

STAR TREK 30
ONE WEEKEND O

STAR TREK 30

September 7 and 8, 1996

Celebrating thirty years of a cultural phenomena.

One of the biggest events in the history of *Star Trek* occurred on September 7 and 8, 1996, which marks the thirtieth anniversary of *Star Trek*. To celebrate, Paramount agreed to hold the largest gathering of *Star Trek* fans and stars ever assembled under one roof. And to top it all off, they held it right in our back yard in Huntsville, Alabama. Thousands of people converged on the Von Braun Civic Center and the U. S. Space and Rocket Center to celebrate the *Star Trek* legend. Once in a lifetime opportunities don't come along very often, and *Star Trek* 30: One Weekend on Earth was certainly one of those.

In the following pages, you will be taken on a guided tour of all the events surrounding this momentous occasion. Not only is the event itself covered, but so are the surrounding stories. The *Wernher von Braun* played an integral part with this, supplying not only volunteer workers, but also attending the event. These articles will hopefully give you some idea of what happened and why. There are moments that will forever be with those who participated.

The news first hit on June 14, 1996 with stories in the *Huntsville Times* and the local TV stations. Apparently, the idea to host an anniversary gathering started with Thad Mauldin, the director of the U. S. Space and Rocket Center (S&RC). He had pitched the idea to Paramount that Huntsville would be the perfect place to host an anniversary celebration. After all, the roots of the space program are buried deep in Huntsville. From



Star Trek: 1966-1996 and beyond.

Making the most out of the biggest weekend ever.

Stardate 960906. Picked up my tickets (I spent the big bucks and as it turns out, that was the only way to get most of the autographs). In my ticket packet I received a neat badge with a hologram sticker on it, a souvenir program for the weekend's events, an autograph schedule, and a really cool limited edition medallion with a calendar on the back (ooh, aah, pretty!).

Note - Huntsville was renamed for the weekend by mayoral proclamation: "*Star Trek*".

Stardate 960907:

Arrived 0830 hrs with some friends at the site of the convention, Von Braun Civic Center(VBCC) and entered Spencer Gifts Warp 10 store half an hour earlier than everyone

else(one of the privileges accorded to those who opted for Galaxy Class passes). Spent most of the day walking the Promenade which consisted of several vendor and informational booths. I also chose to acquire many of the autographs available today. I managed to get autographs from Rene Auberjonois, Kate Mulgrew, John DeLancie, Robert Duncan McNeill, Robert Picardo, and Armin Shimerman. Actually, McNeill, Picardo, and Ethan Phillips walked right past me on their way to the autograph session and I didn't even realize who they were(duh!). However, I did not get Ethan's autograph because he only signed for about 20 minutes due to a scheduling conflict.

While milling around the Promenade, I spotted Rene and Armin walking around with their bodyguard, Mr. Muscle. I also spotted Patricia Tallman from *Babylon 5* but was not

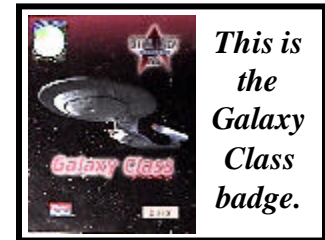
Huntsville, Alabama

One Weekend On Earth

the very beginnings of the space program with the German rocket scientist Wernher von Braun, to the current day Space Shuttle engine testing, Huntsville has played and continues to play a vital role in the space program. Therefore, it was logical—to borrow from Mr. Spock—that the anniversary celebration of perhaps the largest sci-fi phenomenon of all time should occur here.

In personal talks with Phaeton Quinn, the Marketing Director at the Space and Rocket Center and the initial volunteer coordinator, he said that Huntsville came dangerously close to losing the entire event. Paramount officials were hearing the rumors circulating about who was coming and what would happen. They were not pleased to say the least. Attendance was estimated to be in the twenty to twenty-five thousand, though the actual attendance figures were far lower in the 7000 to 8000 range. Rumors also included that all four Captains and the entire original cast were going to be there. Of course, the final turn out was quite different and can be read about in the coverage of the event itself.

Weekend package tickets for events went on sale by calling a toll free number 1-888-2-BEAM-UP. (See the Volunteer Article on page 33 for a *von Braun* tie in to this number.) Ticket's for the weekend were either \$150 for the Constitution package, or \$350 for the Galaxy class package. Both packages contained a souvenir bag, fancy name badge, a special gift, tours of the S&RC and the Marshall Space Flight Center, and reserved seating in the main auditorium for all events including the stars' discussion panels and the Saturday night tribute to Gene Roddenberry. Galaxy class packages also received a special forty-five minute mini-space camp experience, priority access to the stars' autograph sessions, and access to a special VIP gala diner late Saturday night with the stars and astronauts. Day and event tickets were also on sale for \$30 or more. Apparently, they



Boldly going for 30 years.

quick enough to get her autograph. Then I spotted none other than Chase Masterson walking down the hall. Wow! She signed autographs and posed for pictures- what a terrific lady.

“I got to meet Chase Masterson (Leeta, the Dabo girl) and received signed photos... This was truly one of the major highlights for me during the weekend.”

light was when Shatner and Nimoy came out at the same time and poked fun at each other's careers both in and out of *Star Trek*. I would've

I attended the evening show featuring TOS cast, several astronauts, a tribute to Gene Roddenberry, comedian Rick Overton, and Michael Dorn as host. The high-

paid money for a videotape of the show, but none was to be had. I was also amused by the fact that Buzz Aldrin seemed to be bored.

Shuttled over to the U.S. Space & Rocket Center for the private party with the stars. The food was pretty good but the turnout by the stars was just a tad disappointing. The stars that did show up to party with us included: Robert Picardo, Nichelle Nichols, Walter Koenig, Kate Mulgrew, Chase Masterson, Patricia Tallman(B5), and Rick Overton.

Stardate 960908:

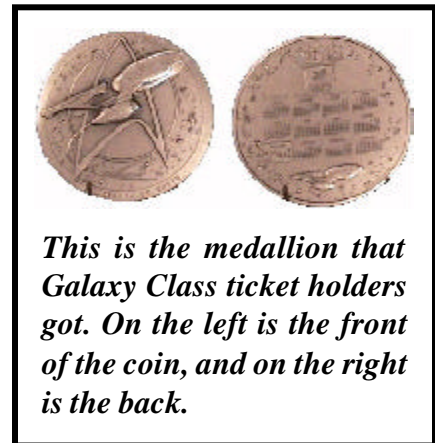
I arrived once again at the VBCC at 0900 hrs. I watched some *Star Trek* highlight reels and a preview of *First Contact*. I also sampled several new software releases including a cool game called *Star Trek: Borg* that

STAR TREK 30

September 7 and 8, 1996

also had a special fan club price that was slightly better than the Constitution package, but it wasn't widely advertised. Hotel and plane reservations could be made as well. They also had tour and golf packages of the surrounding areas such as Birmingham, Decatur, and Nashville. However, even with the astronomical prices, I'm not sure if Paramount covered the cost of the reported one million they spent to have this since the attendance was much lower than expected.

The souvenir bag contained a welcome letter, a schedule of events, an advertisement from Intergraph, a sample *Star Trek* check from a check service (They looked beautiful!), a gorgeous *Star Trek* Continuum web site mouse pad, and a souvenir handbook. The Constitution name badge had the original USS *Enterprise* and the Galaxy badge had *Next Generation's Enterprise*, NCC 7201-D. Both badges had a hologram of the world on it, the *Star Trek* 30 logo, and seating assignments and legal disclaimers on the back. The special gift for the Constitution package was a black baseball hat with the words "*Star Trek* 30" stitched in white on the front in the original series type style and "One Weekend On Earth" in white and "September 7 and 8, 1996" in blue on the back. The Galaxy class gift was a pewter medallion about 1/4 inch thick from the Franklin Mint. On the front is the first movie era *Enterprise* set atop the *Trek* chevron among the stars. The words "*Star Trek* 30: One Weekend on Earth" encircled the medallion. On the back is a 1996 calendar with September 7 and 8 raised above the other dates. At the top is the *Trek* 30 logo and at the bottom is the *Enterprise* with stars encircling the medallion.



This is the medallion that Galaxy Class ticket holders got. On the left is the front of the coin, and on the right is the back.

Star Trek: 1966-1996 and beyond.

featured John DeLancie. Received a neat mousepad and coaster from the *Star Trek* Continuum. I got to meet Chase Masterson and received signed photos and her fan club flyer (she was soooo nice and I have since joined her fan club). (By the way, she was signing at the Playmates booth in the Promenade and Playmates will be producing a Leeta action figure later this year— probably June.) This was truly one of the major highlights for me during the weekend. I also managed to get autographs from George Takei, Grace Lee Whitney, Nichelle Nichols, Walter Koenig, and James Doohan. I also purchased some new items including a cool

baseball jersey available only for the weekend (on sale!) and a neat trading card featuring George Takei and yours truly.



Wayne Cole, our own Picard clone, posing for a picture at Star Trek 30, courtesy of Traveller Information Services. HT

Synopsis:

In summary, I would say that although there were some minor things that I did not like, I would rate the overall experience as a thoroughly enjoyable one. I had a great time and if I had it to do over again knowing what I would get for my money, I would happily do so. For the autographs I received and the enjoyable experience I had, it was truly worth every penny. See you at ST60!

- SCPO Don Daniel

Huntsville, Alabama

One Weekend On Earth

As the event drew closer, more and more articles and stories were done by the local papers and TV stations. The *Huntsville Times* interviewed several of our crewmembers in the Sunday, July 21, 1996 issue. You can view this article and many more on the web at “<http://www.htimes.com/today/startrek/startrek.html>” (everything inside the quotes, but not including the quotes). In fact, some of the pictures used in this newsletter are theirs and are marked with HT. A local radio station even did a morning show interview of Commanding Officer, Richard Trulson.

Madison Square Mall hosted a *Star Trek* costume contest on August 17, 1996 to help generate interest and publicity for the celebration. Former *von Braun* member Mary K. Dyer won first place with her costume of the late Kai Opaka from *Deep Space 9*. She received two Galaxy Class passes as a prize. Wayne Cole, who has won previous costume contests for his uncanny resemblance to Jean-Luc Picard of *The Next Generation*, won a book in third place. They had about twenty entrants in the contest, including several Klingons and a Borg. Several articles appeared in the *Times*, but the winner announcements occurred in the August 25, 1996 edition.

Perhaps one of the most significant events to occur was on August 29, 1996. Then Mayor Steve Hettinger proclaimed that Huntsville would be renamed to *Star Trek*, Alabama to commemorate such a monumental event.

- FCAPT Richard L. Trulson

Is the model scary or what? This the hat that Constitution Class ticket holders received. The writing on the back is in the upper left hand corner.



Introduction

Boldly going for 30 years.

Volunteering: Betrayal and triumph.

When the news of *Star Trek 30: One Weekend On Earth* first hit the airwaves, the crew of the *Wernher von Braun* was very excited. We didn't quite know what was going to happen, but we knew we wanted to be a part of the biggest *Star Trek* event to ever occur. Obviously we wanted to go as fans; but given we were also a STARFLEET chapter, we also wanted to volunteer help. However, what's that line about the "best laid plans of mice and men?" This is the chronicle of the tribulations we had to go through as volunteers.

Apparently, Anya Funderburk, the ship's counselor, was a secret agent amongst us. She had been close friends with Thad Mauldin, who is responsible for getting Paramount to host *Star Trek 30* here in the Rocket City to begin with. However, she had to keep

quiet about it until it was officially announced, so as not to ruin the possibility of them hosting it here. When they were discussing what the toll free number for tickets were going to be, she suggested "BEAM-ME-UP", but because it had too many letters they had to shorten it to 1-888-2-BEAM-UP. Anya proved to be a valuable link to what was going on later.

Phaeton Guinn, marketing director at the Space and Rocket Center, was to be the initial volunteer coordinator. I, as Commanding Officer, began talks with him on behalf of the ship to provide a STARFLEET presence at *Trek 30*. When talking with him, Guinn said that Paramount had to have two stipulations when they agreed to have this: One, it must be a spectacular event unlike a typical convention.

Volunteering

STAR TREK 30

September 7 and 8, 1996

Huntsville, Alabama

Embracing a once in a lifetime opportunity.

Like everyone else, I was very excited when I heard the rumors surrounding *Star Trek* 30: One Weekend on Earth. I knew I wanted to attend this event from the very beginning regardless of the cost. I considered it a once in a lifetime opportunity that I was not going to let pass me by. Of course, I talked my parents into buying me the Galaxy class ticket as my birthday present since it was only three days later on September 10. Suffice to say, it was one of the best birthday presents I ever received. Anyway, here's what happened.

In the beginning, I was focused as a CO in hopes that this would be a golden opportunity for the *Wernher von Braun* as well. However, everything fell apart in mid-August as far as our ship participating. This was unfortunate but could not be foreseen. I then decided to focus my



attention on being a fan. I was going to go to this event and have the time of my life. (See the accompanying article on our volunteer efforts and the problems we faced.)

Though events officially began Saturday, September 7, my weekend began that Thursday doing volunteer work. However, I've combined the story of the *Wernher von Braun* volunteer workers into a separate article on page 33. Since I worked the registration table Friday, I picked up my membership bag then, as did several others. (See the *Trek* 30 introductory article for details on the bag contents.) This was a decision I am very thankful for. I was somewhat disappointed though, that the

Galaxy Class package didn't also include the Constitution gift as well since that is a very nice hat. However, the medallion is so much better.

Star Trek: 1966-1996 and beyond.

And two, it must be profitable. While that's understandable, I should have realized this would lead to problems later.

Of course, have you ever known something relating to *Star Trek* to NOT make money? I didn't think so given that even *The Final Frontier* made money. However, they wanted to make sure a profit was made given the large number of stars they were going to be bringing in. One method of saving on the one million in expenses was to have plenty of volunteers so they wouldn't have to pay people to work. This is where we come in.

Other STARFLEET chapters throughout the southeast were also interested in helping. Pete Mohny of the *Hephaestus*, Isaac Turner of the *Yamato* (both in Birmingham), Kelly Hilliard from the *Republic* in Atlanta, Cindy Krell from our mothership *Alacrity* in

Memphis, Carol Burhans of the *Dark Silence* in Florence, and Bonnie Flanagan of our shuttle *Alabama* in Decatur were the main ones. Pete turned out to be the biggest help though. (Thanks Pete!!!)

One of the first things they had us do was distribute thousands of brochures and posters they made. These were gorgeous full color glossy productions that listed the planned events and stars. They were done in a deep red and blue motif, with white writing and yellow highlights. We were to blanket our communities with them, as well as distribute them to our members, which we did. Of course, I'm sure a few of these were saved back and stockpiled for our own collections. ::grin::

After the initial announcements in June of 1996, there wasn't much activity until the brochures came out the next month. It was

One Weekend On Earth

Friday night.

Late Friday night several of our crew members met with several crewmembers from the U.S.S. *Hephaestus* from Birmingham, AL. About 20 of us got together for dinner at the Kettle. A few, however, were from the U.S.S. *Guardian* (Howdy to Russ McNutt who is transferring here soon.) and the *Hephaestus* shuttle *Emerald Star*. I know several other ships from STARFLEET had checked in during the day though. As with any gathering of Fleet members at a restaurant, we took over several tables and started to get quite rowdy. Our ship was represented by Don Daniel, Ralph Brigham, Anya Funderburk, and Richard Trulson. I played show and tell with my Galaxy Class goodies. I know blackmail pictures were taken, but I haven't seen them floating around. It was great to see Pete Mohny, the *Hephaestus* CO, and some of his crew. We'll have to do it again sometime. I crawled home and went to bed for some much needed sleep after pulling an all-nighter the previous night.

Saturday Events

Unfortunately, I overslept Saturday morning because I was so exhausted from volunteer work! You can imagine my surprise when I woke up at 11 AM, fearing I had missed something vitally important. After a frantic dressing and violation of warp speed laws, I arrived around noon to discover the thousands of people waiting in line, which stretched about halfway down the street. I went ahead to the main entrance in hopes that I could get in since I had the foresight to get my package Friday. I heard later that people were waiting several hours to get in. And what's worse is that people with advanced registration and the two big packages could have made it in much quicker. However, the few signs that were out weren't that informative.

Speaking of the signs, they had the front of the Von Braun Civic Center (VBCC) covered with a huge red banner with "Celebrating 30 Years of TV and Movie History" written in yellow. They also had a HUGE

Boldly going for 30 years.

simply a sit and wait to see what happens. Once we established phone contact with Gwinn, we chatted on a weekly basis to see what was happening. It wasn't until August

that we finally started to here more news. Janet Morgan became the official volunteer coordinator and our attention focused on her.

About this time volunteer interest began to wane. We discovered that we wouldn't be doing anything relating to the stars. In fact, most of the activities would probably take us AWAY from *Trek* 30 activities entirely. They wanted the volunteers to handle registration, bus loading and unloading, and to serve as greeters at the airport. Not exactly the nice responsibilities we were hoping for. To make matters even worse, they wouldn't guarantee the volunteers anything other than a T-Shirt. They did say that volunteers might receive a pass to the US Space and Rocket Center and to the Saturday night tribute to Gene Roddenberry though it was not guaranteed.

Giant wood archs, in the shape of the Trek chevron, were used as signs throughout the VBCC. Here's the main one at the entrance.



STAR TREK 30

September 7 and 8, 1996

plywood cut out in the shape of the *Trek* chevron triangle with the *Star Trek 30* logo on the front and back. They had similar display stands scattered throughout the VBCC to indicate the various things. I made my way to the main entrance in hopes that I didn't have to wait in line. They saw my reddish Galaxy name badge and ushered me right in.

Moving around was cramped due to all the people. As I walked past the West Exhibit Hall entrance, I saw a large line waiting to get into Spencer Gifts Warp 10 Store. As I headed



for the Promenade in the North Exhibit Hall, I also saw a brief glimpse of the Holosuites in the East Exhibit Hall. More about both of these later. I fought my way through the crowds to make it up to the second floor of the Promenade. This is where stars and astronauts were signing autographs. John de Lancie (Q) and Kate Mulgrew (Kathryn Janeway) were scheduled to have started forty-five minutes earlier, and I was afraid I would miss getting Kate's autograph. I wasn't that concerned about de Lancie's since I had gotten his autograph at Delecon II in Kansas City during STARFLEET's 1992 International Conference. I bought some pictures of both just in case and got in line.

In retrospect, I didn't miss all that much. It would have been nice to have seen deLancie and Mulgrew's presentation in the main arena entitled "Q's Crush", but that wasn't anything major compared to getting an autograph. I also missed a few video presentations in the Blockbuster Viewscreen, but

Star Trek: 1966-1996 and beyond.

As a result, volunteers started dropping out. And except for those from our crew, all of the other STARFLEET volunteers withdrew their support. Of course, we live here so it's not as much of a burden on us. However, for those traveling from hours away, they want some sort of compensation for their work. While money is not required, (You cease to cease to be a volunteer then.) either better treatment by Paramount, a discount in price, or even some free stuff would be nice. At the very least tell us before hand what we can expect, and not leave us hanging on maybes.

Furthermore, they were not very organized in their approach. They didn't even tell us what was happening and what we needed to do until late August. They had two volunteer orientation meetings two weeks before *Trek 30*. That was cutting it a bit close in my opinion. Not only that, volunteers had to sign a release

form waiving Paramount and everyone of any legal liability. To make that waiver even worse, it also allowed them to use you in any promotions they may do. Several people who would have been willing to volunteer even with the accident waiver would not do so because of this publicity waiver. As a final result, we only had five of our crewmembers volunteering to do anything.

Unfortunately, as the celebration drew closer, Guinn ceased all communications with us entirely. We literally heard nothing from him during August and September. This is unfortunate, as he was the ship's contact person for obtaining a recruiting table for us and STARFLEET. Once I realized he was not returning phone calls or E-Mails, I frantically tried contacting his assistant and others to get answers to my questions. Unfortunately, it was too late. Phaeton Guinn is solely responsible

Huntsville, Alabama

One Weekend On Earth

nothing I couldn't do without. However, the one thing I did miss that I wish I hadn't was my 10 AM Space Camp adventure. While I can easily attend Space Camp, it will cost me more now and I really don't have that much enthusiasm for it. I guess chance was smiling upon me in that respect.

The autograph line is where I spent most of my time during *Trek 30*. By the time I got in line for Mulgrew, it had stretched out the room and along the balcony walkway. I waited patiently, using this time as opportunity to read through all the materials in my bag of goodies. By the time I got in the room, I could see the physical duress appearing on Mulgrew's face of making one of her rare convention appearances. It was about this time that DeLancie had to leave to do a hosting gig in the main arena. People moaned and groaned about losing one star, but were overall pleased that Mulgrew was staying. This leaving for other obligations is an unfortunate recurring theme throughout the weekend. I finally got my autograph and



Mulgrew and deLancie signing autographs.

picture, which I am eternally thankful for. I thanked Mulgrew gratefully and smiled. You could tell she was tired, but she smiled and signed dutifully.

Boldly going for 30 years.

for us not having a greater presence at *Trek 30*. Even if we were unable to do so, the least he could have done was told us so. However, he simply stopped calling us entirely.

I showed up Wednesday night prior to *Trek 30* for an unofficial volunteer help session. It's a good thing too, as they needed help stuff the 1300+ Constitution and Galaxy Class souvenir gift bags. After calling around, I was able to get Donald Daniel and Ralph Brigham to help. Thanks guys! Though Ralph had to leave early for work the next day, me and Don stayed there until 3 AM Friday morning. While stuffing bags with goodies may not sound like hard work, it's certainly monotonous, repetitive, boring work which quickly tests your sanity. We would stuff in the package gift, then the letters and souvenir book. Then we got to move them to a different location and count

them, sometimes several times. The accolades of thanks from the Paramount staff was quite rewarding. However, it was even more rewarding when they gave me a *Voyager* T-shirt and Don a Borg T-shirt. It's this type of impromptu thanks that makes volunteer work worthwhile.

Then at the Region 2 Summit, I received a Regional Commendation along with Pete Mohney for our *Trek 30* networking efforts and Don received a Region 2 Distinguished Service Award. (On a personal side note, I went back out to my car Thursday night/Friday morning to discover that I had left the lights on. Oh joy. I was finally able to jump start the car and go home. Unfortunately, by the time I did that and showered, it was time for me to go back to work. Therefore I got no sleep Thursday night. ::yawn::)

STAR TREK 30

September 7 and 8, 1996

As soon as I got out of there around 1:30 PM, I went over to the other autograph room to see Robert Duncan McNiell (Tom Paris), Robert Picardo (holographic doctor), and Ethan Phillips (Neelix). Again, the same song and dance number occurred waiting in line. This time Phillips had to leave since he had to be on stage in the main arena to do a presentation on “*Star Trek Aliens*” with Armin Shimerman (Quark), Rene Auberjonois (Odo), and Michael Westmore (the make-up and costume man for recent *Treks*). Again, I was somewhat disappointed at not getting his autograph or seeing that presentation. I waited forever again, but finally got both Roberts’ autograph. If I had missed this one, they were also signing for a short time on Sunday afternoon. They were equally good sports about signing tons of autographs.

With a major *Voyager* autograph collection started, I was able to then peruse everything else at the VBCC. On my way

down, I grabbed a bite to eat and then started going through everything in the Promenade. Due to Paramount’s licensing rights, small independent dealers

were unable to participate. Therefore, the entire thing had a commercialized, mass produced feel to it. You weren’t going to find the small, uniquely made items and such. While this may have allowed for a larger volume of merchandise and dealers to be there, I think it lowered the variety of things available. Forget about buying anything that’s not currently in production. On the other hand, you were usually buying directly from the maker. Such a large audience allowed for bigger names to display



Auberjonois and Shimerman (on right)

Star Trek: 1966-1996 and beyond.

Friday, I got to work the registration table. People were checking in early and getting their gift bags. This wasn’t too difficult a job, though we did get busier as the day progressed. We had to verify who they were, have them sign for their stuff, then give them their name badge and their gift bag. However, it was quite disconcerting to inform someone that they weren’t in our records. We had people from all over the Southeast and even the world. I got to chat with several Fleet members from other chapters, though I can’t recall their names. One of the more interesting guests to appear was a tour group from Australia. Since I have internet friends from downunder, this was a very pleasant coincidence.

Then there were the fans from hell. You know the type: the ones that can’t be satisfied with anything you do. Oh well, thankfully these types were rare and I only had to deal

Here I am by the beautiful red and blue banner at the main entrance of the VBCC.



with about three of them. Of course, matters were sometimes complicated by the fact that groups who were to be seated together, were sometimes split apart. They had to be told to go

Huntsville, Alabama

One Weekend On Earth

their wares that won't even consider small time fan conventions. (Skip the next four paragraphs if you could care less about what the booths were doing.)

Some of the more interesting booths there: Leaf Inc. was carving giant chocolate bars before your eyes. Graphix was selling jewelry with hologram and LED enhancements, similar to what Worf wears on his family sash. Vital Technologies had a functioning tri-corder that our own Chief Medical Officer Ralph Brigham bought. Advanced Graphics, who supplied a free display check in everyone's membership bag, had beautiful displays of their checks that could be purchased. Interstellar Productions had some nifty gifts available, such as mouse pads, movie soundtrack CDs, phaser laser pointers, and more. Tevco Sportswear, which came the closest to a smaller dealer in appearance, had T-shirts for sale.



Hamilton Collection (collectors' plates), Pocket Books, Ertl (and other model companies), Q-Voice (voice computer control) and Hallmark (Christmas ornaments) were also there.

The U.S. Space and Rocket Center booth was tiny compared to NASA's booth, which took up about 1/5 of the exhibit hall. NASA's area had various dioramas of all their accomplishments and a few hands-on programs. Traveller Information Services also had almost as huge an area where people could surf the web. Playmates Toys was there with an interesting museum of past, current, and future *Trek* product lines. They even had a display on the toy making process. Franklin Mint had all of their pewter sculptures on display, including the three nacelle Enterprise from "All Good Things...", which I wanted

Boldly going for 30 years.

wait in the "problem" line which grew longer as the day progressed. Suffice to say, that didn't win over any fans.

Though I was scheduled to work registration throughout the day, they took me off around lunch time to run to Brunos to get some snack supplies. It was quite an honor that they trusted me with petty cash to go and get them some drinks and snack supplies. They of course, had heard about Sun Drop and wanted to taste the local fair. I'm not sure if they got really local and tried grits or not. The rest of the afternoon was spent relieving others for breaks and general errand running. This was my official job that I registered for and received the T-shirt for. I also received a pass to the Space and Rocket Center and a pass to the Saturday night tribute to Gene. Therefore, they were able to live up to getting people a pass to these events.

This reminds me of one of the things that soured me a bit: people's attitude toward volunteering. When they first heard about this, people had hopes of working with the stars or getting discounts on tickets. However, once they heard that they would not be working with the stars, may not get free tickets, or may even be taken away from the VBCC itself, they quickly changed their attitudes. They no longer wanted to help at all. This was especially prevalent in Fleet members.

Volunteerism is most often associated with charitable works such as working a phone bank at a telethon, rebuilding a family's home after a tornado, serving food at a homeless shelter, etc. However, volunteerism at its basic level is simply doing something for nothing. That's what Paramount was wanting here. People, however, felt they were owed something for their supposedly "volunteer" work.

STAR TREK 30

September 7 and 8, 1996

desperately to buy. A Las Vegas hotel advertised their “*Star Trek: The Experience*”. They had an original *Enterprise* bridge set where you could have souvenir pictures taken. They were to later have an adventure ride and special sets designed so you could beam out live. Several of our crewmembers had blackmail pictures taken. Creation had a table selling their usual star pictures, glasses, jackets, and other stuff. Blockbuster also had a huge big screen TV and were selling videos.

The live Barbie and Ken dolls, dressed in Starfleet uniforms. HT



Mattel was selling their Ken and Barbie dolls in STARFLEET uniforms, as well as giving away some autographed

by Nichelle Nichols (Uhura). However, I think the live Ken and Barbie models were getting more longing stares from the crowd. Lincoln Enterprises, which I think Majel Barrett Roddenberry (Luxwanna Troi) is involved with or owns, had various items for sale. The U.S. Postal Service had a booth available where you could get a special cancellation stamp put on your mail. It had the *Star Trek 30* logo on the right, the original *Enterprise* on the left, with the “*Star Trek Station / September 8, 1996*” above it and “1966 / 1996 / Huntsville, AL 35813” below it. Fleeer/Skybox had a trading card display, with an actor dressed as Wolverine who’s costume had muscles and claws. They also had a photo session area where you could have your picture taken live with Walter Koenig (Chekov), James Doohan (Scotty), George Takei (Sulu), and Grace Lee Whitney (Yeoman Rand).

Star Trek: 1966-1996 and beyond.

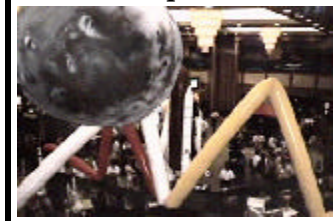
When you’re paid for doing something, whether it be in money, in exchange for goods, or whatever, you cease to be a volunteer and become an employee.

Don’t get me wrong: There is nothing wrong with expecting a little something in return for your efforts, especially when it’s a profitable money making company like Paramount and not some fatally ill child. However, how much do you want? People were guaranteed unique volunteer T-shirts and free food. They were also told they MIGHT get free passes as well, but they couldn’t guarantee that ahead of time. When “volunteers” heard this, they dropped out quickly deciding it wasn’t worth their efforts. (I also realize that some ended up having scheduling conflicts and other legitimate problems; these few are NOT the ones I’m chastising.) Fortunately, Paramount was able to come through with a free pass to

the Saturday night tribute to Gene Roddenberry and a day pass to the US S&RC. Because they dropped out, however, the former “volunteers” never received these gifts in appreciative thanks.

For me, the greatest thanks did not come in the form of a material possession. When I worked the long hours stuffing the gift bags, I felt the most reward in the looks of relief and thanks on the faces of the Paramount staff that were being paid to work there. I lost track of the number of times they verbally thanked the volunteers that were there late Thursday night and early Friday morning for our

Here is the huge NASA exhibit, complete with moon and Space Shuttle



Huntsville, Alabama

One Weekend On Earth

When booths, like Fleer/Skybox or anyone else, had a special autograph session, it became almost impossible to get through. Some of the stars signing in the Promenade included Nichols, Keith Birdsong (painter on several Hamilton Collection plates), Whitney, Jeri Taylor (*Voyager* executive producer), Judy and Gar Reeves-Stevens (book authors), Marc Okrand (Klingon Language Institute), Majel Barrett, and Chase Masterson, (Leeta, the DS9 Dabo girl). Other stars would occasionally make impromptu visits to the promenade, causing a major traffic jam.

While wandering around the various booths, I eventually ran into other shipmates. Don, Anya, Bonnie Flanagan, Dianne Adams, and Larry Adams (last three from our shuttle *Alabama*), Kit Ramsey, Wayne Cole (our resident Picard look alike), and Johnnie Peterson. Those are the only ones I remember running into. I'm sure out there, somewhere in all those people, were dozens of other Fleet



Boldly going for 30 years.

hard work. Sure, I ended up with a T-shirt as well, but the greater sense of reward came from their verbal thanks and the relief on their faces that our jobs were accomplished on time. I have no doubts in my mind that our work that night saved them many headaches and other problems the rest of the weekend. That's what being a volunteer is all about.

Oops. I didn't quite mean to get on my soapbox quite so much, but it did help me illustrate a point. Anyway, on with the review:

The line Friday was not bad at all. I think even at the busiest, there was only a fifteen, possibly thirty minute wait. That was NOT the case on Saturday and Sunday. As was mentioned elsewhere, the line to get general admission stretched out the door and down the street. I would NOT have wanted to have waited in that line. Furthermore, some of the Constitution and Galaxy class ticket holders

waited in that line, when they didn't have to. Directions and signs were not very helpful. This isn't surprising given that I saw the large plywood signs being cut, painted, and set-up Friday, literally the day before everything was to begin. While I'm sure they had a planned schedule, and they were able to finish, waiting so close to the deadline to finish these things seems rather foolish to me.

Signs weren't the only thing to be completed at the last minute. Even the schedule of events didn't get back from the printer until late Friday afternoon. And the autograph schedule and welcome letter for the gift bags didn't arrive until we were half way finished stuffing them. We had to go back and stuff the flimsy paper in the bags we had already completed, which was difficult with the gifts and other stuff already in there. I have no idea why they waited to the last minute on these items

STAR TREK 30

September 7 and 8, 1996

members. I did run into Russ and Pete again, as well as Carol Burhans from the *Dark Silence* Station in Decatur. In fact, on the STARFLEET E-Mail list, I occasionally hear people mention *Trek 30* and the time they had here.

I grabbed a bite to eat and headed for the main Arena to watch "Star Trek Salutes the Space Program" by Picardo and McNeill honoring the astronauts Alan Shepard, Alan Bean, and Buzz Aldrin. They were introduced by John de Lancie, who was the arena events host for all day Saturday. After a brief discussion among themselves, the *Trek* stars showed a video clip as an introduction to the astronauts. They then continued the discussion among all five of them. Having a guaranteed seat reserved for you is quite nice. Even though there were seats closer to the stage, I had a great view from about midway back along the right side of the left-front section. They had a HUGE video screen above the stage for those

Koenig and Majel Barrett with three of the Apollo astronauts, not sure which ones. HT



who weren't as fortunate in their seat location. The stage itself was done with a bridge layout, but with *Deep Space Nine* design and color motif.

Once this was over, I wandered back into the East Exhibit Hall that had been renamed the Interactive Holosuites. One

Star Trek: 1966-1996 and beyond.

which should have been finished at least a week before the celebration. This was incredibly poor planning and could have caused some major problems for them. You'd think they

would want to get all this stuff finished weeks ahead of time so last minute problems and hang-ups won't be as severe. But that wasn't the case.

Now isn't this a Kodak moment? This original series bridge set was on display so you could have your picture taken. HT



Huntsville, Alabama

Of course, we had a few more volunteers participate as well. Security Chief Dustin Williams worked with the VBCC itself. And Jim Dykes volunteered to work the busses. However, after helping a little while, he got pulled off that duty to work on a more hands-on approach. In fact, he got to tease Klingons, or more appropriately, Klingons' hair. Brave man isn't he? For the stunt spectacular show, Michael Westmore was doing the make-up for the Klingon warriors. He needed help preparing the costumes, and Jim happened to be in the right place at the right time. So while most of us were enjoying the Saturday night tribute, Jim was hard at work back stage teasing the hair on the Klingon headpieces. And while he

One Weekend On Earth

entire wall size display had been set up in a shallow S-curve with computer terminals and video monitors set in it. They had various PC game demos playing and product demonstrations going on. If you had the patience to wait, you could play them. Two of the most exciting were *The Borg*, with de Lancie reprising his role of Q, and *Starfleet Academy*, where you train to command different starships. The graphics, sound, and cinematography were absolutely amazing.

At a circular column in the center of the room packed with more computer terminals, people could browse the *Star Trek: Continuum*, which is a world wide web site ran by Paramount via the Microsoft Network (MSN). Paramount (as well as parent company Viacom) wants to make sure all things *Trek* are stored at this site. And since it's part of the MSN, you have to subscribe to MSN in order to access it. While a very good site (In fact,

about a third of the pictures used in this issue came from there.), it stifles the creativity that *Trek* fandom has become. However, if you'd like to peruse it yourself, the WWW URL is "http://startrek.msn.com".

During the day of the event, MSN did a live simulcast on the web with some of the events going on here. While the broadcast of the panels are no longer available, you can visit <http://www.paramount.com/startrek/huntsville/master.html> on the web to see additional reports on some of the things that happened. In fact, local internet provider Traveller Information Services helped with this set up. You can visit <http://www.startrek96.com/> for their information, which contains many great pictures. In fact, several of the pictures used throughout this article were taken from the previous two web sites and I've tried to indicate who they belong to with a MSN and TIS at the end of the picture caption.

Review

Boldly going for 30 years.

didn't have the chance to talk with anyone, he was able to see Westmore backstage, along with a few other stars like the most popular Klingon of all, Michael Dorn, who plays Worf on *The Next Generation* and *Deep Space 9*.

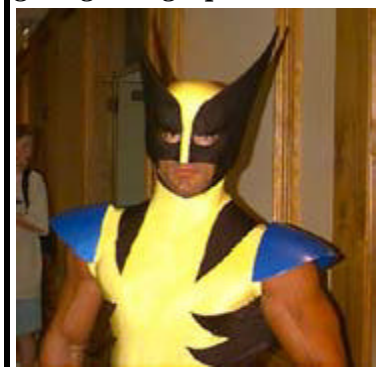
Even though we didn't have an official booth or table as we would have liked, we did have a small presence there. Other fan organizations took over a small table laying out in the food area and hallway. They laid flyers as did I. Pete also had some Region 2 posters there as well. By Sunday afternoon when I left, almost an entire ream (about 450 sheets) of STARFLEET applications had been taken. While these were for STARFLEET in general, they had an introductory letter on the back with all the local chapters listed. I also had two full color signs on display, one for the *Wernher von Braun* and one for STARFLEET. These were full color signs placed in a cheap, cardboard

display, though they looked quite nice. In fact, they looked so nice someone decided to take the STARFLEET one home.

Unfortunately, as far as I can tell, no one has joined the ship as a result of *Star Trek 30*, which is very disheartening. It should have been the best recruiting opportunity anyone has ever had. I

blame the lack of support from Guinn, lack of planning on my part, and the ever watchful eye of Paramount trying to control everything for this not being

Even Wolverine was there giving autographs.



Review

STAR TREK 30

September 7 and 8, 1996

Located in one corner of the holosuite was a Kodak moment. Or, more correctly, Kodak would take your picture beaming off the transporter pad. In another corner was the Bajoran Immigration Station. Here you could be turned into a Bajoran with a ridged nose piece. While the worker's makeup looked fine (as it was probably done by Michael Westmore or his staff since they were present), I personally didn't think their quickie process resulted in a very good effect.

A third corner of this room held the live auction for both days. If you think Fleet auctions are something to behold, you haven't seen anything like this. They had quite a few low numbered toy and action figures to bid on. When I say low, I mean LOW, like a few 1's and 2's, but all were certainly under 200. They also had a few dioramas and nine inch dolls. Two of the more spectacular items included original action figure proofs used to make them, and a gold plated original series *Enterprise* with stand that went for \$2,200. They

also had several silent auctions throughout the day. The auction on Saturday raised \$13,500 for the Gene Roddenberry Scholarship Fund.

In the adjoining South Exhibit Hall was housed the Blockbuster Viewscreen. This room was set up in a small theater style with a giant TV screen. I didn't partake of many events in here as I was too busy with other things. However, had I had the time, I'm sure it was a very informative and revealing experience. Not only did they have the usual episode viewing and video clips, they also had presentations by the production staff and industry insiders. Terry Erdmann, a motion picture publicist, hosted both days.

Saturday's schedule included: favorite scene montages from all four *Trek* series, footage that has never been seen before (presented by the Reeves-Stevens couple and Margaret Clark: book authors and editor, respectively), stunt creation (Dennis Madalone: stunt coordinator), 30 year tribute slide show (Erdmann), writing *Star Trek* shows (Jeri

Celebrating the thirtieth anniversary of *Star Trek*.

as successful as a convention or movie recruitment drive. Paramount has always had a very hateful relationship to fan organizations. Only it's official fan club is tolerated, and it's nothing more really than a merchandise outlet to make money. I'm sure the response would have been much better had this been a friendlier, fan run convention.

Overall though, I'm very thankful to have had the opportunity to have participated as a volunteer in the *Star Trek* 30 celebration. A person develops a very wonderful sense of self-worth knowing that your efforts helped make something so important happen. I'd highly recommend that people do some type of volunteer work no matter how great or small, as the rewards will be immeasurable. What was nice about volunteering with this is that I was working with one my greatest hobbies and interests: *Star Trek*.

- FCAPT Richard L. Trulson

*Crewmember
Johnny Peterson
poses in her
"monster maroon"
uniform from Star
Trek II with one of
the friendlier
Klingons. MSN*



Huntsville, Alabama

One Weekend On Earth

Taylor and John Ordovery: *Voyager* creator and Pocket Books editor, respectively), creation of the *Trek* universe (Dan Curry, Rick Sternbach, and Andre Bormanis: visual effects producer, senior illustrator, and *Trek* science consultant), and the original series episode “The Trouble With Tribbles.”

Sunday’s schedule included: writing *Star Trek* books (Reeves-Stevens couple, Clark, Ordovery, and Paula Black: the latter is Publishing Director of Viacom), a “smorgas-Borg” buffet of *Next Generation* Borg episodes, Klingon “Kulture” (Okrand and Curry), ten biggest *Trek* villain video, *Star Trek: First Contact* slide preview (Erdman), and another presentation of the never seen *Trek* footage (Reeves-Stevens).

I finally made my way into the Spencer Gifts Warp 10 Store located in the West Exhibit Hall. This turned out to be a mixed blessing. On one hand, everything was available from uniforms to actions figures, from trading cards to toys, from models to collectables, from hockey jerseys to baseball caps, etc. I could go on forever, but I won’t. There was a staggering amount of merchandise available as it was definitely a collector’s dream come true. If it was licensed by Paramount, it was in here. However on the other hand, there was nothing here that you couldn’t get from any other well supplied Spencer Gifts.

Correction, there was one thing that was supposedly only available at this store: a limited edition of ten thousand action figures of Scotty and Sulu from the very first *Trek* episode, “Where No Man Has Gone Before”. I, of course, bought me one of each for investment purposes and some for another Fleet member. However, by late Sunday night, hundreds if not thousands, of these were still left on the shelves. Had I known they wouldn’t be selling well, I would have waited, because most everything else was being marked down drastically in price. I actually managed to override my desire to buy and made it out of the store with only the actions figures and some metal trading cards. Woe be unto the weak-willed with high credit limits.

Around 3:30 I made my way back into the autograph line for Shimerman. Westmore was signing as well, but I didn’t get his autograph. I admit, I want the stars themselves, not the background crew. Auberjonois was not signing as the schedule said that he may not. By the time I got Shimerman’s autograph, I started making my way toward the arena for the night’s main event.



These figures of Sulu and Scotty, from Star Trek’s very first episode, were supposedly available at Star Trek 30 only.

STAR TREK 30

September 7 and 8, 1996

Huntsville, Alabama

Tribute to Gene Roddenberry.

The main event Saturday night was the thirtieth anniversary tribute to Gene Roddenberry. While waiting for everything to start at 7:30, the overhead screen displayed various video clip montages set to different types of music. This was also done throughout the day for the other presentations as well. I had a small bite to eat while waiting since I had a sudden craving for the arena food.

Finally, the tribute began by the host for the evening, Michael Dorn (Worf). Comedian Rick Overton was the first to perform. He tried valiantly to do *Star Trek* humor, but I felt most of his jokes fell flat. Funnier stuff has been heard over the net or at ship meetings. Then came the great stunt spectacular choreographed by Dennis Madalone. It basically amounted to a fight sequence between a single Federation officer and about a half-dozen Klingon warriors. Frankly, it left much to be desired in excitement and believability, though the makeup and costumes were nice. (Check out the volunteer article for an interesting side story involving one of our crewmembers helping with this event.) Even the final explosion fall wasn't that spectacular, though I think the stuntman nearly hit his head on the railing. When I heard them claiming stunt spectacular, I envisioned something along the rides at MGM studios or amusement parks that would allow audience participation. Not this poor excuse at entertainment. Even Dorn joked about wishing Worf could fight like that.

Finally Dorn introduced James Doohan (Scotty), Nichelle Nichols (Uhura), Walter Koenig (Chekov), and George Takei (Sulu). Given the fact that *TV Guide* reported that Doohan had declined to appear at *Trek 30* due to financial compensation disagreements and personal dislikes, I was greatly relieved to see him there. He reconsidered his decision after the outpouring of fans convinced him otherwise.

After they left, DeForest Kelly (McCoy) was introduced. He chatted briefly and then began to introduce a "friend, writer, director, father..." From stage left walked William Shatner (Kirk) and from stage right walked Leonard Nimoy (Spock). The crowd roared with laughter as they both tried to determine who Kelly was talking about. At one point, Shatner produced a small wallet sized picture of his grandkids; Nimoy countered by pulling out an 8x10 picture. It was quite a hilarious moment. They all three sat and chatted a while. They related various anecdotes about their careers and time together.

The astronauts were introduced next and they chatted briefly as well. Buzz Aldrin, Alan Bean, Charles Duke, Fred Haise, Ed Mitchell, and Alan Shepard were on hand to discuss the relationship between the fictional *Star Trek* and the reality of the space program. They touched upon how *Trek* inspires children to look to the stars. Finally, Daniel Goldin, a NASA administrator, brought Majel Barrett Roddenberry up on stage. They presented her with a huge plaque in tribute to Gene Roddenberry. Of course it was a very emotional moment to listen to her thank NASA and the legions of *Star Trek* fans for the past thirty years of memories. She even had their son Rod come on stage. He announced that Gene's dream of going into space was realized when the space shuttle *Columbia* carried his ashes into space.



Koenig, Takei, Doohan, and Nichols. MSN

One Weekend On Earth



The tribute plaque to Gene Roddenberry is presented to his wife, Majel Barrett Roddenberry, by Daniel Goldin, NASA administrator. HT

It was then followed by a musical celebration featuring the Oakwood College Choir and the Alabama A&M Gospel Choir. They also had a laser light display. And of course, various images and scenes from the celebration and from the TV show displaying on the big screen in the background. They even had people in alien costumes among the performers, from the previously seen Klingons, to Romulans and Vulcans, even a few Ferengi.

They also brought all the original series cast members back on stage. For me, it was very emotional and awe inspiring site to see the entire original cast on stage at one time. Of course, due to personal dislikes among them, you could see a few of them avoiding each other. But all in all, they still worked well together for this occasion. What added even more emotion to the scene was to see the real life space heroes, the Apollo astronauts, standing along side the cast members along with Majel Barrett, the queen mother of *Star Trek*.

The show was concluded with a song by Garth Brooks entitled “We Shall Be Free.” And just make sure it ended with a literal bang, they had some in-door fireworks, which was sort of scary and exhilarating at the same time. If you listen closely to the lyrics, you will hear that Brooks envisions a world free of racial prejudice, a world free of famine and war, a world free of the problems that face us today. That’s also the same utopian vision that Gene Roddenberry envisioned in his *Star Trek*

universe. And that’s also the same wonderful world vision we’re working for in STARFLEET.



Nimoy and Shatner.

STAR TREK 30

September 7 and 8, 1996



*An awe inspiring sight: The entire original cast together on stage.
Doohan, Koenig, Kelly, Nimoy, Shatner, Takei, and Nichols.*

VIP banquet.

I managed to catch up with Johnnie Peterson after the crowd started to leave. We made our way to the busses, which were taking everyone over to the US Space and Rocket Center (S&RC) for the VIP Gala dinner held exclusively for the Galaxy Glass package holders. We arrived safely after a speedy buss ride over there. Unfortunately, we had to check our cameras at the entrance, though a few people did sneak theirs in.

We were herded through the twisting, winding corridors of the S&RC to their dining area. Once there, we got to fight our way through the hundreds (a thousand perhaps?) of people to get in line for the food. They had various buffet lines available with all kinds of food, from pasta to roast beef, from pork to fish, from fruits to cheeses, from cookies to cakes, and just about everything else. I gorged

myself silly, regretting having succumbed to the stadium food earlier. Me and Johnnie were able to sit down with Don Daniel.

We sat and chatted a while, catching glimpses of the various stars that were roaming around. They even had a free picture session area available for people to get their picture taken. We eventually parted company, trying to meet up with a particular star. Since I'm not one to hobnob very much, I didn't try to meet any of the big ones. I did, however, have a nice conversation with Rod, Majel Barrett and Gene Roddenberry's son. I think Don had the chance to speak with the actress who plays Leeta the Dabo girl. We were also speculating that the actress who plays Lyta Alexander, the station telepath on *Babylon 5*, was there as well.

Finally, we were getting tired, having perhaps one of the most exciting days of our life. On the way out of the S&RC, we stopped

Huntsville, Alabama

One Weekend On Earth

to peruse the exhibits that weren't cordoned off. It was fun to see science-fiction toys from my childhood on exhibit at a space museum hosting a gala dinner in honor of the thirtieth anniversary of the cultural phenomena that *Trek* has become. There were a few *Star Trek* toys there, as were *Star Wars* and dozens of other science-fiction movies and TV shows.

Just as we headed out, we ran into Cindy Krell, former STARFLEET Chief of Operations. She is also former Commanding Officer of the USS *Alacrity* out Memphis, Tennessee, which is also the ship that launched the *Wernher von Braun* as a shuttle. We exchanged hugs and notes on the day, but were getting tired. We boarded the busses back to the VBCC and went home.



*Picardo,
Phillips,
and
McNeil.
MSN*

Sunday Events.

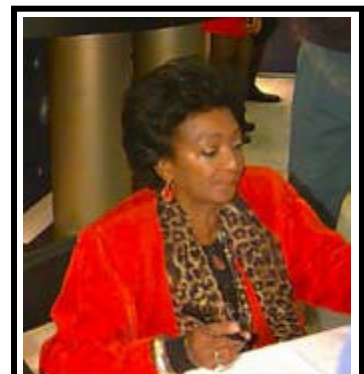
I managed to get up on time for Sunday's activities though. My day started off in the autograph line again for John de Lancie, Rene Auberjonis, and Armin Shimerman. However, the first two had to leave so they could go have a "Menage a Troi" Majel Barrett Roddenberry. Or more accurately, host a panel entitled that with her. I decided to follow to the main arena to watch that since I already had Shimerman's autograph. That was followed by a presentation by William Shatner and Leonard Nimoy hosting a "*Star Trek* Salute to the Apollo Astronauts" with Ed Mitchell, Fred Haise, and Charlie Duke.

Robert Picardo, who was hosting the arena today, then introduced the original cast members who have formed their own little

group. Nichelle Nichols, Walter Koenig, James Doohan, and George Takei led a hilarious impromptu scene presentation of "Bridge to Engineering." You could hear the hostility they felt for Shatner and the other "big three" stars (Kelly and Nimoy). In fact, they lampooned it with much gusto and audience approval. The scenario was that Kirk was being held hostage and the others were "trying" to save him. Koenig, who was looking a bit ill and as if he wasn't feeling very well, kept saying as Chekov to let the Klingons have Kirk. Doohan as Scotty kept having to repair the *Enterprise*, which was constantly falling apart. Only Takei as Sulu seemed to generally want Kirk back and was the calmest of the bunch. Come to think if it, he stood between the big three and the lesser four during Saturday night's tribute celebration, acting as buffer between them. And poor Nichols as Uhura, as she usually did in the TV show, simply stood in the background trying to open hailing frequencies. It was a very biting satire, but very funny.

I then went to the autograph room to wait several hours for the lesser four's autographs. Since all four were signing, I figured it was a golden opportunity not to be missed. After all, they're aging rapidly, especially Doohan, and will not be with us forever. It was sort of funny though, the Paramount people were telling us NOT to talk to the stars, as that slows them down.

He warned us especially not to talk to Takei, who was known to ramble. He also reminded us to have the pictures ready and that personalization of autographs was not allowed. All this was done in an



*Nichols signing
autographs. MSN*

STAR TREK 30

September 7 and 8, 1996

Huntsville, Alabama

attempt to make sure as many people as possible get their autograph. And I did walk out of there with Nichols's, Koenig's, Doohan's, and Takei's autograph. And the Paramount guy was right, Takei did ramble a bit when spoken too or asked questions. I simply limited my words with them to "Thank-you very much!"

I suppose the handling of autographs was one of the major faltering points of this convention. Not only was the lines impossible to deal with, but they often times scheduled the autograph session before the stars were to appear on stage.

As a result, people sometimes waited hours in line only to have the star leave for their presentation. They should have scheduled much more time for autographs after the stars' presentations. Additionally, the Galaxy Class people were to have gotten priority in the lines. As far as I could tell, there was no one making sure this occurred.

I'd also like to mention that the astronauts were signing autographs as well. However, some of them were only signing at the S&RC. Even though busses were traveling too and from there every half hour, I didn't want to waste my time to get them. And while I am eternally grateful to them for braving the space frontier, I am a *Star Trek* fan first and foremost. Given the time and opportunity, I would gladly and proudly get their autographs too.



Kelly telling a funny story on Shatner. HT

Anyway, due to time it took to get those four autographs, I missed an arena presentation by DeForest Kelly and Robert Picardo, the two most popular doctors of *Star Trek*. Entitled "Report to Sickbay," I'm sure seeing these two together would have been a remarkable experience. It was followed by "Star Trek: The Latest Generation, which was a panel with Armin Shimmerman, Ethan Phillips, and Robert Duncan McNeil. One of the things they talked about was inheriting the *Trek* mantle from the original cast members. Phillips was also a very funny, and entertaining person.

At this point, the convention started winding down quickly. While there was another autograph session with McNeill and Picardo, I decided to use the remaining time to browse the Promenade and the Spencer's Warp 10 store again. They were quickly marking down the merchandise in hopes not to have any surplus stock left over. In a way, it was a very anti-climactic end to something as significant as *Star Trek*'s thirtieth anniversary.

In Summary

The bottom line is that I had a very wonderful time and experience. It may have been a bit expensive, but I think it was well worth it to see the entire original cast together, along with so many of the recent series stars. Seeing them all on stage together at once on Saturday night was a very powerful and moving experience.



Mulgrew signing a Barbie doll packages. MSN

One Weekend On Earth



McNeil relaxing. MSN

I could have hoped for better autograph scheduling, but I did manage to make it out with nine autographs. It would have been even nicer if the “big three” were signing, but they rarely do so at conventions any more. I would have liked more *Next Generation* stars as well. And if they had managed to get all four Captains, it would have been perfect. The entire original cast was there, and that was the important thing. And most of the *Deep Space Nine* and *Voyager* cast were there as well. The Promenade had everything you could probably want. However, as I mentioned, it had a mass market, commercial feel to it since they did not allow the independent dealers there.

Furthermore, they really only had four tracks of programming going. Compared to say



The two doctors past and present: Kelly and Picardo. MSN

Dragon*Con, that’s incredibly few. They had the main arena events, which were geared to bring the big audiences. They Viewscreen events were the filler material, as they were

going continuously. The only other thing that was going on was the events in the Promenade, which were mostly autograph signings. The fourth track was the autograph signings in the Galaxy Class Club. Therefore, I think there was fewer things available when compared to your usual conventions. However, the things that were going on were quite spectacular. As a result, you did have time to partake in most everything. While more would have offered more variety, it would have been even more frustrating to miss out.

But then again, Paramount never wanted this to be an overgrown convention. They repeatedly stated this was to be a celebration to honor *Star Trek*’s thirtieth anniversary. So I suppose in that regard, they succeeded very well. With Saturday night’s tribute celebration as the main event (and the VIP gala afterward), everything else was just fluff to make money and pad out the weekend.

Star Trek 30: One Weekend on Earth was one of the most exciting things I’ve ever had the opportunity to participate in. It was a once in a life event that I enjoyed thoroughly. While this might have been “One Weekend On Earth,” the memories will last a lifetime.

- FCAPT Richard L. Trulson



Majel Barrett signs autographs. MSN