

The Origins of the Borg Cube Project

Tucsonans Matt Rios and Bruce Tretbar, long time Star Trek fans, envisioned creating a Borg Cube from leftover pieces of model kit sprue in 2014. The project would be 3ft by 3ft by 3ft and include lights and other effects. Bruce was a member of Sonoran Desert Model Builders and put a call out for members to save their leftover sprue and donate it to the endeavor. Chuck Wacker was representing Sonoran Desert Model Builders at the Pima Air & Space Museum's monthly model Make-N-Take where over 20 model kits a month were being built and the leftover sprue was going in the trash. He immediately began diverting the sprue for Bruce and Matt's needs. The sprue began to accumulate but life's responsibilities kept the project from moving forward.

In 2016 Bruce informed the model club that the project was on hold. Chuck came up with an idea to make smaller versions of the cube. They would measure 6in by 6in by 6in and be built by whoever had a wish to be creative and throw something together out of model kit leftovers. The ideal cube builder would be someone with great imagination but with limited resources to buy actual model kits. In keeping with the grand scale of the project a framework was conceived that would hold these smaller cubes. The 3ft by 3ft by 3ft size was revived in a frame that would fit 6 cubes across and 6 cubes high on 4 sides with a top grid holding another 16 cubes. When completed it would require an impressive 136 cubes plus the framework to hold it.

The key to this project would be consistency. Each cube would need to be a specific size. To accomplish this a box was designed with an interior dimension of 6 inches on every edge. The design and fabrication was accomplished at Xerocraft Makerspace as well as special fixtures to allow a starter frame to be made. With this starter frame a builder need only fill in the inside of the cube and the proper dimensions will be held. A demo cube of full size 3 foot dimensions was created from foam core board and displayed at Heroes and Villians Comic Book Store. A sprue donation box was placed as well. Another donation box and small 6 inch demo cube was placed at Ace Hardware on 22nd street near Kolb road. Members of the Sonoran Desert Model Builders were solicited to build cubes and build sessions were arranged at the Columbus Library. Demo sessions were held during local Model Mania Tucson swap meets and the Star Trek Tucson Fan Club had cubes on display at their booth for Tucson Comic Con. Pima Air & Space Museum saw a table of cubes during one of their Night Wings evenings in 2017. This had become a truly cooperative project.

By late 2018 the project slowed down as more of life's responsibilities accumulated. However, an opportunity is now presenting itself in 2020. With more people staying at home and looking for things to do during this pandemic the Borg Cube Project has arisen again. This opportunity is even more promising with the Mini Time Machine Museum's invitation to distribute cube kits to the youth that frequent the museum. The project has also been scaled down to a frame that holds 3 cubes across and 3 cubes high. This frame only requires 25 cubes and will be on site at the museum ready to assimilate completed cubes. Technically, there are no rules or limitations on how one completes a cube. It will be necessary however to make sure a cube fits in the container provided in order to guarantee a proper fit into the frame. It is also necessary to keep the cubes to a reasonable weight. Plastic pieces will be no problem. Just keep any metal or electronic pieces within reason. Of course, if there were one rule we would like everyone to follow it would be to have FUN!!

We look forward to your being assimilated into the Borg Cube Project.