



To Boldly Go Where ...

—the *Star Trek* legacy goes underwater

Why Roddenberry Dive Team?

Rod: I've loved it for many years. The beauty, the mystery, the adventure is what attracted me to the underwater realm. It really had nothing to do with *Star Trek*. I was certified during my first year of college in 1993... I didn't even think to connect the two worlds until many years later.

In the same way that *Star Trek* portrays a future where humanity has embraced diversity and reached into space in search of new ideas and life forms, the Roddenberry Dive Team (RDT) is a real world effort to share and preserve the wonder and diversity of our oceans and environment. Through scuba trips, special events and thought-provoking seminars, the dive team will inspire the change that will lead to a future where our species work together for the betterment of all life.

What do you mean?

Rod: Every diver I have met is considerably aware of the ocean and the state it is in. When I was young, I knew what my father (Gene Roddenberry, creator of

Star Trek) did for a living, but I wasn't into it myself. I guess I was a rebellious teenager and didn't see things eye-to-eye with him. When he passed on, I started to look into the bigger picture and the idea behind the series, and I became very proud of him and how he reached out and inspired so many to go beyond their perceived barriers and achieve a better understanding of human values.

When I hear people talk about how *Star Trek* inspired them to achieve greatness, it makes me proud of what my father did. It is those principles that my father stood behind that I want to implement in the Roddenberry Dive Team. When I first met Greg, he told me we could do something more than just a "dive club", and I believed him... and we have spent the past year of planning just that.

Greg: I have been a scuba diver for 33 years, and I grew up in Kansas about as far from water as you can get. I'd see scuba divers on TV or read about them, and it was really an exciting adventure for me. I was also as *Star Trek* fan, so

Text by Peter Symes
Photos courtesy of
Roddenberry Dive Team

Eugene "Rod"
Roddenberry (left) with
Greg Martin at a recent
event on Catalina
Island, California





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Starship Enterprise from the early *Star Trek* series. The *Star Trek* universe created by Gene Roddenberry is the setting of six television series including the original 1966 *Star Trek*, and eleven feature films.

when I heard about Rod's idea, it immediately went together in my mind—it was just a natural.

Greg: *Star Trek* has developed a bit of a stigma over the years—you know, over the top fans, etc. I don't know if you have been to a soccer or football game lately; there are some pretty over the top fans there too! These fans are just really embracing Gene's ideals for a better world. The dive team is not about *Star Trek* but about the philosophies that Gene created as part of the overall theme of *Star Trek*. We are using those themes and the fun of it to bring people together to make a difference in our oceans for all of the future generations to come.

What principles or ideas does it share with Star Trek?

Rod: The two worlds—the exploration of outer and inner space—go hand-in-hand. Instead of starting “just another dive club”, we want to create awareness and get people involved in preserving our

environment. Just in my relatively short diving career of 16 years, I have seen changes for the worse, and that is scary. These changes over time might be forgotten if we don't have anyone around who remembers how it used to be and to help the rest of us. The younger generation also needs to be aware. We hope to involve both science and marine experts (as well as a few celebrities) so that they can explain these matters and help inspire change.

Another parallel is that we don't go out on “dive trips”, we call them “dive missions”—in the same manner that *Star Trek* had “away missions”—since we want to go diving with a purpose. We always want to incorporate a message for what we do. If there is not a concrete message relating to that mission, then there should at least be the message of hope.

Listen to our radio interview with Rod, Greg, Peter Symes and Ken English on www.xray-mag.com/X-Raydio



Gene Roddenberry, creator of *Star Trek* and Rod's father

History is history for a reason, and we shouldn't stop making progress because we are scared of moving forward.

How is Roddenberry Dive Team organised?

Greg: Rod is the president and founder, and I am the executive director.

Rod: It is membership driven and we would like it to grow into a large “dive collective” that is essentially a global community of divers and ocean lovers who are working together to inspire change for a better future. We would like to do more than just organizing events here on the West Coast and even the US. We plan to have trips and meet up with like-minded dive groups from

all over the world. Preserving our planet and protecting life is a global responsibility, and we know we are not alone in our beliefs. As far as logistics to the dive team membership, there is a membership fee of US\$49.95 per year, which goes towards setting up various activities and events. While not officially a non-profit organization, we are non-profit oriented and are reinvesting all money back into the team objectives.

When we go out on our dive missions, we also want to explore the above-water part of the environment and get into the cultural element. So, if you are not diving, there are a lot of other activities you can participate in and also online.

We have a ton more information of what the RDT is all about at our

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website. I encourage anyone who's curious to go to www.RoddenberryDiveTeam.com and check it out!

Greg: We hope to have as many non-divers as divers joining because we also want to take part in lots of activities such as beach clean-ups and the like.

We won't be able to have the traditional club meetings, but we do hope to be able to have meetings in cyberspace.

The film studios owns the rights to Star Trek, and I assume, all of the derived merchandise. Couldn't that lead to some conflict over your dive team?

Rod: No, because we work off the Roddenberry Dive Club name and not Star Trek, and the studios have been quite gracious about us and will continue to be so as long as we don't go in and make any money off the Star Trek name.

Of course, they see us as something that also benefits their enterprise, too, and even in the case of any issues arising, I think they would consider it bad PR going into a spat over it. We might consider going into making some underwater vehicle later, so perhaps we have to talk to them there. However, my family does have some rights to sell Star Trek merchandise.

What are your long term goals?

Greg: First we must build up membership. Then, I would like the dive industry to think of our group as doing some important work. We want to take the next step with the young kids to educate them on what is going on with our oceans. We need that youthful excitement we are hoping to utilize it to make a difference in our oceans. ■



Paramount Pictures has produced eleven Star Trek feature films, the most recent released in May 2009 with a twelfth in development, possibly to be released in 2011, which will celebrate the Star Trek franchise's 45th anniversary



Roddenberry Dive team was introduced to the general public at the recent Scuba Show in Long Beach, California

For me, the series was best when it was about issues. "Star Trek" has tackled many racial and economic issues. We were the first to do ecological issues, and we always talked about peace on many planets. Those are still such relevant issues for the new film. On the series, a writer would come to the set and say, "I'm really passionate about this issue," then he would work it into the "Trek" world. That's the beauty of these stories.

—Leonard Nimoy,
quoted by Los Angeles Times
on May 3rd



Leonard Nimoy played the character of Spock on the first Star Trek series, that ran for three seasons from 1966 to 1969, and he reprised the role in the movie sequels (most recently 2009's Star Trek) and the follow-up series, Star Trek: The Next Generation

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