The Whovians are coming to Baltimore County to share their mutual love of the cult sci-fi TV series ‘Doctor Who’
A CELEBRATION OF DR. WHO

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originally remained on the air until 1989 — at 26 years, an impressive run for any series. But demand for the good doctor’s exploits continued — much like demand for more adventures of the starship Enterprise on “Star Trek” were barely damped by the initial series’ cancellation in 1969 — leading to a TV movie in 1996 and the return of “Doctor Who” to series television in 2005. For the relaunch, Christopher Eccleston was cast as the ninth Doctor; currently, Peter Capaldi is playing the 12th (or 13th, if you count the out-of-character War Doctor played by John Hurt in 2013).

That’s a lot of different guises, different plot lines and different eras for a single TV show, an awful lot of ground to cover for fans and for conventions. It’s that very scope that appeals to so many fans.

“I admire the enormous storytelling potential of a show that can go anywhere in time and space,” says Michael O’Brien, 46, a tech expert ad podcast writer from Chesapeake, Va., who will be in Hunt Valley this weekend. “Plus the audacity of the show, to do the craziest things on generally no budget, and trust that the audience was willing to run with them on that — I appreciate that.”

Dennison, 34, an anime and video game editor from Newport News, Va., who is also convention-bound, agrees. “My aunt put it very well when she first started watching: ‘Doctor Who’ is never the same genre from week-to-week,” she says. “One week it’s a fairy tale, then it’s a horror movie, then it’s sci-fi, then it’s something else. The core is always the same, but it’s more like an adventure serial than a sci-fi show. And there’s something for everybody.”

Other staunch Whovians praise the spirit of the show — its underlying optimism about the future and about human (and alien) nature. The Doctor and his companions (supporting characters lucky enough to accompany the Time Lord on his travels, often over multiple episodes) are an eminently embraceable bunch.

“It’s not just about this silly guy who runs around,” says Patterson, a 22-year-old student at the College of Southern Maryland in Leonardtown. “It’s about hope. It’s about how it doesn’t matter who you are or where you come from. That’s part of what makes his companions so great — he takes these people who are extraordinary, but they just don’t see it. He doesn’t make them great, he just helps them see the greatness in themselves.”

Dr. Who fans James Butler as Vincent Van Gogh and son Connor Butler, as the 10th Doctor, will be at the Doctor Who convention in Baltimore County.