



FEBRUARY 2005 • ISSUE #6
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The New York Clone

The Official Newsletter of the NYLine
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TODAY

Sunset
7:45, 10:36

Weather
Darkness
Approaching

NYLine **E** **3**

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International Fan Dedication Spurs NYLine's Auction Effort for The Starlight Starbright Children's Foundation

NYLine is pleased to announce that we are amassing a cornucopia of exceptional *Star Wars* collectibles to be auctioned online to benefit The Starlight Starbright Children's Foundation. The seed for this idea has been around since 2002, just before

the premiere of *Episode II*, but at that time, no practical venue for holding such an event surfaced, so the idea was shelved.

The idea of an auction of rare and unique *Star Wars* collectibles resurfaced when we received a transmission from across the pond sent by an old friend named Bart Barenbrug...

NYLine is fortunate to have among us this dedicated fan, who has spent more than 2 years traveling from one side of the galaxy to the other (or, more specifically, through parts of Western Europe) gathering a collection of memorabilia and autographs from the stars of *Star Wars* for the sole purpose of donating them all to NYLine to benefit The Starlight Starbright Children's Foundation. What kind of a person possesses the will, the dedication—alright, the obsessiveness—to embark on such an undertaking? A true FAN.

A fan who not only collected 69 autographs on 64 pictures (46 unique pictures), but created

a webpage in the style of nyline.org which showcases his donation:

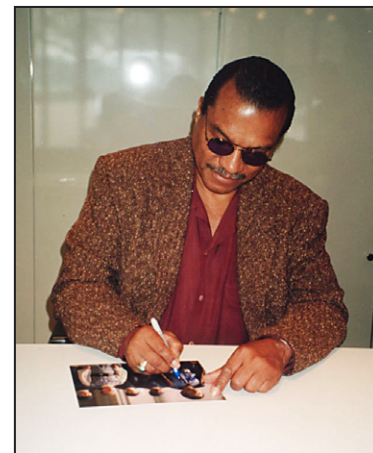
<http://home.vianetworks.nl/users/starcats/nyline3/autographs/>

Bart lives in The Netherlands and has been involved with NYLine since the 1999 Stand-a-Thon for *Episode I*. NYLine caught up with him for an interview to learn more about the man behind this remarkable endeavor. Here's what Bart had to say to us:

NYL: *Your involvement with NYLine goes all the way back to 1999 – how did you get involved, what were your expectations, and what was your impression of the overall experience?*

Bart: I got involved primarily because the international release dates back then were far more apart than now: *The Phantom Menace* wasn't scheduled to open in The Netherlands until the end of September, and that was just too long a wait for me. Many around here opted to go for the July release in the UK and

plan a trip there, but since I also like musicals a lot and had always wanted to visit New York to see a few Broadway shows, coming to New York in May 1999 seemed like the perfect



All photos by Bart Barenbrug

match. And it was. I came not knowing anybody, but meeting up with fans from all over the world and sharing this whole galaxy (far far away) with them was an experience that has kept me coming back.

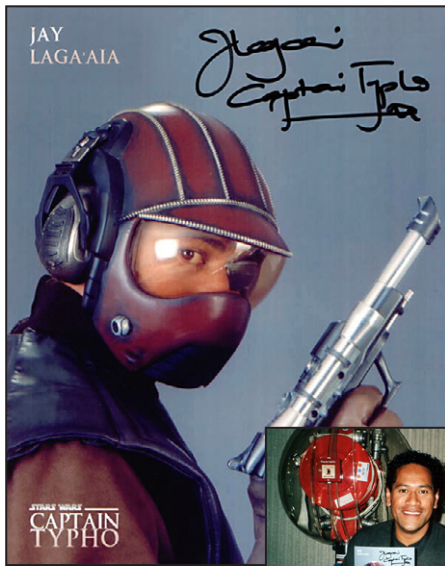
NYL: *With the international release of Attack of the Clones, you didn't need to return to NYC to be among the first to see the film. What brought you back for the second NYLine? And what was it like having your girlfriend along?*

Bart: I came back to meet my friends again. People I met at the first line, and also from the message board (starwarsboard.com) where many of the first liners have been keeping in touch, and even more friends were made. Having my girlfriend [Andrea Schneider] there to share the experience was great: she's a big *Star Wars* fan too (we met through *Star Wars* actually, but that's another story). Although she was a bit anxious during the final hours before the midnight show because she knew that, due to the time difference, our friends back home had already seen the movie, she's looking forward to being back in New York again this May.

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NYL: How did you come up with the idea for collecting all the autographs for a Starlight Auction?

Bart: Well, my girlfriend helps organize events (fairs and conventions) here as a hobby. So she is often in contact with actors and crew to invite them to events as star guests, and then I usually get to tag along at the events and meet them. In early 2003 we were very lucky to have Vic Armstrong (stunt man/coordinator, and winner of both an Academy award and a Bafta award) as a guest at one of these events, and Vic asked us to donate the proceedings of his signing sessions to a local charity. We did, but he also had a few pictures left over that he signed so we could sell them to further benefit that charity. That's when I thought of Starlight and asked him if I could use a few of those for NYLine, to which he heartily agreed.

So that's where the idea was born, and ever since, when my girlfriend or myself met with *Star Wars* actors or crew at events, we asked if they'd be willing to donate a signed picture for auction for Starlight. And the response has been overwhelmingly positive. So while I did do the collecting: the signed pictures are actually donated by the stars of *Star Wars* themselves.

NYL: The auction is now going to be a fairly significant event for our 2005 Stand-a-Thon, being run entirely by Starlight staff. What is your response to being the catalyst for this major fundraiser?

Bart: I'm very happy that Starlight picked up on it. It shows once more

how committed the NYLine organization is in bringing this to them, and it also shows the commitment of Starlight. Also, I hope that having the auction organized from New York gives the auction more visibility there, so that the New York *Star Wars* fans have a better chance to be the ones who win the auctions. I like having the New York fans benefit, after having been so welcoming during the previous lines.

Also, I didn't get myself sponsored for lining up in the first two lines (it was just too far away for the people here, and being from abroad, I couldn't spend weeks on the sidewalk), and only made some donations myself. So this time I'm happy to have come up with a way to contribute to a very good cause, albeit with an unusual group of sponsors.

NYL: How much time and money did you spend gathering all the autographs?

Bart: I've been at it since early 2003, so the autographs were collected over a period of a little over two years. How much actual time and money went into it is hard to say: I've spent a lot of time at the events (sometimes also helping behind the scenes, sometimes as a regular visiting fan). I bought the JediCon 2004 action figure double pack for the auction since I thought it would make a nice addition (I'm not even sure if the autographs on it increase or decrease its value), but like I mentioned before: virtually all autographs were donated directly by the stars themselves, with only a few that were donated by a friend who is an autograph dealer.

NYL: Did you tell the people who were signing that their autographs were going to be used to raise money for a children's charity? If so, what was their reaction?

Bart: I did, and many of them knew of Starlight and were happy to donate an autograph for the cause.

NYL: What is the autograph you're most pleased with having obtained? Why?

Since I'm not too much of an autograph collector myself, I have to go with the people who made the biggest impression on me. And in that light, I count myself

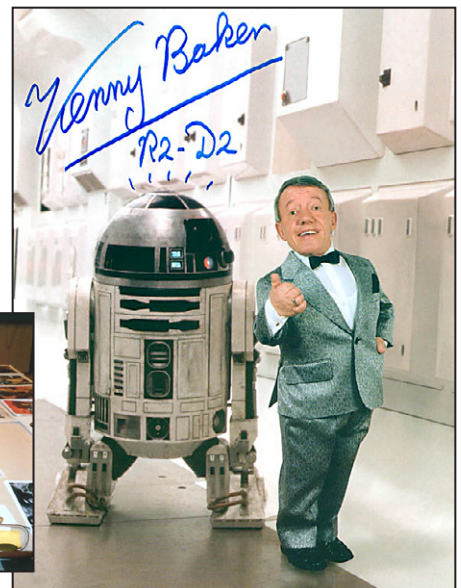


The NYLine Auction Needs You!

Bart's dedication inspired NYLine to propose an online auction of *Star Wars* collectibles to benefit The Starlight Starbright Children's Foundation. The auction kicks off April 21 (stay tuned to www.nyline.org for details), but it's not just all about Bart - you can be a part of it, too! Do you have a highly-sought-after *Star Wars* collectible that you'd be willing to part with for a great cause? Does the idea of joining forces with the likes of the great Bart Barenbrug interest you? How about being rewarded for your donation with shift points redeemable towards your spot in the line to enter the Ziegfeld for the midnight screening? If you have an item you'd like to donate to our online auction, please e-mail amit@nyline.org by March 20, 2005 with a description of the item, a photo, and an approximate value. If your item is chosen to be a part of the auction, we'll be in touch to discuss the details of just how the reward system works!

very fortunate to have met stunt coordinator Peter Diamond on a number of occasions. He was always very friendly, and always willing to give his own mini stunt show in which he showed, for example, how he made Vader lift the rebel aboard the Tantive IV with one arm, and how he made the swords in Highlander spark. Peter passed away last year, so in my mind this auction is dedicated to him. I

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Chapter

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To the Members of NYLine:

Starlight Starbright Children's Foundation is thrilled to once again serve as the beneficiary of NYLine's "Stand-A-Thon." In both 1999 and 2002, NYLine raised funds and media attention for Starlight through Stand-A-Thon activities centered around the release of the new "Star Wars" movies.

Monies raised by NYLine in the past have gone toward programs such as Starlight's Fun Centers, units comprised of a flat-panel television screen, DVD player and a Nintendo GameCube system that roll up to a child's hospital bed. NYLine's Fun Centers have been placed in New York area hospitals such as the Hospital for Joint Diseases, the Hospital for Special Care and Bellevue Hospital Center.

Since our last partnership in 2002, Starlight has undergone a major change. In 2004, the Starlight Children's Foundation merged with its sister organization, the Starbright Foundation, creating the Starlight Starbright Children's Foundation. The new Board of Directors appointed former Make-A-Wish President and CEO Paula Van Ness to serve as the foundation's Chief Executive Officer.

Founded by producer Peter Samuelson and producer-director Steven Spielberg, the Starbright Foundation's signature product is "Starbright World," an online community that connects seriously ill children across North America. Starbright has also produced animated videos and CD-ROMs aimed at children to educate them about their diseases. The educational and technological aspects brought by the Starbright Foundation allow the organization to reach 30,000 more children and families each month, and create additional funding opportunities.

The mission of the newly formed Starlight Starbright Children's Foundation remains to brighten the lives of seriously ill children and their families. Through an impressive array of in-hospital, outpatient, school and home-based programs and services, Starlight Starbright touches the lives of more than 180,000 children and families each month.

Starlight is confident that NYLine members will raise even more money and awareness this year, as "Revenge of the Sith" is the final "Star Wars" film. We have added an online eBay auction to our fundraising activities, and hope that there will be some furious bidding on the donated "Star Wars"-related items. If you have any items you would like to donate to the auction, please contact Amit Saxena at amit@nyline.org.

Starlight Starbright Children's Foundation is grateful to NYLine members and sponsors for their continued support, and looks forward to an extraordinary few weeks.

Starlight Starbright Children's Foundation NY* NJ* CT

*Brightening
the lives
of seriously
ill children
and their
families*



NYLine III Stand-A-Thon To Benefit Starlight Starbright Fun Center Program

By Steve Lorenzo

After considering sponsorship of several new programs that have become available since the Starlight Children's Foundation merged with the Starbright Foundation, NYLine staff members have decided that all funds raised during the 2005 Stand-A-Thon at the Ziegfeld Theatre will once again be directed to the Starlight Starbright Fun Center program.

"The Fun Centers are really the best fit for our fund-raising efforts," NYLine organizer Suzanne Sousa said. "The games and movies allow children an escape from their hospital beds to someplace happier, just as so many of us have been transported by the 'Star Wars' films."

Fun Centers are state-of-the-art console entertainment centers that roll up to the side of a hospital bed to provide playtime and distraction during a child's hospital stay. Since 2002, when NYLine members raised enough money to place Fun Centers in four NYC hospitals, the units have been redesigned to take advantage of advances in entertainment technology.

Each Fun Center now features a Sharp AQUOS Liquid Crystal Television, a Nintendo GameCube System and a DVD player. Nintendo of America manufactures the units, which are specially designed to prevent electrical interference with sensitive hospital monitoring equipment. Each \$3,250 Fun Center comes with game software and movies, as well as a service contract to ensure it remains operational.

While bedside entertainment is the primary function of Fun Centers,




The newly designed Fun Centers have been streamlined and upgraded with a flat-screen monitor, a GameCube and a DVD player.

caregivers have found new ways to employ them, such as diverting children during long hours of dialysis or grueling chemotherapy treatments. Also, since Starlight Starbright began placing the consoles in hospitals in 1991, research has shown that children who have access to Fun Centers during post-operative recovery require less pain medication than those who do not.

Because of their proven success in helping children during hospital stays, Fun Centers are being requested by hospitals faster than Starlight Starbright is able to supply them. Currently, at least nine New York City hospitals are on the waiting list to receive Fun Centers, including the Hospital for Joint Diseases and the Bellevue Hospital Center, which received NYLine-sponsored Fun Centers in 2002.

Please join NYLine in its goal to place as many Fun Centers in New York City hospitals as possible by joining the Stand-A-Thon during NYLine III, either

as a participant or as a sponsor. In addition to helping this worthwhile program, participants will be eligible to receive exclusive incentive items designed specifically for the Stand-A-Thon, and they will be in the running for prizes and preferred seating at the opening-night screening of *Revenge of the Sith*. 

Auction

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was happy that a few interviews with him were included on the DVDs of the original trilogy, so we all still get a glimpse of him on camera other than in the guise of the person he's doubling as a stunt man.

NYL: *How long have you been a Star Wars fan? Is Star Wars the phenomenon in the Netherlands that it has been in the United States?*

Bart: I've been a fan since somewhere around June 1980 when I bought my first *Star Wars* toy. A few months later I saw *Empire* when it was released here, and that made it a much larger universe that has kept my interest ever since.

My view on how much of a phenomenon *Star Wars* is around here compared to the US might be a bit skewed by me having been in the US around the release of the premiere. For me it's hard to picture the Ziegfeld sidewalk without *Star Wars* fans lining up there. There's a very good fan base here (and in Germany, where my girlfriend is from) who organize good conventions and other get-togethers. But I think that in the US, *Star Wars* has penetrated the general population more than it has here, judged by the references you see in for example TV series.

NYL: *What do your friends and colleagues have to say about the work you've been doing to help Starlight, and your plans to return to NYC for Episode III?*

Bart: I haven't made a big deal about the autograph collection, but they know I'm an avid *Star Wars* fan and will be lining up for *Episode III* again, and that's usually received quite positively, with people being genuinely interested in what that's like. 

THE NEW YORK CLONE

FEBRUARY 2005 • ISSUE 6

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“Star Wars” Valentines Make for a Maxie Big Val Day

By Simon Diaz

It is a period of severe cutesiness. Merchandising forces, striking from a corporate base have won their first victory against the winter lull between Christmas and the release of Episode III.

During their shopping, “Star Wars” fans of all ages managed to purchase tray valentines featuring Lando Calrissian and the DEATH STAR, armored with non sequiturs and bad puns with enough power to destroy an entire budding crush.

Consumed by a love of “Star Wars” that eclipses all perception of taste, Padawans everywhere race home aboard their bicycles, custodians of the reasonably priced greetings that can crack up their people, and restore giddiness to the galaxy...

During an average calendar year, *Star Wars* fans enjoy favorite expendable items, like calendars and party goods, and greeting cards for various occasions. But the one little item that shines forth at this time of year and stands out as charming (if somewhat silly) is boxed *Star Wars*-themed tray valentines. Called tray valentines, because they were traditionally always packaged in years past in little cartons containing a slide-out tray, these sets usually consist of 24 to 30 perforated cards in four or five different designs, all with little envelopes. Designed for use by school-children, the sets are made for kids to be able to pass out cards to their

entire class, as well as their teacher and, sometimes, their school principal. Nowadays, tray valentines are often just boxed, and come in assortments featuring licensed characters of all kinds, with certain steadies, but mainly centering on characters from the previous summer's big movies.

With the Prequel Trilogy films, *Star Wars* fans have been pretty lucky, because tray valentines have been released almost every year since the mid-'90s, when *Star Wars* valentines reappeared in conjunction with the Special Edition. They have remained on the radar, while other characters have come and gone, sustained by the new films and the DVD release.

Star Wars valentines first appeared during the Original Trilogy Era in 1984, after the release of “Return of the Jedi.” Offered by the now defunct company Drawing Board Greeting Cards, they came in a standard “Return of the Jedi” movie assortment and an animated Ewoks cartoon assortment. During the dark times of the late '80s and early '90s, when *Star Wars* faded from the forefront of pop culture, the valentine was but a distant goofy memory. When they reemerged (manufactured until now by the tray valentine powerhouse company, The Paper Magic Group), the simple drawings and graphics of the vintage era evolved into



flashy graphics and photo stills, and eventually the cutting edge of tray valentine technology - foil valentines, printed on a surface shiny as C-3PO at an awards ceremony. They now come with little heart sticker seals, and the Episode I cards even featured trivia questions on the back. But one thing has remained constant throughout - bad puns and jokes that easily out-corn Orville Redenbacher.

Sometimes cute and funny, sometimes oddly threatening, and sometimes just plain cringe-worthy, the writing on these valentines has always been



the star of the show. Take these classics: Vader flanked by Emperor's Royal Guards threatening the recipient to "Have a Happy Valentine's Day...or Else!" Or Jabba the Hutt "commanding you" to have a happy Valentine's Day. Or the animated Wicket swinging from vines and thanking his teacher for "showing him the ropes."

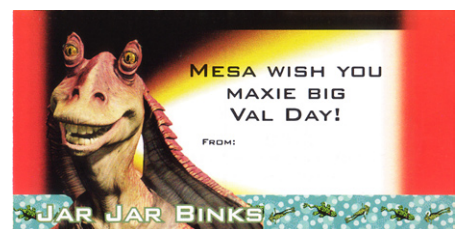
Now we all can see the dirty little secret of these tray valentines coming a mile off: Little kids aren't the only ones buying them. Fully grown *Star Wars* fans are buying them, and in some cases, actually using them. This taps into the primal conflict of any self-respecting *Star Wars* fan. It's internal war between gorging on all things *Star Wars* all the time, and actually getting a date.

With the *Star Wars* fan rapidly replacing the "Star Trek" fan in pop culture as the icon of the dateless and desperate geek, sending a *Star Wars* tray valentine to another adult could in fact be the most shamelessly geeky of all possible romantic overtures. But I say go ahead and send it! It's the ultimate litmus test of whether or not the object of your crush will ever be



able to handle your affection for "Star Wars." And in 2005, that's going to be more important than ever. You can't be dating someone who can't handle having R2-D2 say to them, "I bet you whistle at all the droids," Jar-Jar saying "Mesa Wish You Maxie Big Val Day," or C-3PO quipping, "I'm certain you'll find a splendid counterpart on Valentine's Day!"

This year's only drawback is that if you want to find the Chewbacca "You've got me howling" card along with the rest, you'll have to find a Wal-Mart. The Original Trilogy-themed set meant to play off last year's DVD release is available in Flashy-Foil style only, exclusive to the retail giant. For us here at NYLine, that's pretty rough, because there are virtually no Wal-Marts in New York City. Good thing we stocked up on those vintage "Return of the Jedi" speeder bike "out of this world" valentines when we had the chance! 



For a full gallery of Star Wars Valentine's from both the Vintage and Prequel Eras, visit sponsor RowM.com's archive at this link: http://www.rowm.com/news.php?article_id=51

Ya gotta amit....

He's Dancing Like Oola? It's For The Moola!

By Amit Saxena

Are you wondering, why am I here? Are you trying to unravel the mystery of what it is that drives me back to 54th Street every three years, risking my own health and comfort to spend 19 days waiting in line for a movie that I already have tickets to? Well allow me to mitigate your befuddlement, for the answer is as straightforward as possible - I'm in it for the money.


Now don't misunderstand me, there is an entire legion of benefits to being an NYLine member. It's a power that others don't understand and could never have – seeing your name in lights on NY1 news at 4:30 a.m., witnessing a drive-by flashing on a Wednesday afternoon, knowing that you are going to see a movie before most other people do. While that's all well and good, when the movie is over and the tents come down, what do you have to show for it? A pile of nothing as high as a bantha's eye, that's what. This is why, as far as I'm concerned, it's all about the Benjamins. Or the Queen Elizabeth IIs, or whoever is on your money.

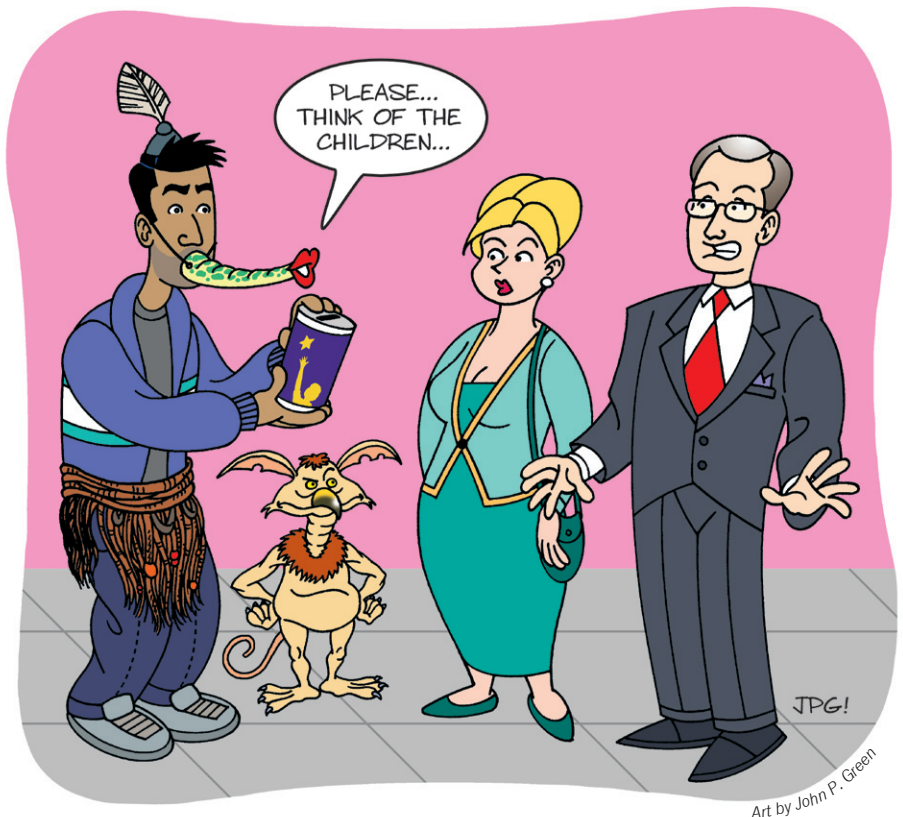
Y'know, there are times that I wonder if during the Empire, Palpatine had his picture on every denomination of credit that was circulating. It would be sufficiently evil, but I imagine it might get a little confusing. That, however, is a topic for another time and place (probably around four o'clock in the morning sometime in mid-May, in front of the Ziegfeld). The subject I'm discussing now is the sweet feeling of watching someone pull out a wallet, take out a five-dollar bill, and then put that five spot into the Starlight donation cup. The knowledge that each contribution brings us closer to providing hospitalized children with an opportunity to momentarily forget their troubles at a Starlight Fun Center is what keeps me going. To acquire every last cent, I'm willing to sully myself to whatever degree necessary. If a prospective donator asks me to jump, I say, "How high?" If they need a droid that understands the binary language of moisture vaporators, I say, "My first job was programming binary load lifters AND I speak Bocce." If they ask me to perform a song and dance number a la Sy Snootles, I say, "I'll provide the lipstick and skimpy outfit, you let me know if you want Original or Special Edition."

But most people are not so demanding when they pass by the line (which is unfortunate, because I've already rehearsed the dance moves). The usual response to our little band is one of confusion. It's at this moment, when they are frozen in bewilderment at what they are seeing, that we try to hit them over the head with wit and eloquence regarding our charity and the Fun Center program. Sadly, I possess neither of these traits, so I usually just hit them over the head with a plastic lightsaber. But that is generally sufficient to get their attention, and often they will give up some money to make me stop whacking them. In that sense, people have been very nice.

Still, it's inevitable that some will not respond with the same type of enthusiasm we have for sidewalk fundraising. And often it will be the person with the highest stature who

will brush us off like Lando would to C-3PO. I'm looking at you, Mr. Local Newsman – I haven't forgotten how you talked to us when you thought we were fans but got gruff and ran off when we mentioned the word "charity." And to think I used to trust you to deliver to me the important events of the day! I remember you too, Miss Sitcom Sweetheart, with your attitude as you told us that you already donate money to other things. And to think I used to trust you to put the "goodness" in TGIF!

But that is the exception to the rule of hospitality that New Yorkers have shown us as we stay on the fold-out couch that is their sidewalks. People from all walks of life have listened to our distress signals and given whatever they could to what everyone agrees is a worthy cause. And we'll continue to put on whatever show it takes to draw attention to ourselves in order to eventually divert that attention to Starlight Starbright. Hopefully that show will involve my choreography, because I've been working on something that is going to blow you away. 



Art by John P. Green