

Photos by The Chattanooga Times Free Press
Downtown Chattanooga, Tenn., is seen from the historic Walnut Street Bridge. It shows the Tennessee Aquarium on the right and Riverfront Apartments on the left. The city's downtown and riverfront have experienced a rebirth since the aquarium opened in 1992.

Revitalized Chattanooga

CHATTANOOGA, from Page A7

On May 13, the city dedicated a pedestrian passage beneath Riverfront Parkway that commemorates Cherokee culture and the tribe's forced removal on the Trail of Tears. A team of American Indian artists from Locust Grove, Okla., designed huge clay medallions for the passage.

Chad Smith, principal chief of the Cherokee Nation in Tahlequah, Okla., said the ceremonies and project should boost public awareness about real American Indian history, instead of what people "see in sports mascots and old John Wayne movies."

Smith said Chattanooga's birthplace by the river, Ross' Landing, was a "central point of dispatch" for Cherokees forced to leave the region in 1838 on the Trail of Tears.

"It was a gate from our homeland to Indian territory," Smith said. "This is still our homeland, and we are coming back through that gate."

Former Mayor Bob Corker, who coordinated the city's 21st Century Riverfront project and fund-raising, describes it as a true partnership between public and private sectors.

A hotel-motel tax provided \$56 million for the project, and private donors contributed \$51 million. The state provided some additional funding and gave the city Riverfront Parkway, the street that runs along the waterfront.

"I don't know of a community in America that could come together the way ours has," Corker said. "We have this vital urban area that has been transformed, and all these God-given amenities around us."

"It truly feels very different than even a few years ago, despite all the success we have had in the past."

A 1969 federal government report identified Chattanooga as the most polluted city in the United States because of the smoke, ash and dust that was trapped by a perimeter of mountains.

But foundries and smokestacks gave way to high-tech industries. Changes in emission standards and the use of unleaded gasoline were also major contributors to the



Bill Glass, left, a Cherokee artist from Locust Grove, Okla., installs a Sun Circle on April 28 on the Ocean Journey building at the Tennessee Aquarium.

cleanup, said Kelley Walters, a spokeswoman for the Chattanooga-Hamilton County Air Pollution Control Bureau. Coal-burning power plants in the region also are "slowly cleaning themselves up," she said.

Now, Outside Magazine rates Chattanooga as one of America's Top 10 Dream Towns, with an outdoor recreation lineup that includes hiking, camping, hang gliding, rock climbing and nearby whitewater rafting.

But the Scenic City has been getting ready for some new competition. About one-quarter of the Tennessee Aquarium's customers travel from the Atlanta area, just 120 miles

away, and now that city plans to open the larger Georgia Aquarium later this year.

A Warner Robins, Ga., teacher, Stacy Odoms, said last week while visiting Chattanooga as a chaperone with seventh-graders that she first visited the Tennessee Aquarium as an 11th-grader.

"I like how they have it fixed it, so you can walk through yourself," said Odoms. She said an aquarium in Atlanta would not be the same.

"They don't have the water. They don't have the riverboats. They don't have the mountains or the scenery," Odoms said. "That makes a difference."

Sci Fi challenge pits 'Star Trek' versus 'Star Wars'

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an hour.

Representing "Star Wars" (SW) were Kim Fink, of Bryan, Ohio, a member of numerous fan clubs, including the Jedi Knights of Cleveland and the Ohio Star Wars Collectors Club; Brian-Joseph Baker, of West Toledo, who organizes Star Wars gaming events, and Sean Dixon, a fan who collects Star Wars comic books and novels.

On the other side of the debate were "Star Trek" (ST) fans Kevin Stewart, of Adrian, Mich., who has been to numerous conventions; Christine Brockway, of East Toledo, a member of the local fan club, the USS Tycho, and David J. Rose, of Monroe, founder of the USS Tycho who has a fictional rank of fleet captain.

BLADE: Which of the two franchises do you think has better storytelling?

SEAN (SW): [George] Lucas is good at telling a story. As far as having the people talk during the story, maybe he's not that good. ... I think he enlisted somebody to actually write the script for this movie. I think I read that somewhere. So hopefully the actors are gonna be a little more human in the movie.

CHRISTINE (ST): Lucas sat down and did the whole story and kept it that way, but ["Star Trek" creator Gene] Roddenberry came up with a concept that a lot of different people were able to build upon. There's different writers, different areas, you get the four different types of worlds — I guess five if you count "Enterprise" — five different types of "Star Trek" world building there and you have all those stories.

BLADE: Which do you think has better acting?

CHRISTINE (ST): We have Patrick Stewart [from "Star Trek: The Next Generation"], who's a classical Shakespearean actor.

KIM (SW): I think some of the actors in the newer ["Star Wars"] films are limited by the dialogue that's given to them. Because Natalie Portman and Hayden Christensen, they're very good.

CHRISTINE (ST): You can only work with the material that you're given. If you have shoddy material, your dress is gonna look awful.

SEAN (SW): The actors are pretty much just background to all the visuals.

BLADE: Which is more likely someday to be the basis of a religion?

KIM (SW): "Star Wars." You already have the Jedi. They had a survey in England, what's your religion, and Jedi Knight came up as one of the lower tiers, under the major religions.

CHRISTINE (ST): "Star Trek" is a way of life, but "Star Wars" would be a religion.

BRIAN (SW): It's kind of a spiritual thing because that's what they did with the whole Jedi. They tried to go with this kind of Judeo-Christian-Hindu type of belief system, and all in all it's pretty cool. It's very spiritual, and it's one of the most consistent things throughout the films because it's always there underlying everything: May the Force be with you. That's like God go with you, that type of thing.

CHRISTINE (ST): "Star Trek" is more like the civil liberties union.

BLADE: Do you think one franchise has more devoted fans than the other?

DAVID (ST): Just as loyal on both sides. You look at the stores now, how many people are gonna go out now and buy the Pepsi cans and the special boxes of cereal. Well, you know "Trek" is the exact same way.

CHRISTINE (ST): But there's a lot of crossover between "Star Wars" and "Star Trek." In the fan bases, I mean.

SEAN (SW): I just like "Star Wars." I'm not watching the Sci Fi channel every night to see what's new. I don't even know what channel it is.

BLADE: If you go out and say, "I'm a 'Star Wars' fan," are you going to get different looks than if you go out and say, "I'm a 'Star Trek' fan."

KIM (SW): No because most people lump us in together. ... "I'm going to a 'Star Wars' convention." "Oh, OK, is there gonna be a lot of Spock there?" God, no ...

CHRISTINE (ST): When you get into the convention and you start looking at the costuming, frankly there's not as much leeway for costuming in the "Star Trek" world. Now especially with the newer ["Star Wars"] movie and the elaborate costumes of the princess and the queen, there's some good leeway there. And the Stormtroopers are always a big hit for costuming.

KIM (SW): Well, the Stormtrooper costumes are not very comfortable. You can't see.

BRIAN (SW): And they get hot.

BLADE: If we take a look back at the movies and the series, which do you think from the beginning until now has had the lower lows?

KIM (SW): ["Star Wars"] Jar Jar's pretty low.

DAVID (ST): The lowest spot is ["Star Trek V"].

BLADE: Lightning round. Who is the bigger babe, Princess Leia or Deanna Troi?

STAR TREK FANS: Deanna Troi.

KIM (SW): Did Deanna Troi wear a slave outfit?

SEAN (SW): Yeah, Princess Leia. I think she won that one.

BLADE: Which is worse, the movie with the whales or Jar Jar Binks?

STAR TREK FANS: Jar Jar. Jar Jar.

CHRISTINE (ST): The movie with the whales is the good one.

KIM (SW): Really?

SEAN (SW): I think I stopped after the whales.

BLADE: Who was the bigger stud, Han Solo in "Star Wars" or Captain Kirk in "Star Trek?"

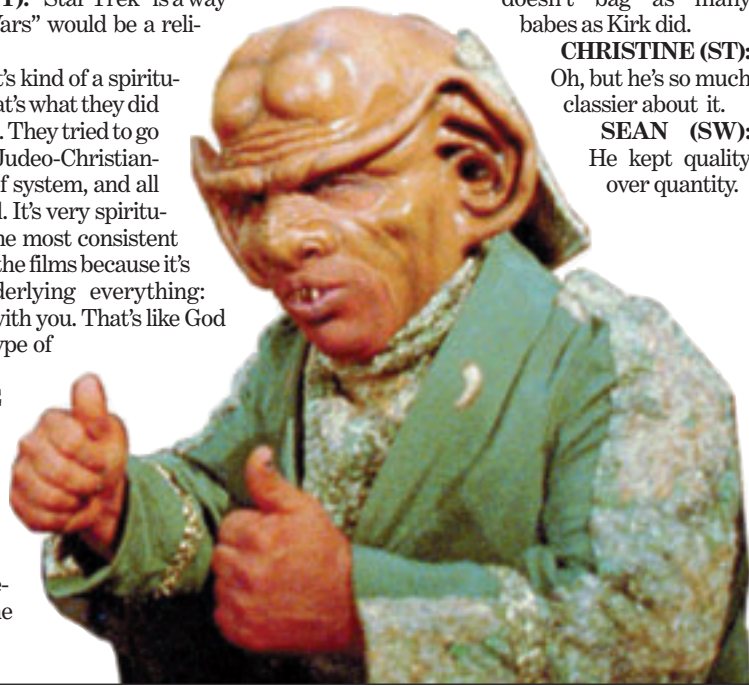
CHRISTINE (ST): Han Solo.

SEAN (SW): Han Solo.

KIM (SW): I don't know, he doesn't bag as many babes as Kirk did.

CHRISTINE (ST): Oh, but he's so much classier about it.

SEAN (SW): He kept quality over quantity.



Ship, ship, hooray!

Cindy Greenberg

Wine lovers know where they were and what they were doing on Monday when the announcement was broadcast that the U.S. Supreme Court had ruled in their favor on the "wine case" (no pun intended) and that they could now begin ordering and receiving wine shipments.

To most wine buffs (except those who happen to be lawyers or Supreme Court acolytes), this whole "wine shipping" issue boiled down to this: the inconvenience, expense and risk of having to find a friend in a "reciprocity" state who would accept your wine shipment, readress the box, and ship it to your home. To the small winery owner, it boiled down to decreased sales and restriction of trade. However, as is usually the situation, it is much more complicated than it appears on the surface. Obviously, it must have been important since the lawsuit made its way through the entire Judicial system.

This lawsuit pitted the states rights groups, who argued for preservation of state alcohol regulation systems based on the 21st Amendment, and wholesalers, who control about 98 percent of the wine market, posturing for maintenance of the traditional three tier system of sales, (that is, producer-wholesaler-retailer) against the small winery owners, who felt that the current system of distribution failed to adequately market and distribute their wines. The latter is due to a combination of the massive consolidation occurring in the wholesale industry (similar to the telecom industry where the big boys are buying up the little guys and everyone is merging) as well



as the wholesaler focusing on major nationally distributed brands rather than the limited production labels of small wineries (it is easier for them to sell a large lot of a well recognized name brand versus a small volume of a boutique wine), and the wine lovers who had no other means to obtain small volume production wines in addition to wines that were not available in their state.

Who would have thought that one small winery owner from Middleburg named Juanita Swedenburg, who felt it was unfair to discriminate against her out-of-state product in favor of their own in-state product and just wanted to be able to ship her wine to other states to make a living, could open up such a Pandora's box. This is definitely a real-life courtroom replay of David vs. Goliath.

The U.S. Supreme Court ruled in a 5 to 4 vote that Juanita Swedenburg was correct. Essentially the ruling states that the 21st Amendment allows the states to "regulate but not discriminate" in alcohol policy. If the state, of say New York for example, wishes to allow its in-state wineries to ship to New York state residents then it must allow ALL wineries to ship to its residents.

But this doesn't just affect small wineries, points out Margie Healy, assistant vice president of Public Relations for Korbels Wines in Napa Valley. "Large wineries, such as Korbels, have significant distribution networks that utilize the

traditional three tier system. We aren't going to abandon that network. However, we also offer special "limited production" wines that are only available through our tasting room, on our premises. This ruling will allow us to ship these special wines to more consumers across the country."

While on the whole, the ruling is a victory for the small winery owners and wine enthusiasts (and does not seem to have the negative impact on wholesalers they would like you to believe), it can continue to remain confusing while the states decide how to react to this new ruling. Some states may choose to comply and ease shipments to their residents while other states may opt to shut down shipments all together (including wineries in their own state). The latter being a sort of suicide-swell approach.

What about those of us who live in the Baltimore-Washington metro area? Virginia recently adopted a law that allows for direct shipment of wines in limited quantities. Since the lawsuit originated with a Virginia winery, it would seem likely that the laws will be modified in some way, but that remains to be seen. In D.C., where there is limited (one quart per person) direct shipping allowed, we again will play the wait-and-see game.

For Maryland residents, nothing has changed. It has been and will continue to be a felony offense to ship wine to that state. Hopefully, Maryland wine lovers will get a Juanita Swedenburg of their very own to champion the wine shipping cause. Until then, I guess they'll just have to ship their wines to a friend in Virginia.

You can reach Cindy at scott@vineguys.com.

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