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Coppell High School English teacher Zach Sherman stood up at his brother's wedding as he prepared to give his best man's speech. Instead of an expected poignant story, he began speaking about his childhood memories with his brother regarding *Star Wars*.

"Han Solo and Chewbacca were our favorite characters growing up," Sherman said. "The theme of [my best man's speech] was using that as an extended metaphor for our relationship."

Star Wars is arguably one of the most successful movie franchises. After six films, a spin off, and a few television series, the love for the story spans many generations. The space epic is set "a long time ago in a galaxy far, far away," and follows the journeys of several characters as they adventure through space.

The original *Star Wars* film was released in 1977. The success of the initial George Lucas film resulted in two sequels, The Empire Strikes Back and Return of the Jedi, finishing off the trilogy.

The massive popularity of the franchise led to a prequel trilogy being released between 1999-2005. However, as the case with many revivals, for fans of the original series, these prequels did not quite compare to their predecessors.

In 2012, Disney bought the rights for the *Star Wars* as well as the *Indiana Jones* franchises from Lucasfilm. After this, the production for the first movie in the third sequel series was announced.

"My first reaction was, 'awesome,' and then that was followed by trepidation of, 'please don't be as bad as *Attack of the Clones* and *The Phantom Menace*," CHS English teacher William Visco said.

Many actors, such as Harrison Ford and Carrie Fisher, from the original series are returning for the new film, but trailers also introduce new faces and characters, without actually revealing much of the plot.

Another new change will be the director. All six of the previous films were written, produced, or directed by George Lucas. The upcoming movie will be directed by science fiction and action director J.J. Abrams, who is known for directing the most recent *Star Trek* films as well as *Super 8*.

Presale tickets went on sale directly after the newest trailer was released on Oct. 19. Websites such as Fandango.com and Movie Tickets.com crashed after extreme traffic. It is important to note that the movie will not even be coming out until Dec. 18. Further, the film broke the IMAX record for presales.

"As I started learning more in terms of who the director was and how they were filming, I became really excited," CHS debate teacher Brian Bloss said. "Once the new trailer came out it sold me as something worth being really excited for."

Some fans will be attending an all day marathon the Thursday the film comes out. The marathon will begin at 1 a.m. and the films will play in chronological order leading up to *Star Wars: The Force Awakens*.

Visco is planning on going with his son, whose name was inspired by the franchises' popular protagonist, Luke.

"[The marathon] will be cool because I'm going to be one of the first people to see the movie," Visco said. "However since it is over Christmas break, I am going to take Luke to that movie, even though he's only 2. That will definitely be the first movie my son sees in a movie theater."

Excluding current and diehard fans, the film is attracting a lot of popularity from

a new audience. New graphics and effects are much more pleasing to a newer generation, especially compared to how dated the older films may look.

THE SIDEKICK

november 2015

This does not mean that only teachers and adults appreciate the series as a whole. Many students are fans of the movies because of their parents' influences.

"My dad introduced me to the franchise when I was 8 years old," CHS junior Pam Mason said. "I had to stay home from school because I was sick, so we watched all three of the original trilogy together. About 10 minutes into the first film, I was in love."

Newer viewers are also excited because the experience of going to a theater to watch a *Star Wars* movie is brand new to them

"I never thought that they would make another film and I can't wait to see what's in store for fans," CHS junior Alton Udeh said. "The movies have had a big effect on my life because they were some of the first I ever saw, and I loved it all."

However for some of the older fans, the experience will be very nostalgic. "My parents tell me that I saw *Return*

"My parents tell me that I saw *Return* of the Jedi in theaters when I was 4 years old," Sherman said. "My brother and I would constantly trade *Star Wars* roles and play with figurines. [The movies were] on constant replay in my house from the ages of 4 to 12."

Whether you can quote every line of the movies, or you just saw the trailer and became interested, the hype of the film seems very well deserved. The *Star Wars* saga seems to have something for every movie watcher, whether it be lightsaber action scenes, epic romances or high quality backgrounds and CGI.

For Star Wars fans, the adventures awaiting them in this upcoming film aren't so far far away.