



Robert Orci, who co-wrote the upcoming *Trek XI* film, is being considered to participate in any sequels.

New *Star Trek XI* movie will “toy” with your wallet

Even with Art Asylum releasing some toys based on the long-lived franchise, it's been a while since fans have been rushing to stores to buy a lot of *Star Trek* merchandise.

However, with *Star Trek XI* scheduled to debut next May, word is starting to come out about new *Trek* toys and merchandise that Paramount is hoping will cause both long-time and new fans to spend their hard-earned quatlous.

The first phase of new *Star Trek* products will feature action figures, collectibles and toys for role-playing, some with interactive electronic features. As with the movie, specifics of the merchandise are being kept quiet for as long as possible.

However, knowledge of one product has been released already. *Star Trek* PEZ candy dispensers will be released in September or October of this year in an eight-dispenser/candy gift pack. The dispensers will feature the original series cast, including: Kirk, Spock, McCoy, Scotty, Uhura, Sulu and Chekov. There will also be a NCC-1701 *Enterprise* dispenser. The set will have a limited run of 250,000 units.

Paramount hopes to get the *Trek* merchandising machine back into production, so stay tuned for more information as it becomes available.

▲ In related news, *Star Trek XI* screen-writer Robert Orci recently revealed that Paramount is already trying to woo the creative team behind the new film to commit themselves to a possible sequel.

“[They] already want to lock us down to write the sequel. Take that as you will,” Orci told *TrekMovie.com*. Orci's comment applied to the whole creative team, including his co-writer Alex Kurtzman, director J. J. Abrams, and the producers. However, he also clarified that this was simply the studio's standard way of making sure the same creative team would be in place for a possible sequel, not a confirmation there actually would be a sequel.

“Unless the studio had a horrible experience with us, they would be trying to lock us down as standard operating procedure,” he said. “They haven't even seen the movie yet, so this news should not be taken as evidence that we are anything special. It's a quite normal practice.”

Of course, with the current film not even having been finished yet, let alone released, no work has yet been done on a possible sequel.

But Orci did say the following when asked whether he'd put much thought into a sequel: “It depends on what you classify as ‘much.’ We've certainly thought about it some.”

Stay tuned for more details! ■

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It's Hard Times again for our June club meeting

The next meeting of the *U.S.S. Chesapeake Star Trek* and Science-Fiction Club will be held on Saturday, June 21, at the Hard Times Cafe located in College Park, Maryland.

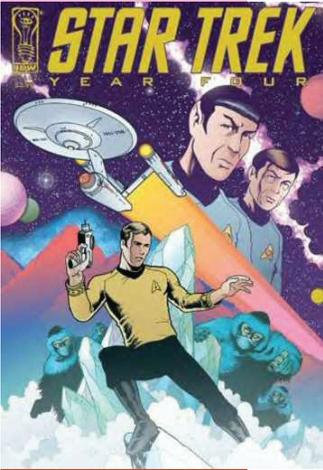
We'll get together for dinner at 5:00 p.m., immediately followed by our club meeting, which will start no later than 7:00 p.m.

We'll find out what fellow club members

have been up to, then also catch up on the upcoming science-fiction conventions as well as discuss the latest news about *Star Trek* and other sci-fi television shows and feature films.

Do you need directions to get to this month's meeting? Please download this month's Insert, which can be found in our Yahoo! Group. ■

CAPTAIN'S LOG: "Star Trek—Year Four"



A cool cover from local artist Steve Conley for "Star Trek—Year Four."

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Check out our club website: www.usschesapeake.org

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It's one of the big questions asked by *Trek* fandom over the past few decades and has been answered creatively several times. No, it's not "Does William Shatner wear a toop?" Instead, it's "What would a fourth season of Classic *Trek* been like if NBC hadn't cancelled the series?"

Among the most "fascinating" answers to that question have been the animated series from Filmation in the 1970s and the recent *New Voyages/Phase II* independent productions or "fan films."

The fourth year of voyages by Kirk and company has also been fodder for many *Trek* comics as well. The latest entry in that field was "Star Trek—Year Four," a six-issue mini-series from IDW Publishing.

One of the things that interested me about the series was the fact that one of its main contributors was Steve Conley, a local comics artist whose work caught my eye in a series called *Astounding Space Thrills*, during which he established a "retro 1950s sci-fi" style.

David Tischman provided the stand-alone stories for each installment of IDW's third *Trek* series, which has now been collected in trade paperback form.

In issue #1, the *Enterprise* encountered a series of interconnected planets called the "Strand." An away team met the man behind the phenomenon, a mad scientist who was creating "human animals" not unlike a certain Doctor Moreau. Kirk and McCoy were captured and imprisoned, leaving Spock in command to fend off nuclear missile attacks on our favorite starship.

One of my favorite exchanges took place after Kirk used a hidden phaser to free himself and Bones from their prison. "When did you start keeping a spare phaser in your boot?" McCoy asked. The captain's answer was classic: "You get knocked out and thrown in a cell enough, you start to take precautions."

The second installment had two storylines. While replenishing their supply of dilithium crystals during a stop at Aarak 3, Kirk, Spock and McCoy were attacked by terrorists who believed the crystals are sacred and should not leave the planet. At the same time, the ruler's beautiful daughter pretended to be helping Scott install the dilithium as she secretly sabotaged the *Enterprise*.

Issue #3 focused on Kirk's suspicions that members of his crew were being taken over by a mysterious alien force trying to divert the ship to a distant planet. Long-time *Trek* artist Gordon Purcell provided the pencils here, and my only problem was that I could tell which stills of the cast he used as the basis for many panels, which has gotten a bit annoying of late.

Jon and Rob Sharp lent their very realistic art style to the fourth installment, which was appropriate because the starship crew visited a planet run by an entertainment company that made—you guessed it—reality TV shows.

There were lots of fun little jabs at contemporary television, but my favorite line came when Kirk tried to discover the hidden talents of his crew members, and McCoy in a tuxedo responded: "I'm a doctor, damn it—not a magician!"

Steve Conley returned for issue #5, which involved the *Enterprise* in a space experiment that went awry and seemingly killed Spock. It was then up to Chekov as acting science officer to try and rescue the Vulcan officer.

The final installment was again drawn by Gordon Purcell. This story had an away team being captured on a supposedly uninhabited planet by a rather goofy-looking female robot that was revealed as a nanny for what she called "the merchandise"—infants of several species of aliens.

All in all, I really enjoyed this series, even though it didn't quite live up to the excellent "Blood Will Tell." The biggest difficulty came due to the page count in a comic book, which forced the author to tell rather limited stories. I wouldn't have minded reading a run of two-parters, but Tischman did pretty well with what he had.

Several folks online complained about the use of several artists throughout the series, but that didn't bother me. I felt that the realistic styles of Purcell and the Sharps gave their issues a certain feel, but that didn't diminish Conley's more stylistic approach.

Rating: ▲▲▲

Next up: IDW turned the spotlight on alien races in *Trek*, including a meeting of the Gorn and the *Reliant*, why Andorians never appeared in *TNG* and a clash between an Orion Slave Girl and Christopher Pike! ■

Captain Randy Hall

SCIENCE *TREK*: Earth attacks!

Despite its diminutive size, the red planet looms large in the mind of many Earthlings. Though Venus might be a fraternal twin (with a runaway greenhouse problem), Mars has tended to hold more fascination. In the course of human space exploration, we have launched about 20 missions to Venus and about twice that to Mars.

October 4, 1957, saw the launch of Sputnik and the start of the “space race” between the United States and the Soviet Union. Though the Soviets struck first with their Earth-orbiting satellite and sent more missions to Mars in the next two decades, they had less success than the Americans.

The Soviet Union tried for Mars first, launching Korabls 4 and 5 in 1960. Neither made it to Earth orbit. Not until 1964 (five missions later) did we humans achieve a successful fly-by of Mars with Mariner 4, which beamed 21 images home to Earth. Following more Soviet failures, the U.S. imaged Mars up close and personal once again in 1969 with Mariners 6 (75 images) and 7 (126 images).

The Soviets, though, scored their first success in a big way with the successful insertion of an orbiting spacecraft (insert your own depraved joke here) in 1971. The Mars 3 orbiter returned data for eight months. Perhaps even more important, the U.S.S.R. also landed a spacecraft safely on the Red Planet. However, the lander only transmitted for 20 seconds. The U.S. followed with another fly-by mission (yielding more than 7,000 images) later that year.

Out of three missions in 1973, the Reds landed one more spacecraft and returned data from another before it failed on landing. The successful lander survived for nine days and transmitted 60 images. The third spacecraft missed the target and is now in solar orbit.

Two years later, the U.S. landed two probes on Mars, Vikings 1 and 2. Viking 1, the United States’ first attempt to land a spacecraft on Mars, set down on July 20, 1975, on the Chryse Planitia. Its sister lander, Viking 2, landed almost 14 months later at Utopia Planitia (and you thought the shipyard was orbiting Mars!). Both landers and their orbiters survived for over two years, with the Viking 1 lander lasting until a Bad Code Transmission Error™ in 1982. (Side

note: The orbiting Mars Reconnaissance Orbiter took a picture of Viking 1 in 2006.)

We humans got busy with other business (I blame it on *malaise* and the “Evil Empire.”) and did not launch another Mars mission until the last two Soviet shots in 1988. Both Phobos 1 and 2 failed, the former lost *en route* and the latter possibly hitting Mars’ moon Phobos by accident. (I know, you’re thinking, “How do you hit a moon by accident?”) The U.S. tried and failed with its grand Mars Observer in 1992.

The year 1996 re-enthused scientists, the public and Mars fanatics. Despite the failure of the Russia Mars 96 mission (which included an orbiter, a lander and a penetrator) during launch, the U.S. found success with the orbiter Mars Global Surveyor and the Mars Pathfinder with its six-wheeled rover, Sojourner.

The Pathfinder mission, intended to last seven to 30 days, lasted more than 80. Next time you watch *Star Trek: Enterprise*, watch for the clip of Sojourner investigating Yogi rock during the opening credits.

The Past Decade: Mission Summaries

1998

Nozomi (Japan): Failed to establish orbit around Mars because of fuel and electrical problems.

Mars Climate Orbiter (U.S.): Lost on arrival (broke up in the atmosphere because of a navigation error—one team uses metric units, everyone needs to use metric units, *capiche?*)

1999

Mars Polar Lander/Deep Space 2 (U.S.): Lander lost on descent to surface. Analysis indicates the vibration sensors interpreted the landing legs extending for the actual landing and, well, the thing fell the last 40 meters to the surface, Wily E. Coyote style. The Deep Space 2 mission, carried onboard the lander, included a pair of surface penetrators. Mission control never received any signal from either probe.

2001

Mars Odyssey (U.S.): This highly successful orbiter (like the Energizer bunny, still going after nearly seven years and more than 130,000

Continued on page 6



The Sputnik, launched by the former Soviet Union, started the “space race.”

ART CREDITS:

startrek.com 1, 5
idwpublishing.com 2
images.google.com

3, 4, 6,
Insert back
scifi.com Insert front

REFLECTIONS: This song is familiar

I received a phone call from a former club member recently. He congratulated me on the latest article I wrote, the one about *Battlestar Galactica*. He told me that he totally agreed with what I had written and that I was right on the nose about everything. I modestly complimented him on his intelligence and good taste and asked him what he thought of the show. He said he agreed with me unequivocally: “*Battlestar Galactica* is a horrible show.”

I was dumbfounded. I told him that wasn't what I said at all. I told him I really liked the show, but I didn't think it was good science fiction. He then asked me how I could like a science-fiction show that isn't good science fiction. I was dumbfounded again. I told him it was great drama. Now it was HIS turn to be dumbfounded.

I was at a loss to understand how he couldn't see that good drama and good science fiction were NOT synonymous. Then it hit me like a south sea tsunami. THIS guy actually liked *Babylon 5*! All of a sudden, his tunnel vision and *naivete* made perfect sense.

So far, I'm enjoying this rather slow but interesting season, but in watching, I'm constantly struck by a sense of *deja vu*. I'm overwhelmed by the similarities of *Battlestar* to my all-time favorite science-fiction show.

I marvel at the ease with which *Galactica* can weave a tale that is both serial AND episodic. My all-time favorite SF show not only invented this process, but perfected it as well. *Galactica* does it very, very well. Not better, but very, very well.

I love the fact that no character on the show is inculpable. Everyone and anyone is capable of doing good, but just as equally capable of doing bad. My all-time favorite SF show was one of the first series on television in which EVERY character had a shade of grey. Even the one character the producers insisted was pure evil had plenty of scenes in which he displayed bouts of humanity and downright compassion.

There's a reason *Battlestar Galactica* and my all-time favorite SF show have so much in common. One of *Battlestar's* executive producers and its story editors did time on my all-time favorite SF show. If you watch closely (or listen to me), you can tell. The similarities are striking. The shame of it all is that

while *Battlestar Galactica* is drowned in critical praise, no one is giving credit where credit is sorely due—to my all-time favorite SF show.

“I think you can look at Ira Behr's *Deep Space Nine* and Ron Moore's *Battlestar Galactica* in the same way,” says Story Editor David Weddle. “The difference being Ron Moore worked on both shows, learned directly from Ira and was a major creative force on *Deep Space Nine* as well.”

“I think *Star Trek: Deep Space Nine* will be seen as a groundbreaking series that made *Battlestar Galactica* possible. Ira saw how *Deep Space Nine* could be an unfolding epic story. He kicked open a door for all of us and gave us a glimpse of what was possible. Ron Moore embraced this concept [and] applied it brilliantly in *Battlestar Galactica*.”

David Weddle, with his partner Bradley Thompson, are the story editors for *Battlestar*. They also worked the last three seasons on my all-time favorite SF show, and I co-sign most heartedly with what he says.

Without my all-time favorite SF show, there would be no *Galactica* as we know it. As a matter of fact, because of my all-time favorite SF show, there are a LOT of things that are *de rigueur* in television now that started on my all-time favorite SF show.

Battlestar Galactica owes a lot to my all-time favorite SF show, but then again, so does television in general. I don't condemn *Battlestar*. If you're going to borrow, at least borrow from the best, but where's the recognition for my all-time favorite SF show?

These dumb television critics should recognize the quality in which my all-time favorite show wallowed for seven brilliant seasons. If they can recognize the brilliance of *Galactica*, the least they could do is try and find out the origin of that brilliance.

Next month: *Andromeda*. You have been warned. ■



Battlestar Galactica has a relationship with Lorenzo's all-time favorite SF show.

Conn Officer Lorenzo Heard

WAYNE'S WORLDS: Happy 15th, *DS9*!—1

Let me say right away that *Star Trek: Deep Space Nine* is my choice for best science-fiction show of all time.

I haven't seen much in the way of recognizing *DS9*'s 15th birthday, so it falls to those of us who are fans to honor the show.

DS9 debuted on January 4, 1993, in syndication. A spin-off of a spin-off remains a chancy thing, but if *Trek* can't do it, who can?

I couldn't wait to see the first episode. When I did, it did not disappoint me. There was conflict, something largely absent from *TNG*. There were vibrant, interesting characters, both alien and human. There was also a world trying to recover from a terrible occupation, but they had not lost their spirituality. How would all this mix into the *Trek* universe?

I remember several club members watching "Emissary" for the second time when one of us, a huge *TNG* fan, expressed her unhappiness as Sisko began explaining linear time to the Prophets. "Let's fast forward through this, the dull part," she said. Several of us told her: "No way—this is science fiction, after all!"

It took her several years after that to finally "get" the show, but that wasn't surprising. That happened with a lot of *TNG* fans.

On the other hand, I felt like this was the *Trek* I had always hoped for. I had found my home at last!

I knew I had fallen in love with the show when I saw "Captive Pursuit," a first-season episode in which an alien bred to be hunted came to the station through the wormhole. Trying to help him, the crew interfered with the hunt, causing him to be captured. To set this right, O'Brien sets him free. At the end, Sisko dressed down Chief O'Brien, which he *had* to do, but O'Brien noted that he and the alien should have been trapped by force fields before they reached his ship to escape. "I guess that one got past us," Sisko said, then dismissed O'Brien. Sisko turned just a little bit, the beginnings of a smile happened on his face.

Now, on other shows, there would have been a long monologue by Sisko, but just a slight smile communicated all that.

One of the things that *DS9* always remembered was that television is a visual medium. Moments like that were many, little things that made me know I adored this show.

I thought I would list a few things that

made this program so special to me.

The Characters. Benjamin Sisko is my favorite SF character ever. He was a no-nonsense commander, a single parent struggling to raise a son who was very different from him, yet he was also a very spiritual man. That made for a very conflicted character, something special to me because I see myself as a person of varied interests and abilities. Now, I'm no Sisko and never could be, but I identified with his concerns and passions.

Kira, the valkyrie, was never tremendously smart. She tried to kill her own mother in the past when she realized her mom was a conspirator. Now *that's* devotion to one's cause!

O'Brien suffered better than anyone on television. His wife caused him grief, he was brainwashed to think he had killed a fellow prisoner in his cell, and he was infected with a disease that was about to kill him until Sisko transported him away just in the nick of time.

Bashir, who turned out to be genetically enhanced, was smart, exotic and fun. I always referred to him as the "eager, young space cadet" of the crew.

Odo was a member of a race of beings who could change their very shape, yet demanded order in everything else. If that's not irony, I don't know what is.

Quark represented the greed aspect in all of us. He made things happen on the station, and they were not always good.

Dax was great no matter what body she was in. Personally, I liked both Jadzia and Ezri.

The Ships. I've said before I was a ship guy, and that's so true in *DS9*. When I first saw the station, I liked its shape. It made sense to have a circular structure on many levels. But then I saw the runabouts, and I was in love. I had always felt that the Starfleet shuttles were little boxes floating through space, but here was the Cadillac of shuttlecraft.

I was nearly orgasmic when the *Defiant* decloaked at *DS9*. It had all the elements of a *Trek* starship (two nacelles and a bridge on top of the saucer section, for example), but it was compact and tough-looking. I grieved terribly when the ship was destroyed in the show's final season. Then I was happy when they christened a new one a few weeks later.

More about *DS9* next month! ■

Chief of Security Wayne Hall



The U.S.S. *Defiant* docks at Deep Space Nine.

COMING EVENTS

JUNE

June 21 The next meeting will be on Saturday, June 21, at the Hard Times Cafe located in College Park, Maryland. We'll gather at 5 p.m. for dinner, followed by our monthly meeting no later than 7 p.m.

SCIENCE TREK: Earth attacks! ... concluded

continued from page 3

images) is still in orbit around Mars. In fact, Mars Odyssey helped check out landing sites for the recently landed Phoenix mission.

MRO also took a high-resolution picture of the famous "face on Mars" with its HIRISE camera, showing that it's only a funny-looking rock.

2003

Mars Express Orbiter/Beagle 2 Lander (E.S.A.): A mixed-success mission, the lander failed to respond after its supposed landing, while the orbiter is still circling Mars. Check out Web Notes below to listen to the sound of the Phoenix mission landing, as recorded by the Mars Express Orbiter.

2007

Mars Phoenix Lander (U.S.): The first stationary lander since Viking 2, the Phoenix mission was intended to last 90 sols (about 92 Earth days). Though like the stock market, past results are no indication of future success, hopefully this mission will continue for many more months/years. Phoenix's powerful retro-jets apparently cleared the dust/dirt off a patch of ice directly below the lander. How lucky is that? Well, we'll find out.

Missions to Mars Scorecard:

U.S.: 19

U.S.S.R./Russia: 18

Others: 2 (Japan and the European Space Agency)

Successes: 14

Failures: 22

Mixed Results: 2

TBD: 1

Web Notes

- <http://mars.jpl.nasa.gov/missions/> (The facts and the future, paid for by your tax dollars.);
- <http://answers.yahoo.com/question/index?qid=20071204150614AAcMsBZ> (I had to ask.);
- http://tomsastroblog.com/images/viking1_120406.jpg (Not a great picture, but then the camera was a couple hundred miles away.);
- http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Viking_1 (Just change the "1" to a "2" for Viking 2.);
- http://www.esa.int/SPECIALS/Mars_Express/SEMAWQ1YUFF_0.html (Sounds like hello.);
- <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Image:Oppland02a.jpg> (Planetary hole-in-one); and
- <http://antwrp.gsfc.nasa.gov/apod/ap080612.html> (Find the spring.) ■

Second Officer Phil Margolies



An artist's rendition of the Mars Phoenix Lander touching down.

Mars Exploration Rovers—Spirit and Opportunity (U.S.): Launched about a month apart in the summer of 2003, these two roving landers are still operating today, far surpassing the 90 Martian days (sols) both rovers were intended to last. (To date, the rovers have survived more than 1,500 sols and journeyed over 10 kilometers ... impressive when you're a microwave-sized rover over 35 million miles from home.)

In 2004, Spirit took the first picture of Earth from the surface of another planet, while in 2005, Opportunity discovered the first-ever seen meteorite beyond the surface of the Earth. (Trivia: The mission patch for Spirit includes Marvin the Martian and for Opportunity, Daffy as Duck Dodgers of the 24th and a half century.)

2005

Mars Reconnaissance Orbiter (U.S.): The last to arrive of the three orbiters currently circling (ellipsing?) Mars. With a more powerful camera and telecommunications equipment, MRO should capture and transmit more data than all previous missions combined. In addition to imaging, the Opportunity lander's hole-in-one (see Web Notes), it captured the Phoenix lander as it descended to the surface.