

# Students create a reel monster

BY LARRY O'CONNOR  
STAFF WRITER  
Everything Harrison student Gordon Eick and his fellow horror film buffs touch turns into a monster.

First, there was the plan last year to dress up and scare a few people during Halloween. Before they knew it, their efforts exploded into a full-fledged haunted forest with darkened tunnels in a friend's back yard.

"This year's no different. Eick and his partners in ghoulishness have conceived a video horror movie, 'The Things in the Woods' will premiere midnight Friday, Oct. 29, at the Farmington Civic Theater in downtown Farmington. Admission is \$1.50.

"It's getting bigger than expected," said Eick. "Kids are passing out fliers. We're getting kind of nervous that a lot of people are going to show up."

"We hope people understand it's a video movie made by kids, but it's a good video movie." The 30-minute short story centers on a pair of teenagers heading up north. They run over an elderly man, who turns out to be "Old Man Finnigan," a 1960s relic cult leader.

They try to bury him in the woods. When he springs to life with his dead pals, the kids have the mother of all supernatural battles on their hands.

Eick said it's a scary, action and horror flick rolled into one. "Halloween is a great time to be creative," Eick said. "You can do anything you want and get away with it."

Eick produced the film with fellow high school seniors Jaymie Haynes, Mike Cynulnik and Steven Craine. Haynes attends Harrison; Cynulnik goes to North Farmington and Craine Southfield-Lathrup.

The four head up RTD Productions, which produced a vampire thriller "Fangs" last year. "This effort was intended to be on a smaller scale than 'Fangs,'" Eick said. "The four started producing in spring, but got waylaid during the summer."

In all, 22 kids worked on the video with editing completed at TV-10. The production team members, who also have starring roles, gave up their weekends for two months to finish the project.

They decided it deserved a gala premiere. By coincidence, they booked



Two scary guys: Young filmmakers Steven Craine (left) and Gordon Eick prepare for battle.

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Gordon Eick  
Harrison student

the Civic Theater the same night there will be a free showing of "Frankenstein" as a part of the city's Halloween Fest Friday and Saturday. Eick's not worried, though.

"That's fine with us," said Eick, who plans to major in film at the University of Michigan. "The crowd for 'Frankenstein' is more for adults. Kids are more drawn to what we do."

Eick is keeping premiere plans wrapped tighter than a mummy.

The show, which includes a cartoon "Bye Bye Bunny" done by Craine, is being hosted by Roger Mortis.

Decorations and other surprises are in the works, Eick said. The \$1.50 admission will help offset the \$150 the teenagers spent on the project. They'll be quite happy to break even.

"We always plan to make (the projects) small," Eick said. "Then, boom, they get huge."

# Fest from page 1A

Everyone's sinking a fang into the promotion.

Merchants have contributed many of the prizes, including \$500 to the winner of the best costume contest.

A free showing of the horror classic "Frankenstein" will take place 11:30 p.m. Friday at the Civic Theater. Theater owner Greg Hoehler admits the original film has been aired on TV several times.

"There's certainly an element of nostalgia in seeing it in a theater," Hoehler said. "Anything that promotes downtown Farmington, I don't think you can do enough of that."

Also, some Farmington area

film buffs will be debuting their latest creation, "The Things in the Woods," in the balcony of Civic Theater at midnight Friday. Admission is \$1.50.

Pagos, Dagwood Deli, Farmington Bakery and the Grand Cafe will be selling food. Grand Cafe owner Robert Sakuta said they are planning to have special fall drinks such as apple cider and ice caramel apple drinks as well as pumpkin pie and pumpkin ice cream.

A real scream will be the costume contest. The grand prize is \$500 for the best outfit.

Downer said she's pulling out a Merlin the Magician type costume for the weekend festivities.

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