

SAFC – 2018 Con Report by Ivic Wulfe

The Second South Afrifur convention has come to an end and with it comes another year to plan for the 2019 convention, details of which will be announced in January 2019 at latest.. In this report, as with last year's report, I will attempt to outline some of the particulars that made this convention more successful than last year.

As with last year's report, I would like to thank all 43 who came and made the convention enjoyable and would like to personally thank our Vice Chair Yukon and the rest of the con-staff:

Scratch – Accounts management and raffle organizer

Sudan – Con artist and venue liaison

Yote – Fursuit games and PR

Dan Leo Doge – Donations, registrations

Valerion – Stats and advisory role

As always all of our staff members did a lot more than their roles implied and were integral in their ability to continue the trend of last year's convention as well as help us improve on many aspects of it. For that, I would like to thank them for continuing the drive towards making the SAFC an ever-expanding venture.

Summary

South Afrifur 2018 kept the majority of its roots in the initial premise of creating a small and accessible convention in the Gauteng province as well as the majority of the things that made last year's convention work, including an Artist Alley, Raffle, Panel discussions and a charitable raffle. This year we tested the waters by adding fursuit games, along with also having a few activities like paintball and air rifle target practice, archery, horse riding and quad biking.

We are proud to announce that this year's total donation to our charity, Husky Rescue SA, was R12,000, and we have had a positive response from them in respect to that donation.

Decisions

Our choice of venue changed from Magalies Retreat to that of Getaway Coaches: www.getawaycoaches.co.za which is a beautiful modified train station just outside Cullinan that is usually used for bachelor parties and now in our case, furry conventions.

We'd also decided to have a theme at the convention for the first time, the choice was made easier by the venue almost having a built-in theme with the train cars and we'd chosen a Western thematic which went down very well with our attendees. Our conbadges were also geared towards this as well as a poker tournament on Sunday.

Successes and Shortcomings

Our convention attendees grew by 54% on last year's number from 28 to 43 and along with this our international guest amount grew from 1 to 7 with attendees from Europe and America as well as a returning fur from Europe, Bravura Lion.

The venue's meals were far better this year than last year and included a spit braai and a potjie which were delicious.

In respect to sleeping arrangements, there were a few complaints in this regard as to questions in respect to lack of adequate space and bedding. While everyone had a place to rest their head, logistics made a few

decisions far more difficult than they had to be. These issues are being addressed and notes have been made in this regard.

Oddities

While at the convention, an editor who also happened to be the wife of the owner of the establishment was present and took interest in our particular convention. She asked if she could do a piece about us and we agreed. She interviewed several of our attendees and the article was published in the magazine a week later. This also sparked interest from a radio station in the area where myself, YoteFox, Niexie, Iron Wolf Tempest and Dragon Wolf (now known as OwO) also attended to talk more about furies in South Africa. All of these public appearances were on random happen-stance, however, we took the opportunities to help show that there is a fair following of the Furry Community in South Africa.

General Consensus

While we acknowledge there were a few hiccups in respect to the venue (mostly regarding the bedding), the general consensus from the attendees were extremely positive and we hope to improve on some of the issues that were raised in our post con polling.

Closing Thoughts

Given the nature and the growth of the convention going forward and a larger data set to ask questions from we feel that SAFC 2018 was a far greater success than we'd imagined, with attendees genuinely enjoying the aesthetics of the venue as well as the general atmosphere. As you can also see we've made attempts to streamline our constaff's roles and it has been far better to have specific roles to fill in some cases which helps with a variety of things.

As I'd mentioned at the con quite often, we could not have achieved any of this if it weren't for the hard work put in by the staff nor of course without the attendees themselves. Moving forward we're also making a concerted effort to listen to the community as much as possible to keep this 'train' moving forward.

On a Personal Note

This convention proved to be even more stressful for me than last year. We'd set a benchmark and had weathered the first storm of (hopefully) many more to come. The national radio and magazine that were interested in us was a pleasant surprise, but came with their own stressors, though overall both the framing of the article and the radio stations question as well as the reception from the public were positive.

I believe that while there were some problems in respect to the venue itself we managed to ensure that everyone had a good time. We had some new South African furry faces that had attended and the furry games addition was very well done and I hope that we grow from strength to strength in that regard. As before, the acid test is still here. We have many things to learn and prepare for next year and we hope to continue growing from strength to strength with the feedback that we're currently running.

South Afrifur Convention

Ivic Wulfe