

# M a k i n g A D i f f e r e n c e

## Comic-Con: The Metamorphosis

By Jennifer Benton  
Staff Writer

13 years ago when I used to tell people I was going to Comic-Con, this statement was received with confused looks and questions like, "comic what?" And "what was that?"; now the term Comic-Con is common place enough that people ask, "which one", and "how many days are you staying?" Much has changed in the last decade or so, and the little event which started in 1973 in the ballroom of a small hotel for comic enthusiasts has morphed into the largest pop culture event in America. That's right. THE LARGEST POP CULTURE EVENT IN AMERICA! With this growth has come much change for those of us who have been in attendance before the year everyone was looking for glittery vampires.

Gone are the days of casually passing Seth Green or Toby McGuire on the convention floor or waving at your favorite comic artists or celebrities as you pass their booths. No longer is Comic-Con about just art or just comics. In addition to the plethora of comic and sci-fi related television shows and films being produced in recent years, the awareness of this newest phenomenon has bolstered fans' desire to obtain an autograph, sit in on a panel with their favorite cast, and be one of the "first" to see a new trailer or model of a new ship, or one of the "first" to demo the latest video game before it's released.

This shift has heightened the energy on the convention floor and encouraged more cosplay (costuming) than ever, making for some of the best people-watching on the planet! In any given hour, you can see everything from men in slave Leia costumes to Klingons on vacation (in shorts and Hawaiian shirts), samurai Darth Vaders to steampunk Boba Fets, and every single thing in between that you can possibly bring yourself to imagine. It is a circus for the eyes and ears alike.

The problem with this growth is that now there are times when not only can you not wave at people in their booths, you're lucky if you can even see the booth or make your way out of the all encompassing crowds to exit to the lobby and find a restroom. There have been moments, more than I care to count, when the convention floor has been so congested moving forward was a mere fantasy. It's like being stuck in LA traffic except with people in costumes, some far too large for crowds, and only their voices and bodies to get people moving forward.

With all of that said, Comic-Con is still one of the coolest events I've ever attended, which is what keeps me coming back. This year something seemed different. It was crowded and there were thousands of people in costumes and there were cool exclusive toys to buy and trailers to see, yet... something was different. Still cool, still amazing. I couldn't quite put my finger on it. By Friday it hit me. What was missing were the EPIC spacecrafts, superheroes, and large screens I've come to anticipate from Lucasfilms and Marvel. It may seem strange that two companies would have such an impact, but only to those of you who haven't seen their displays. They are simply amazing. You stand and take it in with the sheer awe and joy of a child. Whatever you expect is far surpassed. Whether it's a new superhero or the promise of a new trilogy, these two brands deliver and keep their fans begging for more.

Well, this year, these things didn't happen. Marvel apparently pulled out of their typical Hall H slot one month before Con 2015. The absence of their incredible displays was sorely missed and made me start looking around more closely. When I realized what I personally had been missing, I gasped audibly. With the release of the new Star Wars film, it was with great expectation I approached the Lucasfilm area...much to my dismay.

Don't get me wrong; there were amazing pieces of art, and comics, and t-shirts, and toys, and pet accessories, and jewelry, and almost anything you can think of with the Star Wars brand; what there wasn't happened to be much of anything to tantalize fans about the new upcoming film: *Star Wars VII - The Force Awakens*. I mean, sure, if you waited in line for THREE DAYS to see the trailer then you were also surprised with what was reportedly an epic firework display, a panel with the cast, and a light saber of your very own; but if you're like the rest of us who wanted to spend Con INSIDE the convention instead of in line, we got zilch! No sweetly lit spaceship to take our breath away, no new costumes on

### Family Day Calaveras Big Tree State Park

August 15, beginning at 10am until 4:00pm, a fun-filled day for the whole family awaits. Scheduled activities include: Wild Things, UC Davis Raptors, and a Butterfly release. A live concert by The Great Motherlode Brass and Reed Band; folk music by Linda Tringali. All day activities: Interactive booths with reptiles and fly fishing demonstrations; Carriage rides (\$3 pp) through the park; a BBQ offers food for sale, homemade baked items for sale, ice cream and popcorn are available.

Park entrance fee is \$10 per car. Save the date and join us for a great day at the park. Go to [www.bigtrees.org](http://www.bigtrees.org) for a schedule.



display to ooh and aaah over. And this upset me so I decided to find out why. And I did. DISNEY! Don't get me wrong, I love Disney. I do. And I'm trying to come to terms with a fact that all Comic-Con attendees need to face.

The purchase of the Star Wars franchise by Disney is going to change how we access our favorite film. No longer are the 'first looks' and 'sneak peeks' going to be taking place in San Diego. They will be, you guessed it, in Anaheim. On August 14th to be exact, when one of the highlights of the D23 expo weekend will be the opening of their newest experience: "Worlds, Galaxies, and Universes: Live Action At The Disney Studios".

Another change as a result of Disney is that Darkhorse will no longer be publishing the Star Wars comics. This is huge! Darkhorse and Star Wars have been together since 1991 and in addition to publishing new SW comics, Darkhorse also republished the Marvel Star Wars Co-

mic. And this is where another layer comes in. Darkhorse also produces collections of works through a trade paperback called Omnibus, which is also used for other fictional universes, such as Indiana Jones. Yes. Another Lucasfilm project. Disney announced in January that they would be bringing Star Wars comic publishing home to Marvel (1977-1986). While some comic enthusiasts are jubilant at the idea of Marvel recapturing their Star Wars publications, I selfishly just wonder just how deeply this Disney takeover will effect the future of Comic-Con, with Marvel joining forces for this D23 Expo being the "trial separation".

While I'm confident Disney will do everyone justice and never falls short of amazing, I truly hope they remember the fans at Comic-Con have been unwavering in their loyalty through thick and thin, and they need to be rewarded on the convention floor with breathtaking spectacles, instead of only inside of Hall H for the select few lucky enough to receive entrance. I attended with a



Comic-Con article Continued on page 14




## NYF is partnering with ACRA to help get you ready for the Tri Amador!

**What this means for you:**

- **Membership:** Get two months of membership for \$90, no enrollment fee. Offer expires 8/31/15.  
\*Must show proof of registration for Tri Amador.
- **Training:** NYF will have triathlon training workouts posted to help you get prepared for the big day. The "Masters" swimming class will also be available for training.
- **Discount:** Receive \$5 off of the Sprint or \$10 off the Olympic distance on your registration for the Tri Amador if you are a current member of New York Fitness.

Register online and view the course maps at [Active.com](http://Active.com) (Tri Amador), [goacra.org](http://goacra.org), or contact the Amador County Recreation Agency at (209)223-6349 or email [jwilliamson@amadorgov.org](mailto:jwilliamson@amadorgov.org)

615 New York Ranch Rd.  
Jackson, CA 95642  
209.223.3236  
[www.nyftyfitness.com](http://www.nyftyfitness.com)