

We don't need no stinkin' badges!

Chicano-Con, Suicide Girls, MST3000 and more no-badge-needed events for the Comic-Con crowd

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We all cried a little when Zachary Levi made the announcement that NerdHQ wouldn't be at this year's Comic Con. The HQ was one of the more accessible events for non-badge holders, but there are still a ton of local breweries, art galleries, theaters and even museums that have put together events for nerds of all stripes. From zombie plays

to *Star Wars* spelling bees, we've rounded up some of the better events that will, hopefully, cheer up some of our badge-less readers. For more, check the *CityBeat* events calendar, the [SDCC Unofficial Blog](#) and [Outside Comic-Con](#).

First, put on a red cape and challenge siblings and parents to play some comic-inspired games at **Family Con** at Liberty Station Public Market (2820 Historic Decatur Road, Point Loma). The day has activities ranging from comic costume contests to a superhero scavenger hunt. It goes from 11 a.m. to 6 p.m. Thursday, July 20. Wear a super suit, despite the hot weather, and enjoy some free, genuine family fun. libertypublicmarket.com

Another alternative "Con" is the annual event to emphasize the importance of giving kids a creative platform and ultimately creating awareness for a diverse comic industry. **Chicano Con**, at Border X Brewing (2181 Logan Ave., Barrio Logan), does just this just as it portrays the allure of Mexican art and culture. The event is free and takes place from 1 to 8 p.m. Friday, July 21 through Sunday, July 23.



Scare the actual crap (OK, not literally, that would be gross) out of everyone with the scariest costume at the **SDCC Horror Cosplay Meetup**. Join other horror-enthusiasts, free of charge, for giveaways, a costume contest and more at the Gaslamp Quarter (614 5th Ave. Ste. E, Gaslamp) from 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. Saturday, July 22. After the event,

those over 21 can head over to Club Sabbath at Numbers (3811 Park Blvd.) for a Horror vs. SciFi afterparty, 9 p.m. to 2 a.m.

Speaking of horror, Turning Tydes Theater combines Stephen Sondheim's *Into the Woods* and AMC's *The Walking Dead* in their newest musical, ***Into the Walker Woods*** at the Geoffrey Off Broadway (923 1st Ave., Gaslamp). The show runs from Thursday, July 20 through Sunday, July 23, 7 to 8 p.m. and features lurching zombies, southern accents and songs such as "Sanity, Suffering, Gore." Yum. Tickets are \$16 at ticketleap.com. Right down the road, parody show ***Game of Thrones: The Musical!*** is playing at Tenth Avenue Arts Center (930 Tenth Ave., East Village). For \$30, catch another hit TV show turned to song and dance. Productions are at various times Thursday through Sunday evening (gotthemusical.com).

One of the more popular burlesque tours will be here Friday, July 21. **Suicide Girls: Blackheart Burlesque** features models from all around the world giving sultry, Con-inspired performances (think storm troopers dancing in bikinis to an indie soundtrack). It happens at The Music Box (1337 India Street, Downtown) at 9:30 p.m. Tickets are \$26 to \$28 at musicboxsd.com. San Diego's biggest music box, the Civic Theater (1100 Third Ave, Downtown) is reviving the 30-year-old soundtrack of **The Legend of Zelda: Symphony of the Goddesses** is an orchestral adventure featuring scores from Zelda games both old and new. The show is one night only, Friday July 21 from 8 to 11 p.m., and tickets are \$60 to \$100 at ticketmaster.com.



There's also some keynote brewing and cocktail events taking place all over the city. Attend a headlining DJ act by Game of Thrones cast member Kristian Nairn (Hodor!) at [Heroes Brew Fest](#) (2 p.m. Saturday, July 22 at Waterfront Park), enjoy some gluttony and drinking till you drop at [Hop Con](#) (7 p.m. Wednesday, July 19 at Stone Bistro & Gardens—Liberty Station), and talk about the A's, Beers and C's at the [Modern Times Beer Dinner and Star Wars Spelling Bee](#) (7 p.m. Thursday, July 20 at Biga San Diego).

In the Gaslamp Quarter, Alcon Entertainment and Warner Bros. Pictures will debut the virtual reality experience for the upcoming *Blade Runner* sequel with [The Blade Runner 2049 Experience](#), a virtual walk through the film's neon-lit setting. The free experience starts Thursday, July 20 and runs through Sunday, July 23 in the afternoon and evenings. Registration is on site and can be done in advance or the day of.

After experiencing virtual reality, actually get face to face with the cast of [Mystery Science Theater 3000](#). Creator Joel Hodgson, host Jonah Ray, their smart-ass robot companions and other members of the crew put on a live performance at Balboa Theatre (868 Fourth Ave., Gaslamp Quarter) Friday, July 21 and Saturday, July 22 at 7 p.m. Tickets are \$39 to \$299.

Worst case scenario: Just find a bar in the Gaslamp, order a cocktail and bask in the costumes, revelry and the guilty pleasures that unite all.

