

EUGENE COMIC CON TO CELEBRATE POP CULTURE THIS FALL

Get ready, Eugene: A huge pop culture phenomenon is in the works, and you're encouraged to dress in costume. Eugene Comic Con, organized and produced locally by long-time comic book fan and Eugene resident Royce Myers, is coming to Lane Events Center in November. The event will include celebrity guests from shows like *American Horror Story*.

Comic Con, short for comic convention, is a pop culture celebration that started as a comic book event in San Diego in the '70s. Since then, it's branched to include movies, television shows, artists, writers, cosplayers (people who create costumes and dress up as their favorite characters) and more. Conventions take place all over the world, and the San Diego show brings in more than 130,000 people a year.

There are still many details to work out, but Myers says that this is "the first time Eugene will have a large-scale, locally and professionally produced Comic Con. The community has been starving for something like this for a long time."

Myers says his interest in comic books started early, when he struggled with reading as a child and his mother encouraged him to read comics. "It actually improved my reading proficiency," he says. "Comics have brought me a lot of comfort and joy throughout my life."

Myers has lived in Eugene for more than 20 years and has attended comic conventions in San Diego and Seattle as a fan, and

he's participated as a comic book dealer at Oregon conventions. He says the comic book community in Oregon is huge.

"There are a lot of artists and writers that live in this area that are comic book professionals," he says, naming Mike and Laura Allred who worked on the comic *Madman* and DC Comics artist Matthew Clark.

For the Eugene Comic Con, Myers says he's trying to represent a wide span of interests. He's already announced five guests: actress Naomi Grossman of *American Horror Story*, costume play artist Nicole Marie Jean, WWE Hall of Fame wrestler "Hacksaw" Jim Duggan, comic book writer Anina Bennett and her husband, artist Paul Guinan, who has worked with DC Comics.

More guest announcements are to come, Myers says, and could include cast or crew from TV shows, movies and comics in the science fiction, fantasy and superhero genres. The convention will also feature comic book vendors, cosplay and more.

"I'm super thrilled with the response I've gotten so far,"

Myers says. In less than two months, the event has garnered more than 1,000 likes on Facebook, and nearly 3,000 people on Facebook are interested in attending. "It's been amazing already."

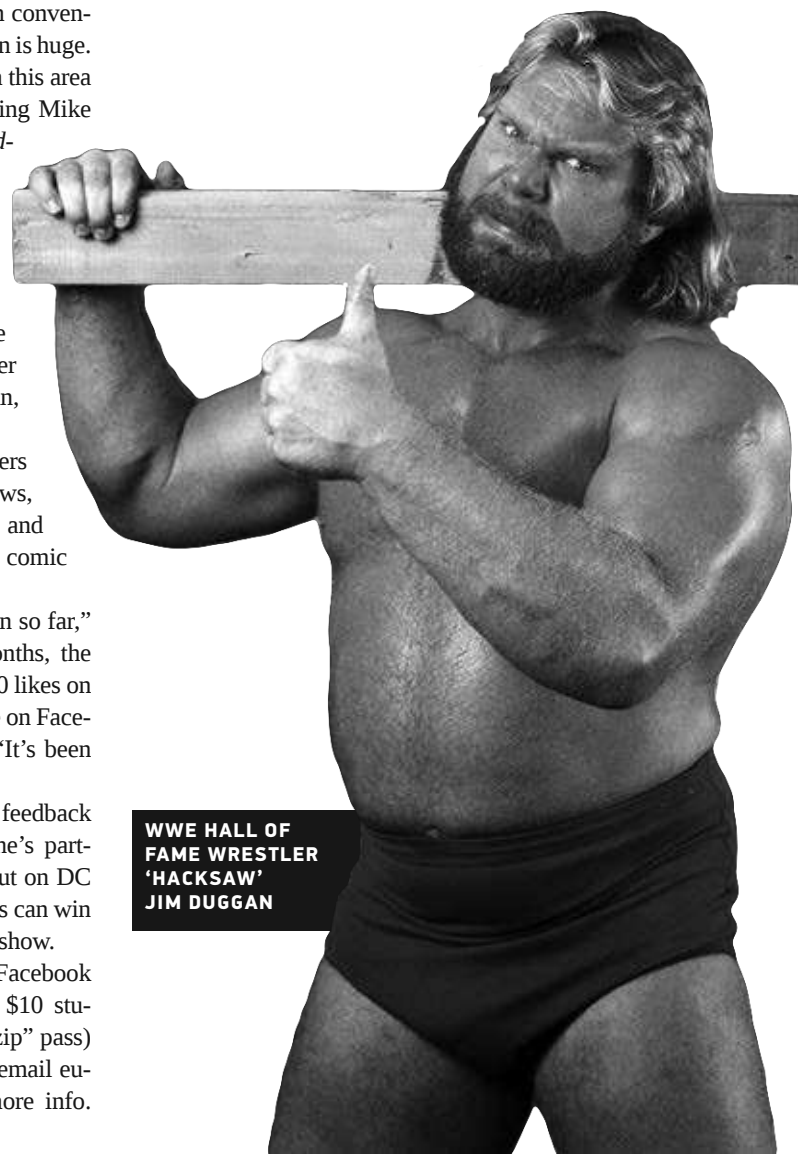
Myers says he's looking for feedback from community members, and he's partnered with Barnes and Noble to put on DC Comics Days July 8-12, where fans can win giveaway prizes and tickets to the show.

See Eugene Comic Con's Facebook page to buy tickets (prices from \$10 student tickets to the \$31 weekend "zip" pass) for the Nov. 14-15 convention or email eucon@eugenecomiccon.com for more info.

— Amy Schneider

'The community has been starving for something like this for a long time.'

— ROYCE MYERS,
EUGENE COMIC CON



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