

SAVE STAR TREK

Help Star Trek Find a New Home!

Part of the ad placed
by fans in the *Los Angeles Times* on
February 15.

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Fans unite in their efforts to save *Star Trek: Enterprise*

Star Trek fans, discouraged by the recent decision to cancel *Enterprise*, have united to form a strong grass-roots campaign aimed at letting both Paramount and UPN know that they aren't going to give up the show quietly. The campaign's main thrust is that *Star Trek* does not need a "rest" and that it should have a place to air, somewhere, even if it isn't on UPN or CBS, the two most high-profile Viacom-owned networks.

The strategy for getting the message out includes an ad in the *Los Angeles Times* that appeared on February 15, protests outside the studio and UPN, letter writing, e-mailing, online petitions and even faxing protests to Paramount. (The fax option, by the way, is considered the least effective. E-mail can be sent to community@startrek.com.)

It's important to remember that other campaigns may be underway to save the show that request a monetary donation. Use caution before sending money since these groups have no connection to Paramount, nor are their activities condoned in any way by the studio. You may not be able to request a refund or get your money back.

The history of the campaign to save the show actually began before the end of the third season of *Enterprise*, as cancellation rumors then were rampant. Two main

groups surfaced last year, SaveEnterprise.com and EnterpriseProject.org, both with one goal in mind—to keep the show from going away. In the run-up to the announcement of getting a fourth season, these groups were very vocal, and production personnel and the cast were very grateful for their support. (Not to mention the positive feedback from fans across the globe!)

After the powers that be reached a deal for a reduced licensing fee between UPN and Paramount Network Television, the show was given the go-ahead for a fourth season. It survived to reach the requisite number of hours to go into syndication (around 100) but was then given the ax this year when lackluster viewing figures followed the show's move to Friday nights at 8:00 p.m.

Although the ratings never improved significantly to ensure a fifth season, the show featured decidedly stronger storylines and increased interest amongst long-time *Star Trek* fans who were intrigued by the plots that sought to tie in elements of the Original Series or *The Next Generation*. Sadly, it wasn't enough. Other factors were also in play, as Scott Bakula (Captain Archer) said in a recent startrek.com chat: "Unfortunately, we don't fit into UPN's business plan and really haven't for the last two and a half years." ■

Happy 14th Birthday, U.S.S. Chesapeake!

The next meeting of the U.S.S. Chesapeake *Star Trek* and Science-Fiction Club will be held on Saturday, February 26, at the Hard Times Cafe in College Park, Maryland.

We'll gather at 5 p.m. to decide what to order for dinner that evening.

At 7 p.m., we'll begin our monthly club meeting, which will include discussion of

recent conventions (including Farpoint), upcoming cons (including Shore Leave), find out what fellow club members are up to and get the latest *Star Trek* and other science-fiction news.

Want to know how to get there? Then check out the insert with this newsletter for directions. ■

CAPTAIN'S LOG: There are always ...

Possibilities.

That's what the *U.S.S. Chesapeake Star Trek* and Science-Fiction Club has been about

since it was founded in February of 1991. But back then, we couldn't have imagined a time when we wouldn't have any new *Trek* to look forward to.

After all, *Next Generation* was still getting monster ratings on the boob toob, and there were even whispers of another *Trek* series on

the horizon, which would later materialize as *Deep Space Nine*. (Of course, *Voyager* and *Enterprise* weren't even a gleam in anyone's eye at that point.)

The original cast was getting ready to celebrate the franchise's 25th anniversary with their sixth feature film, though there were rumors that this was to be the last to star Kirk and his crew. Sadly, those rumors turned out to be true.

Playmates was cranking out action figures, ships and other toys from *The Next Generation* as quickly as we could afford to buy them, and *Star Trek* novels and other books were still flying off store shelves at warp speed.

Star Trek was everywhere from T-shirts to bookmarks. Some of us even wondered if Gene Roddenberry just might live forever.

And I would never have guessed that on our group's 14th anniversary, we might be facing the end of *Star Trek* as we've known it for 39 years.

I readily admit that I haven't been the quadrant's biggest fan of *Enterprise*, but I've been impressed with the show's past two seasons. The Xindi arc was interesting last year, and the "birth of the Federation" we've been enjoying since last fall has entertained me more than *Trek* has since *DS9* left the small screen.

From meeting "Khan's kin" in the Augments storyline to exploring Vulcan (complete with sehlat and Sarek's katra) to the literal beginnings of the Federation with the Andorians and the Tellarites, I've had a ball watching Coto and company get back to

Classic *Trek* basics. And I'm really looking forward to learning the Klingons' biggest secret and returning to the "Mirror, Mirror" universe as well.

So I was more disappointed than I ever expected when the word came down that *Enterprise* was being sent to the *really* final frontier.

Since then, I keep being drawn back to that "possibilities" thing my favorite starship captain was so fond of talking about. After all, if the powers that be wanted to be certain of ending the franchise, they could have waited to cancel the show until May, when it'd be too late for anyone to find a way to keep *Trek* boldly going on TV.

But it's only February, and several options are still available.

There's first-run syndication. I mean, it was good enough for *TNG* and *DS9*, right?

And there's always the Sci Fi Channel, which has always looked with lust at *Trek*. These are the people who paid big quatloues to get the original series as a way of making themselves legitimate players in the genre, and they tried to get the later shows before there ever was a Spike TV.

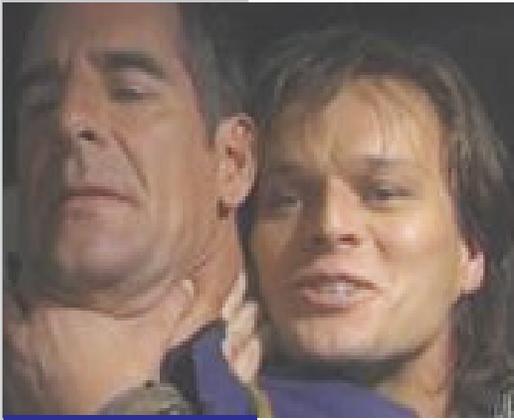
Of course, I've been down that particular road before. Anyone who's ever hoped Sci Fi would charge in and make new episodes of such fan favorites as *Forever Knight* and *Space: Above and Beyond* knows that this way lies madness, or at least disappointingly tiny budgets for sets and special effects.

That's why a third option might just be best. Show *Enterprise* on cable first, then follow the *Stargate SG-1* example and syndicate it afterwards, and you could end up with "the best of both worlds."

Still, there's no such thing as a cloud without a silver lining. It looks pretty certain that Rick Berman, he who has led *Trek* into the black hole of irrelevance, will finally have the Roddenberry legacy wrested from his greedy little mitts. And if that's not a reason to celebrate, I don't know what is. (I wonder if Ira Behr is looking for long-term employment these days.)

So Happy 14th Birthday to the crew and friends of the *U.S.S. Chesapeake*. May *Star Trek* continue to live long and prosper, and may there always be ... possibilities! ■

Captain Randy Hall



Captain Archer is attacked by a UPN executive. Or is that one of the Augments?

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those of the
entire club.

"*Star Trek*,"
"*Star Trek: The Next
Generation*," "*Star
Trek: Deep Space
Nine*," "*Star Trek:
Voyager*," and "*Star
Trek: Enterprise*,"
as well as the terms
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"starship *Enterprise*,"
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SCIENCE TREK: A little cosmic conundrum

This month, we'll talk about one more article from an issue of *Time* provocatively titled "Cosmic Conundrum."

But first, this thought: You'd think it would be a good idea to first read the article you (or rather I) am going to be writing about. And you'd be right. Let's leave it at that.

Now back to our regularly scheduled column, already in progress.

There's been a lot of talk (and some action by certain states—Pennsylvania—that will go nameless) about teaching a so-called theory so-called "intelligent design." Well now, you say, design should be intelligent, or at least, designers should be. And you'd be right.

This theory, so-called, is such because it's arguably not a theory but a religious belief disguised as a scientific theory. According to its critics, that is. According to its supporters, well, it's a theory. Just like evolution is a so-called theory, or rather a so-called* fact, according to *its* critics.

Confused yet? I've just started.

Let's go to the dictionary. According to my handy *dictionary.com***:

Theory: A set of statements or principles devised to explain a group of facts or phenomena, especially one that has been repeatedly tested or is widely accepted and can be used to make predictions about natural phenomena.

Fact: Knowledge or information based on real occurrences:

Evolution: A gradual process in which something changes into a different and usually more complex or better form.

Intelligent design: A theory that nature and complex biological structures were designed by intelligent beings and not created by chance.

Conundrum: A riddle in which a fanciful question is answered by a pun.

Now that we've got a basic understanding, let's take the issue from the local matter of evolution versus intelligent design from our local blue-green planet to the universe at large.

You're reading this article (still, I hope). What does that say about you? You exist, first of all. As does this article, whether on paper or as electrons in a semi-conductor

world. To bring you (and this article) into existence at this point and time, a lot of things had to happen.

Excluding the obvious (and who wants to think of their parents havin—?), the Earth needs to exist, and its environment needs to support life, human life. The universe needs to support planets that can support human life. Humans need to have the capacity to write and read.

On a closer look, if the electromagnetic force were slightly different, if the weak or strong forces were higher or lower, if gravity pulled a bit more or less, well, you wouldn't be here reading this. Or at least, you wouldn't be you, and this article would be—okay, I have a headache now.

Just like the local evo-design so-called debate, the question here is this (according to the *Time* article): "The universe seems uncannily well suited to the existence of life.** Could that really be an accident?"

Now that I've provided the discussion point, please feel free to start a debate among your so-called friends, family, co-workers or strangers on the bus.

Wow...I didn't even get to the part about multiple universes.

Web Notes:

- <http://www.time.com/time/archive/preview/0,10987,995781,00.html> (The article);
- <http://www.cnn.com/2005/EDUCATION/01/19/evolution.debate.ap/> (ID in PA);
- <http://www.intelligentdesignnetwork.org/> (We promote the scientific evidence of intelligent design because proper consideration of that evidence is necessary to achieve not only scientific objectivity.); and
- <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/evolution/> (From the people who bring you *Arthur* and *This Old House*)

Footnotes (Feetnote?):

* I'm not biased or unbiased, I'm just trying to be fair to both so-called sides.

** Since Wayne won't let me have a whole 'nother page, I'm just giving the number one definition of each. If you want the others, just hit www.dictionary.com and look 'em up.

*** Of course, *we're* biased since *we're* the only life we know of ... or at least that our so-called government admits to. (Play *The X-Files* theme.) ■

Second Officer Phil Margolies



ART CREDITS:
startrek.com 1, 2, 5, 6
images.google.com
3, 4, Insert back
washingtonpost.com 6
Dynamic Graphics
Insert front

REFLECTIONS: The blame game

The stage had been set. The announcement of this forthcoming program designed to bring all other science-fiction shows to shame had the genre world abuzz. This was supposed to be a darker, more adult take on science fiction. Hence, their unofficial motto: No robots, no cute kids ever! Supposedly, a direction never taken before. This show, taking place in the future on a space station, was unique unto itself, and *Star Trek* had nothing like it. Or so they thought.

All of a sudden, as if to deliberately rain on Straczynski's parade, Paramount announced plans for a new *Star Trek* series. This new show was supposed to be grittier, darker than *Next Generation*. This new *Trek* series promised more internal conflict than *Next Generation*. Best of all, this new show was to take place on a space station!

"It was devastating," Straczynski said. "I'd deliberately created something that was a whole different environment from *Star Trek*, which has always been on a starship, so I thought, we're safe in this one area."

In March of 1992, the OFFICIAL announcements went out about *Star Trek: Deep Space Nine*. Before you could say "Make it so," every major newspaper, magazine and television news program had been fed the information concerning the new show. This was the OFFICIAL release; the UNOFFICIAL notices came out a year before that, sometime around May of 1991.

"I remember it very specifically. It was two days before Christmas of 1992, and Walter Koenig called me at home. He had just had lunch with Richard Arnold. Walter knew about *Babylon 5*, and he said, 'Do you know what the new *Star Trek* show is going to be?'

I had no idea, and he said, 'It's about a space station near a warp point for businessmen and travelers to come

in and out.' I just sat there on the edge of the bed where I picked the phone up and felt the world evaporate under my feet."

The Purists were already crying foul. *Star Trek* had ripped off their beloved show, a show NONE of them had seen, a show they knew very little about. Be that as it may, the Purists were convinced that the concept of *Babylon 5* was stolen by Paramount.

I even had a handicapped Purist in a wheelchair accost me because I was wearing my *Deep Space Nine* jacket. He proceeded to tell me this totally ridiculous story of how Gene Roddenberry paid J.M.S. an unsubstantiated amount of money not to sue him. I told him not only how dumb that story was, but that it was also a bald-faced lie.

He was stunned. I told him that I knew Gene had never read J.M.S.'s outline because he was quite dead when it was pitched. However, Gene did see a very, very, VERY early outline for *DS9* for which he gave his blessing. I asked the Purist who'd told him that story. He told me J.M.S. said it. He confessed that he did not personally hear him say it but was told that he did.

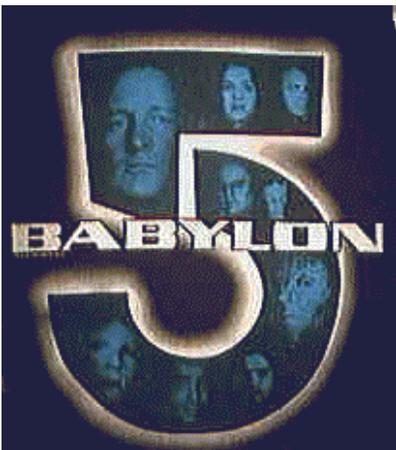
I also let him know that at the time *DS9* was being developed, J.M.S.'s wife was Michael Piller's intern, so if they'd stolen the show from him, she would have told him. He looked crushed, as though I'd stripped him of his hopes and dreams. I felt bad for a little bit, but not long.

The Moderates didn't see any similarities. (I'm not joking.) To them, a different name means a different show, since that was usually the extent of their analysis of television ... that and how many cute men are in the cast. The Moderates were not fazed, and they should have been. They LOVED *The Next Generation*, and this was the principal target of Straczynski's assault.

"I liked *Next Generation* to a certain extent," Straczynski revealed, "but I also saw that they were not pushing the limits; they had this great Porsche, but they were keeping it in the garage. At that time, I tried to write a script for *Next Generation*, which was just starting up, but was told I didn't have the credits for it. I've never forgotten that comment."

Next month: We explore the Babblers and the Evangelistas. ■

Conn Officer Lorenzo Heard



RANTINGS: By Grabthar's hammer, you shall be avenged!

We interrupt the history of the Man of Steel to comment on news that affects all of us. What some of us have been predicting for the last couple of years has finally happened. *Star Trek: Enterprise* has been cancelled by UPN. Let's take a moment for that sentence to sink in. Do you realize how bad a show has to suck to get the axe from UPN?

According to the report I read on *trektoday.com*, Les Moonves of UPN's parent company, CBS, personally ordered the cancellation. He must have really grown to hate the show. Maybe he didn't get cast on the original series back when he was a never-was actor and is having his revenge.

In the words of Jimmy Buffett, I don't know, and I don't care. I really can't shed a tear over the demise of *Enterprise* because it was a mediocre idea that was poorly executed. Berman and Braga showed they had either run out of ideas or were lazy and just collecting a paycheck.

To be fair, *Enterprise* suffered from the exact same problem *Next Gen*, *DS9* and *Voyager* did in their first two seasons: EXCEEDINGLY BAD WRITING. Most everything was just a warmed-over rehash of old plotlines and safe stories. Those shows solved their problems enough to keep going for seven years each. *Enterprise* never seemed to catch on with the general public, and the science-fiction fans were less than interested as well.

Was it all putrid and uninteresting? No. Jeffrey Combs as the Andorian Shran was always a treat to watch. Arik Soong and the "augment arc" was an example of what this show could have been. The Vulcan civil war arc was probably the finest hour or three this series had. There are still some episodes to come that sound like they could be interesting.

The last episode of *Star Trek: Enterprise* will air on Friday, May 13, 2005. The entire series will arrive on DVD later this year and join the boxed sets of the other *Star Trek* shows collecting dust on a shelf in fans' parents' basements.

I was 13 years old when the original series was cancelled by NBC in 1969, and it seemed like the end of the world. Due to rerun syn-

dication and overwhelming fan support, *Star Trek* returned; first as an animated cartoon, then a series of films and finally as a plethora of television shows.

I doubt that will happen again. Paramount's gums are still bleeding from *Nemesis* and *Enterprise*. They don't want to hear the words *Star Trek*. Who knows how long it will take to return, if it ever does?

Another reason is that the present-day science-fiction fan doesn't have the emotional investment in *Star Trek* we older farts do. The reasons for this are many, ranging from multiple choices of films and series to the exceeding lack of an attention span of several generations of fans.

Commercial television is no longer interested in the hour-long drama unless it's the latest incarnation or variant of *CSI* or *Law and Order*. The only other thing they're buying is "Reality TV" since it's cheap to produce, delivers big numbers and appeals to the worst aspects of human nature: greed and avarice. Also, the enormous costs of production can be offset when a raging egomaniac like the Donald is the executive producer, and you get him to fork over some money.

There's no room for an expensive show like *Star Trek*, especially when it's going to deliver such incredibly low ratings for something that is one-eighth of a network at best.

Actually, we're lucky we got four years out of this. Other series with higher profiles than *Enterprise* were yanked after three episodes when they failed to perform up to expectations.

What's next on the *Star Trek* horizon? Nothing. *Star Trek: Nemesis* killed the movie franchise, and now, *Star Trek: Enterprise* has done the same for television shows.

What will happen at UPN? Well, I've heard that the buildings will be demolished for a parking lot. After all, CBS execs need a place to park their Mercedes-Benzes. And what better place than on the last incarnation of a show that was killed by another network 30 years ago and should have stayed dead? That's sound studio executroid thinking.

What's gone and what's past help should be past grief. ■

Officer Peter Chewning



An outraged Shran tends to an injured Talas in *Enterprise*'s "Babel One."

COMING EVENTS

FEBRUARY

February 26..... Happy 14th birthday, U.S.S. *Chesapeake*! We'll celebrate at our February club meeting! See the insert included with this newsletter for directions!

MARCH

March 19..... Let's gather for our March meeting before Spring has sprung. Be sure to look for more information in next month's newsletter, the COMSTAR!

APRIL

April 23..... Now that the taxes are paid, let's have our April get-together! Stay tuned for more information coming your way soon!

CANDORVILLE



HOLODICTATION: Patterns of force

As you all know, I tend to relate the events in my life to things I learned from all the *Star Trek* series. So why depart from the norm (at least, the norm for me)?

In the episode "Patterns of Force," the *Enterprise* is sent to check on John Gill and finds that he has introduced the planet Ekos to Nazi Germany circa 1940. I remember an exchange when James T. Kirk asks John Gill, "Why Nazi Germany?" and he replies, "the most efficient state that earth has known."

Some events that have occurred in my life recently got me thinking about this episode. Harrison got in trouble at the private school he was attending. (If you want to know what he did, email me, and I'll tell you.)

His punishment was a five-day suspension, and then Harrison had to appear before all of the teachers and tell them what he did and what his remedy was for this. Then, the teachers would vote on whether he was to be expelled from the school.

Susan and I did not condone or approve of his actions, and he has been disciplined for

this, but for a 9-year-old to have to face a room full of teachers alone is just unacceptable. So, long story short: Harrison is in public school.

My point is: How often do we subject ourselves to people who have ultimate control over us in certain situations? The principal of the school said that there was an appeal process, but think of the damage done to Harrison. I wouldn't have to do that if it were me in my work place.

Think about situations in your own life. I'll bet each of us have or have had people who control us with hardly any recourse for us.

So what's the answer? I guess that we, as a people, should not entrust this power to only one person or entity, and that everyone should have a set of checks and balances for accountability.

But what do I know? I'm just a father.

"Those who fail to learn from history are doomed to repeat it."

Shalom. ■

Weapons Officer Patrick McBee



McCoy and Kirk as Ekosians in "Patterns of Force."