

Library's comic con kicks off a fun summer of reading

By LINDSAY RENNER-WOOD lrenner-wood@somdnews.com

Jun 14, 2019

For a few hours on Saturday afternoon, the Waldorf West branch of the Charles County Public Library was the spot to be for local comic book fans of all ages.

Since 2015, said young adult librarian Bill Stea, the library has kicked off its summer reading program with C4, the Charles County Comic-Con. Although he envisioned an event catered more to young adults when the first convention was held, Stea said, over the years it has evolved to be suitable for a younger audience. Saturday's event featured everything from a green-screen photo booth for attendees to strike their best super poses to trivia contests to a cosplay competition that capped off the afternoon.

"Every year is fun," Stea said. Each year has run a little more smoothly than the last, he said, and CCPL program coordinator Abigail Worden estimated that about 300 people attended this year, although the final numbers hadn't yet been officially tallied. The feedback from attendees, Worden said, was resoundingly positive.

"We got a lot of 'thank you, this was so much fun,'" Worden said, noting the amount of activities and prizes made the event an attractive draw for both families with young children and teens and adults who are passionate about their "fandoms."

"We want to make it fun for everyone," Stea said. "Pop culture is a new form of literacy, I think. ... I've seen that this is much bigger than one group."

It isn't the largest comic convention in the world by any means, but Worden said the event's focus on all ages is what sets it apart and makes it popular.

"It's inclusive for all ages, especially the younger kids," Worden said.

“That’s the goal,” Stea added. “We want this to be open to all ages, and have it open both age and diversity-wise. It’s for anyone regardless of income bracket or anything else. We just wanted fun for everyone.”

By the end of the day, Worden said, they faced a “good problem”: throughout the event, they’d had so much interest in the summer reading program that they began to run out of some of the program shirts.

“This year, I feel we’re going to be empty in a month,” Worden joked. “It’s a great way to kick it off.”