

SATellite One

SCIENCE FICTION CONVENTION
SEPT. 28-30, HOTEL BENTLEY



Jay Carr — Staff artist

Beam me up, Scottie!

Star Trek stars beaming into Alexandria for science fiction convention

A number of television stars and writers will be beaming in for Alexandria's first science fiction convention, Satellite One, to be held at the Hotel Bentley Friday through Sunday, Sept. 28-30.

The event is designed to offer celebrity talks as well as gaming, autograph sessions and a dealer's room with a full array of science fiction and fantasy memorabilia, said Mary Alice Pace, president of the Centra Science Fiction Club which is sponsoring the event.

Cost will be \$40 for a three-day pass; \$30 for a two-day pass; and \$19.50 for a one-day pass. Children under 12 will be admitted for \$35 for three days; \$25, two days; and \$15, one day.

Guests will include Majel Barrett, Roddenberry, who played Nurse Christine Chapel in the original "Star Trek" tele-

vision series and in several of the Star Trek motion pictures. She is also a frequent guest star in "Star Trek: The Next Generation." Also appearing will be Richard Chaves, Lt. Col. Paul Ironhorse in "War of the Worlds." Exclusive posters of Chaves will be provided for the convention participants.

Literary guests

Literary guests will include C. Dean Anderson and Nina Romberg from Dallas, Texas. Under the pseudonym Asa Drake, the husband-and-wife team authored Crimson Kisses, a novel of Dracula. The Hel series of fantasy adventure novels from Questar was also authored under the Asa Drake pseudonym.

Under her own name, Ms. Romberg authored The Spirit Stalker, a horror novel set in East Texas, and under the name Jane Archer she has

written numerous romance novels.

Anderson is the author of two horror novels, Torture Tomb and Raw Pain Max. His short stories have appeared in Scare Care, an anthology published to benefit children's charities, and in the magazine Slaughter House.

Also appearing will be Robert Pettit of Baton Rouge, author of numerous horror and science fiction stories including the title story in Razor's Saddle, an anthology of science fiction, fantasy and horror stories with Western settings. A paperback edition of the work is scheduled for fall release. His stories have also appeared in a number of magazines, and upcoming publications will include a story in the suspense anthology Dark at Heart.

Local author Sidney Williams will also be a guest. He is

the author of Azarius, Night Brothers and the upcoming novels Blood Hunter and Gnells. "Does the Blood Line Run On Time?" a story co-authored by Williams and Pettit will be published in the upcoming Horror Writers of America anthology Under the Fang.

Other guests will include Jack Crain, the craftsman who designed and prepared the authentic knives and tomahawk used on "War of the Worlds." He has also designed knives and weapons for "Predator," "Die Hard II," "Commando," and other films. He will bring weapons designed for various films and other items and will speak about his craft and his work in Hollywood.

Official meeting place

The International Space: 1999 Alliance, a fan club honoring the science fiction series of the mid-70s has designated Satellite One as their official meet-

ing place for 1990. This year marks the 15th anniversary of that series. Special events honoring "Space: 1999" will be held throughout the convention weekend.

Other activities include the "Banquet With the Stars" and a costume contest and dance. Fans will dress in costumes from TV and movies in this special event judged by the guest stars and authors. The celebrities and authors will hold talks and question and answer sessions daily for attendees, as well as autograph sessions. The authors will participate daily in panel discussions of their work and the field of science fiction, fantasy and horror.

Satellite One will be open to the public. Tickets will be on sale prior to the convention at several locations throughout central Louisiana including National Video.

For more information, call Mary Alice Pace at 442-8292.



Majel Barrett Roddenberry: As she appeared in the original "Star Trek."

Piloting a convention no easy task, even for Capt. Kirk

Planning a science fiction convention is a task that might make even a stalwart swashbuckler like "Star Trek's" Capt. Kirk wince.

There can be more things to worry about than piloting a starship through an asteroid belt as the planners of Satellite One have learned in the last few months of getting ready for the event to be held Sept. 28-30 at Hotel Bentley.

After initial meetings and discussions about what type of con-

vention to hold, efforts began to get Satellite One into orbit. "We contacted the Bentley and set it up. We contacted the convention bureau and registered. We contacted the Chamber of Commerce and found out what we had to do to become legal. We registered with the secretary of state and the IRS to get our articles of incorporation and then we just decided we'd put on a science fiction convention," explained Mary Alice Pace, president of the Central Louisiana Science Fiction Club.

Meeting legal requirements was a big task. "You have to have an IRS employee number because the actors and actresses, writers and speakers are our employees," she said. "You have to have their Social Security number before you pay them."

Formed club

The group actually formed the Central Louisiana Science Fiction Club after planning was under way because an organization was needed to sponsor the event.

After plans were formalized there was still a matter of lining up the guests. The contract for Majel Barrett Roddenberry, "Star Trek's" Nurse Chapel, was lost. Finally she had a personal secretary contact the group, however.

After some cancellations and rescheduling, the guest roster was finalized.

"The Bentley has been most helpful in the planning," Mrs. Pace added. A number of rooms have already been

booked with participants from across the country and sites as diverse as North Africa and Belgium already registered.

It is a bit out of the ordinary to have a science fiction convention in a four-star hotel such as the Bentley. "Most of the time they are at your basic, standard airport hotels. While they are nice, they just don't have the background, air and elegance of another time," Mrs. Pace said.

Chaves will always be fond of Ironhorse

Role put him in touch with heritage

By Sidney Williams
Staff reporter

Fans know him best as Lt. Col. Paul Ironhorse, Native American hero from the first season of "War of the Worlds." The series is canceled but Richard Chaves will always be fond of the part because it helped put him in touch with his heritage.

While dying on screen is part of an actor's job, in some ways it was tough for Chaves to walk onto the set for his last day of filming, the day Ironhorse was to die.

Chaves, a former Port Polk soldier who will visit Alexandria as a guest of the science fiction convention Satellite One, talked candidly during a telephone interview about his "War of the Worlds" experiences.

Identified with hero

He had come to identify with the hero who had also become a favorite among television viewers. The actor is part Cherokee, and playing Ironhorse helped him learn about himself and his heritage which was not given much attention while he was growing up. He had first begun to get in touch with his feelings when he met other Native Americans while filming "The Gambler III" with Kenny Rogers.

He fought for a depiction of Ironhorse's ethnicity in his final scenes on "War of the Worlds," perhaps as hard as Ironhorse fought alien invaders through 26 previous episodes. An expert with edged weapons, the hero took on many invaders using his knife or

tomahawk in the syndicated science fiction series. The Ironhorse episodes remain popular among fans who view videotapes of the first season episodes and follow Chaves' career.

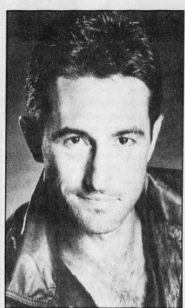
The decision for the character to die was made by a new producer, Frank Mancuso Jr., and Chaves was told in his final episode he should forget all that had come before. Producers didn't want him to fight with knife or tomahawk or use his Native American ceremonial pouch. He argued for their use. "I said, 'I believe in my Indian heritage.'"

Eventually, after some debate with the on-set producer, he was allowed to use the weapons during filming, but then those scenes were cut from the final episode.

He regretted that even though he thought Ironhorse's death in a battle was a fitting way for a character to go. Chaves believes mistakes were made when the decisions to cut his character and black actor Phil Akin's character from the show, removing all ethnicity. Mancuso told him decisions were based on seeing the first episode and only one other show.

There was a fan backlash against the series, which dropped drastically in the ratings during its second season.

Chaves remains proud of the work he did for those first 26 episodes, however. The role earned him fans who offer a support system in an often challenging business. Some fan letters have also helped him learn about parts. Fans have



Richard Chaves: will always be fond of 'War of the Worlds' role.

sometimes told him of articles or items he's missed in film industry trade papers.

Looking for work is an ongoing process for an actor each time a job is finished, even one like Chaves who's been in the business for many years. "It's like starting over, especially in my position right now. I'm not a Tom Cruise or one of the Sheen boys."

Science fiction fan

Chaves has long been a fan of science fiction television shows and films. "Outer Limits," "Star Trek" and "Twilight Zone" are among his favorites. He would welcome other genre roles.

He appeared in "Predator," a movie about soldiers taking on an alien hunter. Much of his work was done by reacting to the creature which was to be inserted in the film later through special effects tech-

Knife maker Jack Crain unplugs his phone at night

By Sidney Williams
Staff reporter

Knife maker Jack Crain unplugs his telephone at night. If he didn't he might get phone calls from almost anywhere with questions about his Hollywood work.

Since he frequently makes knives and other weapons for movies, the Dallas-area craftsman has his name in the credits of many movies. He's had calls from people in New York hotel rooms watching "Predator" on cable. They want to know why the monster acted a certain way or have questions about the storyline.

"I talk to everybody I can," he said, especially young people who have questions. Since part of his work has him in the public eye, he feels a certain responsibility to respond to fans.

Crain began in the late '60s making knives, teaching himself by trial and error. "I made a few, and they were so terrible that you couldn't give them away," he said.

Gradually he improved, and by the late '70s he decided to devote himself completely to the quality of his work. "I wanted to make my name mean something," Crain said.

"I learned in the mid-70s how to make the Japanese steel," he said. He's one of only a few people in America who have that ability. He has earned the title master smith, although he considers himself a knife maker.

Crain feels fortunate that he's been able to develop his talent for knife making, and he's also found he's good at marketing his work. Now he does it full time. He was selling knives everywhere from New York to Los Angeles when some of his items were purchased for actors.

Introduced to business

He was soon approached about making weapons for two Blake Edwards television projects. Those were filmed but never aired. That introduced him to the business, however. He next made weapons for "Airwolf" on television. Not long after that he was hired to make knives for "Commando" with Arnold Schwarzenegger.

That was a survival type knife similar to the knives Jimmy Lyle made for "First Blood" and "Rambo." While he chooses not to be captivated by his own press, Crain noted magazines credit Crain and Lyle with developing that survivalist type of knife.

Following "Commando," he made 35 real knives used in "Predator" and also made knives for "Action Jackson."

The work can involve extensive research. He's done careful study of Japanese history for projects, and he worked closely with Richard Chaves to design Native American-style weapons for "War of the Worlds."

Since a tomahawk was one of the weapons, he sought to design a dependable weapon the military might use. He also developed a dagger for Lt. Col. Paul Ironhorse (Chaves), making him one of television's first good guys to use a dagger as a weapon of choice.

Recent projects include a dagger for "Tales from the Crypt" and knives for "Predator II" and "Die Harder: Die Hard II." The knife used by Robert Englund in "Ford Fairlane Private Eye" is another Crain creation.

"They come to me because they want something that's never been seen on the screen before," he said.

Quality weapons

He strives to make quality weapons for the producers. "It's not just pretty stuff. These are all actual pieces."

Authors often consult Crain as well. He's designed knives for 12 different book series. Often he will actually create knives used by fictional heroes in adventure or science fiction novels. That way the author has the weapon in hand for realism when he begins to work. "It helps them to visualize the scenes," he said.

For "The Freeman" series by Jerry Aherm, he designed a knife that might be used in the series' setting 80 years in the future.

For a book series called "Time Police" he designed a weapon that would be used by heroes who travel through time and needed a knife that would not be conspicuous in various eras.

For "The Defender" he created a knife called the Defender to be used by the heroes. He believes soon he will be working with science fiction authors Janet and Chris Morris on a project.

In one book an author wrote a scene in which the fictional hero actually calls Crain to order a blade. "It's the fun part of what I do," Crain said.

■ Please see CRAIN, C-8

■ Please see CHAVES, C-8

Chaves: tried 10 times for guest roles on show

■ Continued from C-7

niques. He went to the effects people and looked at the design to get an idea of how it would look. "I have a great imagination, and I put that sucker to work," he joked. The 8-year-old boy alive in his imagination allowed him to visualize the monster, he said.

He's tried out for guest parts at least 10 times on "Star Trek: The Next Generation." Originally he was under consideration for the parts of Commander Riker and the

android Data, but he was turned down. Producer Gene Roddenberry saw his audition tape and decided he was too nice looking.

When Chaves first went to Hollywood, he was pegged as a leading man, but that usually hasn't kept him from playing character parts. He's tried for a different look with each character. He's grown his hair long or cut it short, worn glasses and let stubble grow for various roles. Coupled with his acting skills, the altered appearance has allowed him to create diverse personalities on film. He's played killers, soldiers and nice guys over the years appearing on shows such as "L.A. Law" and "Eight Is Enough" and in plays such as "Streamers." He recently appeared as a child killer in the television film "Penalty Phase."

For more information about Chaves' appearance in Alexandria, call 442-8292.

Crain: makes school appearances

■ Continued from C-7

Working with authors kind of breaks up the day-to-day business.

In addition to his knife making, Crain makes appearances in schools. Once an introverted youth, he encourages students to build their self esteem and stay in school to fulfill their dreams.

Improving his work is also his major goal. "My best knife is always the next one I'm working on," he said.

Jack Crain will be speaking during Satellite One Sept. 28-30 at the Hotel Bentley.

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