

Star Wars Day:

Joliet's Galactic Universe

August 15, 2018

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An Initiative of the American Library Association Public Programs Office

Welcome and Announcements

- Today's webinar is a presentation of ALA's Public Programs Office, with support from ALA's Cultural Communities Fund (www.ala.org/CCF)
- Visit www.programminglibrarian.org for more online learning sessions, program ideas and grant announcements
- Tech issues on today's webinar? Send a private message to PPO Admin

Today's Presenters



Megan Millen
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Joliet Public Library
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Star Wars Day

From “a little Star Wars program”
to
a Galactic Event

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In the Beginning...



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In the Beginning...



Highlights:

- A youth services program for families.
- Themed games & crafts.
- 16 cosplayers roaming during the event.
- **Surprise!** 600 people attend!



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In the Beginning...

With the success of the previous year, we knew we needed to make some changes:

- Location
- Activities
- Partnerships





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A Period of Rapid Growth



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A Period of Rapid Growth

- During this time period, our attendance grew by 300%!
- We went from 44 cosplayers in 2012 to more than 125 in 2015.
- This tremendous growth meant that our “little Star Wars program” was quickly becoming unsustainable without seeking cosponsors, space, volunteers and financial assistance.

A Period of Rapid Growth

Considerations for Partners & Cosponsors:

- What organizations, businesses, and groups in Joliet would be interested?
- What can the organization bring to the event and make it better?
- Who has a location close to the Library and might be interested in partnering?
- Why would they want to partner with us?

A Period of Rapid Growth

Our Cosponsors and Partners:

- Friends of the Joliet Public Library
- City of Joliet
- Joliet City Center Partnership (Economic Development)
- Heritage Corridor Convention & Visitor's Bureau
- Joliet Area Historical Museum
- DK Publishing
- LucasFilm, Ltd.

A Period of Rapid Growth

Considerations for Space:

- How much space is needed?
- What do you want to put in that space?
- Do you have the staffing necessary to manage the space?
- What permits do you need in order to use the space?
- What infrastructure do you need?

A Period of Rapid Growth

Space:

- Used about 37,000 sq. feet in library, library lawn, and side streets
- Activities
 - Games: 3-7 needed
 - Artists: Meet with Star Wars illustrators (as many as 5)
 - Life-size Cantina replica
 - Live Music
 - Costume Contest
 - LegoLand™
 - Parade

A Period of Rapid Growth

Space Needs:

- What permits do you need in order to use the space?
 - Special Event?
 - Portable Stage?
 - Large Tents?
 - Sound Amplification?
 - Street Closures?
 - Parade?

A Period of Rapid Growth

Space Needs:

- What infrastructure do you need? Consider:
 - Bathrooms? Need Portable Restrooms? Don't forget about wash stations and ADA compliant restrooms!
 - Security? What is your plan to keep everyone safe? Do you need off-duty police? What do they need to be doing— crowd control, watch for problems, closing down streets, etc.?

A Period of Rapid Growth

Space Needs:

- What infrastructure do you need? Consider:
 - Refuse Disposal? How are you collecting garbage? Do you need receptacles and/or a dumpster?
 - Electricity? Are you going to need electricity if you are outside? From where?
 - Inclement Weather? What's your plan for inclement weather?

A Period of Rapid Growth

Space Needs:

- What infrastructure do you need? Consider:
 - Equipment Rentals? Do you need...
 - Tables?
 - Chairs?
 - Tents?
 - Golf cart or other small vehicle?
 - Barricades if you are blocking streets or locations that need to be inaccessible by cars or people?

A Period of Rapid Growth

Space Needs:

- Do you have the staffing necessary to manage the space?
 - Volunteers
 - Staff
 - Security
 - Emergency Medical Assistance

A Period of Rapid Growth

Workers, Volunteers, and Staff:

- Who's going to...
 - Set up the tables, chairs, tents, stage, etc.?
 - Tear down the set up?
 - Work during the event monitoring the games and activities?
 - Oversee the move in of vendors and guests?
 - Distribute information to guests?

A Period of Rapid Growth

Workers, Volunteers, and Staff:

- Where do you find the people to work? Do you pay them or are they all volunteering?
- Are you going to feed your workers, volunteers and/or staff? What? When? How?
- If the weather is warm, are you supplying water or another beverage to workers? How?
- Do you have enough workers to provide breaks, including a meal break?

A Period of Rapid Growth

Financial Costs of Event:

As attendance grows, so do the costs of putting on the event. Expenditures include:

- Food for workers
- Rental of tables, chairs, tents, etc.
- Marketing materials
- Live entertainment
- Security personnel and EMTs
- Extra dumpsters, garbage pickup and mobile restrooms

Tweaking the Plans



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Tweaking the Plans

Additions and Improvements:

- Increased cosplayers by including other cosplay groups.
- Additional artists attended and each provided original art for one of five collectible trading cards that could be autographed by artist.
- Set an annual date for the event – 1st Saturday in June.

Tweaking the Plans

Additions and Improvements:

- Providing more photo opportunities and memorable moments.



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Tweaking the Plans

Additions and Improvements:

- Added partners to the group, including the Rialto Square Theatre, Joliet Slammers and an improvisational group.
- Two of our vendors at the event have also become sponsors by providing in-kind services and products.

Tweaking the Plans

Additions and Improvements:

- Rialto Square Theatre hosted a Jedi Training Academy on their mainstage.
- We planned an official start to the event with a ribbon cutting ceremony using light sabers.



Tweaking the Plans

Additions and Improvements:

- Local business owner gave us use of a store front near the event to store tables, chairs, etc. for a more efficient set up and clean up.
- Showcased a very large, inflatable Darth Vader.



Tweaking the Plans

Additions and Improvements:

- Developed one of a kind invitations for City Council and various board members.
- Invited them to take part by serving lemonade in the Cantina.



Budgeting and the Bottom Line

Fundraising Efforts:

- By 2016, the event outgrew the two big funders—the library and the Friends of the Library—and the local convention and visitors bureau that supplied much “in-kind” assistance.
- Increasing costs and the need for other funding sources became critical to our future success.

Budgeting and the Bottom Line

Fundraising Efforts:

- We established a fundraising committee to determine the available sponsorship opportunities and locate sponsors for the event.
 - What to sponsor?
 - How much to charge for sponsorship?
 - What was sponsor's return on investment (ROI) for sponsorship?
 - What amount did we want to set as our goal for measurement purposes?

Budgeting and the Bottom Line

Fundraising Efforts:

- We considered library vendors:
 - Lawyer
 - Printing and Copier Providers
 - Architect
- We looked at local organizations:
 - Credit Union
 - Financial Institution
 - Local Small Businesses
 - Chamber of Commerce

Budgeting and the Bottom Line

Fundraising Efforts – What happened?

- We increased 2018 sponsorships by more than 50% over 2017.
- We increased 2018 revenue by almost 25%.
- We now have businesses that are contacting us to be a sponsor.



Looking Forward

The Future...

- 2019 will be a big year because it's our 10th Star Wars Day.
- As always, there will be plenty for Star Wars fans to do, participate in and enjoy.
- Surprises and special guests are a given!
- It is, after all, ***The World's Largest Public Library Sponsored Star Wars Event!***

For more information...

Visit our Star Wars Day website:

<http://jolietlibrary.org/index.php/en/star-wars-day>

Visit our Star Wars Day Facebook page:

<https://www.facebook.com/JPLStarWarsDay/>

Taste of our Star Wars Event Courtesy of the Heritage
Corridor Convention and Visitors Bureau

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yni1JdaQ6xg&feature=youtu.be>

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