



Buttons galore and other fan items are all the rage at Atlantis Fantasyworld on Cedar Street in downtown Santa Cruz. Credit: Jana Marcus

ARTS & ENTERTAINMENT

‘The Lost Boys’ fans gather in Santa Cruz ahead of a potential 40th-anniversary bash



BY JANA MARCUS

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Quick Take

Nearly 40 years after “The Lost Boys” turned Santa Cruz into Santa Carla, actor Jamison Newlander hopes to bring the film’s worldwide fan base together in Santa Cruz for the 40th anniversary of its 1987 release. Two October events featuring international fan art, live music and a screening will test the waters for something bigger in 2027.

Nearly 40 years after a gang of teenage vampires took over the Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk, apparently Santa Cruz still has a few creatures of the night wandering around.

And plenty of fans looking for them.

As [“The Lost Boys”](#) approaches the 40th anniversary of its release in 2027, the 1987 cult film continues to draw fans from around the world to the real-life locations that became the fictional town of Santa Carla.

Jamison Newlander knows because they keep telling him.

If you go

Who: The 418 Project & “One of Us”

What: “The Lost Boys” fan night – film screen, live music and panel discussion featuring Frog brother actor Jamison Newlander

When: Friday, Oct. 23, 7: 30 p.m.

Where: The 418 Project, 155 S. River St., Santa Cruz (large theater)

Tickets: \$35 advance; \$45 at the door;

Newlander, who played vampire hunter Alan Frog, travels to fan conventions worldwide and says the question of pilgrimages to Santa Cruz comes up repeatedly.

“There are a lot of fans that want to get to Santa Cruz for ‘Lost Boys’ stuff,” he said. “People in Europe, Australia and all over say, ‘Just tell me when and I’ll be there.’”



Jamison Newlander played the vampire hunter Alan Frog in “The Lost Boys.” Credit: Courtesy of Jamison Newlander

With no official 40th-anniversary celebration yet planned in Santa Cruz, Newlander says he began to feel responsible for getting something moving.

“If I can focus the energy of some of the fans and of the cast members of the film I’ve spoken to, we’d love to be all together in Santa Cruz,” he said.

The bigger dream is eventually turning that gathering into an annual event, perhaps building around the [Boardwalk’s summer screenings of the film](#) and expanding the idea to celebrate other vampire films as well.

But Newlander is also realistic about what it takes to turn an idea into a festival.

Bringing cast members to Santa Cruz costs money, and funding for a larger 2027 event has not yet been established yet. Newlander has spoken with fellow cast members, including Jason Patric and Corey Feldman, but says considerable work remains.

“I’m new at organizing events,” he said. “It’s not my skill set.”

Newlander is currently working with event organizer and author Jennifer Otter Bickerdike to develop plans for a “One of Us” weekend of events in 2027.

For now, October is a trial run. “We wanted to test the waters this year and see how much interest is there,” Newlander said.

“One of Us,” in partnership with The 418 Project, is presenting a monthlong “Lost Boys” fan art exhibition at Hotel Paradox on Ocean Street.

The exhibition, which runs through Oct. 30, features work inspired by the film, Santa Cruz, the Boardwalk, vampires, and the decades of fandom that have followed the movie. Organizers say submissions came from the Philippines, Mexico and Switzerland, from across the United States and as close to home as Boulder Creek.



One of many pieces of fan art inspired by “The Lost Boys,” on display at Hotel Paradox through Oct. 30. Credit: Art by Ercilia Medeiros, courtesy of The 418 Project

Hotel Paradox has its own connection to the movie. The property was a Holiday Inn when cast members stayed there during production in 1986.

For Newlander, that history makes it another natural gathering point.

“The Boardwalk is the key spot,” he said, “but to have people stay at the Paradox and have events there is super cool.”

The [celebration moves to The 418 Project on Friday](#), Oct. 23, for an evening built around the film and its long afterlife.

Salinas band The Dead Cassettes will perform six songs from the movie’s soundtrack, followed by a conversation with Newlander and Joe Ferrara, owner of Atlantis Fantasyworld, whose original downtown comic book store was recreated for the film. Jennifer Otter Bickerdike will host the discussion.

The evening also includes a screening of “The Lost Boys,” followed by signing and photo opportunities with Newlander.

“We hope these two events will be successful,” Newlander said. “No one has ever really done these kinds of ‘Lost Boys’ events in Santa Cruz before, so we want to get the ball rolling and see if it works.”

For Newlander, however, returning to Santa Cruz is about more than testing a festival’s viability.

He was 16 when he arrived here in 1986 to make the movie, and the experience remains tied to the place in ways he says can be surprisingly immediate.

“Coming to Santa Cruz is nostalgic for me,” he said. “The month I was there in 1986 to make the film was an incredible moment in my life. The smells of Santa Cruz bring me right back to that time.”

He also understands why fans feel a connection to characters they first encountered decades ago.

“The thing about being an actor is you end up taking on the roles you play, and they become part of you. They never really go away,” Newlander said. “For the audience, it’s the same thing. Those characters never go away.”

Neither, apparently, does Santa Carla.