

Kirk's chair

Posted At : August 23, 2011 8:42 PM | Posted By : Admin

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Editor's Note - We have known Laura for over 10 years as a computer systems integration business owner, entrepreneur, and prolific writer.

I never thought that just sitting in a chair had the power to change a mood. That changed for me when I sat in Captain Kirk's command chair from the Starship Enterprise and I instantly bubbled up with joy and laughter. All the blah feelings that had been hovering around me all morning instantly disappeared the moment I saw the chair and the command bridge set across the room.

I guess you now know my secret. I am a Trekkie. I've been one since the late 60's and the passion for the idealism of *Star Trek* has never really left me. Yes, I wanted to be an astronaut. Yes, I believe that there are incredible things in the universe to explore and yes, my mood completely changed as soon as I sat in *the chair!* My husband took me to Kennedy Space Center to see the *Star Trek* exhibit and I was having one of those days where I could not seem to shift into a happy place. I wanted to but I could not seem to switch it on. This seemed very strange for me since I really wanted to go to the exhibit plus I love going to the Space Center because you get to meet astronauts!

We spent the next eight hours wandering around the exhibits talking to Vulcans (actors I think!), and just enjoying the day. Being there made me think about dreams and expectations, realities and disappointments but most of all how my life has turned out since that day I saw my first *Star Trek* episode. For me, *Star Trek* was always about good versus evil, human spirit triumphing against overwhelming odds, teamwork and most of all ingenuity. Plus they got to do it on a spaceship!

Kirk, Picard and all the other captains and their crews thought inside and outside the box and came out on top. Not without a few cuts and bruises and a dead extra in a red security shirt though. For you non-trekkies, that is an inside joke. Almost every episode had a new security person in a red shirt beam down on an away mission and he always seemed to be killed by the evil alien.

Star Trek episodes reflect life. You have to take the bumps and bruises along the way, figure out how to win or survive, pick yourself up and move on to your next adventure. Ok, they do it in outer space with lots of cool special effects and aliens and stuff but if you think about it, they are just people doing their jobs and having an adventure along the way.

All of us have hopes and dreams when we are little. I never realized that sitting in Kirk's chair was a dream of mine until I actually had a chance to do it. It is just a chair from a TV set yet in my mind it represents something so much bigger. *Star Trek* launched my love of technology and led me to a career that spanned several decades which got me an introduction to the head of NASA a few years ago.

Kirk's chair is a symbol for me of the future and all its infinite, wonderful possibilities. *Star Trek* symbolized humanity at our best. Everyone was working together for a common goal to improve life for everyone no matter whom they are or where they are from. For me, that is a lesson I strive to live by and sitting in Kirk's chair reminded me of that little girl with big dreams.

We all have someone, something or some place from our past that can instantly transport us back to a place of possibility, inspiration and joy just by thinking of them or in my case sitting in it! What's yours? Let me know!

Laura Steward Atchison is a creative entrepreneur and writer who brings wit and wisdom to her fans. Her current endeavor is founding Wisdom Learned, LLC. Ms. Atchison gave birth to the idea of a new company that

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