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MCTV (Massillon, OH) President Robert Gessner was re-elected Chairman of the American Cable Association, and Patricia Jo Boyers, President and Vice Chairman of the Board of Directors of BOYCOM, was re-elected ACA Vice Chairwoman -- each to two-year terms -- by a vote of the ACA Membership announced Wednesday at the 11th annual Independent Show in Lake Buena Vista, FL. Marty Brophy -- former Shen-Heights TV President-CEO and 1997-98 BCAP Chairman -- has retired from the ACA Board after lengthy service that included its Executive Committee. Bob Wieand, Service Electric Cablevision Controller and BCAP Immediate Past Chairman, was elected to a three-year-term as Director to replace Marty. The Pittsburgh-based ACA represents nearly 750 smaller and medium-sized, independent cable companies located in rural and smaller suburban markets across America.

Visiting Beverly Hills often feels like an out-of-this-world experience, but this is pushing it.

I am among the journalists who have just arrived for the two-week Television Critics Association Press Tour (TCA). We've gathered poolside for a kickoff party at the Beverly Hilton, where the National Geographic Channel is going all out to promote its ambitious "Mars" miniseries coming in November.

Check it out: We can nosh on "futuristic space food and cosmic cocktails." There's also a photo booth where our bodies are magically beamed to the red planet. And that's just one of the "intergalactic surprises" being offered.

This is how it works at TCA, a.k.a. "The Death March With Cocktails." One by one, broadcast networks, cable channels and streaming services parade through the premises trying to wow us. In this era of "peak TV" and a billion channels, it's more important than ever to stand out from the crowd. Go big or go home, as they say.

So it stands to reason that Nat Geo really, really wants you to watch its six-part saga that blends scripted elements and interviews with wonky experts to imagine the first manned mission to Mars and the quest to colonize the planet. They've even brought in Stephen Petranek, author of "How We'll Live On Mars," to sign books and impart his spacey knowledge:

"To Chuck," he writes, "see you next on Mars."

Um, that's great, but for now I'll settle for a trip to Stars Hollow. Consider that my segue to Netflix, which got TCA rolling in earnest during a day packed with -- count 'em -- 11 panel sessions pegged to various shows, including "Marvel's Luke Cage," "Stranger Things" and, yes, the highly anticipated "Gilmore Girls" revival.

Mind you, this is the same Netflix that was merely a footnote on tour just a few years ago. Netflix's ascendance as a content creator is another indication of how the industry is changing, and that's part of what I'll be reporting on in coming weeks.

Now, about those "girls," the Los Gatos-based streaming service announced that "Gilmore Girls: A Year in the Life" will premiere on Nov. 25 -- nine years after the beloved series starring Lauren Graham and Alexis Bledel left the air.

Netflix teased us with two minutes of footage, which featured Graham's Lorelei and Bledel's Rory engaged in the kind of rapid-fire banter the show was famous for.

So was it difficult for Graham to slip back into that rat-a-tat style of speaking? Not at all.

"It was fun. It was easy. It was joyous," she told reporters. "It was like it was meant to continue."

You could sense, too, that there was a joyousness in the TCA ballroom. In a rapidly changing TV world, its gratifying to know that we still can lean on Lorelei and Rory. –
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