

Halloween

No time for faint hearts

By Tom Henderson
staff writer

LATE OCTOBER: Cold winds blow dead leaves from the trees. Thick, leaden clouds hurtle through the sky, angrily dragging night behind them. There is winter in the air.

And evil.
Feel it? It's always been there this time of year — brooding, foreboding evil, thick as a morning fog on a lake. Summer becoming winter, life becoming

death, and evil lurking as they merge on these cold, creaky, howling nights.

Late October: the eerie time. We feel it. Our ancestors felt it. The spirit world feels it. It has always been. It may always be. From Scotland to Michigan, the eerie winds have blown chilly fear into men's and women's hearts.

HALLOWEEN: A saintly name undone by evil. It's not the saints who occupy us Oct. 31; it's satanic things — ghosts, goblins, the dead come back to life, devils hiding from the light, witches and things that go bump in the night.

Halloween can be traced back to the Druids in Ireland and Scotland about 100 B.C. Big on rituals, rites, blood sacrifices and magic, the Druids had festivals for two major gods, a sun god and a god of the dead, whose festival was Nov. 1, the beginning of the Celtic new year.

By the ninth century A.D., the Christian church, as it did with many pagan holidays, appropriated the day of the dead and turned it into the day of the saints, All Saints Day. The night before All Saints Day became All-Hallows (as in "hallowed be Thy name") Eve, or Halloween.

Yet, the pagan aspects prevail. How many priests go door to door Oct. 31? And how many ghosts and goblins? So many, another night was needed, and Oct. 30 became Devil's Night.

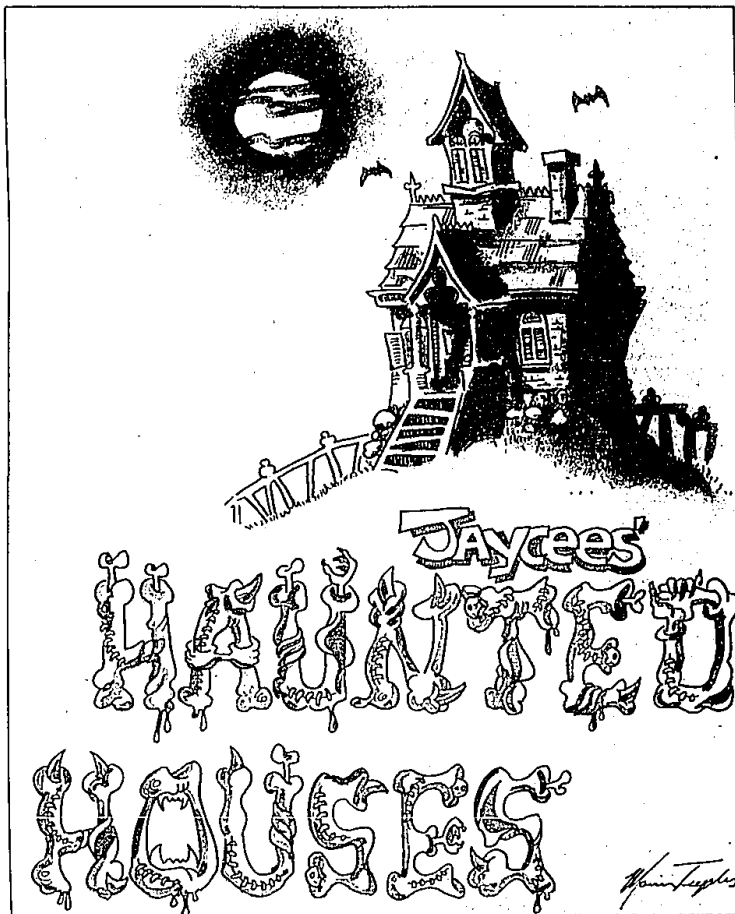
In Europe during medieval times and later, elves, fairies and witches, who often took the shape of cats, came around the last night in October. Bonfires were lit to keep the spirits away. Which spirits? Those of all the dead in purgatory, who returned to their earthly homes one night a year. The current residents would depart, leaving the lights on and food out for their temporary guests.

BUT THE feel of evil wasn't confined to Europe. It was universal.

Indian tribes in Mexico made human sacrifices to appease the corn gods and keep the souls of the dead from returning in November. In Cambodia, the great festival of the dead took place at the end of a two-month period known as Phatsoth, roughly Nov. 1. Indians in Ecuador thought it provident to kill 100 children at harvest time. In Egypt, ghosts swarmed about during the festival of Osiris.

Sacrifices are no longer necessary to keep the spirits and goblins at bay. Throughout the Observer area, concerned citizens such as the Jaycees and Masons have joined forces to round up the scary, bump-in-the-night things and banish them to various haunted houses.

Think you're tough? Think you're able to laugh in the face of evil? Think ghosts and goblins are figments of someone else's imagination? Then, boy, or girl, do we have some scary news for you. If fear is your aim, target in on a haunted house for a Halloween to remember.



Accent is on safety

By Casey Hane
staff writer

A movie starring the "Headless Horseman," a neighborhood "graveyard for the dead" and two community parties are among this Halloween season's local highlights. Community groups are stressing a safe holiday for children of all ages.

By week's end, treats will have been gobbled up at local parties at Tully Hall on Orchard Lake Road and at Botsford General Hospital on Grand River.

Tully Hall's fifth-annual party Thursday night will have costumed kids from six months to 17 years old attending, coordinator Sally Larson said.

Safety is the party theme, she said. "That's why we do this. To my dismay, we no longer can be safe trick or treating."

The Tully Hall party is one of the few area Halloween activities for older children and teens. Free trick-or-treating throughout the shopping center, a costume contest and pumpkin decorating are just a few of the planned activities.

CONTESTS ARE divided into three age groups, with the costume contest the most popular, Larson said. Pumpkin decorating entrants had to have decorated pumpkins at the center by Oct. 26 for display. Judging will be done the night of the party. Costume contest registrants must sign up by 5:30 p.m. Thursday.

For the first time this year, Tully Hall will host a Halloween party for the mentally and physically handicapped. The Farmington Elks Lodge also hosts such a party.

Botsford hospital's community party was held

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City is planning to close parks early this week

By Casey Hane
staff writer

Farmington parks, school grounds and vacant properties will be closely watched during Devil's Night and Halloween Wednesday and Thursday, Oct. 30-31.

This special attention will pay off in fewer "disorderly incidents," according

to a report to city council from City Manager Robert Deadman.

The city council voted Monday to close city parks between 6 p.m. and 7 a.m. from Oct. 28 through Oct. 30.

Raphel Street will be closed during the same time through a temporary traffic control order by Director of Public Safety Frank Lauff.

City staff will also contact Farmington Public Schools and request school

properties be closed during the same period, according to Deadman's report.

IN ADDITION, the council voiced concern about the vacant Farmington Lumber buildings at 32800 Grand River, owned by Conrad Sullivan, a long-time Farmington business owner. Deadman was authorized by the council

to send a " terse, straightforward" letter to Sullivan, advising him of his "responsibility to keep the property secure" during Halloween week.

"We are not happy with the appearance and longstanding vacancy of the building," Councilman Alton Bennett said.

A citizen at the meeting said potential Halloween problems would be

avoided if the buildings had been demolished. Deadman said Sullivan would not raze the buildings until after the property sale closing had been completed. City personnel were not aware of the closing date, but Deadman said he believes the sale will be

closed sometime in November.

The property is being developed into a 33,350-square-foot office and retail development by Nelson Ross Properties. Dave Nelson, of Nelson Ross, said plans are being finalized and that firm construction dates would be given in about a month. The development is being called "Village Commons."

police/fire calls

Listed below are highlights of Farmington-area police and fire calls received during the past week:

REWARD POSTED

The Detroit Clearinghouse Association has posted a \$1,000 for information leading to the arrest or indictment of the gunman who robbed a Farmington Hills businessman of his car and \$2,000 in cash outside a local bank Oct. 16.

According to a Farmington Hills police report, the 37-year-old businessman was parking his car outside First of America, 28554 Orchard Lake, when he was approached by the gunman about 9:35 a.m.

The gunman entered the passenger side of the car and threatened the businessman if he didn't do as he was told.

At a shopping center near 12 Mile and Orchard Lake roads, the gunman ordered the victim out. With \$2,000 in a City National Bank money bag in tow, the gunman fled in the car south on Orchard Lake.

The car, a 1983 brown Ford station wagon with wood-grain sides, was valued at \$4,000.

The gunman was described as black and about 20-25 years of age, 5-10, 150 pounds, with black hair, a medium build and a medium skin tone. He brandished a blue steel revolver.

He was wearing a Detroit Tigers cap and possibly a black jacket.

Call tips to the Farmington Hills Police: 475-9537.

CARS DAMAGED

Two Farmington-area men allegedly smashed the windows of five cars parked on Farmington Hills streets early Wednesday.

Arrested before District Judge Michael Hand of Farmington, James E. Hartson, 18, of Farmington and Curtis J. Gieszynski, 17, of Farmington Hills were charged with five counts of malicious destruction of property over \$100. Conviction of the felony carries a penalty of up to four years in jail and a \$2,000 fine.

Judge Hand entered not-guilty pleas in the suspects' behalf and released each on \$5,000 personal bond pending a preliminary examination in 47th District Court.

The suspects were arrested near Meadowlark and Laurelwood in Farmington shortly after an officer on patrol provided a description of the car believed to be carrying whoever damaged the driver's window of a car parked in front of a house on Meadowlark. The patrol officer earlier had seen the suspects' car in the area and drew suspicion because of the pre-dawn hour, Farmington Hills Detective Gary Brandemuhl said.

Under the passenger seat of the suspects' car, police found a hatchet believed used in smashing the windows. A piece of glass was found embedded in the hatchet. The detective said, "The suspects, he said, stomped from window damage to a 1979 Ford on Meadowlark, a 1984 Ford on Kirby, a 1980 DeSoto on Imbrook, a 1986 Audi on Johnstown and a 1983 Pontiac on Livingston Circle. Thursday, Brandemuhl said he was investigating four other reports of smashed car windows, also in the Nine Mile-Balslev area.

The damage apparently occurred early Wednesday as well. But Hartson and Gieszynski have not been charged with the damage to these four cars, Brandemuhl said.

In Farmington, meanwhile, 10 cars were damaged at Ken's Shell, 32540 Grand River, and in Chatham Hills subdivision some- where on Wednesday. Ken's Shell reported \$1,500 in damage to cars parked in the lot. Four damage reports were filed by subdivision residents, according to Farmington Department of Public Safety reports.

Possible ties between the Farmington Hills and Farmington incidents are being investigated. No charges have been filed in connection with the Farmington incidents, Farmington Deputy Director of Public Safety Gary Goss said.

BUILDING FIRE

One person suffered smoke inhalation late Friday morning when an employee using a spot welder accidentally ignited flammable liquid in an open bucket in the work area of Associated Parts & Service, a one-story welding shop at 30690 S. Mile.

A spark from the spot welder found its way into the open bucket, which was about 15 feet away, Farmington Hills Fire Lt. Peter Baldwin said.

Damage was confined to a wooden wall and storage materials above a restroom. Employees used a garden hose to douse the flames. Firefighters cooled remaining hot spots, Baldwin said.

SUSPECT ARRESTED

A 21-year-old man was taken into custody Wednesday as Farmington public safety officers arrived on the scene of a reported larceny in progress at the DeLashere Apartments.

The suspect was arrested running west toward Drake Road, following witness reports that a man was entering unlocked cars in the apartment parking lot. No weapons were found. The suspect was released pending a warrant, according to a Farmington Department of Public Safety report.

THEFTS REPORTED

A furnace valued at \$2,000 was stolen from a house being built on DePhillips sometime Oct. 16-17. Basement duct work sustained about \$50 damage during the theft, according to a Farmington Hills police report.

Sometime Oct. 22-23, three sums valued at \$400 at one steel door valued at \$150 were stolen from a condominium construction site on Orchardbrook Court, according to a Farmington Hills police report.

WINDOWS SMASHED

Vandals threw stones through five basement windows and two kitchen windows of a house under construction on East Tallwood sometime Oct. 22-24, according to a Farmington Hills police report. Damage was estimated at \$300.

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