



HUMAN INTEREST

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Calling ET: Your chance to send a message to alien life



If you had the chance to send a message into space, what would it say? "Greetings, fellow sentient beings"? "We come in peace"? "Hi... we've kind of messed up our planet, and we wondered if by chance anyone out there had a spare one?" The subject of alien life – and its presence or absence in the universe – has been moving up the agenda recently, thanks to the approaching anniversary of the day in April 1960 when Frank Drake, an astronomer at Cornell University, pointed a radio telescope towards Tau Ceti, a suitably Sun-like star

in our galactic neighbourhood. Drake was looking for unusual radio transmissions, which could indicate the presence of intelligent life. And even though the search came up empty, it was a good enough idea to kickstart the SETI programme – the Search for Extraterrestrial Intelligence. Fifty years later, the team at SETI are still looking, and still puzzled by what is known as the Fermi paradox (first put forward by Enrico Fermi, the atomic scientist): the universe is large enough that there should be a host of advanced civilisations out there, so why haven't they been in touch? [FULL STORY HERE](#)

Saint fan's heart in her throat

The Saints didn't choke -- and neither did one of their biggest fans after accidentally swallowing an earring shaped like the team's logo. New Orleans resident Florellen Rickard had a piece of fleur de lis jewelry stuck in her throat last week before ER doctors pushed it out of harm's way. She wore the earrings on Sunday. "They're my lucky earrings and I wore them yesterday!" a beaming Rickard told The Post yesterday, still giddy about New Orleans' 31-17 upset victory over the Colts on Sunday in Super Bowl XLIV. Every night, Rickard, 42, puts her Saints earrings in her jewelry box and takes six vitamins and supplements kept on her nightstand. But last Monday, Rickard put her Saints earrings on the nightstand -- and in the dark, she blindly went for her vitamins and water. "I swallowed and something really hurt -- then I looked down and saw one fleur de lis," said Rickard, a Saints season-ticket holder. "I thought, 'Uh-oh.'" ER doctors pushed the quarter-sized earring out of her throat and into her esophagus. Then doctors pumped her stomach to recover the jewelry. By Sunday night, she and hubby Daniel Rickard were at a neighborhood party, noshing on crawfish and jambalaya,



whooping it up for the Saints. "She has a little sore throat, but she's OK," said Daniel Rickard, 53. When doctors spotted the earring in X-rays, they broke out in laughter, easing the couple's worries. "She's a Saints fan inside and out!" she quoted her ER doctors as saying.

Indy Irony

Talk about bitter irony. The Indianapolis Star says the local Adidas factory is busy pumping out Super Bowl t-shirts - just not the ones they would like to be. Demand is extra high for Saints merchandise because of a powerful trifecta: their first ever Super Bowl win, their Katrina comeback story and their "boy-next-door quarterback" Drew Brees. Workers at the plant are putting in overtime to send out 130,000 Saints shirts a day. But some don't care about the extra money. Says one worker who reportedly cried all morning yesterday: "I would have rather worked three days and had the Colts win." [FULL STORY HERE](#)



A howling good time in Gotham



Wile E. Coyote and friends are invading Manhattan. Three coyotes turned up on the Columbia University campus on Sunday morning, prompting an e-mail alert to students and faculty. A few hours later, a coyote was spotted darting around bushes and across a frozen lake in Central Park. Urban coyote authorities say the dogs will likely be seen more and more in big cities as they fight one another for living space. "It's not uncommon at all, and it's going to increase in frequency," Dr. Stanley Gehrt of Ohio State University said of coyote sightings in cities. Columbia's public-safety officials said the coyotes were spotted in front of a campus building near 119th Street and Broadway. Someone called 911, and police saw one of the coyotes before it left the campus, apparently near 120th Street. Later, in Central Park, photographer Neill Engler was walking along the 72nd Street transverse

when he spotted a coyote running back and forth near The Lake and a gazebo. "I was very shocked but pleasantly surprised that wildlife has returned to Central Park," said Engler, who recognized the animal based on his experience with them on California trails. Gehrt and fellow coyote expert Dr. Paul Curtis of Cornell University said coyotes are coming to cities because they are being forced to seek out new territory. "The peak of breeding is right around this time of year," Curtis said. "The young animals get kicked out of the home because their parents are preparing to breed." As a result, young coyotes migrate south along train tracks, cemeteries and other green patches from Westchester County and other points north. Green spaces, like parks and college campuses, provide a food source, like small rabbits, Curtis said. "They're pushing themselves into the city, and what they found in the city is that life isn't so bad," Gehrt said. Columbia warned its students and faculty "not to approach these animals." That's the right policy, experts say, even though coyotes are not as ferocious they are sometimes depicted. "I've been up close to them a number of times," Engler said. "They're far more scared of us than we are of them."

Sinatra Song Often Strikes Deadly Chord



GENERAL SANTOS, the Philippines — After a day of barbering, Rodolfo Gregorio went to his neighborhood karaoke bar still smelling of talcum powder. Putting aside his glass of Red Horse Extra Strong beer, he grasped a microphone with a habitué's self-assuredness and briefly stilled the room with the Platters' "My Prayer." Next, he belted out crowd-pleasers by Tom Jones and Engelbert Humperdinck. But Mr. Gregorio, 63, a witness to countless fistfights and occasional stabbings erupting from

disputes over karaoke singing, did not dare choose one beloved classic: Frank Sinatra's version of "My Way." "I used to like 'My Way,' but after all the trouble, I stopped singing it," he said. "You can get killed." The authorities do not know exactly how many people have been killed warbling "My Way" in karaoke bars over the years in the Philippines, or how many fatal fights it has fueled. But the news media have recorded at least half a dozen victims in the past decade and includes them in a subcategory of crime dubbed the "My Way Killings." The killings have produced urban legends about the song and left Filipinos groping for answers. Are the killings the natural byproduct of the country's culture of violence, drinking and machismo? Or is there something inherently sinister in the song?

[FULL STORY HERE](#)

Central Talent Booking