

# 'Furries' embrace support found in animal costume-wearing community

Fursuit hobbyists seek to dispel misconceptions about their fandom in the wake of school district tensions.

By COURTNEY TANNER | The Salt Lake Tribune

It took 50 hours, four yards of colorful faux fur fabric, two pounds of Poly-fill stuffing and enough upholstery foam to rival a mattress store for Ven Ferlin to create their first animal costume. "Seriously," Ferlin said with a laugh, "there was so much foam." If it were an option, Ferlin would've opened a tab at the

nearest craft store. Ferlin, who is nonbinary and uses they/them pronouns, lovingly crafted their original sky blue fox suit in 2015 when they first joined Utah's furry community — a sort of cosplay group for people who share a passion for dressing up in handmade, cartoonish

Please see FURRIES, A5



BETHANY BAKER | The Salt Lake Tribune

Ven Ferlin, left, and Jolo Larrabee, co-chairs of an annual furry convention in Utah, show off their handmade costumes in the street in Vineyard.

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## The Salt Lake Tribune

« MIDWEEK PRINT EDITION »

WEDNESDAY, MAY 29, 2024

PULITZER PRIZE WINNER

### UNEVEN ACCESS TO NATURE

Wasatch Front communities are working to give people in underserved neighborhoods closer proximity to biodiversity.

BY MEGAN BANTA and JOSE DAVILA IV

People who live in two Salt Lake County neighborhoods less than 20 miles apart have vastly different views out their windows.

One, in West Valley City, is mostly in a built environment with backyard views of public storage and loading docks for chain malls, offering residents few opportunities to step out their front doors into nature.

In the other, along Salt Lake City's East Bench, residents can walk to a trail leading up Grandview Park or be in Millers Creek canyon in 10 minutes.

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These two neighborhoods illustrate that where Utahns live, who their neighbors are, and how much money they make often determine their chances of enjoying the health benefits of Utah's nature-rich landscape.

NATURE B2



From top: A view of a residential street in West Valley City, Utah. A view of a residential street in Salt Lake City, Utah. A view of a residential street in Salt Lake City, Utah. A view of a residential street in Salt Lake City, Utah.

Top-left: A view of a residential street in Salt Lake City, Utah. A view of a residential street in Salt Lake City, Utah. A view of a residential street in Salt Lake City, Utah.

### COULD EMERGENCY CHILD BIRTH CARE BE IN JEOPARDY?

**SUPREME COURT** » A decision on Idaho's challenge to federal law could threaten availability of emergency care for women with serious child birth complications. » **OPINION, A7**

### HISPANIC SOCCER CLUBS TARGET OF RACIST COMMENTS

**YOUTH SOCCER** » Has the association done enough to deter derogatory language directed at some of the Hispanic teams? » **SPORTS, B1**



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