

## MAGFest 8 Was a Blast!

Written by Awol

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MAGFest 8 happened over the New Years weekend. For those who don't know MAGFest is a video game and music festival run by fans, for fans. MAGFest was held in Alexandria, VA., which is near Washington D.C.. Understand MAGFest isn't like PAX or E3 or any other huge game show. MAGFest is a small friendly convention. This year saw over 2100 people and its like everyone knows each other. Everyone I talked to was friendly and very into the spirit of the convention.

I think the best part of MAGFest is the live music they have. Every night there were 4 or 5 bands playing. These are small indie bands that for the most part either recreate video game music or write music based on video games. Not only do you get to enjoy a live show you will also have a chance to purchase their music at the show. Most of the music is from the older video games so for me its some of the best music that comes from gaming. I walked away that weekend with 2 CDs and websites for a bunch of bands to check out later.

If music isn't your thing don't worry, remember MAGFest is also about video games. They had a huge area setup for arcade and console games. Ranging from the oldies to the newer games. I stopped in and played some Mario Kart and Sonic and watched people try their luck on some Japanese music games. Not sure how these people do it as these games make Guitar Hero look like a kindergarten game. In one corner of the game room they had a challenge area setup.

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You could try your skills on some older games and see if you can bet the challenge. Some of these were just brutal most required pure skill to bet and we are talking skill that's been perfected. Upstairs they had a large BYOC lan room. I didn't spend much time here as I didn't have a PC at the show but walking around most were playing the normal FPS fair you would expect.

What would be a con without a dealer area. MAGFest does the dealer area a bit different than others cons. First they place the dealers right in the middle of all the action and secondly they can be open 24 hours a day. Not sure if any of the dealers stayed opened the whole show but they were there most of the time. What was for sale the most was older games. From NES to SNES and newer were being sold. If you were a collector of video games this would be the place to find them. Not only games sold but working systems as well. I saw a Virtual Boy still in the box and a top loading NES for sale.

MAGFest was a blast I know I will be going back next year and I recommend you do as well. Make sure to bring cash with you to buy from the dealers room. I would also recommend some energy drinks cause you will want to stay up late to play all the games and check out the live bands. If you are interested in MAGFest 9 or what happens at MAGFest head over to the MAGFest website and check it out.