

## Comic Con 2002 San Diego Convention Center August 1 – 4



Thursday, August 1

We left Scottsdale around 8am and arrived in San Diego around 2pm having listened to AOTC during the drive. We got settled in at the Holiday Inn on the Bay then took the con shuttle to the convention center to get registered and hit the exhibit/dealers room which was huge and crowded. To paraphrase the con's website "*The expanded Exhibit Hall - a shopper's paradise, with aisle after aisle of the greatest merchandise under the popular arts sun: Comics, graphic novels, original art, toys, movie memorabilia, games, trading cards, apparel, videos, DVDs, art books. The Exhibit Hall hosts a variety of booths featuring comics publishers, movie studios, leading toy and gaming companies, and video and DVD sellers.*

*At many of the booths you'll find writers, artists, and other creative personnel showcasing their new and upcoming work. And lots of exhibitors offer exciting giveaways and exclusive items, too! In the Independent Press Pavilion and the Small Press Area, you'll find the cutting edge comics of the day. The absolute best in small press, alternative, and independently published comics, fanzines, and magazines are showcased in these prominent Exhibit Hall areas. The Golden and Silver Age Pavilion is packed with exhibitors offering comics from 1930s through the 1970s. Also part of the Exhibit Hall are the Art Show, Artists' Alley, and the Art Auction. Comic-Con offers one of the largest Art Shows of any convention in the United States."*



Smoot and I split up after he took my picture by a large LOTR Ringwraith figure and in the giant Hasbro action figure box. As I wandered around I saw and took pictures of Ray Harryhausen and Peter "Chewbacca" Mayhew.



I will list the talks I went to. There were a lot more than these, but I hadn't cloned myself so I couldn't be in two or three places at once!

*"5:30 The Rise, Fall, and Rise of Star Trek—Free Enterprise's Mark A. Altman and Robert Meyer Burnett, FilmThreat.com's Chris Gore, Talk Trek's Daren Dochterman, Pocket Book author Mojo, and some special guests discuss whether Enterprise has kept Trek on course and whether Nemesis can save the movie franchise. One of San Diego's most popular panels returns for its fifth year! Room 16AB"*

The panel hated Voyager, didn't like Enterprise, and think Berman et al are trying to destroy what Gene created. As an example of that destruction, one of the panelist took out a model of the Enterprise and tried to smash it with a hammer, but tellingly only one nacelle came off! They liked DS9 and would like to see an edgy DS9 movie, but doubt it will ever happen because not commercial enough. They showed ST Eternal, a video of ST clips and two funny parodies. First was Kirk's Korner with "Shatner" doing the Omega Glory speech. Second was the hunt from Arena with 'Kirk' looking for weapon making material and wishing he had a phaser when a phaser is sitting in plain site and the 'Gorn' represented by a tiny little lizard.



After supper at the HI's pub we collapsed and went to bed early.



Friday, August 2

*"10:30 Novels from the Reel World—Best-selling novelists Peter David (Spider-Man), Andy Mangels, Michael A. Martin, Nancy Holder (co-author, Angel: The Casefiles), and Jeff Mariotte (Angel: Stranger to the Sun) discuss novels based on characters from*

*movies and television. Discover what these writers of Star Trek, Buffy, Angel, Roswell, Charmed, and Babylon 5 novels have to say about playing in the sandbox of popular established characters. Room 16AB"*

Peter David dominated the panel, making jokes and keeping other people from talking much. They all talked about the benefits and limitations of writing licensed fiction. David told of wanting to write, when Riker didn't want to do something, that he'd rather 'walk the Neutral Zone in his underwear.' Paramount complained saying it hadn't been established that Starfleet personnel wore underwear! He had to change the line to walk naked. Then came the decon scene in Enterprise. David's editor called him to say, see they DO wear underwear. David also said he'd wanted Riker and Troi to get engaged at the end of Imzadi II (he hated the title but it was forced on him) but once again Paramount said Riker and Troi would never marry. Well, here comes Nemesis that starts with their wedding. The Buffy writer said it's hard when you get a writing assignment and the TV show changes making your fiction look wrong, when it was right for what was known at the time it was written.



*"11:30 Dark Horse: Star Wars—Fast on the heels of the blockbuster film Star Wars Episode II: Attack of the Clones, here's your chance to hear about what's on the plate for Star Wars comics in the coming year! Interact with Dark Horse editors Randy Stradley and Lee Dawson, various Star Wars artists and writers, and a representative (Chris Cerasi) straight from Skywalker Ranch! Get a sneak peek at upcoming storylines and exclusive characters, and find out everything you wanted to know about the Star Wars comics universe! Room 7A"*

It was a very interesting panel with the participants talking about their current projects. DH is planning on creating two lines - Republic, dealing with prequel stories, and Empire. There are no plans for doing comics on the New Jedi Order series. They asked for ideas and what people would like to see. They seemed pleased at the enthusiasm of

the audience for their work. In response to a question about why Aurra Sing didn't have the big part in Ep II she'd said she'd have, the Lucasfilm rep said that was never planned and she was just taking advantage of her situation.

[According to my report on the 2003 Comicon, 'Last year there was a panel for comics professionals entitled "What do you tell the person sitting next to you on the plane what you do for a living," which seemed to indicate a little reluctance or embarrassment to admit to being an adult who was still 'into' comic books. But after all the big budget movies that have come out in the last year based on comic book characters, comics are now hot, worthy of the notice of Hollywood types and bean counters. That's a big difference in one year.' I don't think this Dark Horse panel was that one. I guess I didn't attend that one.]

I'd seen that Jeremy Bulloch was to be in the autograph room from 11- 3 so I ran by to say hi to him and ask him what he thought of his AOTC family. I said he had been darker as a boy. He laughed and said looks like that are easily changed but what worried him was that he was a clone! We had seen him and his wife; they must have been staying at our Holiday Inn.

*" Celebration of the 25th Anniversary of Star Wars. One of the richest veins of fan film production revolves around George Lucas space and time spanning saga, so we went right to the source (or in this case "the Force") and got permission to show the complete Star Wars Fan Film Festival from Lucasfilm, Ltd. and AtomFilms.com.*

*1:00 Star Wars Fan Film Festival—Shown in its entirety only at Star Wars Celebration in May in Indianapolis, Indiana, the Star Wars Fan Film Festival was also highlighted in a one-hour special on Sci-Fi Channel, hosted by Kevin Smith. If you saw that special, you caught only a glimpse of most of the films which made it to finalist status. Here you'll see all 45 of the finalists in their glory. Steve Sansweet of Lucasfilm will introduce the program at 1:00 p.m. These films all vary in length. The complete listing, in order, is:*

*A Green Hope*

*A New Dope*

*Alex Strikes Back*

*Dantana Morse for Galactic Senator*

*Darth Vader's Psychic Hotline*

*Figure Club*

*Galactic Feud*

*Luke Flips Out!*

*Silent But Deadly*

*Sparring Program*

*Spoiler Wars*

*Star Wars Toys That Never Were Made*

*Star Wars: Action Figures*  
*SW Project*  
*The Womp Ratz Anthology*  
*Waiting for Jar Jar*  
*1-800-GET R2D2*  
*Christmas Tauntauns*  
*Words of Jedi Wisdom*  
*Star Wars: Attack of the Anxieties*  
*Lloyd Stormtrooper*  
*Star Wars: A Christmas Carol*  
*Dream of the Jedi*  
*Jawas Gone Wild*  
*The World According to Darth*  
*Star Thumbs – Wheel of Misfortune*  
*Your Lightsaber and You*  
*Star Wars Gangsta Rap*  
*Vote Wars*  
*Womb Wars*  
*Stargeeks*  
*Phantom Menace Prologue*  
*Star Wars or Bust*  
*Womb Wars: The Special Edition*  
*Jabba Wookiee*  
*Darth Vader: The Rudy Pirani Story*  
*Fandom Menace*  
*Star Wars: The Battle of Hoth*  
*Pod Commuting*  
*The Unconscious Jedi*  
*Wan-Abi: The Making of a Fan Film*  
*Andy's Episode*  
*Jar Jar's Walking Papers*  
*Power of the Sith*  
*Empire of One"*

I didn't get to see all of these since it took all afternoon to show them but I watched for two hours.

"3:00 Douglas A. Anderson: *The Annotated Hobbit*—Douglas A. Anderson, author of *The Annotated Hobbit*, Revised and Expanded Edition, to be published by Houghton Mifflin in September, will present "Annotating and Illustrating *The Hobbit*," a slide show covering how *The Hobbit* has been professionally illustrated over the years, as well as



the background of J. R. R. Tolkien and his writings. Anderson is a renowned Tolkien scholar whose expertise in the complicated textual history and evolution of both *The Hobbit* and *The Lord of the Rings* has led to the inclusion of his essays on these topics in most editions of those works published in English since 1987. Room 16AB"

It was an interesting if long slide presentation showing how *The Hobbit* has been illustrated since its first publication. The foreign interpretations were esp. interesting. Douglas thought the French version had Bilbo looking like an always-smiling Buddy Hackett. The Portuguese figures, even the wolves, had huge noses. Some of the illustrators showed Gollum as large which displeased Tolkien who thought of Gollum as being about the same size as Bilbo. The cover for the first US paperback was done by a woman who hadn't even read the book but was a friend of CS Lewis so she put a red-eyed lion in the lower left. After Tolkien saw it, got upset and the woman finally read the story, she took the lion and emu-looking thing out!



Larry Niven far right

"4:30 Writing Science Fiction and Fantasy—What sparks writers' imaginations to create stories of speculative fiction? How far does a work have to differ from our reality to

*qualify as sf or fantasy? Who determines the rules that govern imaginary worlds and their inhabitants? Just where does the difference lie between science and magic anyway? Seven of science fiction and fantasy's finest discuss these questions and more: David Gemmell, whose fantasy novels have reached readers on three continents for nearly 20 years (Stormrider) is his most recent; Kevin J. Anderson, whose novels in 2002 include Hidden Empire: The Saga of the Seven Suns, Vol. 1, Dune: the Butlerian Jihad, Hopscotch, and Captain Nemo; Rebecca Moesta, Kevin J. Anderson's frequent collaborator, whose Buffy the Vampire Slayer: Little Things is the "hot off the presses"; Emma Bull, whose novels include the classic urban fantasy War for the Oaks. Will Shetterly, whose semi-autobiographical Dogland is newly available in Tor's Starscape edition; Peter David, whose recent works include Knight Life, Woad to Wuin, and Sir Apropos of Nothing; Hugo and Nebula Award-winning author Larry Niven, who created Ringworld and the Man-Kzin Wars among his varied universes; and moderator Maryelizabeth Hart, the publicity manager for Mysterious Galaxy bookstore in San Diego and co-author of two nonfiction companions to Buffy and Angel. Room 7B*

There were only 6 chairs for 8 authors so after finding one more chair one of the speakers had to sit on the floor behind the table. Once again, Peter David tried to dominate the panel but Larry Niven's reputation and length in the field meant that even David had to defer to him. Niven seemed like a typical nerd. They told stories of how they got into writing. David Gemmell talked about thinking of himself as a thriller writer, but when all his stories were rejected and he got cancer, he wrote a fantasy story that was accepted. His publisher then demanded more fantasies which he wrote, but he still thinks of himself as a thriller writer!

"6:00 The  
Tribune  
Trilogy:



*Andromeda, Mutant X, and Adventure Inc.— This look at three Tribune Entertainment TV shows is hosted by Henry Urick, vice president for /marketing and Philip Segal, senior vice president for programming and development. First up will be the women of Andromeda, the number-one weekly series in syndication. Lexa Doig (Andromeda) and*



*Laura Bertram (Trance Gemini) will provide a lively Q&A session and present exclusive preview scenes from this fall's new episodes and the new Andromeda DVD. Then it's Mutant X with John Shea (Adam), Victoria Pratt (Shalimar Fox), and Victor Webster (Brennan Mulray) making a rare appearance together. Exciting new elements and world premiere scenes for this fall are revealed. Finally, you'll get a quick peek at Adventure Inc., Tribune's newest series, starring Michael Biehn (Aliens, Terminator, T-2, The Abyss). Room 6BCDEF"*

I watched this panel when the Andromeda speakers were on. Laura Bertram is as spacey in real life as Trance is! Rev Ben will come back for a visit in the next season.



Smoot had played golf that afternoon, taking longer than he'd expected. I told him I was going to the Mark Hamill event, not knowing it would take the entire evening:  
"7:00 Mark Hamill Wants You in his Movie –Join Luke Skywalker and his force as he films scenes for his first feature film directorial effort. Don't miss your opportunity to be a part of this historic mockumentary as Mark Hamill (Star Wars, voice of The Joker on the animated Batman) dons the mask of a fictional documentary filmmaker and plunges with his crew of crazy characters—played by Billy West (Futurama, Ren & Stimpy); Jess Harnell (Animaniacs, Lilo & Stitch and Scooby-Doo), and Roger Rose (Rugrats in Paris: The Movie)—into the heart of Comic-Con! Along the way he discovers a hilarious, but very human story in the land of pulp fantasy. Room 6A"



The 'warm-up act' was a panel of a large group of voice-over actors including the guys that do Pinky & the Brain, Wacko of the Animaniacs, the Yellow M&M, Bender, Ren & Stimpy. It was hosted by Gary Owens, the famous voice of many narrations as well as Powdered Toast Man on Ren & Stimpy. They were all hilarious - one of the high points of the day. The guy that voices Wacko told a funny story about a boy at Disneyworld who didn't believe he was who he said he was. After their presentation, Mark Hamill, who had introduced the panel, came back in make-up for the filming of the 'mockumentary.' The audience was asked to do 'reaction shots' of surprise, laughter, bemusement. Then came the first take, during which one of the actors almost fell in my lap. If they use that clip I'll be in the movie! But the director wanted a second take so we had to go through the whole thing again;. After that it was getting close to 10pm and even though I'd finally reached Smoot to tell him why I wasn't back at the hotel, I gave up on movie-making and went back for a very late supper and again collapsed into bed.

Saturday, August 3

This was the day of big presentations and Smoot was willing to join me for them.

*"10:30 Lucasfilm Presents Behind the Scenes of Star Wars: Episode II: Attack of the Clones— A look back at the movie that spawned the summer's toughest action hero: Yoda Lucasfilm's Steve Sansweet gives us a look at the story, the love angle, the music, and the action sequences and goes behind the scenes at ILM in specially cut minidocumentaries. He'll also examine the worldwide reaction to Clones and some of the funniest moments on TV surrounding the movie's*



*opening. Plus, he'll take look ahead as George Lucas prepares the final chapter of the Star Wars saga. Room 20"*

This was one I most wanted to see. The videos Sansweet showed were great - on the hype and anticipation over the movie, some behind the scenes shots and one of the deleted scenes that will be in the DVD. I felt like I'd had a taste of what Celebration II was like.

After a quick lunch of leftovers from the trip, we went to see the end of the Paramount presentation that included Marina Sirtis talking about the new Star Trek Next Gen movie Nemesis. She hadn't been in the original program but I was glad she had been added. She's always funny and entertaining and tried not to reveal too many spoilers as she narrated a slide presentation. The movie opens



with her and Riker's wedding. She's wearing a pink wedding dress (she couldn't see herself in white!) that she asked to be cinched very tight. She said when she heard about the movie she worked hard to lose weight to get into the dress. Her husband said they could just let it out. After he regained consciousness (!) she told him that wasn't the right response. She also wanted really high heels but between the tight corset and heels, the two days it took to film the sequence seemed very long! She liked the new wig she got and enjoyed working with 'the boys' again. But she made some slightly snippy, but funny comments about how much focus was on Stewart and Spiner.

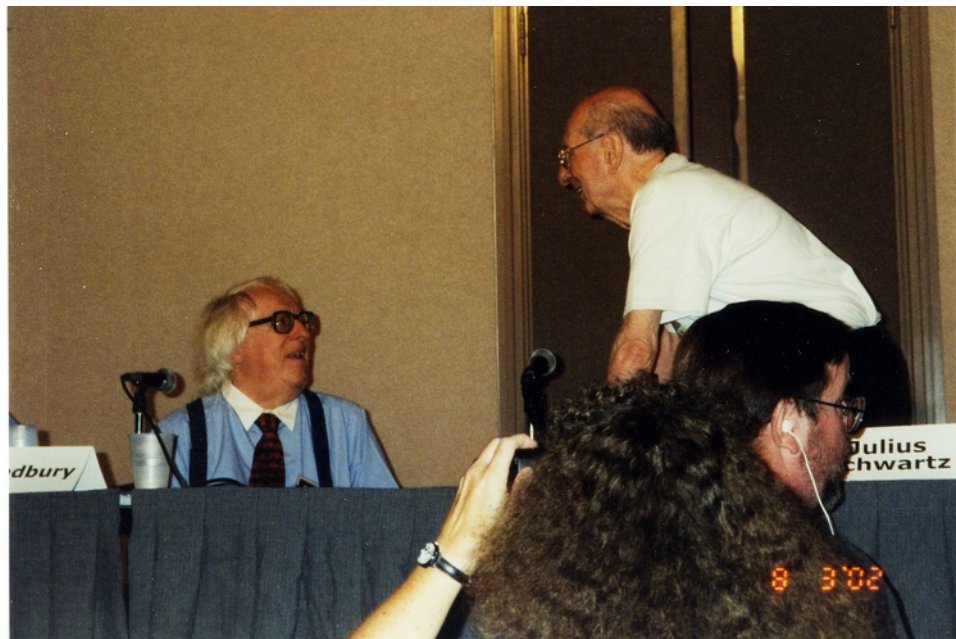
*"1:00 New Line: Lord of the Rings--New Line Cinema takes you behind-the-scenes of the next installment in Peter Jackson's epic The Lord of the Rings: The Two Towers. Academy Award winning visual effects master Richard Taylor will be on hand with Gino Acevedo and Warren Mahy of the WETA effects team to show an exclusive reel and answer questions on the visual effects, prosthetics, armor, and weapons, as well as the making of this highly anticipated new film in the trilogy. Highlights also include an interactive documentary on wizards featuring Christopher Lee (Saruman); a Q&A with Sala Baker (Sauron) and Lawrence Makoare (Lurtz), and surprise guests. Room 20"*  
There was a video welcome from Peter Jackson who was in Australia finishing The Two Towers. It was interesting to hear the details of what it took to create the movie - make-up, weapons, locales, etc. But we decided to sneak out early to hear the end of:



*"1:00 Futurama-o-rama!—Matt Groening is proud to present Comic-Con's fourth annual Futurama funfest! Join Matt and, executive producer David X. Cohen, along with an all-star panel for a preview of the upcoming Futurama season. You can pester writers Bill Odenkirk, Patric Verrone, Ken Keeler, and Dan Vebber, match wits with voice actors Billy West, John DiMaggio, Phil Lamarr, and Maurice Lamarche, and bow in reverence to animation producers Claudia Katz and Rich Moore. In addition to the stellar conversation, be prepared to be the first in your quadrant to see an exclusive Futurama video premiere! Room 6BCDEF"*

Once again the voice-over actors were hysterical, esp. the buy who does Bender. We didn't get to see the video though.

Then came a very big name: Ray Bradbury. *"He could may well be the most famous science fiction writer of all-time. Ray Bradbury joins us for a special Saturday, August 3 panel with his life-long friend Julius Schwartz.. With a career spanning books, comics, and film and television adaptations of his work, Bradbury*



*remains one of the best-selling SF writers. His latest collection of short stories One More For The Road: A New Story Collection is in bookstores now."*

*2:30 An Hour with Ray Bradbury and Julius Schwartz—One of the all-time great science fiction authors and one of the all-time great science fiction editors (and before that, agents) chat about their careers. And there could even be a surprise guest or two! Mark Evanier gets the ball rolling with Ray Bradbury and Julius Schwartz. Room 6BCDEF"*  
Both Bradbury and Schwartz were much funnier than I'd expected. The moderator tried to take control of the presentation but Schwartz took over and asked Bradbury some great questions that got him to tell us funny stories about his life. One was about his attending a party with a group of people who didn't think we'd ever make it into space. He asked for their phone numbers and when Neil Armstrong walked on the moon, he called them up, said "You stupid son of a bitch" and hung up!

Smoot was tired and left but I stayed for the next talk:

*"4:30 Spotlight on J. Michael Straczynski—The mega-popular creator of Babylon 5 and Jeremia, is also the writer of Marvel's flagship title, The Amazing Spider-Man. J. Michael Straczynski will talk about his TV projects, his upcoming plans for comics in general, and Spidey in particular and answer questions from the audience. Room 6BCDEF"*

But when it became evident that it was going to be a slobbering love-fest with the audience treating JMS like a god, I decided to leave.

We decided to splurge and have a fancy early Anniversary dinner at Ruth's Chris Steak House, then back to the convention center. One of the PlayTrek people had warned not to go to the masquerade, that we'd want to tear our eyes out and replace them with black buttons! But we decided to check it out. We hadn't gotten tickets to get into the ballroom so we watched it on the big screen in the Sail/autograph room.

*'8:00 The Masquerade—The biggest event at Comic-Con has moved to the state-of-the-art Ballroom 20 as a new venue. The costumes! The contestants! The thrill of victory, the agony of defeat, the question of "how the heck did they do that ..." —the Comic-Con costume competition can't be surpassed! Your MC for the festivities is actor Robert Trebor (Salmonius from Hercules and Xena). "*

It started with the kiddie entries which were not very interesting except for the Klingon cheerleader. She was great! Then some teenagers did a version of When Worlds Collide - a parody of the Star Wars and Lord of the Rings combined. The characters included Frodo/Luke, Galadriel/Leia, Aragorn/Han, Gandalf/Yoda, Sauron/Vader - very creative. But we decided our eyes were turning into black buttons so we went back to our room.

Sunday,  
August  
4



Our 29th anniversary. Little did we know 29 years ago where we'd be today!

Smoot went to see:

*"11:00 J. R. R. Tolkien: The Nature of Evil—Peter Jackson's movie version of The Fellowship of the Ring proved last winter's big hit. Many attributed its success to America's own "war against evil" and the urge to escape from current events into a traditional vision of moral certainties. A closer look at Tolkien's vision of evil, however, reveals complexities not shared by conventional oversimplifications. How is evil actually presented in Tolkien's work, and what lessons does he offer? Atanielle Rowland, William Stoddard, Jefferson Swycaffer, and Stephen Potts (moderator) try to answer these and other questions. Room 18"*

He said it had some interesting insights including the idea that the health and stability of the king is reflected in his realm. So when Denethor starts to wither, so does Gondor.

I was starting to worry I wouldn't have time to really go through the Exhibit/Dealers room so I took time for that. I bought a Star Wars lighted necklace from Japan and a magazine done by Suncoast for Celebration II.

Smoot and I met back for:

*"12:30 Muppets Movie Preview: Kermit's Swamp Years—Every frog has a first adventure, and now you can get a sneak peek at Kermit's! Kermit's Swamp Years is the never-before-told story of how the world's most famous frog left the swamp for the very first time and began an adventure that would change his life—and ours—forever. See*

*exclusive clips of this original made-for-video live action movie, brought to you by The Jim Henson Company. Room 6A"*

I had thought it would be an overview of the Hensen company but it was just about their new movie so we left early in order to check out and get on the road by 2pm. We got back to Scottsdale around 8pm, exhausted but happy. At least I was happy. I had had a wonderful time at the con and want to go again. Next year it will be held July 17-20 which is lucky because if it had always been the first of August we'd always be celebrating our anniversary there and that might be a little too strange, even for me!



Overall perceptions: Much better organized than the other cons I've attended. Even though there were lots more people than at a usual con, the organizers obviously knew what they were doing. There were probably 10-15 males for every female and there were very few older women. The people represented an interesting cross-section of fandom. I saw very few ST costumes, mainly Klingon and one Ferengi, but the panels on ST were well attended. Yes, you could tell the con participants on the street, but they were friendly on the bus and the street and waiting in lines. I was sorry to see only a few people at Jeremy Bulloch's autograph booth on Friday, but there was a nice long line on Saturday. Peter Mayhew had his own booth in the Exhibit Hall but there weren't any people there when I walked by and asked to take a picture. It was sad to see the more

marginal actors from over the years sitting at their lonely tables waiting for someone to talk to them. I guess it's a way for them to make sure extra money but it seems humiliating. On the other extreme, the artists, toy designers, voice actors and other behind the scenes people seemed thrilled at the enthusiastic response they got from fans. I asked one of Hasbro's toy designers to sign the action figure poster they were giving out and to mark the toys he'd designed. He seemed pleased to be asked and noted on my poster, "Thanks for noticing me."

Here is a review of the 2002 con from <https://wgcgcomics.blogspot.com/p/2002-san-diego-comic-con-report.html>

“Comic-Con appeared to be, by many accounts, a great success. Early reports pegged attendance at about 70,000—a record number for the show that, if true, represents a remarkable 20 percent increase over the year before. [As any regular attendee of Comic-Con can tell you, over the past several years, the convention center has been under renovation, nearly doubling the size of the facility. Yet even with approximately 400,000 square feet of exhibition and meeting space, the show seemed just as crowded as ever. On the Saturday of the show, fire marshals reportedly temporarily stopped people from entering the convention center because the facility reached full capacity allowed by fire regulations.

Of course, there are distinct advantages and disadvantages to a show this large. On the plus side, the more the merrier. I have been attending this show now for nearly 20 years and I have often characterized it as a "circus." Excitement and energy levels are high, and even friends of mine who are not comics fans enjoy the show. This is also partly due, of course, to the show's broader focus on not just comics but popular culture. I always leave the show re-energized and looking forward to doing my own comics work.

On the negative side, let's face it, the show is just so damned huge! Parking was a serious problem this year. And someone attending all four days of the show would have problems being able to thoroughly explore the entire floor and all the booths, let alone also attend all the panels that interested them. The organizers partly mitigate this problem by generally grouping similar booths together—if you're interested in indie publishers, small press folks, or back issues, you generally knew where to go to find most of them. But it must be sensory overload for newbies.

There were also complaints that some exhibitors -- most notably the back issues dealers and small press area—had been further "ghetto-ized" by the show and placed away from the main center of action. I must admit the location and arrangement of the small press area—where I am traditionally placed when I exhibit—was not very



appealing to me. Still, San Diego is the largest comic-book convention in the country so it is an important venue to participate in.

Though the show was gargantuan, it was still an enjoyable experience. I look forward to attending again next year, hopefully as an exhibitor with new material!”

The reviewer thought it was crowded with 70,000 attendees, though the Wikipedia listing for the 2002 attendance was 63,000. There were 70,000 in 2003 when we went again. But in 2019, the last before the Covid pandemic, attendance was 135,000+

This review from [http://www.mwctoys.com/FEATURE\\_080702.htm](http://www.mwctoys.com/FEATURE_080702.htm) - “Arnold Schwarznegger popped in for the T3 panel, James Cameron showed up hyping the film Solaris at the X-men 2/Daredevil panel, and as regular guests, Ang Lee attended the Hulk panel and Ben Affleck was there for the Daredevil panel. They showed clips from the films, talked about where things were, and answered lots of fan questions. These panels are always a good reason on their own to attend the show, and there was a tremendous variety covering shows like Futurama, the Haunted, Birds of Prey, Adult Swim, the Two Towers, and of course Star Wars. There were literally dozens of panels over the course of the four days, and you can always find a few to grab you no matter what your peculiar interests might be. Mark Hamill is doing an indie film, sort of a mockumentary, on the whole comic book icon world. He was shooting at the con, covering the comic con side of the business and the general fanboy sort of characters.”

I knew when Arnold and other Hollywood stars showed up that the gathering was going to be different in the future and it was.