



A second *Star Trek XI* motion picture poster has been released, with Sulu (upper left), Scotty (upper right), McCoy (lower left) and Chekov (lower right).

## CBS wants *Trek* fans to sign up for franchise's new club

Would you like to join the new yet official *Star Trek* fan club?

According to *TrekMovie.com*, it's going to be "a new kind of fan club—looking for your input."

CBS Products Executive John Van Citters made the announcement recently, and he made it clear they are hoping to put together a fan club that is ready for the 21st Century.

CBS has been working to bring back a *Trek* fan club for years, but has just recently closed a deal with a new (unnamed) company to run it. One big difference is that the new club will not have a magazine since it is felt that the official *Star Trek Magazine* from Titan is sufficient.

The club will also have a much bigger emphasis on the web. This web focus plus separation of official fan club and official magazine approach has also been adopted by other clubs, including the official *Star Wars* "Hyperspace" fan club. Van Citters said they want the new club to be more interactive and include live events in addition to the strong web component (again, all of which sounds a lot like "Hyperspace"). However, Van Citters said there were no specific other fan clubs they were using as a model, noting "we are looking to bring the best components from different clubs together."

It was also clear that CBS and the new partner have not nailed down all the specifics, or even a name for the new club. It also isn't clear how this new, more web-focused fan club will relate to the now mostly dormant official website, *StarTrek.com*. CBS executives said they will be making a detailed announcement for the new fan club next month, but they are hoping to get some fan input to help.

To that end, CBS wants all *Trek* fans to visit [startreckcountdown.com](http://startreckcountdown.com) to fill out a survey gauging interest in four areas (Events, Exclusive Merchandise, News/Previews, & Forums/Community Activities). You can also enter comments on what you think a fan club should be.

In related news, Dan Madsen, the former owner of the *Star Trek* and *Star Wars* fan clubs, has joined up with the technology company VRDAI to help build fan communities. The first of these communities, the Roddenberry Sci-Fi Network (or RSN), was also announced recently at a *Roddenberry.com* presentation. Once again, details are sketchy, and a more detailed announcement is expected in the near future; however, the *TrekMovie* website reports that it will be an online community with the goal "to create a place where fans and sci-fi stars, writers and professionals can interact in a community setting." ■

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## August means fun in the sun at our pool party!

The next meeting of the *U.S.S. Chesapeake Star Trek* and Science-Fiction Club will be held on Saturday, August 23, at the Lindstrom home in Gaithersburg, Maryland, as we enjoy our yearly pool party.

We'll get together for time in the pool starting at 3:00 p.m., with 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 as well as discuss the latest news about *Star Trek* and other sci-fi television shows and feature films.

Need directions to this month's meeting? Get this month's Insert, which is in our Yahoo! Group. ■

# CAPTAIN'S LOG: "Alien Spotlight"—1

Now that Shore Leave is well behind us, let's return to our reviews of the *Star Trek* comics currently being produced by IDW Publishing.

With both a *Next Generation* and a Classic *Trek* mini-series under their collective belt, IDW then decided to focus its next venture on the various alien races populating the vast *Star Trek* universe.

This concept enabled the publisher to look at events from several other "generations" of the long-lived phenomenon while still showing off popular characters and aliens. Each of the six issues had a self-contained story by any of a number of writers and artists, who made "Spotlight" a fun read.

However, covering every issue in a single column just wouldn't do each story justice, so this time around, let's examine the first three tales and finish up the last three next time.

Appropriately titled "The Gorn," the first story was set about 15 years after the first-season Classic *Trek* episode "Arena." Writers Scott and David Tipton and artist David Messina got the series off to a good start with a yarn that also led into *Star Trek II: The Wrath of Khan*.

A plasma wave forced a shuttle from the U.S.S. *Reliant* to crash on a Class M planetoid, and when Captain Clark Terrell and First Officer Pavel Chekov ordered some of the crew to take a look around the surrounding jungle, one of the men was killed by a hidden booby trap.

Then the group spotted a number of Gorn approaching, and one officer remembered that the aliens had wiped out a station on Cestus III before the *Enterprise* intervened.

But were the Gorn attacking the people from the *Reliant* or had they learned something about the "advanced trait" of mercy from their earlier encounter with Kirk?

Issue #2, which was written by James Patrick and penciled by Josep Maria Beroy, put the "alien spotlight" on one of *Trek's* most popular races, the Vulcans. I found it interesting that this story detailed some of Spock's early days on the *Enterprise* under Captain Christopher Pike rather than James T. Kirk.

Even though the half-human, half-Vulcan

crewman wasn't being readily accepted by some on the starship (especially navigator Josh Tyler), Pike decided to take Spock on a diplomatic mission to the hostile folks living on Megafferus III.

The *Enterprise* party was ambushed after beaming down to the planet, so it fell to "the guy with the ears" to not only rescue Pike and Tyler, but also salvage the overall mission.

I was particularly interested in the series' third issue, which dealt with one of my favorite *Trek* alien races, the Andorians. Set just after the *TNG* episode "All Good Things ...," the story explained why we never saw the people with the antennae during the *Next Generation* TV series.

Of course, the real reason is that Rick Berman—the man who made "funny foreheads" a staple of *Trek* aliens—thought their antennae looked silly. Nevertheless, writer Paul D. Storrie came up with a different explanation.

Commander Sharad, an Andorian officer with Starfleet Intelligence, was being taken on the *Enterprise D* to his home world (Sound familiar?) when Counselor Troi pointed out that he was one of the few among his people to either serve on the ship or visit it.

After being tight-lipped with Troi, Sharad was mocked by children on his planet, who told him that his service with the Federation was a disgrace compared to the earlier glories of the Andorians.

Sharad finally revealed his reason for returning home to his lover, Thrynn: Due to the losses suffered in the Dominion War, Starfleet needed Andorians to replenish its ranks. But instead of offering her support, Thrynn arranged a duel to the death between her lover and General Kovan, who fiercely opposed the world's Federation membership.

The art by Leonard O'Grady was particularly well done, and I have to admire his coloring skill, since he was able to turn the blue usually associated with the Andorians and their world into a visual asset rather than a distraction. Nice work!

Next time, we really will get to that clash between an Orion Slave Girl and Fleet Captain Christopher Pike. And what would an "Alien Spotlight" series be without a look at *TNG's* big baddies, the Borg? ■

Captain Randy Hall



The Andorians are back in an IDW Comics "Alien Spotlight."

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Check out our club website: [www.usschesapeake.org](http://www.usschesapeake.org)

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# SCIENCE TREK: It's a small world after all

Last month, if you will recall, we started discussing communication throughout history and covered the past and the present. This month, we tackle the future. But first, a digression.

History presents us with a paradox: As human civilization spread across greater and greater areas, the world itself shrunk—well, not literally. Until a few tens of thousands of years ago, the reach of communications was limited to the distance a voice could carry. By about 50,000 years ago, humans started creating pictographs on cave walls. Communications now could (and did) last beyond the lifetime of the communicator and the messages intended recipients.

The ability for communications to cross distance and not just time came with the invention of writing. Messages could be sent hundreds or thousands of miles, though at speeds limited by human footsteps, beasts of burden, or ships. Until about 200 years ago, a message sent from one end of a continent to the other would take months or more to arrive.

Then came electricity-based communication. By translating human language into electric impulses that went across wires and eventually through the air, the world shrunk to a phone call. Pick up your cell phone (everybody but Lorenzo) and you can call China. The months that a letter took to travel halfway around the world is now mere milliseconds.

Yet, remember that size is relative. Stop laughing, I meant *distance*. Distance is relative. Communication to a geosynchronous satellite and back is only *nearly* instantaneous. A signal to one of our Mars-orbiting spacecraft takes several minutes. Imagine trying to hold a conversation with someone on the surface. The world might have shrunk, but the universe is still growing.

Which brings us to the future.

As humanity expands beyond the reach of this small blue marble we call home, we find that the speed of light—that constant in a vacuum furlongs per fortnight at which photons travel—becomes not a boon to electronic communication, but a serious speed limit. *Voyager I* is now over 13 light-hours away from Earth (after over 30 years!). The near-

est star, Proxima Centauri, is over 4 light-years distant. We're back to the dark ages in terms of the speed of communications.

The same holds true even in our *Star Trek*-kian future. How many times did Captain Kirk contact Starfleet Command and only belatedly receive a reply? (Yes, I know dramatic effect and science vs. fiction, but we're talking "in universe" here.) Even faster-than-light subspace communication is not instantaneous.

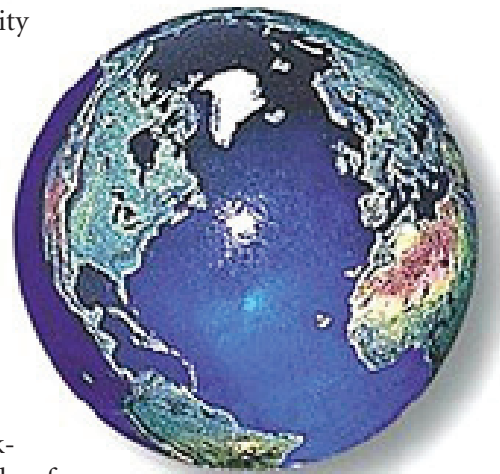
It appears that, even as we progress forward, we find ourselves a step back, to a time when communications did not travel first class and people were forced by necessity to be independent. Or so it seems at first look. With our increased ability to compress information, we can take the knowledge of a million years with us as we spread to the stars. Try doing that with stone tablets and cuneiform.

One thing we as a species have learned over the millennia is that, while seemingly immutable natural laws may in fact be broken, there are some that may be unbreakable. Yet, that has not stopped us from learning and exploring. There is a lot we know after countless centuries, but there is certainly far more that we don't. ■

## Web Notes

- <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Voyager1> (V-Ger phone home);
- <http://futurecommunications.com> (Verizon!?)
- <http://futurecommunications.net> (Getting closer);
- <http://youtube.com/watch?v=iu0ztcdfis> (Experience is the new reality);
- <http://newtelephony.com/news/69h19112550.html> (Near term);
- <http://www.jyi.org/features/ft.php?id=561> (Longer term);
- <http://www.technovelgy.com/ct/Science-Fiction-News.asp?NewsNum=284> (Who says you gotta talk?); and
- [http://www.technovelgy.com/ct/Science\\_List\\_Detail.asp?BT=Communication](http://www.technovelgy.com/ct/Science_List_Detail.asp?BT=Communication) (Communications in Science Fiction).

Second Officer Phil Margolies



Doesn't seem like such a big place anymore, does it?

**ART CREDITS:**  
trekmovie.com 1  
IDWpublications.com 2  
images.google.com  
3, 4, 5, 6, Insert back  
scifi.com Insert front

## REFLECTIONS: Earth revisited

*“No matter what the rewards for obedience or the punishment for non-compliance, there is always that part of humanity that will fight to the death for individual freedom because fat and happy slavery is nonetheless slavery. There’s the whole theme for this show.”*—Majel Roddenberry quoting her husband, Gene.

October, 1997. The air was thick with anticipation, and fandom was all abuzz for unto them was released a new television series created by science-fiction’s television guru himself, Gene Roddenberry. Yes, Roddenberry had been deceased for six years, but apparently shuffling off this mortal coil does not stop the truly gifted. As it turned out, Gene still had a few tricks up his sleeve even though his sleeves had been cremated and were awaiting permission to come aboard one of NASA’s shuttles.

The original title for this television show culled from the ashes (no pun intended) was *Battleground: Earth*, but the producers were concerned that it sounded too much like L. Ron Hubbard’s novel, “Battlefield: Earth.”

Produced and filmed in Toronto, Canada, the show ran in syndication for five seasons. The last episode aired in May, 2002. The show was an instant hit, more than likely benefitting from genre fandom curiosity and the sudden influx of a plethora of genre television shows starting around September of 1995. Gene Roddenberry’s name being attached to the show may have had a little to do with its popularity, but I may be going out on a limb here.

The show was set in the 21st Century as a race of alien beings, the Taelons, arrived on Earth. In exchange for being allowed to take refuge on Earth, the Taelons offered the people of Earth access to their advanced technology. As a result, disease, war and pollution were nearly eliminated. Despite all the advances the Taelons brought, there were people who distrusted them and were convinced they were not as benevolent as they seemed. A resistance movement organized.

In season one, the show’s main characters were: William Boone (Kevin Kilner), a police commander who was manipulated into becoming a Taelon Protector; Da’an (Leni Parker), the North American Taelon Companion (Every continent had a Taelon Companion.); Ronald Sandoval (Von Flores), F.B.I. Agent and Taelon Protector and loyalist;

Lili Marquette (Lisa Howard), double-agent and ex-Marine pilot secretly working with the resistance movement; Jonathan Doors (David Hemblen), a millionaire businessman who founded and funded the resistance movement; and Marcus “Augur” Deveraux (Richard Chevolleau), the technical genius and computer hacker who occasionally helped Boone when the police needed technical assistance. Every once in a while we saw Dr. Jullianne Belman (Majel Roddenberry), who was the movement’s resident physician and Johnathan Doors’ main squeeze.

This show was infamous for many things not normally seen on a television series, and I must admit, these “things” were the very things that made me love the show. There were several things and goings-on that have NEVER happened on any television show ever, thus keeping the show unpredictable, thus keeping ME on my toes. You never knew who would or wouldn’t be around for the next season. Nobody’s job was secure on this show.

There was an unusually high turnover rate among the regular cast. This was partially due to contractual disagreements between the cast and the producers. I loved this because where there’s turnover, there are characters dying! I love it when characters die, especially main characters! Everyone who knows me, knows this. This keeps the audience guessing because, by virtue of it being television, most people don’t expect main characters to die. When they do, the audience is no longer in a comfort zone.

As far as I know, this was the only show in history to kill off its star at the end of the first season! I was in heaven! I was almost orgasmic, mostly because I really grew to hate the Boone character. At first, he distrusted the Taelons, then he wanted to BE a Taelon. I found that extremely boring. The only main character that was present for all five seasons was Sandoval, and he was the villain! We ultimately found out that the Taelons were NOT evil and were not trying to take over or destroy the Earth even though we were led to believe that. This is the only action/adventure show to promote two minor female characters into the lead and center the show around them. That was historic.

Next month: We delve deeper into the abyss. ■

Conn Officer Lorenzo Heard

GENE RODDENBERRY'S  
**EARTH**  
FINAL CONFLICT

## WAYNE'S WORLDS: BBC America gets *Primeval*

*Be warned! The following article contains SPOILERS for the BBC America ongoing series, Primeval.*

First things first ... I want to again mention that *Charlie Jade* continues to be shown on the Sci Fi Channel. The bad news is that it is running Tuesdays at 3 a.m. The reason I mention it is that I keep running into people who liked the show but didn't know it was still airing. So, you have been notified!

If you are like me and enjoy some variety in your science fiction, you might give a show that has begun airing on BBC America a try. It's called *Primeval*, and has several things going for it, in my opinion.

Like *Doctor Who* and *Torchwood*, this program first aired across the pond, this show on ITV. I particularly like *Primeval* because it is more action-oriented and has more dangerous situations than *Who* or its spin-offs.

I also like the ensemble cast although I do struggle understanding the accents at times.

(I do love listening to various accents, so that's not a problem, by the way.)

The series focuses on Professor Nick Cutter, who leads a team of scientists as they investigate portals that open up and deposit dinosaurs in various locations around London so they can gnaw

and chew on the city's inhabitants.

Cutter is the character I like most, kind of sullen yet smart as he struggles to apply his knowledge to this unique situation. He's determined, logical and is the one in the motley group he's assembled to stay on target and not

get distracted by former lovers or, say, a pet dinosaur someone has taken home.

Also involved is Cutter's wife, Helen, who is far ahead of Nick's team since she has utilized the portals many times. She has ties to Cutter's second in command, Stephen Hart.

Connor Temple is the "eager young space cadet" who grows up during the show. He has a thing for zoologist Abby Maitland, who is the team member with more experience with animals.

Nick takes a shine to Claudia Brown, who works with the group. At the end of the first season, her character takes a major shift in direction, one I really liked.

The actor who often steals the show is actor/comedian Ben Miller, who plays James Lester, head of the government agency involved. At one point, even he has to face a threat from the portal. He's suave and yet a typical government bureaucrat, and he takes the limelight whenever he's on camera.

Of course, if you are a big fan of dinosaurs, you'll see some of the best computer-generated graphics of them that I've seen. I'm not a big fan of the big guys (I'm a vehicle guy myself), but this show has done a great job of bringing them to life. Only occasionally did one of them seem hokey or obvious.

If you want to keep all these shows in the same universe, the portals could be related to the ones on *Torchwood*. Me, I'm okay with it being in a different place. Time and space portals have been around for years, long before these recent shows discovered them.

One of the things I enjoy most about the show is that it can be funny as well as suspenseful. In the pilot episode, after a dinosaur has tried to chow down on a child after busting through his bedroom window, the little boy grabs a toy *Star Wars* light saber to try and protect himself. I liked that.

Although it is serialized, this show doesn't require a huge investment of time. The first "series" or season as we say in the U.S. has only six episodes, while the second year is seven shows long. A lot happens during those episodes, so I found myself sitting on the edge of my seat.

*Primeval* now airs on the BBC America cable network each Saturday at 9 p.m. ■

*Chief of Security Wayne Hall*



Dr. Nick Cutter (the one on the right) chases dinosaurs in the BBC America series, *Primeval*.

# COMING EVENTS

AUGUST

*August 23* ..... *It's pool party time!* The next meeting will be on Saturday, August 23, at the Lindstrom home in Gaithersburg, Maryland. We'll gather at 3 p.m. for our party, start dinner at 5, which will be followed by our monthly meeting no later than 7 p.m.

## DVD REVIEW: *Stargate: Ark of Truth and Continuum*

There is a serious soft spot in my heart for *Stargate SG-1*. I watched this show from the beginning, back when it was the best-kept secret on television, and it's always been a favorite of mine. So you can imagine the wellspring of anticipation I felt when I found out, during *SG-1*'s tenth and final season, that there were two *Stargate* movies in the works.

The first film, *The Arc of Truth*, involved the wrapping up of the Ori storyline that had run during *Stargate*'s last two seasons. The second film dealt with time travel and the return of Baal (as in "Bacci?"), General Hammond and Jack O'Neill. Needless to say, for me, this was a time of much rejoicing. Unfortunately, I would only be half fulfilled in genre-related bliss.

The biggest problem I had with *The Arc of Truth* is the Ori. I have always found them boring. Compared with the Goa'uld and the Replicators, not to mention the Wraith, the Ori come across as a bunch of overconfident choir boys. Robert C. Cooper was trying to create a new menace to rival the aforementioned antagonists, but he fell woefully short.

Now basic logic will tell you that if your premise is flawed, then your solution will be flawed as well, and since I found the Ori to be extremely boring, you can bet I found the main plot equally as boring. The funny thing is that the producers must have thought their plot was pretty boring as well because, from out of nowhere, they bring the Replicators into the story.

Don't get me wrong—the inclusion of the Replicators did wonders for the pace of the movie, giving it a much-needed boost and turning a dull storyline into a suspenseful narrative. The problem is that it felt like the writers pulled the Replicators out of their *gluteus maximus* (anatomical term for the back of your front), and it never felt like they belonged. Ultimately, it proved to be a gigantic waste of time.

On the other hand, *Continuum* was like a

breath of fresh air! An inspired plot, a reunion of some beloved characters and friends, some genuine science (The "Grandfather Clause," oh boy!) and an avoidance of all-around general science-fiction cliches! Whereas *Arc of Truth* was the eventual finale of one of the lamest antagonists in the history of science fiction, *Continuum* felt like a joyful return to happier times! All of our old friends were back, and it felt great ... even if some of them really didn't have anything to do with the story—like Major Davis, who doesn't speak a line, but just seeing him walk through Stargate Command was enough to leave a golfball-sized lump in your throat.

Jack is back and used extremely well. And speaking of being used well, this film has the best use of Claudia Black I've seen outside of *Farscape*. Her character had a purpose and didn't come off like a bump on a log, as she did on the show. Teal'c was the old Teal'c again, solemn, brooding and nasty. If his head was shaved, he would have been perfect. Sam was ... well, Sam. Sam has never been bad except on *Atlantis*.

*Continuum* was good enough to be a feature film. The only problem would have been the inclusion of a lot of exposition needed to bring the non-viewers of the show up to speed. As a Direct-to-DVD movie, it was heavenly. It had a great plot, some great special effects and solid acting. This is the stuff science-fiction dreams are made of. This was also a return, of sorts, to *Stargate*'s former glory.

*Stargate: Continuum* is a perfect blend of pure science fiction, solid action/adventure and a rare return to genre days of yore, a time when our shows were special unto themselves, the fans were plentiful and intelligent (*welllllllll ...*) and everything was right with the world. And if that ain't enough to make you purchase this disc, consider a last encounter with actor Don S. Davis, who played General Hammond. It was a pleasure to see Mr. Davis one more time. Who says you can't go home again? ■

Conn Officer Lorenzo Heard

