig]



SECOND OFFICER'S REPORT

BY JUDY WAIDLICH



First of all, I hope everyone enjoyed Thanksgiving, and that everyone enjoys the next round of holidays that they celebrate.

Thanks go to Dave Lynch for his years as CO. I wish him luck and good fortune in his future endeavors (he is still with the crew, just in a different capacity).

Thanks also for Amber's interest in the command position. I look forward to working with her and the rest of the command staff (assuming no issues with the VOC).

There are no promotions L. Haven't I told you how much I like seeing people earning promotions? Get busy and join us on our escapades!

I had a good time at the R7 Conference. The *U.S.S. Serling* did a stellar job. I attended the seminar on Staff Training, craft panels, a talk by Rod Serling's daughter (I bought her book, too), and a paranormal panel. I also met furry and feathered creatures from the local zoo and joined everyone at the dinner. In the evening, there was a Trektionary event (dueling markers!) and just sitting in groups relaxing, chatting, and playing card games.

October and November's activities consisted of the monthly meetings, a game day, the *U.S.S. Justice's* Anniversary Party, and a viewing of "Star Trek: The Motion Picture". I joined up for lunch with those seeing "Interstellar". The *Justice's* party was

pretty much in my backyard; it gave me and Alex some ideas for our own party coming up in 2015. We're hoping to add those to any of the crew's ideas, to make it a great time for all.

The Academy has quieted somewhat, but I have gotten the new VAS courses. They will need some tweaking.

I'm still enjoying plays at the Shakespeare Theatre in Madison. Also, the Papermill Playhouse's October offering was "Can-Can", and "Elf" takes the stage in December.

I'm re-reading "Vanguard" series of novels, too.

Looking forward, the Rutgers Geology Open House has announced its lectures (Ocean Exploration, Extremophilic Environments, The Art of the Geological Map, and one on deciphering the physics of earthquakes), so maybe we can make that an event. Farpoint is February, of course. There are also some gatherings with the *Challenger* crew, the cookie exchange and Intergalactic Food Fest. We were invited to participate at the Comic Con at the Somerset Patriots Ballpark, as well. So hopefully you will join us at some of the events (and maybe there will be some promotions).

Take care until next time.

Judy

IMAGE GALLERY

"Avenger and Enterprise-B", by Daniel Negron



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ROSTER UPDATE

Welcome Back--Thanks for Renewing

1) Gar Chen

Changes and Revisions—Where Are They Now?

1) Lt. Commander Tim Drude's address should now be listed as:

1 Easy Court

Spotswood, NJ 08884-1540

2) Colonel Amber Stronach's e-mail address should now be listed as director.cog@gmail.com

ENGINEERING DIVISION REPORT

BY MATTHEW J. RIELLY



The division wants to begin by thanking our current commanding officer, Dave Lynch, for his years of service leading the *Avenger* and striving to set a good example for the Command Staff and the crew at large. The division hopes that, as he steps down at the end of 2014, everyone will remember his efforts to make ours a tight ship. And we wish his successor all the luck and support of which that person will be worthy.

We missed our contingent at the recent screening we held to mark the 35th anniversary of the release of "Star Trek: The Motion Picture". We hope division members will take time to view the movie that brought "Star Trek" to the silver screen and kept a legend alive.

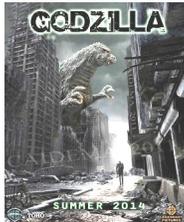
Division members are also being reminded of upcoming activities for later in December...such as the trip to New Hope and Peddler's Village, a screening of the third installment in "The Hobbit" film trilogy, the ship's annual holiday party and encouragement to contribute to the annual Toys for Tots drive, and whatever else may come our way through the end of December and beyond.

Finally, the division would like to wish its members the happiest of holidays this season, peace and togetherness, and a prosperous new year.

MOVIE REVIEW—"GODZILLA"

BY JENNIFER LYNCH

Not many in the club may know this, but I am a big fan of all the original Toho monster movies. So when the last Godzilla movie was made in New York City back in the '90s, I was thrilled 'til I saw it. It was good. Now a new Godzilla movie was recently made, but I decided to wait 'til it came out on DVD to see it. I really liked it. It was made in the spirit of the old



moves, but with new and better technology for the special effects. A few small things were changed around about why and how he came to be, but not the major things. If you have not seen it yet and like the old Toho movies, then I suggest watching this one also.

TV WATCHING SUGGESTIONS

BY JENNIFER LYNCH

If you have time and love to learn new things about technology and/or science, then there are three shows on NHKWorld that you should watch. The first is called "Science View", and the other two are "J-Tech" and "Great Gear". Do not worry if you do not have cable or satellite as your TV provider; you can go to NHKWorld's website and watch these shows on line.



U.S.S. AVENGER SIT-REP

BY ALEX ROSENZWEIG

This column, in accordance with the *Avenger* Officer's Manual, is "a regular report of crew activities, in the form of a column in *Avenger News* or as a separate mailing. It started out with the idea of being a roundup of divisional activities, but is being retooled into a more general summary of chapter events and highlights. As such, if there's something you'd like to share with the group—an idea, a suggestion, a personal milestone, etc.—feel free to let me know and it can get included. "SitRep" is a term used typically by the military or other government groups. It's an abbreviation for "Situation Report", a report given to both senior officers and subordinate staff to make sure that, put simply, they know what's going on. And that's what we do here.

Onward...

DIVISIONS:

COMMAND:



FCAPT Dave is preparing the chapter materials for the upcoming change of command. He will, however, continue to serve as a Subject Matter Expert Consultant at the STARFLEET Office of Technical Information.

The XO's office has continued to focus on activity-shepherding and newsletter work. The biggest challenge remains getting members to participate, as well as to encourage others to bring ideas to the table. ADM Alex again focused on personnel matters, helping two new members get settled aboard ship, as well as working on oversight of the nomination and election processes for the upcoming change of command. He has also continued promoting new activity ideas, and has continued working on *Avenger News*. AN 146 was only slightly late, and continued efforts have gone into getting AN147 out on schedule.

The Second Officer has continued maintaining the Promotion System and monitoring for the next promotions. She has also been updating the database. There have been no promotions since the last Sit-Rep. RADM Judy has also been attending events and doing lots of work at the Academy, as well as preparing to run for CO.

SCIENCES:



CMDR Sarah Bolick welcomes CMDR Michelle Lampson to the chapter and the division!

Sarah and Assistant Chief LT Patrick Hebert still hope to hear back from Sciences members and have some fun conversations about Trek and science.

MEDICAL:



LCDR Jason Blackstone has been keeping the division's members up-to-date with the latest goings-on. Otherwise, things have been quiet in the Medical Division. Jason is continuing to share links to medical articles of interest. MedDiv folks, feel free to give Jason a shout! Also, Jason reported that he was planning a meeting via

Skype on 5 December. That will have occurred by the time you read this, so hopefully it went well!

OPERATIONS:



CMDR Norm Van Houten reports that, aside from his own ongoing assistance in getting the newsletter mailed out to those receiving it in hard copy (thanks, Norm!), Operations has remains quiet. OpsDiv members, don't forget to say hi to Norm from time to time!

ENGINEERING:



CAPT Matt Rielly has continued to update division members regarding details on future activities, events, and other significant goings-on as more information is made available.

COMMUNICATIONS:



The Communications Division has been mostly quiet, though LCDR Jennifer Lynch has continued her attempts to communicate with the members of the Communications Division. She welcomes ENS Chad Lampson to the division, as well. She'd really love to hear back from her members, so say hi!

SECURITY:



COL Amber Stronach has transferred back to the *Avenger*, and has resumed the duties of Chief of Security.

Meanwhile, FCAPT Dave will be standing down as OIC of the 769th Marine Strike Group at the same time he leaves ship command, so a successor in that position may be needed.

(If your division isn't included here, there wasn't any division-specific news this issue. For anyone interested in ideas for or assistance in developing divisional activity, feel free to contact your division chief and/or the XO.)

GENERAL:

Activity-wise, the *Avenger's* schedule has continued with lots of activities to choose from. Attendance has remained a problem, though, and we're continuing to try various approaches to try to improve response. This is something we hope that all of you will help with.

Our recent activities have included, in addition to the meetings:

- ◆ *Avenger* Fiction Workshop, via Skype
- ◆ Group Viewing of "Interstellar"
- ◆ Group Viewing and Discussion – "Star Trek: The Motion Picture"

Looking ahead, we see activities including:

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- ◆ More Video/Movie Days
- ◆ More Group Trips to Film Releases (e.g., "The Hobbit: The Battle of the Five Armies")
- ◆ Additional Skype Chats
- ◆ A possible trip to the Intrepid Museum and Shuttle Enterprise

We're always looking for suggestions from folks for films you'd like to see as a group. Feel free to share your suggestions on the *Avenger's* mailing list, in our Facebook group, or even by contacting any member of the Command Staff. We'll be heavily relying on your input to determine what films we should see together as a group.

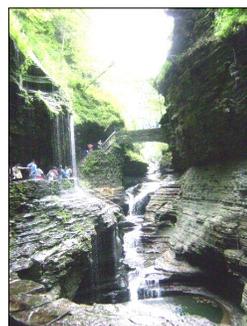
We're looking forward to scheduling more video days, and we're definitely interested in knowing what films/TV shows **you'd** like to watch together, and also if you'd be willing to host such an event. (We've had some wonderfully generous folks host these events in the past, but hopefully we won't have to keep going back to the same people over and over again. If we can move things around a bit, that'd be welcome.)

And, as always, if there's something you'd like to suggest for an event, don't hesitate to speak up. We want to hold events that our members want to attend, but we can only do what members tell us they'd like. Your input is really important here. As some of you may have seen, we've been compiling a large list of potential activities, which we hope to develop into real events, but your input and support are crucial. The senior staff can't do it alone.

Mission Reports:

This section of the column features short recaps of various *Avenger* and STARFLEET events. To make it the best it can be, though, I need your help. If you've been to an event, you don't need to write a whole long article. Just a paragraph or two would be great. Send them to me and I'll include them here. And if you've got pictures you want to supply, that, too, would be pretty awesome. (By the way, if a lot of folks contribute for a single activity, it could always be broken out into a separate article, and if you **want** to write a stand-alone piece, don't let this feature stop you from doing so! It's not an either-or proposition, just another way to share.)

19-21 September 2014 – Watkins Glen Weekend



In many ways, this year's Watkins Glen Weekend (WGW) was much like ones in the past. We were, fortunately, blessed with excellent weather, and the Glen Gorge was as beautiful as always. (If you've never been to this New York State Park at the base of Lake Seneca in New York's Finger Lakes region, I can't recommend it highly enough!) The hope had been that, for this year's 25th Anniversary of the event, there'd be a

stronger turnout, even if not one to rival the massive turnouts of years past. A combination of factors, though, conspired against that outcome, even up to last-minute issues that prevented some of the regulars from making it. Alas, the result was that despite wonderful weather, the

turnout was one of the smallest since the earliest WGWs. As of this writing, there's been no word about whether there'll be another WGW, but we shall see. More word as things develop.

If there is another, I hope that more people will attend! It's far too much fun to not visit!
(ADM Alex Rosenzweig)

3-5 October 2014 – Region 7 Conference



Well, for once, on the day of Fleet Captain David's and my departure to go to the Conference, I was up and ready before him. I got our departure time wrong. It gave me more time, though, to properly pack the extra stuff we needed for bringing our dog with us. The trip up the

PA Turnpike was for the most part uneventful, as we drove while listening to six of my Star Trek soundtracks. We made a few extra stops to stretch out our legs and look at the beautiful landscapes around us. Upon arrival, we set everything up in our room and went over to register for the conference and look over the vendors' tables. At the mixer, we had a good time meeting people and making a few new friends. However, we then decided to go out to eat with one of our new friends over at Applebee's.

On day two of the conference, after having a decent breakfast at the hotel's restaurant, David and I got ready for the morning programs. They were quite interesting, fun, a little silly at times, and informative. For the afternoon programs, I decided to attend some on my own and really enjoyed them. The paranormal group was interesting. They told us about themselves and how they investigate, then answered all of our questions. The zoo animal meet-and-greet was fun also, though I am not fond of certain insects that were shown to us. Many in the group were scared of the small snake that was there, even though it was harmless and cute. It was also my first time to see an albino chinchilla. Dinner that night at Burger Mondays was fabulous for all who came.

On the last day of the conference, I attended the Sunday morning church service. The person who was in charge of it tried her best to make it as non-denominational as possible. I think she succeeded in doing a fabulous job. She incorporated many elements into it, even some Star Trek ones. Shortly after this, we had to pack up and leave. I wish we could have stayed a little longer and had more time to take in some of the other things offered to us in that lovely town.
(LCDR Jennifer L. Lynch)



12 October 2014 – U.S.S. Avenger Chapter Meeting

The highlight of this meeting was a rollicking discussion of the sci-fi vs. fantasy genres, defining each and doing a comparison and contrast. It was fascinating to hear different

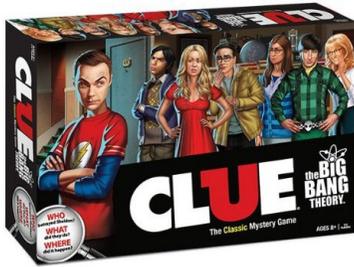
U.S.S. AVENGER SIT-REP

persons' perspectives on what constitutes each genre. There are various definitions, and since the general public often blurs them, it made for a great discussion to explore what our own members thought.

This meeting was also the one at which FCAPT Dave announced his plans to stand down, starting us on the path toward selecting our next CO.
(ADM Alex Rosenzweig)

19 October 2014 – Avenger Gaming Afternoon

After the successful game day we'd held earlier in the year, we decided to take the opportunity provided by the early completion of the Command Staff Training Program, and use the scheduled availability of the North Brunswick Library conference room for another game day. This is one of the most consistently requested activities, though because it requires a venue with some open space, we don't get to run it as often as we'd like. (As always, if someone knows of a place with enough room, pass the word!) Turnout was light this time, with myself, FCAPT Dave Lynch, RADM Judy Waidlich, and ENS Andy Taylor in attendance, but after a bit of discussion, we



opted to try out the "Big Bang Theory" edition of Clue. It was a big hit, and we had a great time with it. We played two rounds before running out of time, and it was definitely fun, especially if one is also a fan of the TV series.

There are still lots of other games waiting to be played, so if there's continued interest, and we can get a suitable venue, it'd be great to do another game day.
(ADM Alex Rosenzweig)

26 October 2014 – Avenger Fiction Workshop

Recognizing that people's schedules can be challenging, we are also trying to hold some activities on-line taking advantage of the opportunities offered by technologies like Skype. Our Fiction Workshop was an example. This one was pretty general, as most of those attending were new to *Avenger's* fictional world. We covered the basics of our setting ("No, we're not in the TNG era; it's 50 years away..."), characters, story ideas, and the like, along with a lot of general chatter. We also let attendees know about cool resources like the *AvengerPedia*, and where stories can be found on the website. It was a lot of fun, and proved that this sort of thing can be done, even as a Skype chat. I'd like to do it again. How about you?
(ADM Alex Rosenzweig)



9 November 2014 – U.S.S. Avenger Chapter Meeting

We try very hard to keep our meetings interesting. I mean, club business is important and all, but the reason we have a club is to share interests and have some fun together, right? To do that, we try to have interesting programs and discussion topics. In November, our topic was the upcoming "Axanar" Star

Trek production. As an extra bonus, thanks to the very cool folks at the heart of the project, we had a call-in guest! Mr. Bill Watters, the production archivist, joined us via Skype to share the latest details and plans as the full film continues in pre-production. It was great to have him with us, not only answering questions and sharing news, but also getting our perceptions and ideas, too! I have to thank not only Bill for taking time out on a Sunday afternoon to talk to us, but also to Alec Peters, who, 10 minutes after I messaged him on Facebook to ask about the possibility of having someone speak with us, messaged me back to introduce me to Bill and make the arrangements. As busy as he is, Alec jumped right on helping us offer something special for our members. That's class, right there.

In return, we were able to get several members, as well as two guests who had joined us for the meeting, very excited about a project about which they hadn't known. And that's exciting right there.
(ADM Alex Rosenzweig)

15 November 2014 – Group Viewing of "Interstellar"

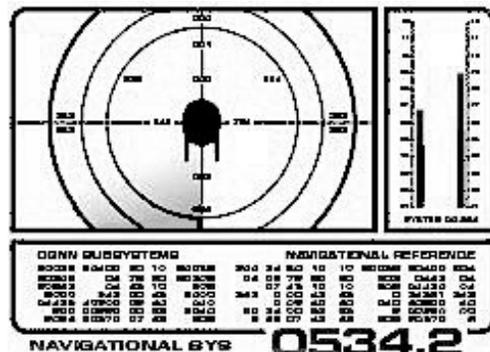
ENS Andy Taylor, CAPT Matt Rielly, and I gathered at the AMC Loews New Brunswick



to check out the new science fiction epic from director Christopher Nolan. We were not disappointed! It offered a powerful, compelling story in a solid, well-paced movie that never had us looking at our watches. The film gave us a lot to think about and consider, and made for some great discussion over lunch. At least, 'til RADM Judy Waidlich arrived. Judy came out to join us for lunch, and since we all agreed that we hoped she'd eventually see the film, we kiboshed the discussion so as not to spoil it for her. Instead, we switched to more general topics of a Trek, sci-fi, and even superheroes nature so everyone could be involved.

We're already planning our next movie outing. We hope to see you there!
(ADM Alex Rosenzweig)

Special thanks to those who have contributed to this column! It's really appreciated. We invite anyone who went to an event and would like to share to also contribute a paragraph or two to this column! It's quick and easy, and it's great to share different views of what the club and its members are doing!



FROM THE BELLY OF THE BEAST

" 'INTERSTELLAR': A LOOK AT A 21ST CENTURY SCI-FI MASTERPIECE"

BY MATTHEW J. RIELLY

There have been very few thought-provoking films in the genre of science fiction, but they have also become some of the most memorable pieces of cinematic history. You have Fritz Lang's "Metropolis"; Shakespeare's "The Tempest" re-imagined as "Forbidden Planet"; "The Day the Earth Stood Still", which immortalized the phrase "Klaatu barada nikto"; the Stanley Kubrick classic "2001: A Space Odyssey", based on a short story and later a novel by Arthur C. Clarke; "Logan's Run", based on the novel of the same name depicting life in the 23rd century under sealed domes...a life which ended at 30 years; even the 1979 classic "The Black Hole", especially for the imagery at the film's climax; and more recently, "Prometheus", intended to be prequel to "Alien" and its three subsequent sequels. If you count exploration of philosophy and studies in good and evil in more of a fantasy setting, you could toss the Star Wars films into the mix. And let's not leave out the Star Trek films, including the last two brought to life by "Lost" and "Alias" producer J.J. Abrams.

With a filmic backlog like that, one would think we have run out of new territory to cover. That was until Christopher Nolan, best known for his work on the recent Batman trilogy, brought us "Interstellar". With this latest entry into the pantheon of sci-fi cinema, Nolan not only manages to pay tribute to those who have gone before him...but also step forward into realms never before traveled. It starts out on a dystopian note, with agriculture becoming endangered across the face of planet Earth. However, it manages to take us to a hopeful place, keeping real human feelings along for the ride.

"Interstellar" stars Matthew McConaughey as an astronaut named Cooper, also a widower and farmer left to raise two children on a future Earth which makes the Dust Bowl of the early half of the 20th century look like an isolated dust storm by comparison. His daughter Murphy, played initially by Mackenzie Foy, is witness to some strange phenomenon in the library of the family home, one which would indicate an otherworldly presence. Cooper is later recruited by Professor John Brand (Michael Caine) to fly a space mission intended to help mankind find a new place to live. The catch: it's a one-way trip, a "Lazarus mission". A wormhole, believed to have been constructed by some alien intelligence, has been found near the planet Saturn. Cooper's ship, *Endurance*, is sent to penetrate the black hole, through which lie three planets explored by previous missions.

Unfortunately, the first planet they land on experiences severe time distortion in which only an hour on the surface equals seven years back on Earth. By the time Cooper and his team leave that world, 23 years have elapsed on Earth...by which time his daughter Murphy (now played by Jessica Chastain) is already an adult. We also learn that Brand never really had any hope of the Lazarus missions working to help the human race migrate to a new planet. There is actually a Plan-B,

which employs fertilized human embryos to restore the population. However, Murphy refuses to give up hope.

The film also highlights some surprisingly meaty performances by Anne Hathaway as biologist Amelia Brand, the daughter of Professor Brand, and Matt Damon as Dr. Mann, a surviving scientist found on one of the three planets discovered orbiting the black hole which has been named Gargantua. We also get a look at a couple of boxy-looking robots, TARS and CASE (voiced respectively by Bill Irwin and Josh Stewart), which prove to be far more agile than even the rovers sent to Mars by NASA. The design of the mother ship *Endurance* is influenced in part by the International Space Station, with its primary rotary configuration harkening back to wheel-shaped space platforms envisioned by aerospace luminaries like Werner von Braun. One of the main shuttlecraft used in the film resembles a flattened version of NASA's recently-retired shuttle fleet.

The plot takes a turn when the *Endurance* has to make a slingshot maneuver around Gargantua to make it to the third planet orbiting the black hole. However, this action forces Cooper to sacrifice himself, and he ends up adrift inside a strange Escher-esque environment. For anyone who remembers the scene from "2001" in which Astronaut Dave Bowman goes into the *Discovery's* computer core to disable the malfunctioning HAL 9000, this sequence in "Interstellar" can be viewed as a sort of nod to Clarke and Kubrick. However, it is done in such a way that it doesn't mock what is clearly one of Nolan's inspirations. It celebrates it. With the right

combination of an intriguing storyline, solid casting and performances, stunning visual effects, and a haunting musical score by Hollywood stalwart Hans Zimmer, "Interstellar" could find itself in the running when Oscar time comes around. It runs the gamut of generating reactions like worry for Humanity's future, fear of the unknown, frustration, hopelessness, heroism...and even the joy of a full-circle reunion involving two key characters. The ending, without providing any spoilers, would seem to indicate room for a sequel, should Nolan or anyone willing to pursue decide if they are up to the challenge...and it will be a challenge.

I think it safe to say that once the film goes into DVD release and television airings for years to come, it will become a modern classic. Just like the fanciful novels of Jules Verne and H.G. Wells; the finely-crafted works of directors like Steven Spielberg, George Lucas, Robert Wise, Kubrick, Nolan, and Lang; and legendary TV treasures like "Star Trek", "Battlestar Galactica", and the like, "Interstellar" will take its deserved place alongside these works...and hopefully inspire writers, filmmakers, and even those who actually work in the field of real space exploration to boldly go where no one has gone before.

#####



RUTGERS GEOLOGY MUSEUM

47TH ANNUAL OPEN HOUSE

BY JUDY WIDLICH

Each January, there is an open house for the Rutgers Geology Museum located on College Avenue. Besides viewing the exhibits on one and a half floors, you can find something at the mineral sale or listen to the talks, both located at Scott Hall across the street from the Museum.

This year, the talks—which begin roughly at 10 AM—are the following:

- ◆ "A Dip in the Ocean: An Interactive Exploration of How the Ocean Impacts You and How you Impact the Ocean", presented by Janice McDonnell of the Rutgers Department of Marine and Coastal Sciences
- ◆ "Extremophilic Environments and Microbial Diversity Within", presented by Dr. Ramaydalis Keddiss of the Department of General Studies at Kean University

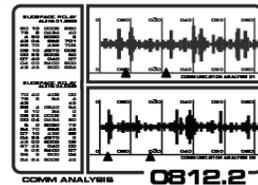
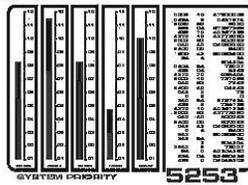


- ◆ "The Art of the Geological Map", presented by Don Monterverde, NJ Geological and Water Survey, Rutgers University Department of Earth and Planetary Sciences
- ◆ "Earth's Cocktail Party: Deciphering the Physics of Earthquakes with Networks of Seismic Arrays", presented by Dr. Jean-Paul Ampuero, California Institute of Technology, Seismological Laboratory

The mineral sale runs from 9 AM to 4 PM. There are also hands-on activities for kids (Outbreak, Stone Tools, Earth Impact). All events are free.

Website: <http://geologymuseum.rutgers.edu>

I find the talks very interesting. They have had talks dealing with astronomy topics in the past. There are also plenty of places to grab a bite to eat.



A SCOOP FROM CELESTIAL BUDDIES

BY JUDY WIDLICH

[Ed. Note: For those who might not be familiar with it, Celestial Buddies, LLC is a company that makes plush toys of various celestial objects, including the planets of Sol System, the Sun, Luna, and a comet.]

A few years back, when I found out about the first wave of Celestial Buddies plush toys (Sun, Mercury, Earth, Moon, Mars, Jupiter, and Saturn) on ThinkGeek, the comments at the bottom of the page ran in favor of a Pluto buddy. Everyone still felt bad about Pluto's "demotion" to minor planet status.

After seeing that the final ones, Neptune and Uranus, were out, I was curious if there were plans to make a Pluto. So I sent an email out and heard the following back from their Vice President:

There are indeed! Jessie, our Designer, is working on it right now, along with a "surprise" Buddy. ETA will be sometime in 2015. I'll send you an email when they are available.

Jon

Jonathan E. Silbert, Vice President
Celestial Buddies, LLC

584 Towner Swamp Road
Guilford, CT 06437
celestialbuddies.com
203-415-0313

I've mentioned it to the Pluto fanatic in my astronomy club, and she is looking forward to it.



STARFLEET AND REGION 7 NEWS



STARFLEET News:

** Executive Committee News:

- **RADM Liz Woolf** and **CAPT Michael Garcia** have tendered resignations as **Chief of Communications** and **Vice Chief of Communications**. They have agreed to stay on until a new chief and vice chief have been named, and applications are being sought for these positions. The deadline for applications is 31 December 2014.

** Admiralty Board Updates:

- Admiralty Board **meeting minutes** are being transcribed. Several additional sets of minutes have been added to the STARFLEET website.

- ** STARFLEET Computer Operations is preparing to **migrate** the 'FLEET website to a new **hosting service**. Originally scheduled for early next year, this migration plan has been accelerated due to difficulties with Dreamhost, our current hosting provider.

- ** The STARFLEET Finance Office reports that the annual **Form 990** has been completed and was submitted to the IRS on time.

- ** The Denver **Membership Processing Team** has processed and mailed a large number of packets. For those of you who have been waiting on your packet, please keep an eye out for yours. If you did not receive your packet by the end of November, please submit a new Help Desk ticket (<http://helpdesk.sfi.org>) so that STARFLEET can track the issue.

- ** The final version of our **40th Anniversary celebration video** is now completed and posted to the STARFLEET Home Page. In addition to the SFI.org Home Page, the **"Happy"** video is also live on YouTube, here:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=th7ZGC_JfnI&feature=youtu.be

- ** The Department of Technical Services (DTS) is seeking talented **artists** to help execute **engineering drawings of starships and space stations**. If you're interested, contact ADM Alex Rosenzweig at shoc-dts@sfi.org or alexr1860@optimum.net, or by US Post at 980 Linwood Place North Brunswick, NJ 08902-2267.

- ** **STARFLEET Shakedown Operations** has announced the launching of the following chapters:

- **U.S.S. Longbow**, NX-87556, based in Mesa, AZ, Region 4, CAPT Denise Rush, Commanding
- **U.S.S. Luna**, NX-80101, based in Grove City, OH, Region 1, CMDR Michael Stanley, Jr., Commanding



- ** **Membership Perks** have been established for **STARFLEET members**. Here is where to find discount codes to all of our Membership Perk Partners:

- Surf to the STARFLEET Database at <https://db.sfi.org/>
- Log on using your database ID (provided to you as part of your membership packet, but if you don't know what your User ID and password is, please contact the STARFLEET Help Desk)

- Click on the "MEMBER" button on the left side to show the menu of available member tools
- Click on the "MEMBERSHIP PERK" button.

On this page, you'll see all of STARFLEET's Membership Perks and their discount codes for you to use!

For more information about STARFLEET's Membership Perks, please visit: <http://perks.sfi.org/>

** STARFLEET International Conference News

- **IC 2015** will be held in **Niagara Falls, NY** on **21-23 August 2015**, at the **Conference & Event Center Niagara Falls**.

- The IC2015 **website** and **registration pages** are now online and ready for you to enjoy! You can find the website at: <http://www.ic2015.com/>

Register for IC2015 through EventBrite at: <http://ic2015.eventbrite.com/>

Or visit the Facebook page for semi-regular updates about IC2015 and a video/picture walking tour of Niagara Falls at: <https://www.facebook.com/IC2015>

- IC 2015's **charities** include the STARFLEET Scholarship Funds and the IC2015 Space Camp charity fund.

- **IC 2016** has been announced. It will be held in **Louisville, KY** on **12-14 August 2016**, at the **Crowne Plaza Louisville Airport**.



Region 7 News:

** 2015 Region 7 Conference News:

- The **2015** Regional Conference will be held in Hanover, MD.

Information on this event will be announced as it becomes available.

- ** The **regional fundraiser** continues; return used inkjet cartridges for cash (<http://empties4cash.com>) For further info, contact Mike Stein at JusticeOC@aol.com or check out the Region 7 website at <http://www.region7.com>

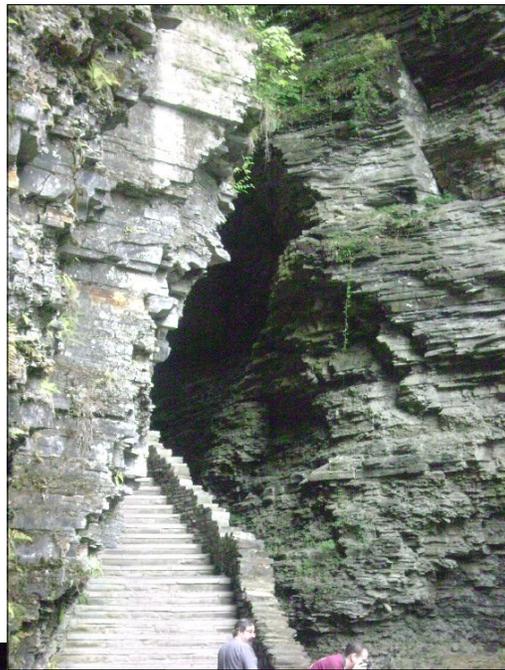


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887	77	18	78828	16	34255	14	812
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IMAGE GALLERY—WATKINS GLEN WEEKEND 2014



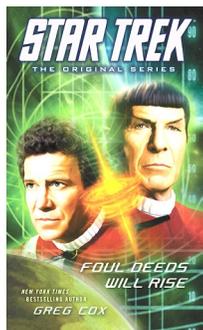
STAR TREK BOOK NEWS

COMPILED BY ALEX ROSENZWEIG

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

Available December 2014:

ST: TOS: Foul Deeds Will Rise, by Greg Cox

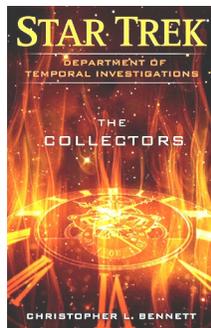


2288. The *U.S.S. Enterprise-A* is on a vital peacekeeping mission in a remote solar system beyond the boundaries of the Federation, where two warring planets—Pavak and Oyolo—are attempting to end years of bitter conflict. Crucial peace talks are being conducted aboard the *Enterprise*, even as Star Fleet weapons inspectors oversee the disarmament process. Losses and atrocities on both sides have left plenty of hard feelings behind, so Captain James T. Kirk has his work cut out for him, even as he

unexpectedly runs into a disturbing figure from his past: Lenore Karidian.

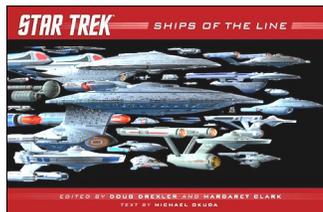
Twenty years ago, the deadly daughter of Kodos the Executioner tried to kill Kirk, but she has since been declared sane and rehabilitated. Kirk wants to give her the benefit of the doubt and a second chance at life, but when a mysterious assassination threatens the already fragile peace process, all clues point toward Lenore—and the future of two worlds hangs in the balance.

ST: DTI: The Collectors (eBook Novella), by Christopher L. Bennett



From the author... "...it's a story I had a great deal of fun writing, delving deeper into two elements from *Watching the Clock* that I've been eager to explore in more depth: The Eridian Vault, where the DTI stores dangerous temporal artifacts (sort of a "Warehouse 13" for time travel), and the mysterious Agent Jena Noi of the 31st-century Federation Temporal Agency."

ST: All: Ships of the Line (Hardcover), edited by Margaret Clark and Doug Drexler



This new hardcover book will collect just about all the images from the "Ships of the Line" calendar series, including all those previously published in the first *Ships of the Line* book back in 2006, plus an additional 75 images from calendars since

then. Doug Drexler and Margaret Clark return to edit, with text commentary from Michael Okuda.

Available January 2015:

ST: DS9: The Missing, by Una McCormack

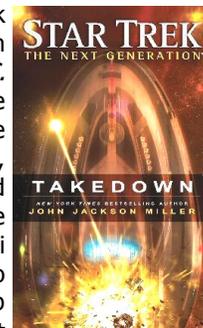


The entire sector is waiting to see what the newly reopened Bajoran wormhole will mean for the shifting political landscape in the Alpha Quadrant. On Deep Space 9, Captain Ro Laren is suddenly drawn into the affairs of the People of the Open Sky, who have come to the station in search of sanctuary. Despite the opposition of the station's security officer, Jefferson Blackmer, Ro Laren and Deep Space 9's new CMO, Doctor Beverly Crusher, offer the People aid. But when Dr. Crusher's highly secure files are accessed without permission—the same files that hold the secrets of the Shedai, a race whose powerful but half-understood scientific secrets solved the Andorian catastrophe—the People seem the likeliest suspects.

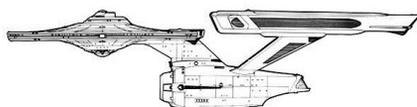
As tensions rise on the station, the science vessel *Athene Donald* arrives as part of its journey of exploration. The brainchild of Doctor Katherine Pulaski, this ship is crewed by different species from the Khitomer Accords and the Typhon Pact. Pulaski's hope is that science will do what diplomacy has not: help the great powers put aside their hostilities and work together. But when the *Athene Donald* is summarily stopped in her voyage by the powerful vessel of a hitherto unknown species, Pulaski begins to wonder—will this first contact bring her crew together or tear them all apart?

Available February 2015:

ST: TNG/AVN: Takedown, by John Jackson Miller



When renegade starships wreak destruction across the quadrant, Captain Jean-Luc Picard and the crew of the *U.S.S. Enterprise* are shocked to discover the mastermind behind this sudden threat: none other than Picard's protégé and friend, Admiral William T. Riker. The newly minted admiral is on special assignment aboard the *U.S.S. Aventine*, helmed by Captain Ezri Dax—someone who is no stranger to breaking Star Fleet regulations. Her starship is by far the faster vessel...and Riker cannot yield, even to his former mentor. It's a battle of tactical geniuses and a race against time, as Picard struggles to find answers before the quadrant's great powers violently plunge into total war...



SHIP'S BBS

The Ship's BBS was first introduced in the novel *Spock's World*, written by Diane Duane. Like BBSs of today, it was a place where items of interest could be posted for the crew to read and respond to. This column is much like that. Things do change from issue to issue, so keep checking back each issue, and if you've got an item you'd like to share, feel free to send it in. ☺

* 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!
- **Storytellers:** See "Avenger Fiction Update" later in this column.

Contact FCAPT Dave or ADM Alex if you'd like to volunteer!

*** 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 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:

chat.trekfan.org

Port 6667

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

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

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

- Avenger is also well-represented on Facebook, with both a page and a group. The page is generally updated with information directed more to the general public, while the group includes more of the discussions, events announcements, and cross-chatter among members and friends. The URLs are:

Avenger Facebook Group: <http://www.facebook.com/groups/27371220186/>

Avenger Facebook Page: <http://www.facebook.com/pages/USS-Avenger/159162957480482>

- Avenger News newsletters are archived online, in PDF format, on the *Avenger* website.

*** Our CaféPress Store:** You can buy *Avenger* stuff online like T-shirts, sweatshirts, mugs, mousepads, etc at the CaféPress *Avenger* Store, featuring our logo. It 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 you'd like and that's not available in our store, contact *Avenger* Command and let them know.

*** Look at the spiffy poster below and go buy one!** The *Avenger* Cutaway Poster, done by artist Chris Allan, is a detailed poster that matches up with the official *Avenger* Blueprints and gives a fascinating look inside our vessel. Take a look! It's at our CaféPress store: <http://www.cafepress.com/ussavenger>



*** 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.

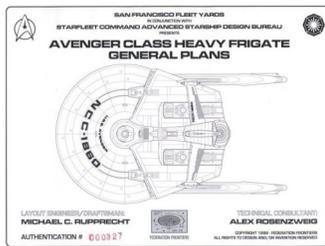
SHIP'S BBS

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@hindlepowerinc.com, or just visit the Federation Frontiers web site for this and other spectacular Star Trek technical documents: <http://federationfrontiers.tripod.com/fh1860/>

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

* *Avenger* Fiction Update

- A new story, in which a beacon's signal draws the *Avenger* to an unexplored star system, has had its first draft completed, and is in the midst of beta reads. One beta reader has provided valuable input, while a response is awaited from the other. Anybody else want to jump in? Let ADM Alex know!
- Contributions of stories set in the *Avenger's* fictional universe, of any length, are welcome and sought!
- Ideas and suggestions for future possible group collaborations are welcomed, too. Feel free to send them to ADM Alex, or even pitch them to the *Avenger's* e-mail list.
- Suggestions for interesting characters to fill open spots in *Avenger's* fictional crew are wanted! You can provide just some rough notes, or a full character file. If you'd like to get in on the fun, check in with ADM Alex.
- And don't forget to work on keeping your own main character's file up-to-date, too! Or create one if you haven't done so yet. Check with ADM Alex for assistance if you need it.

* Quote for this Issue:

"We cannot solve our problems with the same thinking we used when we created them." – Albert Einstein

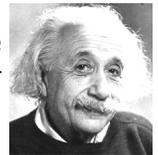
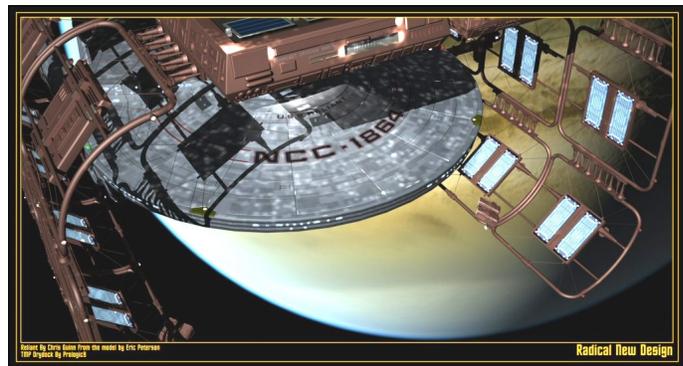


IMAGE GALLERY



"In the Middle of Somewhere", by Rob Caswell
[Submitted by Alex Rosenzweig]



"Radical New Design", by archangel72367 (from DeviantArt)
[Submitted by Alex Rosenzweig]

THE AVENGER IN FICTION

"TWO VULCANS AND THE STARS"

BY ALEX ROSENZWEIG

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

Many members' questions have dealt with the fictional *Avenger*. Since we call for members to make up personnel files for their characters and invite them to write stories in the "*Avengerverse*", 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.

In this issue, we bring you another vignette, this one, admittedly, **slightly** less brief. But it does introduce a senior officer whom we've not met before, and we learn a little more about something that any Star Fleet officers have in common. The key, as I've said before, is that even short fiction can be important, and it's usually a lot easier to write than a novel, or even a novelette! Why not try it out for yourself? You might find it fun! Meanwhile, I hope you enjoy this one...

TWO VULCANS AND THE STARS
By Alex Rosenzweig

SD11410.16

Commander Setak, executive officer of the *U.S.S. Avenger*, ascended the spiral staircase from the recreation deck below, and entered the ship's forward viewing lounge on Deck 3, at the leading edge of the raised hull section. The lounge, late in gamma shift, had only a few persons sitting in it, enjoying the views of deep space on a series of viewscreens interspersed between the actual viewports set into the angled forward bulkhead. The ports were generally more popular at times when the ship was not at warp, but when it was operating at hyperphotic speeds, there was typically little to see when looking directly outside, and the computer-generated simulations more completely satisfied observers' needs. Setak himself came to this part of the ship to relax and find mental balance when straightforward meditation proved insufficient.

Glancing around the lounge, he nodded to the couple of crewmembers who acknowledged him. This lounge, by unspoken agreement of all concerned, was typically a very quiet place, where those who visited could contemplate the universe through which they traveled. As he took a step farther into the lounge, though, he took note of the presence of Doctor Solan, the *Avenger's* chief medical officer.

Solan had joined the crew a couple of years ago, and earlier in the current year had been promoted to CMO when Doctor Draxum was transferred to another ship. Solan was a fine researcher and an efficient healer, though he had taken some time in meshing with the *Avenger's* crew. Originally having served in the Sciences Division, Solan had impressed Setak with

his enthusiasm for learning, even in areas of endeavor well apart from his own.

Solan was seated on a sofa by one of the large viewers. He was holding a data slate and studying it intently, occasionally tapping a finger against the live data surface to make notes. As he heard Setak's soft footsteps, he looked up from his work. "Commander Setak. Good evening. Can I assist you?"

"Hello, Doctor. No, thank you, I am not in need of assistance. I find this part of the ship...relaxing, and sometimes come here before retiring for the night."

"Indeed?" Solan said. "I find it so, as well. At this time of the day, I often find it more rewarding to perform administrative tasks here than in my office." He held up the padd, indicating a message link in one corner of its display, and then gestured at the communicator pin on his jacket. "Should I be needed, my staff is still easily able to contact me." He pointed to the open space next to him. "Please join me."

"Thank you," Setak said, sitting next to Solan. "I had not realized that we shared an affinity for this lounge," he added.

"I have not shared that information with many," Solan replied. "I mean no offense; I have, admittedly, been slow to involve myself with many of the crew." He shrugged slightly. "No matter. I will share this with you, if you wish."

"I have found," Setak told him, "that it does improve both individual and general crew morale, especially with species such as Humans, Andorians, and Betazoids, to interact more freely. It fosters trust, for example." He shook his head slightly. "That, however, is a conversation for another time. For what it is worth, I have received no complaints from the crew." He paused. "So, please do share. You were going to explain what draws you to this lounge."

Solan nodded. "Ahh, yes. As you know, Commander, over the course of my career, I have changed direction several times."

"Yes," the exec said. "That information is in your personnel file."

"The file may also indicate the reason for the most profound shift."

"It speaks of a fascination with space."

"Exactly," said Solan, with an expression of satisfaction. "I found the concept of spending extensive time in space occupying my thoughts more and more, and ultimately, I deemed it illogical to ignore it further. I contacted Star Fleet Command and inquired about the options available to me. Fortunately, Star Fleet has demonstrated a significant interest in experienced personnel with civilian sector experience, and I found myself welcomed." He paused. "Of course, as you know, I still had to complete a rigorous training program, but once that was accomplished, I could at last embrace the fascination that consumed me."

"For what it may be worth, I can well understand," Setak said. "My own path was somewhat different, but I also needed to overcome obstacles, most notably with my family. My choice did create a rift with my parents, although not one in which we ceased speaking. The rift was ultimately healed, for the most part, several years ago."



THE AVENGER IN FICTION

"I am pleased that your family conflict was resolved," Solan responded.

"Thank you," Setak said. "As much as my parents were disturbed by my choice, however, they did not make any attempt to prevent me from carrying it out."

"I had a similar experience," Solan replied. "Of course, I was already far from home and working on—and above—Earth, not to mention among Humans, that it might be fair to say that they were unsurprised when they learned of my decision."

"I am not certain if my choice came as a surprise to my family. I never asked them. By the time my sister chose also to enter Star Fleet, they were not surprised, but they were again disappointed, though in the end it was for the same reason: concern for our safety."

"There are indeed less appropriate reasons," Solan noted.

"This is indeed true," Setak agreed. "Whatever our varying pathways, though, it would seem that we share a common characteristic, not only between us, but with representatives of a wide variety of other species as well. The Humans sometimes call it, 'le rêve d'étoiles', a French phrase which means 'the dream of stars'."

"Interesting," Solan said. "I had heard the phrase mentioned from time to time while I was at Star Fleet Academy, but had not explored its meaning further. Perhaps I should have."

"When I explored it—like you, I'd heard it first at the Academy—I was surprised at how fully it captured my own views, and those of others I knew as well."

"Perhaps we underestimate the Human ability to, as they like to say, 'turn a phrase'," Solan said. Had he been other than Vulcan, Setak suspected that the doctor might actually have chuckled.

"Perhaps we do," Setak replied.

"Suffice it to say, though, that the phrase does fit well. After all, here we both are, from very different backgrounds, sitting in a lounge on a starship hundreds of light-years from home, surrounded by views of deep space. And we have both been drawn here—as are many of our fellow crewmembers of other species—due to a fascination with the potentials we see in exploring space. It would seem that we all share the same dream, that dream of stars."

"I believe you are correct, Commander," Solan replied. "What you say does seem logical, for both of us and for many others in Star Fleet."

Both men were silent for a time after that, watching the stars and accepting a companionable silence. They knew well that sometimes it was not necessary to fill every moment with chatter.

It was into that silence that the signal tones of both their communicator pins intruded, and the voice of Communications Chief Lynch could be heard. "Senior officers to the main briefing room."

"As the Humans like to say, duty calls," Solan said, a hint of a sardonic tone creeping into his voice.

"Indeed," Setak agreed, standing up. He knew the *Avenger* was still several days' travel from their next destination, and wondered if there would be a change in plan. Another possibility, one about which he was aware, but the others were not, was that the meeting might deal with Fleet Captain Lynch's future plans. Setak had been aware that Lynch had expressed interest in returning to the ASDB, and had inquired to Star Fleet Command about that possibility. Perhaps he had heard back.

Solan joined the executive officer, and they both headed for the doorway at the opposite end of the lounge from the spiral staircase. Beyond it was a corridor and a nearby turbo-lift stop. Nodding to the several crewmembers who acknowledged them, they went through the doors and back to duty.

The End

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] The *Avenger* visits a corporate energy research platform, at which a recent explosion has threatened a nearby inhabited planet. The planet's inhabitants have observed the explosion, and believe it's a test of their faith.

2] The *Avenger* unexpectedly encounters a starship believed lost in a battle at some point in the past, and the crew are stunned to discover that the ship is not only perfectly intact, but is being used for black ops missions by Star Fleet Intelligence.

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.

TREKKIN' THE WEB

From Alex Rosenzweig:



TREKYARDS – Ships of the Line Online

TREKYARDS focuses on the iconic (and not so iconic) ships of the Star Trek franchise. Stuart Foley and Samuel Cockings bring you a new ship class in each episode. Their informative back-and-forth explores the pros and cons of each design, the aesthetics of a given ship, and where it fits into the timeline and evolution of the line.

The show is in a slick format, with a great visual design and a tight 15-20-minute format. Each episode details a particular starship, giving you the facts and statistics, and even trivial facts that a lot of people may not know.

You'll love the slideshows, and the amazing 3D renders by Samuel Cockings, as we cover both the classic ships and little known ships that have only been seen once or twice. Even birds of prey, both Klingon and Romulan, are discussed. <http://trekyards.com/>

"Pacific 201": A Star Trek Film

Yup, another Star Trek fan production!

The year is 2200. Four decades have passed since the



devastating Romulan War, and while Earth prevailed, mankind was scarred with the memory of its first interstellar war. Now, humanity's future belongs to the children of those who fought and died those years ago, and they are eager to resume peaceful exploration of the stars.

These hopes and dreams ride with the launch of Earth's newest starship: *Pacific*. But the final frontier is full of untold dangers, and when crisis befalls the *Pacific* in deep space, it will take a crew of incredible bravery and fortitude to boldly go into the unknown.

This film will focus heavily on the "normal" people in Star Fleet, and how they live and work on a starship. The operation of a starship isn't as easy as calling orders and pushing buttons. "Pacific 201" will focus on the skill and expertise required of every crewmember to complete the mission. It's not just the bridge crew that handles everything. Hundreds of people need to do their jobs just right.

In this sense, the movie will take on a "documentary" style of filmmaking. While being a dramatic film, the visual style will be as though the film crew is actually there recording the events. And when crisis befalls the *Pacific*, nobody is any more or less important than another. This is a story about a ship, her crew, and their struggle with the unknown.

"Pacific 201" is currently in early planning/pre-production. <http://echenry.com/pacific-201/>

From Jason Blackstone:

Google is Developing Cancer and Heart Attack Detector

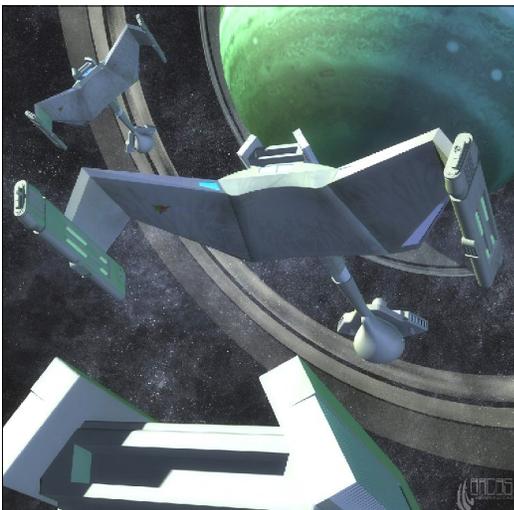
Google is aiming to diagnose cancers, impending heart attacks or strokes, and other diseases at a much earlier stage than is currently possible.



The company is working on technology that combines disease-detecting nanoparticles, which would enter a patient's bloodstream via a swallowed pill, with a wrist-worn sensor.

The idea is to identify slight changes in the person's biochemistry that could act as an early warning system.

The work is still at an early stage. <http://www.bbc.com/news/technology-29802581>



"More Conquest", by Rob Caswell
[Submitted by Alex Rosenzweig]

IMAGE GALLERY



"Echo at Stationkeeping", by Todd Guenther
[Submitted by Alex Rosenzweig]

MISSION DOCKET

UPCOMING EVENTS

14 December 2014 – Avenger Ship Meeting

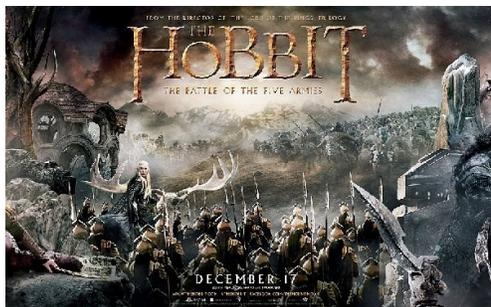
Norm Van Houten's Home, 27 Wilshire Road, Edison, NJ, 2:00 PM

Join us for the usual fun, chatter, and good times. Program: 2014 Holiday Party. Dinner to be provided by our host. Thanks, Norm!

Event Coordinator: FCAPT David Lynch, Karate666@aol.com

20 December 2014 – Group Viewing of "The Hobbit: The Battle of the Five Armies"

AMC Loews New Brunswick Theater, Route 1 Southbound, New Brunswick, NJ, 11:00 AM - 12:00 PM (Exact Time TBD, Pending Showing Schedules)



Synopsis: From Academy Award-winning filmmaker Peter Jackson comes "The Hobbit: The Battle of the Five Armies," the third in a trilogy of films adapting the enduringly popular masterpiece The Hobbit, by J.R.R. Tolkien. "The Hobbit: The Battle of the Five Armies" brings to an epic conclusion the adventures of Bilbo Baggins (Martin Freeman), Thorin Oakenshield (Richard Armitage) and the Company of Dwarves. The Dwarves of Erebor have reclaimed the vast wealth of their homeland, but now must face the consequences of having unleashed the terrifying Dragon, Smaug, upon the defenseless men, women and children of Lake-town.

We'll follow the film with lunch and further discussion/socializing.

Event Coordinator: ADM Alex Rosenzweig, alexr1860@optimum.net

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

11 January 2015 – 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: TBD, Suggestions Welcome!

Dinner and socializing to follow. We hope you'll join us for all the fun!

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

8 February 2015 – 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: TBD, Suggestions Welcome!

Dinner and socializing to follow. We hope you'll join us for all the fun!

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

8 March 2015 – 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: TBD, Suggestions Welcome!

Dinner and socializing to follow. We hope you'll join us for all the fun!

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

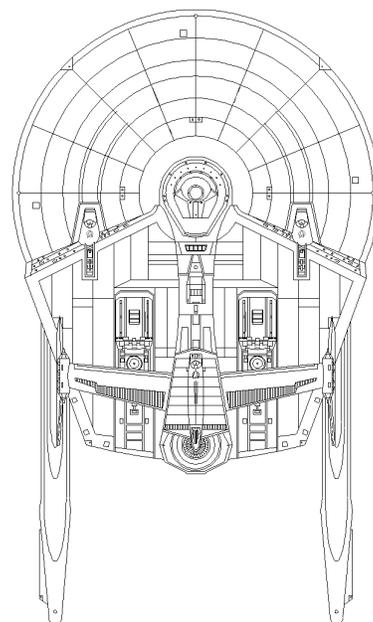
12 April 2015 – Avenger Ship Meeting

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

Join us for the usual fun, chatter, and good times. Program: TBD, Suggestions Welcome!

Dinner and socializing to follow. We hope you'll join us for all the fun!

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



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!

Avenger News 148 Deadline: January 20, 2015
Please send all submissions to Alex Rosenzweig
alexr1860@optimum.net

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

880 Hermann Road
North Brunswick Public Library

2:00 PM

Sunday, January 11, 2015

The Next Meeting of the U.S. Avenger will be:

U.S.S. Avenger

331 Academy Terrace, Apt 17
Linden, NJ 07036-5695

NOTE: YOUR AVENGER MEMBERSHIP EXPIRES WITH ISSUE #