



## January 2014

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Thanks for reading this edition of *New Frontier*. The USS BortaS is a sci-fi fan club based in the Champaign-Urbana area of East Central Illinois. We meet the third Saturday of each month at 2 PM. We meet in a member's home, or in a park, or at a restaurant, or at Barnes and Noble Bookstore. To find out where we are meeting on any given month, please call our Captain, Allen Glenn at (217) 649-6718, or visit our newly updated website at [www.ussbortas.net](http://www.ussbortas.net). Our website will give you lots of information about who we are and what we do! We would love to have you join us. We have a lot of fun and also do many activities for charity. So come on board! Fleet Captain Shirley Kolb, Chief of Communications and Newsletter Editor, USS BortaS

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### BortaS Headlines

USS BortaS Has Another Successful Year Gift-Wrapping

BortaS Purchases Xbox 360 for Cunningham Children's Home

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In this issue .....

Fans Express Diverse Opinions on *Star Trek Into Darkness*

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**Fans Express Diverse Opinions on *Star Trek Into Darkness* (even on our own ship!!)**

*By Shirley Kolb*

Several of the BortaS crew attended *Star Trek Into Darkness* together back in May. It seemed that everyone really liked the movie. Several were very surprised that the villain played by Benedict Cumberbatch, who had been called “John Harrison”, was really Khan. I was happy that they had kept the secret – it made it much more exciting. Also I felt they showed respect for the Original Series in the way they presented the movie. The rest of the crew seemed equally happy.

Later though, some who had not seen the movie with us, saw the DVD. (Mike and Julie to be exact – and Mike gave me permission to share his thoughts.) Mike said that he thought it was a beautiful movie, but it was not a good Star Trek movie. He thinks it was “dumb” that they chose to redo the Khan story. He doesn’t feel that the writing was good, and just feels it was a rehash rather than presenting new and exciting ideas.

Jim Smith, local long-term *Star Trek* fan, expressed his views: “I think director J.J. Abrams hit a homerun with his second in the rebirth of the *Star Trek* Franchise. Just like his first in the series, the casting was perfect, especially Sherlock’s Benedict Cumberbatch as Khan. The film is a great mix of heart pumping action, human interaction, and that exclusive Star Trek feel. I especially appreciated the dark theme of the story. The interactions between Kirk (Chris Pine), Bones (Karl Urban) and Spock (Zachary Quinto) continue to entertain, harking back to the original series. Once again Abrams brilliantly included classic scenes and dialogue from earlier versions of Trek while still turning them on their ear. (Spoiler Alert) Zachary Quinto’s KHAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAN! was a perfect example of Abram’s brilliance. The twist of Kirk being the one who sacrifices himself to save the ship and the addition of Carol Marcus gives all of us classic Trek fans some satisfaction that even though things change in an alternate timeline, they don’t completely change. Abrams has lengthened the life of a beloved franchise with his unique blend of new and old to form something grand. I can’t wait to see what happens next!”

Apparently in fandom there are people on both sides of this debate as well. The following are some quotes from *Star Trek: The Official Magazine*, No. 46, Summer 2013, from an article entitled, “The Needs of the Many? *Star Trek Into Darkness* Reviewed”.

“I loved the characters in the last one, slightly exaggerated versions of the Original Series who were great fun. In this film it is not like that at all – poor Karl Urban only speaks in catchphrases, and all of these ‘homages’ in the story are like over-microwaved leftovers.” (Adam Mclean, UK)

“I have to admit that at first, J.J. Abrams’ vision of Star Trek did not sit well with me. When I watched *Into Darkness* I laughed, I cried, and I had chills as the *Enterprise* once again moved across the big screen. By the time the credits rolled, I realized that I had once again found myself feeling for the characters as the crew of the *Enterprise*.” (Brian Stephenson, USA)

“A good movie, but felt it was all a bit too much. A lot of shouting, a lot of running around – it just felt like it was trying too hard to be an action-packed blockbuster (Should *Trek* films be action-packed blockbusters?) Spock and Khan really stole the show.” (Troy Hedley, USA)

“I was never a *Star Trek* fan, but I’ve really enjoyed the new movies. Well-acted characters, a gripping plot and breathtaking pace had me hooked on *Into Darkness* from start to finish – and the CGI was some of the best I’ve seen. I’m not sure long-term fans will agree, but as a newcomer to the franchise I was pleased to see the creative team are still making bold new moves.” (Grant Springfield, UK)

“While *Into Darkness* is undoubtedly chock full of action, big visuals, top-notch acting, and eye-popping effects, the end result is maybe a little too try-hard in places. While some Trekkies may appreciate the numerous nods to its silver-screen predecessors, I’d wager a large majority will be leaving the cinemas aggrieved and a little insulted.” (Tim Williams, UK)

“Looks spectacular, although I’m in two minds as to how ST2 they went with it...Really thought they were going to do something fresh. Cumberbatch was great, and I loved the Klingons – there wasn’t enough of them. Guess they’re saving them for next time.” (Matthew Banes, Australia)

“Taking a ‘no prisoners’ approach to the *Star Trek* universe, J.J. Abrams struggles with a plot-hole ridden mess of a script which thinks that running very fast can take the place of character development or a compelling story. Loved the first *Star Trek* reboot. Hated this one.” (David Leach, USA)

And here are a few reviews from newspapers:

“Combining humor, action, and drama, Abrams once again delivers an original experience that feels nostalgic without any hint of being either stagnant nor stale. It’s an impressive feat, and one worth catching on the big screen.” (James Fletcher, *Film Ink*, Australia)

“*Into Darkness* may not boldly go where no *Trek* adventure has gone before, but getting there is such a well-crafted, immensely pleasurable ride that it would be positively Vulcan to nitpick.” (Scott Foundas, *Variety*)

“*Star Trek Into Darkness*” is no disaster – it has too much competence on its side for that. But there’s something missing, some vital creative spark to spring it from the crepuscular realm of the so-so and its border territory, the so-what.” (Anthony Quinn, *The Independent*, UK)

“*Star Trek Into Darkness*”, J.J. Abrams’ second entry in his reboot of the eternal franchise, has been engineered rather than directed, calibrated to deliver sensation on cue and stocked with just enough new character twists to keep fans rapt.” (Todd McCarthy, *Hollywood Reporter*)

Rotten Tomatoes, a site which reviews movies, gives this summary: “Visually spectacular and suitably action packed, *Star Trek Into Darkness* is a rock-solid installment in the venerable sci-fi franchise, even if it's not as fresh as its predecessor.”

They have reviews from 244 critics, of which 212 rate it “fresh” and 32 rate it “rotten”, which means about 87% liked the movie. Their average rating was 7.6/10 stars. There are over 280,000 audience reviews with 90% liking the movie, and the average rating was 4.3/5.

If you would like to read some of the reviews from their site, visit [www.rottentomatoes.com](http://www.rottentomatoes.com).

As with all things *Trek*, there are differences of thought and opinion. But that’s part of the fun of being a fan!!

### **Chief’s Corner**

*By Fleet Captain Shirley Kolb, Chief of Communications, USS BortaS*

The BortaS crew spent several days in November and December wrapping gifts at Barnes and Noble Bookstore in Champaign. Although this is a free service, many people leave us tips. With some of the tips we received last year, we gave money to Toys for Tots, and we purchased an XBOX 360 and some games for one of the cottages at the Cunningham Children’s Home. We have already set up some dates for next year.

We had our annual Thanksgiving Dinner together at the Captain and Sara’s home in St. Joseph. As usual it was a great time with great food.

Several crew members went to Chambacon over Thanksgiving Weekend. This is an annual convention held in Champaign, with gaming, filking, authors, artists, etc.

Upcoming in January is our Christmas in January party at my home. We bring a dish to pass and a wrapped \$15 gift. Then people can steal a previous gift if they want it. It is always fun to see what people bring and what is the most popular.

Our food drive planned for October was cancelled due to new management at the County Market in Rantoul. Another one is being worked on for April.

As you can see we have been busy. The charitable events are great, and getting together is always fun.

Keep up the good work, BortaS crew!

## **Review of *Almost Human***

*By Shirley Kolb*

*Almost Human* is a new show on Fox. It is about the year 2048, where the police force could not keep up with crime. So for each human police officer, they created an android police officer. The original ones they programmed to have emotions and to be very much like humans. But some of them malfunctioned and they deactivated all of them. Then they created another group who had no emotions – sort of like automatons. They are programmed with the rules and pretty much go “by the book” – not much flexibility.

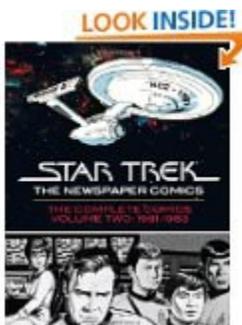
The main human character (John Kennix) is played by Karl Urban, who played Dr. McCoy in the Star Trek reboot. He is great in the role – I think he is a great actor. In the pilot we find out that he has lost a leg and has a biosynthetic leg that he is not real happy about. He also lost his partner in an attack on the police dept. He has just come out of a 17 month coma, and is suffering from PTSD. His boss wants him to come back. He is assigned one of these new androids – the ones with little emotion and “by the book” rules. He isn’t that sort of cop, and there is a hilarious scene with him and his “partner”. So it turns out that there are a few of the first group of androids that they want to reactivate, and the boss decides that he would be a person who would do much better with one of those. So he is given a partner named Dorian (played by Michael Ealy).

I like the show a lot. The dynamics between Urban and Ealy are sometimes funny, sometimes poignant, but always fascinating. As with any show, some episodes are better than others as it finds its way. As mentioned above, Urban is doing a great job with it. I think the writing is good and the cases interesting. I like the way they have created futuristic cities and technology. You can tell a lot of thought has gone into it. So I definitely recommend it.

## **Star Trek Book Reviews**

Star Trek: The Newspaper Comics Volume Two, by DiVono, Harris, Niven, Shigetani, Pasko

*By Shirley Kolb*



Last year I bought Volume 1 of this book, and this year I received Volume 2 for Christmas. What I like about these is that they are like an episode – they bring back the feel of the Original Series and make you feel like the original five-year mission continued. (These are comic strips that ran in major newspapers. The first volume is those from 1979 – 1981 and the second is from 1981 – 1983.)

A very interesting thing about this Vol. 2 is that there is a story that is essentially about the Borg. And these came out more than 7 years before *The Next Generation*'s first Borg story! Instead of the Borg it is called the Omnimind, but there are many similarities. (Each unit is a part of the whole, beings are made into cyborgs and forced to do things they otherwise wouldn't do, perfection is being sought, etc.)

There is even a character who looks similar to the Borg queen.

I haven't finished this yet but from the descriptions in the table of contents, I know I will greatly enjoy it just like I

did Volume 1. Jerry is currently reading Vol. 1 and he says he is also having a lot of fun reading it.

Downside: The book is expensive. Wait for sales or look on half.com or amazon used.

A Very Klingon Christmas, by Paul Ruditis and Patrick Faricy

I have not read this book but with us being a Klingon ship and having many people who are into the Klingons I thought I should mention it.

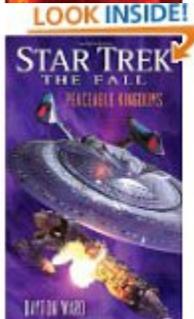
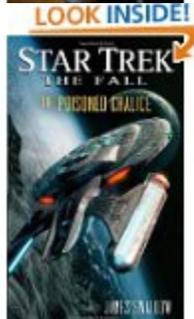
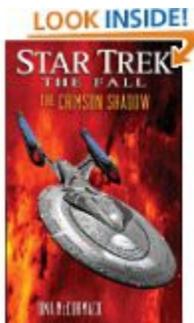
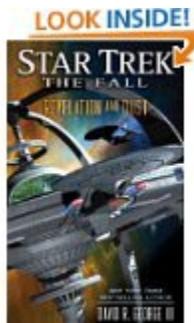


Here is the description from Amazon:

This hilarious parody firmly plants Klingons at the center of the Christmas story—where they rightly should be—including everything from a Santa equipped with retractable claws, tribbles in the stockings of naughty Klingon boys and girls, and the spirited holiday warmth of a hot cup of mulled blood wine. Illustrated in a classic Norman Rockwell–inspired style, *A Very Klingon Christmas* is the perfect holiday gift for every *Star Trek* fan!

I don't know whether to recommend this book or not. Twenty people gave it 5 stars but one person gave it 1 star and said that he, as a Christian, was very offended by the book. Another Christian said that it was a cute book and just explained Christmas traditions from a Klingon perspective. Something people will have to decide for themselves. Most people said it was a parody and not meant to offend, and many people thought it was hilarious. Several people commented on how beautiful the illustrations were.

Star Trek: The Fall (Series of 5 books)



Revelation and Dust by David R. George III; The Crimson Shadow by Una McCormack;  
Ceremony of Losses by David Mack; The Poisoned Chalice by James Swallow;  
Kingdoms by Dayton Ward

A  
Peaceable

I was able to get all of these books from Amazon at about 40% off. I haven't started reading them yet but they are

next on my list. Here are some synopses from Amazon:

### Revelation and Dust: WELCOME TO THE NEW DEEP SPACE 9

After the destruction of the original space station by a rogue faction of the Typhon Pact, Miles O'Brien and Nog have led the Starfleet Corps of Engineers in designing and constructing a larger, more advanced starbase in the Bajoran system. Now, as familiar faces such as Benjamin Sisko, Kasidy Yates, Ezri Dax, Odo, and Quark arrive at the new station, Captain Ro Laren will host various heads of state at an impressive dedication ceremony. The dignitaries include not only the leaders of allies—such as Klingon Chancellor Martok, Ferengi Grand Nagus Rom, the Cardassian castellan, and the Bajoran first minister—but also those of rival powers, such as the Romulan praetor and the Gorn imperator. But as Ro's crew prepares to open DS9 to the entire Bajor Sector and beyond, disaster looms. A faction has already set in action a shocking plan that, if successful, will shake the Alpha and Beta Quadrants to the core.

And what of Kira Nerys, lost aboard a runabout when the Bajoran wormhole collapsed? In the two years that have passed during construction of the new Deep Space 9, there have been no indications that the Celestial Temple, the Prophets, or Kira have survived. But since Ben Sisko once learned that the wormhole aliens exist nonlinearly in time, what does that mean with respect to their fate, or that of the wormhole . . . or of Kira herself?

The Crimson Shadow: Cardassia Prime is home to a prideful people who, for centuries, forged alliances with those they believed would strengthen them and their place in the Alpha Quadrant, and expanded their empire at great cost to other worlds. For generations, dissenting voices were silenced by either fear or an early grave. When their wartime ally, the Dominion, suddenly turned on them, seeking to transform Cardassia into a tomb for every last member of their race, their old adversary—the United Federation of Planets—put an end to the carnage, and even now works to help rebuild Cardassia Prime.

To celebrate this alliance, the Castellan of the Cardassian Union is to welcome the Federation president to Cardassia Prime. As a symbol of this deepening friendship, the *U.S.S. Enterprise-E* is tasked to carry the Cardassian ambassador to the Federation back home. For his part, Ambassador Elim Garak is working with Captain Jean-Luc Picard to oversee the diplomatic reception that will commemorate the last of Starfleet's personnel finally leaving the homeworld. However, there are malevolent forces at work, who even now strive to "restore Cardassia to its proper place and glory," and are willing to do anything to achieve their goal....

### A Ceremony of Losses: THE NEEDS OF THE MANY

Despite heroic efforts by Thirishar ch'Thane, the Andorian species is headed for extinction. Its slow march toward oblivion has reached a tipping point, one from which there will be no hope of return.

#### **THE NEEDS OF THE FEW**

With countless lives at stake, the leaders of Andor, the Federation, and the Typhon Pact all scheme to twist the crisis to their political gain—at any price.

#### **THE NEEDS OF THE ONE**

Unwilling to be a mere bystander to tragedy, Doctor Julian Bashir risks everything to find a cure for the Andorians. But his courage will come at a terrible cost: his career, his freedom . . . and maybe his life.

The Poisoned Chalice: One simple act, and the troubles of the United Federation of Planets have grown darker overnight. The mystery behind the heinous terrorist attack that has rocked the Federation to its core grows ever deeper, and William Riker finds himself beset by rumors and half-truths as the *U.S.S. Titan* is ordered back to Earth on emergency orders from the admiralty. Soon, Riker finds himself drawn into a game of political intrigue, bearing witness to members of Starfleet being detained—including people he considered friends—pending an investigation at the highest levels. And while Riker tries to navigate the corridors of power, *Titan*'s tactical officer, Tuvok, is given a series of clandestine orders that lead him into a gray world of secrets, lies, and deniable operations. Who can be trusted when the law falls silent and justice becomes a quest for revenge? For the crew of the *U.S.S. Titan*, the search for answers will become a battle for every ideal the Federation stands for. . . .

Peaceable Kingdoms: Following the resolution of the fertility crisis that nearly caused their extinction, the Andorian people now stand ready to rejoin the United Federation of Planets. The return of one of its founding member worlds is viewed by many as the first hopeful step beyond the uncertainty and tragedy that have overshadowed recent events in the Alpha Quadrant. But as the Federation looks to the future and the special election to name President Bacco's permanent successor, time is running out to apprehend those responsible for the respected leader's brutal assassination. Even as elements of the Typhon Pact are implicated for the murder, Admiral William Riker holds key knowledge of the true assassins—a revelation that could threaten the fragile

Federation-Cardassian alliance.

Questions and concerns also continue to swell around Bacco's interim successor, Ishan Anjar, who uses the recent bloodshed to further a belligerent, hawkish political agenda against the Typhon Pact. With the election looming, Riker dispatches his closest friend, Captain Jean-Luc Picard, in a desperate attempt to uncover the truth. But as Picard and the *Enterprise* crew pursue the few remaining clues, Riker must act on growing suspicions that someone within Ishan's inner circle has been in league with the assassins from the very beginning . . . .

These sound very interesting and I am looking forward to reading them. I'll let you know how they are in the next newsletter.

**The New Frontier is a publication of the USS BortaS, the Science Fiction Fan Club With a Heart, based in Urbana, Illinois. No infringement upon copyrighted materials contained herein is intended. Previous events that the USS BortaS has participated in include: Fundraisers for the American Red Cross, East Central Illinois Foodbank, Crisis Nursery, and the Champaign Fire Dept.; "Klingons for Literacy: in Rantoul and Danville; Champaign Park District's "A Day at the Park"; Taste of Champaign-Urbana; Light the Night fundraiser for the Leukemia-Lymphoma Association; 3 fundraisers for individuals with cancer or other serious medical conditions; Security for the Rantoul Air Show and for Chambacon and other Sci-Fi Conventions. To contact us visit our website at [www.ussbortas.net](http://www.ussbortas.net) or call our Captain Allen Glenn at 217-649-6718. Meetings are the third Saturday of each month at various locations in the area. The USS BortaS is a member of Starfleet – The International Star Trek Fan Association.**

