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'Twenties,' 'Furries' have pet projects

By Eric Heyl
 TRIBUNE-REVIEW
 Saturday, May 30, 2009



General consensus exists locally that the G-20 Summit trumps the annual Pittsburgh Home & Garden Show in terms of relevance, if not dining room decor alternatives.

But since the stunning news that the city will hold the multinational economic conference in September, the query has been posed in coffee shops, fast food joints and the Giant Eagle deli line:

"Is the G-20 really more important the Anthrocon?"

In other words, will this upcoming gathering of finance ministers and central bank governors eclipse in significance the annual convention of people who dress up in animal costumes?

It's a reasonable question to ask for those who were mostly unfamiliar with the G-20 before the White House announced Thursday the summit is headed here in September.

In other words, it's a reasonable question for most of you.

The events have several common traits.

Like the Home & Garden Show, both will occur at the David L. Lawrence Convention center.

Unlike the Home & Garden Show, both will bring the city considerable media coverage, though for widely disparate reasons.

But the differences between the G-20 and the Anthrocon outweigh the similarities, and in those differences the events begin to separate themselves.

Purpose

- G-20: To discuss the recovery from the global economic and financial crisis.

- Anthrocon: To discuss and act out anthropomorphic concepts in which humans possesses nonhuman characteristics and vice-versa (i.e. Bugs Bunny, SpongeBob SquarePants, the title character of "Beverly Hills Chihuahua" that sounds suspiciously like Drew Barrymore).

Attendees

- G-20: Will come from the diverse nations of Argentina, Australia, Brazil, Canada, China, France, German, India, Indonesia, Italy, Japan, Mexico, Russia, Saudi Arabia, South Africa, South Korea, Turkey, United Kingdom and the United States. The European Central Bank also will be represented.

- Anthrocon: Will come from diverse basement apartments, usually located directly below their parents' living rooms.

About the writer



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Attendee nickname

- G-20: "Twenties"
- Anthrocon: "Furries"

Probable event host

- G-20: Barack Obama, president of the United States and leader of the free world.
- Anthrocon: Samuel Conway, convention chairman and human alter ego of "Kagemushi Goro," a cockroach proficient in the martial arts.

Anticipated attendance:

- G-20: About 3,500
- Anthrocon: About 3,500.

Bit hard to believe that last category was misplaced among the two events' differences, isn't it?

But it's true.

Although the G-20 might have considerably more gravitas than the Anthrocon, perhaps it's best to approach Pittsburgh's sudden international prestige with a bit of perspective.

The G-20 is expected to attract as many people to town to discuss the global economy as the Anthrocon is to discuss how that wascally wabbit always outwits Elmer Fudd.

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