Dallas family breathes life into comic con

By Jolene Guzman

The Itemizer-Observer

DALLAS — When the doors open at Cherry City Comic Con in Salem this weekend, that is the moment John Roach is looking forward to most.

A Dallas resident and new owner of the show, now in its second-year, Roach performed a feat worthy of the costumed super heroes who will patrol the show floor when he saved the show.

"I'm looking forward to people being happy and seeing that this show is so much more than they thought it would be," Roach said. "And to bring this to Salem when it had died. It wasn't just like the show was canceled, it was buried in a hole and somehow digging itself deeper every day."

A small event last year, Cherry City Comic Con ran into financial trouble. This year's event was canceled and vendors who had already paid didn't receive a refund.

Roach and his wife, illustrator Nicole Brune, were vendors at the 2014 event, having recently moved from Southern California to Dallas. He said the show, in spite of its size, was one of their best of the year.

He believed the show could carry on, and had the background in marketing and live-event planning to make it happen.

Roach became the proud owner Cherry City Comic Con on Jan. 6 and he spent the remainder of the month trying to rebuild burnt bridges with vendors and the venue, the Oregon State Fairgrounds.

"I had to basically give the fairgrounds my resume and show all this stuff because of all the problems they had with the previous show," Roach said. "I had to convince them to let us keep having the show."

He said 65 to 75 percent of the vendors staved, and he and Brune began making calls to their contacts in the comic con world.

In a few months, the show brought in 120 exhibitors and an impressive list of celebrity guests, including: Parker Jacobs art director on Nickelodeon's "Yo Gabba Gabba!" Naomi Grossman, Pepper on the most recent

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JOLENE GUZMAN/Itemizer-Observer John Roach (center) and his wife, Nicole Brune, saved Cherry City Comic Con.

season of "American Horror Comic Crazy Story," and Keith Tucker, an animator on such cartoons

as "Pinky and The Brain,"

"He-Man", and "Animani-

out now three times and I

keep adding spaces because

people want to come,"

Roach said. "We are doing

our big push to get as many

people this weekend as we

The two-day event will be

filled with artist panels,

games, costume contests,

roaming cosplay characters

ready to take pictures with

guests, and a large vendor

show floor. Roach said he

booked a wide range of

artists and guests to give

people of any age a reason

"This is not last year's

show. It's way bigger and

Sudoku solution

3 9 4 6 7 2 8 5 1

2 7 1 5 9 8 3 6 4

6 5 8 1 4 3 2 9 7

4 3 5 7 1 9 6 8 2

8 2 9 3 6 4 1 7 5

1 6 7 8 2 5 4 3 9

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Where: Oregon State Fairgrounds, 2330 17th St. NE,

Admission: \$15 Saturday; \$10 Sunday. Two-day pass \$20. Free for active military members with ID and children ages 12 and younger are free with paid adult.

For more information about schedule, vendors and guest artists: www.cherrycitycomiccon.com.

better," Roach said, adding he's passionate about bringing a quality event to his new home.

Roach, Brune, and their daughter, Rose Marie, moved to Dallas in late 2013. Looking to move away from the Los Angeles area, they slowly crossed off all other locations. Dallas was left standing.

"I love it up here. It's been really nice, it's really relaxing," Roach said. "When we

Mon-Fri • Noon - 5 p.m.

first moved up here, I just kept catching myself with this big grin on my face."

He's hoping this weekend he will see plenty of others with a smile on their faces at the new-and-improved Cherry City Comic Con.

"I want everyone to have a really fantastic time" he said. "I want to bring a real show to this town, and I want everybody to really enjoy it."

Partnerships adds to providing better care

West Valley, OHSU and Salem Health work to streamline services

By Jolene Guzman

The Itemizer-Observer

DALLAS — Salem Health, the parent company of Dallas' West Valley Hospital, is working toward establishing a partnership with Oregon Health Science University to streamline hospital services.

This affiliation has been about a year in the making, with Salem Health issuing a "request for proposals" for a partner in 2014.

The organizations will issue a "letter of intent" outlining the new relationship early next month, after which the details will be hammered out before the end of the year.

Essentially the partnership will integrate patient care at all three locations, referring patients to the best place to receive what they need.

For instance, OHSU can take the most critical patients from any of the three hospitals, while Salem Health can provide for less serious cases.

For those in the Dallas area, primary care will most likely happen in Dallas, but referrals to the other hospitals would be readily avail-

able. "We will try to serve the patient at the best location possible," said Bob Wells,

Salem Health Board chair-

Wells said Salem Health sought the partnership as a way of lowering the cost of providing health care and offering patients better access for more services. He noted consolidation seems to be the trend in the health care industry and having started this process a year ago put Salem Health in the

position to pick its partner. "We have been spending the last year talking about how we would make that happen," Wells said. "We have an advantage of time to do this type of alignment."

He added the partnership won't result in any noticeable changes at West Valley in the near term.

"West Valley will remain a strong part of the system," Wells said. "You will see the benefit of having a larger partner.'

Wells believes the combination of Salem Health and its affiliate hospitals and OHSU creates what he thinks "is the premier health organization in Ore-

gon." "We are really excited about the chance to partner with OHSU," Wells said. "There are 400,000 people in our coverage area of Marion and Polk counties. This is a really good benefit for all of those patients."

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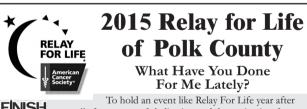
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year calls for a sense of dedication and determination from a lot of people ~ planning committee, participants and their teams, local city governments, and school districts just to name a few. This same dedication to Polk County's Relay and determination to find a cure for cancer have led five sponsors to support Relay for ten years, more than half the event's history! Who are they and what

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Relay For Life 2015 will take place May 30-31, at LaCreole Middle School in Dallas

