



On The Horizon

USS Horizon

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A Celebration of Space

Now's the time to send your name on a trip to the moon ... or find the bright star in the sky known as the international space station ... or catch a meteor shower ... or tune in to the past and the future of space exploration on your computer.

This year marked the 50th anniversary of a rocket circling the earth. At 9:45 p.m. PT on Jan. 31, 1958 Explorer 1 was circling Earth for the first time - and proving that America could match the Soviets on the Cold

War's orbital frontier.

Space Day was established in 1997 by a consortium of businesses and other institutions, led by Lockheed Martin, as an opportunity to educate the next generation about space exploration. It takes place on the first Friday of May, serving as a nod to President Kennedy's May 1961 speech to Congress in which he set America on a course for the moon. This year, more than 100 events have been registered as Space Day activities.

The Space Day Web site also offers online games and 101 suggested activities to get kids in a spacey mood.

Special events are being planned to mark the touchdown of NASA's Phoenix Mars Lander on May 25. Your local science center may be planning something as well. In any case, you should be able to tune in NASA TV and follow along online as the Phoenix makes its descent. Touchdown is timed for 7:36 p.m. ET, with confirmation of landing due at 7:53 p.m.

At the St. Louis Science Center The

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NASA'S Phoenix Mars Landing

It's go time for NASA's Phoenix Mars Lander.

After nearly 10 months speeding across 422 million miles, the Phoenix spacecraft is just days away from plunging into the Martian atmosphere on Sunday to land near the north pole of Mars.

Phoenix is slated to land on the Martian arctic plains in a region called Vastitas Borealis, where it will use a robotic arm to dig for water ice in the hopes of determining whether the site may have once been capable of supporting primitive life.

NASA's Phoenix mission machine kicked into high gear on Thursday with the first in a series of status briefings leading up to with the first hoped-for signal from the probe at 7:53 ET p.m. on Sunday. Because of the 171 million miles between Mars and Earth during Phoenix's Red Planet arrival, it will take signals about 15 to 20 minutes to reach NASA's control center at JPL once they're sent. Phoenix is the first spacecraft to attempt a powered landing on Mars since the crash of NASA's ill-fated Mars Polar Lander in 1999. It follows the 2004 airbag-cushioned arrivals of the agency's Spirit and Opportunity — which are still active today — and would mark the first successful powered

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The Staggering Price of a Burger

This is one way to super-size sales: Burger King in the U.K. plans to serve up the world's most expensive cheeseburger — costing a staggering \$170.

The sumptuous sandwich was originally to be made from finest Japanese Kobe beef and topped with foie gras and a rare blue cheese, The Sun newspaper reported.

But later the fast-food chain dropped the foie gras condiment after howls from

British animal-rights activists over the use of the goose-liver delicacy.

Burger King said it will roll out the choice cheeseburger in the tony London neighborhoods of Kensington and Chelsea first.

Apparently they are looking for high concentrations of affluent fast-foodies.

Anthony Daniels The Best of Star Wars

Anthony Daniels was born on February 21, 1946 in Salisbury, Wiltshire, England. He was never a science fiction

fan. The only Sci-Fi movie he ever saw in theaters was *2001: A Space Odyssey*. He walked out after 10 minutes because he was so dissatisfied with the movie, and demanded his money back.

Best known as C3-PO he and Kenny Baker, who played R2-D2, are the only two actors who can claim that they played the same roll in all six movies. He had the honor of saying the first words in Episode IV and the last words in Episode III.

He has done voice over for the animated series "Droids" and "Star Wars: Clone Wars." He has also provided narration and character

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Fleet Captain,
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This is the first Region 12 Summit that I have attended in many years. It was a great deal of fun seeing folks I have not seen for a couple of years. Friends from the Discovery, Royal Sovereign and the Umiak were present as well as many folks I have never met.

One of those folks was the

XO's Log

first Regional Coordinator. What a cool guy. Listening to him was a bit like listening to a sage speak.

Friday night the Horizon took honors in the Romulan Ale contest. I was told that the non-alcoholic version that I made had an "alien flavor" to it. Since it won first in the non-alcoholic competition, I shall take the comment as a compliment.

Eddie's version of the alcoholic version took first in that category. Watching the judges attempt to choke it down was fun. One judge thought there must be something wrong with the ale because he came back for seconds and thirds. Best of all it has now become known as the "Horizon Beverage."

There was a request for the

recipes and Eddie wrote them out for anyone who wanted them.

The Horizon will resurrect the Missouri Sector BBQ. It will be at Nickell Shelter in Cosmo Park on July 19th. Bring you suggestions for food and fun to the next meeting. I know there will be water gun fights, that goes without saying since the Discovery is planning to attend.

Mark your calendars for next year's summit which will be held April 24-26, 2009 in Columbia. The Horizon has offered assistance to the RC and staff for the organization of the event. We are hoping that every member of the Horizon will come out to both events. At the Friday night reception, per Eddie's suggestion, the Intergalactic Food Network, IFN, will be holding a Saurian Brandy contest at next year's summit. The Horizon will enter again, I am sure. It is a great outlet for our CO's creative bartender talents.



Anthony Daniels, a British actor who played C-3PO in all six "Star Wars" movies, poses with a model of the fictional robot at the Carnegie Science Center in Pittsburgh.

C3-PO Enters Roboworld The Robot Hall of Fame

PITTSBURGH - How robots act, think and sense the world around them will be the focus of an upcoming exhibit billed as the largest and most comprehensive nationwide on robotics. The Carnegie Science Center plans to open a robotics exhibition next spring called Roboworld that will encompass an array of mechanized devices, including a welder that's been modified to pick up basketballs and shoot them through a hoop.

The \$3.4 million permanent display — similar to a traveling exhibition that's been on the road since 1996 — will emphasize three aspects of artificial robotic behavior: sensing, thinking and acting. And it will include members of the Carnegie Melon



"To shine like a beacon on the horizon that others may follow."
Motto of the USS Horizon

University Robot Hall of Fame. The exhibition, which also will pay homage to portrayals of robots in popular culture, will capitalize on the work of area universities and businesses that have developed an international reputation in robotics, said museum director Joanna Haas.

New Hubble photos show galaxy collisions



Arp 148, shown here, is the staggering aftermath of an encounter between two galaxies, resulting in a ring-shaped galaxy and a long-tailed companion. This image is part of a large collection of 59 photos of merging galaxies taken by the Hubble Space Telescope.

A huge set of new Hubble Space Images show galactic collisions in action and the variety of peculiar forms that merging galaxies can take. The series of 59 new photographs, released today on the 18th anniversary of the Hubble Space Telescope's launch, are the largest collection of Hubble images ever released together. Galaxy mergers are now known to be more common than was previously thought. They were even more common in the early universe than they are today. The early universe was smaller, so galaxies were closer to-

gether and therefore more prone to smash-ups. Even apparently isolated galaxies can show signs of past mergers in their internal structure. Our own Milky Way contains the debris of the many smaller galaxies it has brushed against and devoured in the past. And it hasn't stopped munching away at its neighbors: It is currently absorbing the Sagittarius dwarf elliptical galaxy. The Milky Way isn't the top predator though, as our giant neighbor, the Andromeda galaxy, is expected to devour the Milky Way in about two billion years. The



When Galaxies Collide

future resulting elliptical galaxy has already been dubbed "Milkomeda. Though colliding galaxies rush towards each other at hundreds of kilometers per hour, the interactions can take hundreds of millions of years to complete.

This game of celestial bumper cars is driven by the gravitational pulls that galaxies exert on one another. Typically the first sign of a collision is a bridge of matter connecting two galaxies as gravity's first gentle tugs tease out dust and gas. As the outer reaches of the galaxies begin to interact, long streamers of gas and dust, called tidal tails, sweep back to wrap around the galactic cores.

As the cores approach each other, the conflicting pull of matter from all directions can result in shockwaves that ripple through interstellar clouds. Gas and dust are siphoned off to fuel bursts of star formation that appear as blue knots of young stars. Given the vast distances between stars in a galaxy — the nearest star to us is 4.3 light-years away — stars rarely collide when galaxies merge.

The Hubble images capture galaxies in various stages of the collision process and show the variety of new and unusual shapes the mergers can create, including mergers that look like an owl in flight and a toothbrush.

C3PO (Continued from page 3)

The museum hopes by mounting the exhibit to encourage young people to pursue careers in science, math and technology, among other fields related to robotics, she said.

Anthony Daniels, the British actor who played C-3PO in all six "Star Wars" movies, said the world needed more scientists.

"My father was a scientist — I was a disappointment," said Daniels, who read a statement on behalf of Mayor Luke Ravenstahl at a news conference declaring April 9, 2008, "Carnegie Science Center Robot Day." "We need hands-on, real scientists."

Anthony Daniels (from page 2)

voices for *Dark Force Rising* and *The Last Command* audio books. He also had a cameo shot in *Episode II: Attack of the Clones* in the Outlander night club scene as Lieutenant Dannl Faytonni, the man in blue uniform. Faytonni can also be seen at the Galaxies Opera House in *Star Wars: Episode III Revenge of the Sith*.

Daniels was the voice of Legolas in Ralph Bakshi's 1978 animated adaptation of *The Lord of the Rings*. He crops up intermittently on British TV in various dramas, notably in a recurring role in *Prime Suspect* starring Helen Mirren. He also played the priest in the 1990 British spoof horror film *I Bought a Vampire Motorcycle*.

Mars Landing (Continued from page 1)

landing on Mars since NASA's two Viking spacecraft arrived in 1976. Phoenix is due to slam into the Martian atmosphere at 7:46:33 p.m. ET while traveling at 12,600 mph, beginning a seven-minute descent that will be over well before mission controllers on Earth get their first hint that it even began. The probe is expected to deploy its parachute about four minutes later, then drop free at 7:50:15 p.m. ET, then drop free a few minutes later to fire its pulse rocket engines for the final landing approach.

If all goes well, the first hint of a successful landing will come at 7:53:52 p.m. ET, though Phoenix will have to wait 15 minutes for the dust to settle before deploying its vital power-generating solar panels, mission managers have said.

Celebration of Space (continued from page 1)

James S. McDonnell Planetarium at the St. Louis Science Center will cover the event live, providing a real-time link to NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory, where visitors will be able to see the very first images sent back to Earth from this Lander.

The event starts at 6:00 pm. It is free and open to the public.

Horizon Calendar - April—May 2008

- May 24 (Mission) Monthly Meeting at China Star, 3301 W. Broadway,**
573-446-8866, at 1:30 pm. After the meeting we will
go to the first movie after 4 pm of
“The Chronicles of Narnia: Prince Caspian” at Forum 8.
- May 26 (Mission) Holiday BBQ at the C.O.’s house in Columbia.** This
Will replace the Allen Family BBQ. The Dinner
Will be at 1 pm and we will go to the next movie
At Forum 8 after the lunch to see **“Indiana Jones:
And the Kingdom of the Crystal Skull.”**
- May 31 (Mission) St. Louis Renaissance Faire (May 17- Jun 8)**
Members will meet at the McDonald’s in Kingdom City at 0900
For the Faire. This will be an all day event. Dinner
Will be at Ruiz Castillo in Wright City after the Faire.
- Jun 27-29 (Fleet) 2007 International Conference in Ithica, NY**
at the Airport Ramada Inn 607-257-3100 or 800-272-
6232. The IC web site is at: <http://www.ic2008.org/>
- June 28 (Mission) Monthly Meeting at Fellini’s at 700 Broadway,**
573-256-5025, at 1:30 pm. After the meeting we
Will go to the first showing after 4 pm of **“Wanted”** at Forum 8.
- July 19 (Fleet) Missouri Sector BBQ at Cosmo Park Nickels Shelter**
Lunch will be served from 12:00 to 1:00 Water guns and
Outdoor games and puzzles. More details will follow
- July 26 (Mission) Monthly Meeting at The Pasta Factory at 1020 E.
Broadway, 573-449-3948, at 1:30 pm.** After the
Meeting we will go to the first movie after 4pm
Of **“Batman: The Dark Knight”** at Forum 8.
- Aug 23 (Mission) Monthly Meeting at The Hidelberg at 410 South 9th**
573-449-6927, at 1:30 pm. After the meeting we
Will go to the first showing after 4 pm of **“The Fifth
Commandment”** at Forum 8.

Things that make you say, Hmmm: Donkey jailed for acting like a Jackass

TUXTLA GUTIERREZ, Mexico - A Mexican donkey has been freed from jail after doing time for acting like a jackass.

The Televisa network on Wednesday showed Blacky gobbling food from a bucket after spending three days in a jail that normally holds people for public drunkenness and other disturbances.

Blacky was jailed for biting and kicking two men near a ranch outside Tuxtla Gutierrez, the capital of the southern state of Chiapas.

Officials freed the donkey after its owner paid a fine of \$36 and the \$115 hospital bill of the men, who suffered bites to the chest and a broken ankle. Authorities say he also must pay \$480 to each man for missed work days. The victims said the donkey bit Genaro Vazquez, 63, in the chest on Sunday and then kicked 52-year-old Andres Hernandez as he tried to come to the rescue, fracturing his ankle.

Chiapas police have thrown animals in the slammer before, including a bull that devoured corn crops and destroyed two wooden vending stands in March.

In 2006, a dog was locked up for 12 days after biting someone. His owners were fined \$18.