

Two Young Adult Projects: Kawaii Kon and Free Comic Book Day

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Graphic Novels and animation are popular with all ages, but teens especially find them exciting and enjoyable. Young Adult Librarians organized two wonderful projects highlighting these two formats: the Library Table at Kawaii Kon and Free Comic Book Day.

Kawaii Kon is an annual convention dedicated to anime (Japanese animation) where fans are welcomed to experience different types of events such as panels, concerts, video games, autograph sessions, and more. Held at the Hawaii Convention Center, this past Kon ran April 18-20, 2008.



Gayle Hirohata-Goto of Waikiki-Kapahulu Public Library lets an attendee choose a sticker after seeing her library card.



More attendees at the Library Table.



Day 3 Grand Prize winner
Cullen Miyamoto.

The Library Table was a great success, on average the Young Adult Librarians spoke with 370 adults, teens, and children each day. Attendees were at first surprised to see the Library Table, but they supported our being there very quickly. People who hadn't thought of a library in *years* got reacquainted with HSPLS.

We gave out various information handouts and attendees were surprised just how much anime and manga are available at public libraries. And the Summer Reading Program received a good response when we mentioned to the teens that manga is allowed for Summer Reading.

People who showed us their library card got to choose a special pin or sticker, and there was also a daily "grand prize" to one lucky person. We were very happy to notice that the teens seemed to have their library cards more than anyone else, and those with cards *definitely* felt superior to those without. Several schools' anime clubs

also attended; we spoke with students from Baldwin, Kalani, Lahainalua, and the University of Hawaii.

"Cosplay" is Japanese slang for "costume play," it means to dress up as an anime character. To be more involved with the Kon environment, I wore a homemade *Claymore* outfit and a Japanese school jacket.



Jolene Miyaji of Waipahu Public Library, Hillary Chang of McCully-Moiliili Public Library, & Gayle Hirohata-Goto.



Seigaku Middle School students from *Prince of Tennis* pose with a "classmate."

Our library presence at Kawaii Kon effectively "took our message to them," and reminded our prodigal library customers (of *all* ages) about the services provided by HSPLS. This outreach showed the attendees that HSPLS cares about what they care about, and that librarians really understand them.

Free Comic Book Day is always the first Saturday in May, and in 2008, nine branches participated in this fun program. It's very simple: show your library card, get a free comic book. Because public libraries are much more diverse than people realize having a program like this really broadens their view.

Each branch gives out about 150 comic books every year to all ages. This is a great invitation for everyone to visit their neighborhood library, make a library card if necessary, and discover the many services HSPLS has to offer. Our "regular" library customers also enjoy Free Comic Book Day because it's so different from our conventional programs.



Library customers receive their free comic book.