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THE CATHOLIC UNIVERSITY OF AMERICA
Metropolitan School of Professional Studies



weekendpass

AWESOME CON A TO Z

“Geek” is our word now. So is “nerd.” We’ve reclaimed them, made them our own, and we take pride in them.

And Awesome Con is the place where D.C.’s geek flag flies highest and nerd pride reaches its pinnacle. Forget the White House Correspondents’ Dinner — THIS is Nerd Prom. Dress as a Dalek for the WHCD and you’ll get turned away at the door. At Awesome Con, you’re the coolest kid in the room. There’s so much to do and see and gawk at, we’ve made an alphabetical list to help you navigate the convention center. KRISTEN PAGE-KIRBY (EXPRESS); ILLUSTRATIONS BY CHRIS DANGER (FOR EXPRESS)

► Washington Convention Center, 801 Mount Vernon Place NW; Fri.-Sun., \$31.73-\$79.32. Kids under 10 free; VIP tickets, photo and autograph sessions extra; awesome-con.com.



A is for anime
Fans of Japanese animation can find their people here. They’ll either be at a screening of “Sailor Moon” or “Princess Jellyfish” episodes or at Anime Anonymous: Meeting of the Binge Watchers.

B is for business
The creators of Superman got totally screwed. Make sure that doesn’t happen to you with a series of talks aimed at those getting into the comics business, covering topics like intellectual property, censorship and publishing contracts.

C is for cosplay
The art of dressing up like beloved characters — or variations thereof — has gone mainstream. Learn how to start or how to up your game, or compete in individual, group and kids contests.

D is for Don’t blink. Blink and you’re dead.
It’s a family reunion as Alex Kingston and Arthur Darvill

(who played daughter and father, respectively, on “Doctor Who,” even though she’s older; it makes sense within the series) appear. Catch their separate panels on Saturday or pony up for a photo op or autograph. The Weeping Angels will not be appearing. Probably.

E is for exercise
Superman doesn’t get ALL his strength from the Earth’s yellow sun; that guy is a beast at the gym. A panel called Geek Fitness: Embracing Your Inner Superhero covers getting in shape the nerdy way.



F is for feminism
An industry that spent a long part of its history essentially saying “You have Wonder Woman. What else do you want?” is now changing for the better (not that Wonder Woman isn’t awesome). Panels include discussions of sexism, creating great female characters and how to deal with cosplay harassment.

G is for gaming
A whole chunk of the con, now in its third year, is dedicated to



gaming — like, an entire side of the center. There’s all-day gaming (digital and analog) every day, plus playtests, demos and tournaments.

H is for horror
Scare up some ... well, scares with screenings from The Spooky Movie International Horror Film Festival. There are shorts, features and a post-screening Q&A session with “Exists” director Eduardo Sanchez and writer Jamie Nash.

I is for “I repeated the computer, Fred.”
“Galaxy Quest” may be the finest sci-fi movie ever made, and now you can discuss it with the highly intelligent people who think so, too, at “Galaxy Quest”: The Panel.

L is for “Lord of the Rings”
Actors John Rhys-Davies (Gimli) and Sean Astin (Sam) are attending, for a Q&A session on “Lord of the Rings” and for autographs and photos. Just don’t ask Astin to carry anything. He’s done enough.

M is for money
Not for spending, though you can certainly do that. For getting. Learn about crowdfunding, using social media to build your business, and turning that knitting addiction (or whatever your hobby is) into cash.



J is for Joss
The patron saint of geekdom, Joss Whedon is perfect in every way. Which is why he shows up a lot on the schedule of events (though not in person). There’s the Marvel and the Whedonverse Collide panel, the star-studded “Buffy the Vampire Slayer” Q&A and a panel focusing solely on Buffy’s buddies.

K is for Kirk (and Klingon)
vaj ghu’vam, ‘e’ Doj laD SoH laH. ‘e’, umqu’ ghot chay’ le’ qar, SoH ghoS. vaj ‘e’ ghaH DoHmoHhaj wa’ ‘ejyo’ HoD James T. Kirk (William Shatner), nargh ghaH cha’ t’lhIH ja’chuq, ben law’ photos legh je pongDaj ghItH ghaytan SoH.

N is for nostalgia
Sci-fi usually looks ahead, but sci-fi fiends often like to look back. Your childhood (assuming it took place in the ‘80s or ‘90s) comes alive with Q&As featuring stars of the animated “Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles,” four actual Power Rangers (black, red, yellow and blue) and Ralph Macchio, best known for “Dancing With the Stars.” And some movie about taekwondo or something. All are available for photos and autographs.

O is for Oliver Queen
No, Stephen Amell isn’t coming and he’s not bringing his salmon ladder with him. But there is a session called Arrow: My Aim is True, and we’re pretty sure the ladder will come up.

P is for Pinkie Pie
Bronies and whatever the female equivalent of a Brony is have a panel all to themselves, where they can talk with writers and artists from “My Little Pony: Friendship Is Magic” and “Friends Forever.”



Q is for quickie
Not THAT kind of quickie. Unless you want to; we’re not judging. Seven separate sessions of Sci-Fi Speed Dating happen throughout the con, including two for LGBTQ people. Find the Robin to your Batman, the Oliver to your Felicity Smoak, the Tara to your Willow.

R is for remembrance
We said goodbye to one of the most human of souls this year when Leonard Nimoy died at 83. On Saturday, this sci-fi community will gather to remember a man who lived long and prospered.



S is for Sulu
The hand that steers the Enterprise is the hand that rules the world. Shake that hand (or at least lunge for it desperately) at George Takei’s Sunday panel, or at his autograph and photo sessions.

T is for technology
Fake, real and somewhere in between — multiple panels cover the tech of sci-fi. Energy at the Movies will feature STEM

experts from the U.S. Department of Energy; a panel on colonization of exoplanets will discuss how to get there and who we’ll oppress when we make it; and there are workshops on digital painting and coloring.

U is for “Ultron,” age of
Now that comics have leaped to the big screen in a big way, there are a lot of opportunities to discuss the phenomenon. There’s a session on surviving the summer blockbuster

tsunami, a discussion of Marvel’s work versus that of DC, and Q&As about films like “Starship Troopers” and “Clerks.”

V is for voices
A bunch of esteemed voice actors are stepping out of the studio and into the light, including all four Ninja Turtles (you can get photos with each Turtle individually or as a group). On Saturday they’ll all get together for “Twisted Toonz!,” based on the YouTube hit.

W is for WWE
It’s not science and we wouldn’t dare call it fiction because they are way bigger than we are, but WWE stars Seth Rollins and Diva Natalya appear for a panel on Friday, as well as for photos and autographs.

X is for Xander
Except Xander won’t be there. But other Sunnydale Survivors (well, they didn’t all survive. Technically.) will be: James Marsters, Emma Caulfield and

Amber Benson will appear, both for a “Buffy the Vampire Slayer” Q&A and for autographs and photos.

Y is for youth
Pass down the proud geek culture with three days of kids activities. You’ve got crafts. You’ve got magic shows. You’ve got lightsaber training. You’ve got a colony of 3-foot-tall, juice box-fueled Batmen running around.

Z is for zombies
Fast, slow, TV, movies; you could spend all con going after braaaaaaaainnnns with panel discussions about the meaning of zombies in contemporary culture, a lesson about readiness if when the zombie apocalypse strikes, and a screening of the first four episodes of the anime series “Is This a Zombie?”



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