

Project...

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a certain way because even though the artwork is the same, it's prepared differently for letterpress and offset."

Some years, while Osterer explores letterpress printing or silk screening; this year, it was offset lithography.

He had his students create artwork in class before visiting the nearby Trico Group, located on 47 Antares Dr. in Ottawa, to see first-hand how a commercial job is processed and printed. It's all part of Osterer's "experiential learning" plan, which aims to teach students about the entire process, from start to finish, in whatever medium they're studying.

"I wanted to do it in a way they could feel and see what the process looks like, so my class sees the file sent from the computer down to the plate maker, and they watch the plate being burned. I think it's really good for them to understand this stuff," he said, adding his stu-



Jim Phillips, back row, far left, met with award-winning teacher Irving Osterer, front row, second from right, and his Focus program for a unit that teaches printing technologies.

dents are "always taken aback with how fast it prints."

Osterer said Trico sales representative Jonathan Stokes did a "great job" accommodating him and his class.

"My kids saw an aluminum printing plate being made and had a chance to see their work printed on their large litho press," said Osterer, adding the

experience was impressive for students and Trico workers alike. "They're all keen, and it really takes the people in these places by surprise that all of them are interested in what they're doing."

Osterer, a long-time graphic designer, said he "tries to impart respect on tradespeople as well because down the line that kind of relationship pays off."

CANADA POST

As Osterer's Focus program was completing its year-end project celebrating *Star Trek's* 50th anniversary, Canada Post "quite serendipitously" happened to release a much-hyped series of *Star Trek* stamps celebrating the same thing.

"I touched base with Jim Phillips at Canada Post, and he assigned Joy Parks to our group," said Osterer. "We were able to bring our posters to a boardroom in the Riverside Drive head office, put stamps in the appropriate places, and cancel them with a special Vulcan, Alberta postmark."

Phillips, who's Canada Post's director of stamp services, also taught students about the "highly specialized and expensive" lenticular printing process using a "very large" sample of Canada Post's recent lenticular issue.

"Canada Post picked up the cost of the stamps for our project, and also presented each student with an OFDC [official first-day cover] of the lenticular stamps. They did a terrific job with our students."

As with Stokes and the Trico Group, Parks and Phillips at Canada Post were "terrific" with Osterer and his class, he said.

"They were really excited and fascinated we were interested in the stamp stuff; they're making every effort to make kids interested in stamps, and this was sort of like magic for them," he said. "They really went out of their way to make it a great experience. Jim's a busy guy, and it was in middle of the World Stamp Show in New York, but he took time to come and meet the kids and talk to them."

Osterer, who has been teaching for 35 years and collecting stamps even longer, said the large lenticular was "really impressive;" so much so he's considering buying one for Merivale and displaying it proudly in the hall. And as self-professed "Trekkie," Osterer said he was impressed with Canada Post's recent release.

"The approach they took is interesting. They tried to capture the intimacy of the show, and they designed them really, really nicely," he said. "There's a really nice Canadian hook to it all because [William] Shatner, [John] Colicos, and [James] Doohan are all Canadian."

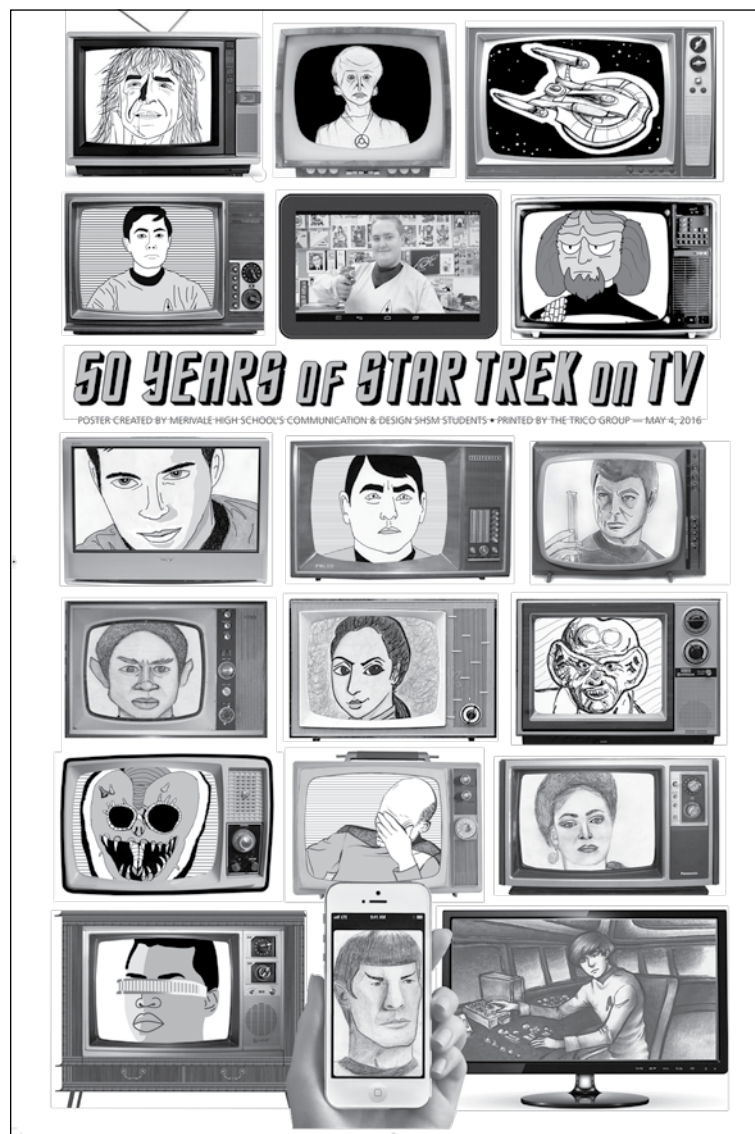
Osterer said most people don't consider Canada's "integral" role in *Star Trek's* beloved original series.

"I'm more honed in on first series than the subsequent films and other incarnations of it, although I'm interested in all of it," he admits. "It's really fascinating stuff. It broke a lot of new ground we all take for granted now. It was all new at that time – how to make all that stuff look real – and at its time ... what a revelation it was and how we were drawn to it every week."

Although this school year has only just come to a close, the award-winning teacher said he's already looking ahead to next year's philatelic project.

"We always do the Valentine's Day covers, but I'm trying to think of something really interesting that's semi-related to stamps," he said, adding he's hopeful the artistic community – from artists to tradespeople to Crown corporation employees – can come together like they did this year.

"It was just one of those serendipitous events that worked out really well for all concerned." 🍁



Eighteen students from Merivale High School's Focus program had a hand in creating this Star Trek poster celebrating the 50th anniversary of the show's original series.



Phillips, left, was 'terrific' with Merivale students, Osterer said.