

Updated January 2025

Please be aware that this contest will be judged on stage, without any pre-judging/up-close inspection of your cosplay, unless it is over 50% handmade. Judges and participants who are caught in violation of this will be immediately removed from the contest and will not be allowed to participate or compete for three future contests. Participants are responsible for specifying on pre-registration or registration the %-handmade of their cosplay. Participants who fit this criteria will be sent another form via email to fill out for pre-judging/up-close inspection of your cosplay.

Sign up and registration

- There are only 15 slots available for Smol potato
- There are only 10 slots available for Grizzled veteran
- Casuals are open for up to 20 cosplayers
- All contestants are encouraged to pre-register online to save their spot in the category they wish to participate in.
- Online pre-registration ends **April 4th, 2025 at 12:00 AM EST**. There will be announcements made if there are still spots available. If there are spots still available, in-house registration will be open from **12:00 PM EST until an hour before the contest begins**. There will be no exceptions for late entries.

Contest Categories

- **Smol potato:** beginners at cosplay are recommended to go here. If you have just started getting into cosplay, or if your cosplay is at least 20% handmade, we recommend you enter this category.
- **Grizzled veteran:** cosplayers who have been through the trenches and seen the spoils of war are recommended to enter here. If you are new to cosplay and are confident in your abilities to stand against the big leagues, you are more than welcome to enter. All cosplay entered here must be at least 50% handmade.
- **Casuals:** cosplayers who aren't in it to win it or who's cosplay is below 25% handmade are allowed to strut their stuff on the main stage before the contest begins. There is no judging and no prizes.

Limitations of Liability: Fandom Fest SWMI and all of its participating libraries are not responsible for any incorrect or inaccurate information, printing errors, technical or human error which may occur in the administration of the Contest or the processing of entries. Fandom Fest SWMI is not responsible for any injury or damage to persons or property which may be caused, directly or indirectly, in whole or in part, from entrant's participation in the Contest or receipt or use or misuse of any prize.

Contest Awards

Smol potato

- **1st place:** \$TBD and certificate of participation
- **2nd place:** \$TBD and certificate of participation
- **3rd place:** \$TBD and certificate of participation

Grizzled veteran

- **1st place:** \$TBD and 3D printed gold limited edition Fandom Fest trophy
- **2nd place:** \$TBD and 3D printed silver limited edition Fandom Fest trophy
- **3rd place:** \$TBD and 3D printed bronze limited edition Fandom Fest trophy

All Casuals will receive a certificate of participation.

Judging System

Judging is done using a points system, with the most points one can earn being 30-45. Points are earned using these following criteria:

- Craftpersonship - **up to** 10 points maximum
- Overall appearance - **up to** 10 points maximum
- Stage Presence - **up to** 10 points maximum

If your cosplay qualifies for pre-judging/up-close inspection, you will be allotted **up to** 15 extra points.

Judges will base their decision on the criteria listed above

- **Craftpersonship:** how well your cosplay is made and presented on your person. This includes props, masks, helmets, hats, weapons, and footwear.
- **Overall appearance:** how your cosplay looks and moves on stage. Judges will look for how your cosplay appears visually as it is worn, how well cosplay items appear to be attached and incorporated, and the visual quality of your cosplay. This judging criteria will be based upon garments and props, **NOT** race, height, body shape, gender identification, religious garb, mobility devices, or health related devices.
- **Stage Presence:** this is based on how you present your cosplay on stage. Judges will look at your poses and how you show off your character, such as their attitude,

Updated January 2025

personality, and movements. Please remember that the judges may not know your character, so your energy and general stage presence will be considered.

Cosplay permitted

We want to see everyone shine by allowing all types of cosplay and cosplayers in the contest, so any cosplay may enter, including:

- Handmade
- Store bought
- Incorporation of both handmade and bought
- Old and new cosplays
- Cosplays that have won previous awards
- And anything else in between!

Staging rules

- Everything brought onto the stage must be removed at the end of the contestant's walk on stage.
- No items that can create a mess, be removed from your body or hand onto the stage, judging area, or crowd, or cause a disruption in any way are permitted. This includes, but not limited to, pyrotechnics, water/water guns, projectiles, throwing balls or stones, glitter, streamers, and/or slimes or sticky materials.
- You may not throw anything off the stage or into the crowd. No projectiles of any kind are allowed, and in doing so violates the Fandom Fest Code of Etiquette and could result in removal from the convention and Lake Michigan College property.
- Climbing onto or leaping off of the stage is prohibited.
- No live animals are allowed on stage or as part of the cosplay entry. If you or your accompanied helper have a guide animal, please refer to the Fandom Fest service animal policy, and let the judges and cosplay coordinator know at time of check in.
- You will have 30 seconds maximum on stage to strike poses and present your cosplay to the judges. You will follow makers on the stage as will be shown during rehearsal.
- The Casuals category will be first, followed by Smol potato, then Grizzled veteran.

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Updated January 2025

- Do not leave the staging area immediately. Photos will be taken of all participants, then categories, then of the winners after the show is done.

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