

Finding a Sci-Fi convention in Eastern North Carolina is no longer a fantasy.

Mac Daddy's Entertainment Center is inviting all trekkies, ghost hunters, gamers and more to the area's first Crystal Coast Con Sci-Fi and Gaming Tournament on Oct. 15 from 10 a.m. to 7 p.m. The Cape Carteret entertainment center will be transformed into a family friendly science fiction experience with hourly door prizes, costume contests, giveaways, dozens of vendors and more.

Connie Nolter, general manager for Mac Daddy's and director for the Crystal Coast Con said, so far, response to the convention has been eager anticipation.

"We have received a lot of feedback that people are excited that we would even (hold a convention)," Nolter said. "Mac Daddy's owner Mac Holz is also a Sci-Fi fan, so this is a labor of love that is close to his interest and he is excited about bringing it."

At 11 a.m., gamers will be getting their fingers ready as they battle in "Magic: The Gathering," "Tekken" and "Halo" tournaments. Visitors will get a chance to hang out with their favorite experts in the Sci-Fi and fantasy arena throughout the day.

Dustin Pari, the Paranormal Rockstar from "Ghost Hunter's International," will lead a discussion, Q&A session and take pictures and sign autographs. Greyson Wolf, a Hollywood FX makeup specialist, will create custom fangs throughout the day. Southeast Paranormal Investigators Association will give a demonstration on the "Prelude to Paranormal" and International Cryptozoology Establishment will give a demonstration, lecture, lead discussions and answer questions.

Rick Ankney of Tempest Comics and Games will give a History of the Comic Book session and Reimann Books of Richlands will be offering Sci Fi and fantasy books as well as fairy hair dusting and fairy beading.

One of the convention's most anticipated guests is "Comic Bot," an eight foot tall chrome robot machine that will be traveling from Tennessee to make a special appearance at the convention. Vendors will also be on site offering psychic readings, fantasy books, comic books, hand-crafted walking sticks, wands and staffs. This event is also a time for guests to wear their most creative, horrifying or flashy getups for the costume contest beginning at 2 p.m.

"We're going to have four separate categories; best fantasy, Sci-Fi, cosplay, and one for kids," Nolter said, nothing that winners will receive \$100 cash prizes in each category except for kids, which will be a \$50 Mac Daddy's gift card.

Newport resident Joe Wilkinson will be attending the convention as "Star Wars" antagonist Darth Maul with his trusty light saber in tow. Wilkinson is looking forward to experiencing his first convention and not having to travel very far to attend.

"I've never been fortunate to go to one close enough and have the money and time, so it's good to be so close to home and go do something that I love to do," Wilkinson said. "You grow up and you're totally into Sci-Fi as a kid and you see these people on TV and the things they get to do. It's good to go and see the people that make it happen."

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