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REGISTRATION

Cosplay Central is the place to go for everything costume! This year we are right in the hotel. No more unwieldy conditions - like last year - having to walk blocks away from the convention, etc. We're located on the main floor of the hotel in Salon B. Much more space than last year's hotel room. Registration for the Cosplay will be located there, as will the Hall Costume judging. The Costume Emergency First Aid Station will be available to all con-goers in need of repairs, and our photographer will be set up to take pictures of your great costumes!

A sample **COSPLAY REGISTRATION** form is available online. Feel free to download it, fill it out, and **BRING** it in to get yourself registered (don't send it back online). Liability and photo releases will be signed at that time. The Cosplay registration staff will go over it with you, help you create a name for your presentation; solve any visibility, locomotion problems, etc. (We'd really feel awful if we couldn't read your writing, and mispronounced your name, etc.) And, remember, check with the Operations Staff on the Bridge regarding your weapons **BEFORE** you register. No peace-bonded props, no cosplay registration.

If you have music or sound for your performance, it must be burned to a CD (in advance). We **DO NOT** have the equipment to burn it for you. It must have **ONLY** that segment of music/sound on it. During the performance, we don't have the time to search through your own personal CD's for the right track. And we can't/won't guarantee the return of your personal CD. **MAKE SURE YOU LABEL IT**, with your name and entry title. (I know requirements sounds harsh, especially if you've only decided to enter at the last minute. But otherwise, it creates so many problems for the Cosplay and sound crews.) Find a friend at the con to burn your music/sound track, and we will gladly accept it. Blank CDs will be available in Cosplay Central.

HAND IT YOUR MUSIC AT THE SAME TIME AS YOUR REGISTRATION - EARLY!. The cosplay/sound crew really needs the time to organize everything coming in.

Once you have handed in your registration, and gone over it with the Cosplay staff, you will receive a token which you can take to our official Cosplay photographer for **ONE FREE PHOTO**. This is our way of thanking you for entering the Cosplay. (You can order additional photos at a really good price). There will be a sign up sheet for a time slot to take your pictures, so register early and sign up for your time.

REGISTRATION FOR THE COSPLAY WILL OPEN AT NOON ON FRIDAY, UNTIL 10PM FRIDAY NIGHT. (Some of the cosplay staff would like to go to parties or sleep, too, you know!) **It will open again at 10am Saturday. COSPLAY REGISTRATION WILL CLOSE AT 2PM SATURDAY.** **There may be a possibility of limiting the numbers of people/entries this year (we're really getting big) so get registered early!**

HALL COSTUME JUDGING will also take place in Cosplay Central. A judging schedule will be posted; 5 time slots will be available. So gather yourself and friends, fill out the registration info available in line, and show us your best! AnimeIowa staff & volunteers **ARE** allowed in Hall.

COSPLAY PHOTOGRAPHY is being provided by Kraig Finney, the same guy who did such wonderful work last year. Cosplayers will get first dibs on his time, but ALL AnimeIowa con-goers are welcome to have their pictures taken. Orders for photos will be taken at that time. Group shots (i.e. All Vash costumed con-goers) can sign up for a reserved photo shot. Times and details will be posted. (We are looking for photographers who are willing to take hall costume pictures. You will be allowed to market those pictures at the con, and on-line.) Cosplay photos and hall Polaroids will be available for viewing, orders and pick-up on Sunday during the Cosplay Show and Tell.

In spite of your best efforts on your costumes, problems can arise and accidents can happen, and your wings, or your ears, or your armor (or something worse) can break and fall off. That's where the **COSTUME EMERGENCY FIRST AID STATION** comes to your rescue. It will be located in Cosplay Central, and available to all, free of charge. Just another wonderful service of AnimeIowa Cosplay Central.

Cosplay Central will close to all con-goers at 2pm on Saturday. The Cosplay staff will be involved in organizing the registration data, and rearranging the room into the **COSPLAY GREEN ROOM** between 2-4pm, only Cosplay staff, those people who have previously signed up for photography, and those who have DIRE costume emergencies, will be allowed in. The Green Room (prep and waiting area for the contestants) will open at 4pm for all contestants.

2. COSPLAY RELATED PROGRAMMING

COSPLAY 101:

Not only does COSPLAY CENTRAL direct the Cosplay, we help you enter it! How? By presenting the panel, COSPLAY 101. This panel is designed especially for those who have never entered a costume contest before. Tips and hints from cosplay / masquerade judges, and experienced contestants will help you feel more at ease on stage. You can ask for help in sharpening up your presentation, find out what does (and does NOT) impress judges (such as staying on stage toooooo loong), etc. Hear some funny stories about past contest mishaps and faux pas, and learn from those who have gone before. Cosplay 101 panel starts at 4:30pm Friday.

BASIC HAT MAKING:

I met with Lisa Keipp (of Past and Present Millinery) at CostumeCon 24 & 25, when she gave a marvelous panel on hat making. I was very impressed, and came away delighted to have learned something new. She has graciously consented to attend ANIMEIOWA this year, and present her hat-making panel to us. Hard as it is to make costumes, it's been even harder to find good information on how to make headgear. Lisa makes it so easy! Saturday at 9am.

Cosplay related panels will take place in a programming room (NOT Cosplay Central). Location to be announced

COSPLAY SHOW AND TELL:

The first thing people want to know about your costume is, "how did you do that?". On Sunday, from 10am to 2pm, Cosplay Central is open to anyone who wants to show off their costume,

3. COSPLAY RULES AND REGS

Of course, you can't have contests without rules. There are only minor tweaks from last year's rules, **BUT PLEASE READ THIS OVER**, so you don't miss anything crucial.

CATEGORIES: The Cosplay categories are the same as last year:

YOUNG FAN 12 years old and younger

All young fans entering will received a “goody bag” and the winner will received a medallion. Children whose parents /relatives/ friends have made their costumes are welcome to enter. Those parents, etc. will be eligible to compete in the beginner or experienced workmanship category.

BEGINNER

Open to those 13 and older who have never entered a costume contest, have entered a few contests (at anime, SF, fantasy or any other kind of costume contest) but not won a major award. This category is open to those who are just starting to compete.

EXPERIENCED

This is for those who have frequently competed, whether or not you have won awards. This is also for anyone who does costuming on a (semi) professional level) even if you've never entered. (People who work at school, community, or professional theaters, reenactment etc. belong in this category.) If you're good, **SHOW IT!** (Please don't embarrass yourself by claiming to be a beginner, when you know otherwise)

EXHIBITION

This is for people who would like to just show off their costume, but not compete for any awards. Frequently, Cosplayers who are planning to exhibit their costume at an upcoming event (like World Con), may want to gauge audience reaction by exhibiting first.

Staff members of AnimeIowa ARE allowed to compete in the Hall Costume contest, but NOT In the Cosplay. They ARE allowed to exhibit. Volunteers of AnimeIowa ARE allowed to compete in both contests.

Registration and judges will have the final word as to what category you belong to.

JUDGING AREAS

WORKMANSHIP (Costume and/or Prop)

Judges will be looking at three areas of a contestant's entry; prop and/or costume workmanship, and performance. Contestants are invited to enter judging for any or all three areas, but are not required to do.

Those who want to be judged for workmanship are asked to show up early (4:30pm sat) to give the judges adequate time to inspect your costume. To qualify for a workmanship award, the majority of your costume **MUST** be made by yourself. We realize that it's hard for most contestants to make their own boots, helmets, etc. But buying all your costume at GoodWill, changing the color of the hatband, and then entering your costume for workmanship just won't work! Items that have been purchased must **MUST** have undergone major revisions and alterations, or are minor items that complete the outfit.

What about purchased or commissioned costumes? If you bought most of your costume on-line or off the rack, it doesn't qualify for workmanship. (But you still can enter performance). If you have had your costume commissioned, or are acting as a mannequin for someone else, you can enter it in workmanship judging **PROVIDED** the person who made the costume for you is a registered attendee of the convention, and is there in the green room with you as part of your group (they don't necessarily have to be on stage with you!) The person who made the costume is eligible for workmanship judging. (People who are very creative, but just don't feel comfortable on stage deserve to have some recognition after all!)

PERFORMANCE

You don't have to be the world's greatest actor to enter for performance judging. In fact, if you don't have a little 'schtick', joke or action to do onstage, don't panic. A slow graceful walk around the stage, a turn to show the back of the costume, and a stately walk off is far more impressive than a joke that goes flat. Just remember, we have a lot of contestants (over 100 people in over 60 presentations last year) and we are getting bigger every year. **So KEEP IT SHORT – 30 SECONDS.** That is usually more than enough time for one person on stage. (There **MAY** be exceptions for larger groups, but that will be decided upon by the Cosplay director and stage crew on a case to case basis).

4. COSPLAY AWARDS

YOUNG FAN (for those 12 years old and younger)

This is primarily presentation, as most costumes in this category are the work of an adult – who will be judged in the beginner or experienced categories. The winner will receive a medal, but all young fan contestants will receive a 'goody bag' for participation.

WORKMANSHIP

This category is broken down into two parts. Costume workmanship and prop workmanship (also known as the "McGyver" award). Is the design original or interpreted

from another source? (Documentation such as pictures of your character are very helpful in showing the judges how well you have succeeded in your interpretation).

The costume entered for workmanship should be primarily your own work (not purchased). Judges will look at construction (are seams smooth, pieces fit well with no puckering, no gaps or broken seams, parts/hems aren't falling off). Is the design original or interpreted from another source? Documentation - such as pictures of your character or even a plastic model - are very helpful in showing the judges how well you have succeeded in your interpretation.

Props entered for workmanship will be judged on how well they are constructed, and how well they resemble the props carried by their character. Just duct taping pieces together, unless it's done well, usually doesn't cut it. (It usually falls apart!)

PERFORMANCE

Performances will be limited to **30 seconds per person**, slightly longer for groups (of no more than 6 people). There will be NO microphones for use, and usually any dialogue from the stage can't be heard past the first couple of rows. So pre-record any music, sound or voice-over and then lip-synch it. The judges will very much appreciate being able to hear you! Any large movements, such as dance or stage 'fighting' must be choreographed in advance (no free form), and **MUST** be cleared during walk-through/rehearsal with the director. **IF IT ISN'T IN REHEARSAL, IT CAN'T BE IN THE COSPLAY.** (If it is, you will be disqualified). Our liability insurance doesn't cover injuries to performers, audience, or worse yet, judges! So keep it safe!

Unless you plan to **ONLY** walk onto the stage, and walk off, everyone is required to attend walk-through/rehearsal. Give yourself a chance to become familiar with the stage. And give the stage crew and Cosplay director a feel for how the show will go. Know where the entrances/exits are, the height of the steps, any visibility problems, etc. You'll feel far more comfortable when the show goes on.

BEST OF SHOW

Scoring is done by a scale of 1 (least) to 10 (best). You don't necessarily have to be the top scorer in all categories, but if you score high in all workmanship and performance categories, you may be in contention for BEST OF SHOW! (Those who enter just workmanship/prop or workmanship /costume, or just performance are not eligible for BEST OF SHOW). You may not be the highest scorer in all categories, but your combination score, plus the reaction of the audience (that indefinable "WOW" reaction) may put you over the top!

JUDGES

Contrary to popular perception, the Master of Ceremonies (MC) and the judges are (usually) NOT part of the Cosplay or Anime Iowa staff. They may be one of the guests of honor for the convention, or they are invited to participate because of their expertise in costuming and presentation. Good judges are hard to find, and may be brought in at the last minute. If you want to know why judges judge the way they do, attend the Cosplay 101 Friday afternoon, and find out! (If you've had any experience with costume construction or performance, please consider volunteering to be a Hall Costume judge!)

5. COSPLAY SHOW SCHEDULE

Cosplay Central (Salon B) opens **Friday at NOON** for registration. Cosplay registration, Cosplay Central closes at **2pm Saturday** so the staff can organize all the registration data, and reconfigure the room into the Cosplay Green Room, which will open at 4pm Saturday (Need some volunteer hours? At 4pm, we will need volunteers to help move chairs and tables around).

The Main Stage area (Salon C) opens at 4:30 for walk-through/rehearsal. Please, you must show up for this! You don't want any surprises with your presentation (like realizing you can't walk up the stairs in your costume – there will be no ramps – or you can't fit in the service hallway that leads to the stage.) Let us solve these problems for you, **BEFORE** you go on stage.

All workmanship judging will occur between 4:30pm and 6:30pm.

All rehearsal/walk-throughs will occur between 4:30pm and 6:30pm.

The LAST CALL FOR COSPLAYERS will be at 6:30pm.

Rehearsal/walk-throughs will stop, as (hopefully) will workmanship judging. You must be in the room by then, as Cosplay staff needs to brief everyone about the schedule, line you all up in the order of presentation, and solve all those last minute problems that arise. If you are not present at 6:30pm, you will **NOT** be allowed to compete unless you have already cleared it with the cosplay staff. You will be introduced to the Cosplay staff; They will tell you how to get up on stage, where to exit, etc. They will assign you to den 'mommies' and job is to baby sit you, get you water, hold your hand and calm your nerves. They will also be assigning you places in the line-up and showing you where you will sit and wait. (Good idea to eat before you arrive at 6:30pm!)

The House opens for audience seating begins at 7:00pm, and that means we need to be quiet (as we share a wall with the main stage area.) And the show goes on at 7:30pm. Once we got going, last year's show went about 2 hours, and we hope to have the whole program run about the same this year. Which means we need everyone in line, paying attention, and moving **quickly**. We don't want to bore the audience, much less the judges, now, do we?

After your presentation, you will be escorted back to the Green Room, via the outer hallways. You will resume your chair in line, and remain quiet, as a courtesy to other Cosplayers, especially those on stage. There will be some food and a water station available. When all the presentations are done, the judges will retire to deliberate, and the Anime Music Videos will be show (as half-time entertainment).

Once the videos are finished, the Cosplay awards will be presented. The winners will be announced in the Green Room, and will be lined up in order, to be escorted to the stage (via the service corridor). The winners will return to the Green Room,

After the awards and any announcements have been presented, we will announce to the audience that pictures can now be taken. Each Cosplay participants will have been brought back to the Green Room after their presentation, and reseated in the order they went out on stage. Each presentation will be brought out in the same order, and allowed a couple of minutes on stage for **fan photos**. We will have three groups on stage at one time, to allow maximum viewing space. You will then be encouraged to walk out onto the patio opposite the Green Room (weather permitting) for additional picture taking. This way, we don't clog the hallways with your rabid fans wanting to shoot you!).

6. COSPLAY PHOTOS and DVD VIEWING and SALES

Unfortunately, last year's recording of the Cosplay was pretty much a bust, as the sound/electrical systems of the theater weren't very compatible with our equipment. What we ended up with was pretty much unusable. So this year, we're hoping to have a professional videographer record the Cosplay show, and will try to have at least raw (unedited) footage available for viewing a programming room some time on Sunday in Cosplay Central - time to be announced.

We also hope to have DVDs of the Cosplay for sale soon after the convention. Pre-orders will be taken at the viewing, and in Cosplay Central on Sunday, and on-line. Come join us Sunday and see yourselves shine!

Those who have earned a free photo (by participating in the Cosplay) can pick up their pictures on Sunday at the Photo viewing. If you still haven't had your picture taken, get into costume, assemble your group, and come on into Cosplay Central on Sunday.

COSPLAY SHOW AND TELL

When costumers meet, the first words are "Hi, how are you? How did you DO that?!" Well, if you'd like to see how they did that for yourself, come to Sunday's open panel, and find out. Anyone who has created a costume (not just cosplay or hall costume entrants) is welcome to bring their creations, and discuss the production methods. Show and Tell will be held in Cosplay Central from 10am to 2pm. Come and show off a little, you deserve it!