Veteran comedian Will Ferrell has proven he can outlast his distinctive three-minute Saturday Night Live sketches, and move to the big screen in DreamWorks’ newest film, Old School. The movie, also starring Vince Vaughn (Swingers) and Luke Wilson (Legally Blonde), explores the lives of three men in their 30s revisiting their notorious college years.

The film begins with Mitch, played by Wilson, coming home from a business trip to find his girlfriend (Juliette Lewis of The Evening Star) having a ménage a trois in his bedroom. He shockingly finds out that this is not the first time it has occurred, and his relationship inevitably ends, as well as his days of maturity.

As Frank (Will Ferrell) stands before the altar days later about to be married, his best man Beanie (Vince Vaughn) tells him, stage left, to run from a lifetime commitment. Frank ignores Beanie, and tries to forget the carefree years of wild beer drinking parties and attempts life as an adult.

Meanwhile, Mitch finds an affordable house to rent near Harrison University and Beanie throws him a campus-wide party to celebrate his new single life. Frank, as a newby, tells the students he cannot drink because he has to get up early to go to Home Depot and Bed, Bath and Beyond. Realizing how terrifying that sounds, he funnels beer until “Frank the Tank” has resurfaced, and is caught streaking down the street by his wife.

He is kicked out of his house only days after he and his wife have said, “I do,” failing to achieve the maturity status his wife expected.

The Dean of Harrison makes a visit to inform Mitch that his house now belongs to the university due to renovations. Beanie endows a plan for them to begin a new fraternity where age, status and popularity do not matter, so Mitch can keep his house.

The three female-troubled men and their 14 new misfit pledges begin a 21-day hazing process, wreaking havoc across Harrison’s campus. Their funny and wild escapades, ranging from kid-napping to K-Y jelly wrestling parties, keep audiences in sidesplitting laughter.

In search of a more preferred to filmmakers, than fullscreen ones, Ferrell, Vaughn and Wilson, although an odd trio for the cast, was a perfect match. The actors’ very different characters produced one hilarious adventure for anyone who’s ever wished they could turn back the clock.

Small appearances by Seann William Scott (American Pie), Artie Lange (The Howard Stern Show), Craig Kilborne (Late Night with Craig Kilborne) and Andy Dick also added comedic performances to their respective scenes.

The soundtrack paralleled the film’s theme of immature thirty-something males relating to growing up and give up the college lives they have led and loved. As the three men partied hard and met up with old friends, ’80s music such as White Snake played throughout the film, while the young college students listened to Snoop Dogg at Mitch’s first party.

If Revenge of the Nerds met American Pie 2, this film would be the result. With the variety of pledges chosen to chassis this new fraternity and the outrageous stunts the overgrown “founders” pull, there is no doubt there are still humorous frat-based concepts to explore.

With co-writer/director Todd Phillips (Road Trip) and executive producer Ivan Reitman (National Lampoon’s Animal House) behind the laughs, who couldn’t enjoy an hour and a half worth of pranks, parties and just plain fun?

Fourth ‘Trekkie’ film returns to DVD in Collector’s Edition

It is truly rare when Sci-Fi movies are made without action, without fight scenes, without monsters and without a great deal of time spent in outer space. It is even rarer when they’re done well.

Star Trek IV: The Voyage Home, directed by Leonard Nemoy (who also played Captain Spock in the film), was a prime example of this, and although the movie is widely shunned by many “Trekkies” for the absence of those very elements, the film stands out to everyone else as one of the best in the series.

The story begins in the 23rd century, where the other films in the series take place. A strange alien race is causing havoc and destruction on Earth, and through the distinctive sounds they make, it is determined that there is only one species of animal that can possibly communicate with them: whales. There’s only one problem; whales have been extinct for centuries.

The original Star Trek crew must therefore travel back through time to a point before their extinction, the 1980s, and rescue a pair of humpbacks to repopulate the species, hopefully, saving Earth from certain doom in the process.

Although the premise may seem a bit out there, the film packs a strong moral punch in its environment protection message. As the crew races to get the whales, they are faced with possibly their most serious enemy of all: the very whales who would contribute to the animals’ extinction.

However, the film is not just one big anti-whaling infographic. The fish out of water story provides for big laughs, as the crew finds many of the customs and advances of the era “medieval,” and the lack of Star Trek scenery and lingo makes it enjoyable even to people who have never once seen any of the other movies or a single episode of the show.

Additionally, the message in the opening of the film dedicating it to the crew of the shuttle Challenger, now more than ever in the wake of the Columbia tragedy, adds a sentimental, classy and timeless touch that even people today, nearly 20 years later, can draw a sense of emotion from.

The new DVD Collector’s Edition improves greatly in the special features department from the last edition, but does nothing to improve upon the actual digital transfer of the film.

While the original DVD’s 2.35:1 anamorphic widescreen transfer was very clean and well ahead of its time, the new release could have benefited from an improvement on the light colors and minor contrast problems early in the film. Instead, the digital transfer from the first release is simply re-used without any such improvements.

Also recycled into the Collector’s Edition was the Dolby Digital 5.1 audio mix. While this mix isn’t bad, a cleaner version with better surround sound, or even just a DTS track inclusion, would have made the set a better buy.

However, the edition earns its keep with an extra-heavy supplemental features section.

Whereas the last release of the movie was equipped with only two supplements, an almost apologetic featurette on why widescreen releases are better, or at least more preferred to filmmakers, than fullscreen ones, as well as the film’s theatrical trailer, this Collector’s Edition has been loaded with an additional disc of features to make up for their previous rush-job edition.

An excellent commentary track by Nemoy and William Shatner (lead character Admiral Kirk) is joined by numerous documentaries, including a few on the movie’s real-life issues, such as the possibilities of time travel and the study of whale calls. However, other featurettes are included as somewhat of a joke, like “The Vulcan Primer,” a feature all about the Vulcan species and Kirk’s Women,” a documentary featuring interviews with all of Kirk’s love-interests throughout the series.

Finally, rounding out the set are more in-depth documentaries like “From Outer Space to the Ocean,” “On Location” and “Daily Deeks Documentation,” which go over the set design, audio and visual effects of the movie. Interviews with the cast are included, as well as a text commentary by The Star Trek Encyclopedia authors Michael and Denise Okuda and the theatrical trailer provided on the last release.

Because of the rerouting of the video and audio transfers from the original DVD release, casual fans will probably find that their original DVD of Star Trek IV: The Voyage Home is sufficient enough. However, fans of the film will not want to miss the library of supplemental features on the new Collector’s Edition release.