

Jaycees house hunting before house haunting

FARMINGTON—Residents living in the Twelve Mile-Orchard Lake roads area may be hearing and seeing some weird things during the last week in October.

That's when the Jaycees will be moving into the neighborhood with their haunted house.

The new neighbors will have unusual taste in decorating, with coffin black lights and monsters very much in evidence, but at least they do have big hearts.

All proceeds from the haunted house will be donated to the Burn Awareness Program for the project. The co-chairmen for the project, Cass Connolly and Fred Madley, began preparing for the haunted house in September.

Finding the right house, takes time, Madley said. Filling out insurance forms, setting up lighting, and taking care of all the legal problems, require more time.

THE BIGGEST problem, though, is finding the right house. "Usually, a builder or developer will let us use the house for the week," Madley said.

"However, we have to find a house that is about to be torn down, because by the time we are through with it, it is just junk. It has to be a house that is not going to be used again."

The special feature in this year's house, he said, will be the basement room, which is underneath a cemetery.

"People going through the house will be walking under the cemetery," he said. "They will be walking under the tree roots and the bottoms of the coffins which will be all over the ceiling."

Although the Jaycees have been having a haunted house for the past seven years, this is the first year the money has been donated to one fund.

IN THE PAST it has gone into the general fund and dispersed among various community services.

The Jaycees are hoping to double their average of \$3,000 by raising \$6,000 this year for the burn prevention program.

In addition to the money raised from the haunted house admissions, Jaycee members will be touring the shopping centers with the haunted house monster, soliciting contributions for the burn program.

They also will be sponsoring a "Name the Monster Program." Application blanks for the contest will be sent home with the school children and can be turned in at the haunted house during operating hours. The house will be open Oct. 24-30 from 5:30-11 p.m. during the week and

1-11 p.m. Saturday and Sunday.

CHILDREN who do not attend the Farmington schools can pick up the contest forms from local shopping centers.

At the end of the week there will be a drawing from all the entries, and the winner will be given a 10-speed bike.

Included with the contest application forms there will be a "First Aid For Burns" pamphlet, which the



FRED MADLEY

Jaycees are urging the children to give to their parents.

According to Madley, 75,000 Americans are burned seriously enough to require hospitalization each year.

Yet, only one out of every 10 severely burned persons gets adequate treatment because the country does not have treatment centers or doctors trained for the treatment of burns.

BURNS CRIPPLE and kill more children every year than polio did dur-



CASS CONNOLLY

ing its peak in 1954, yet there has never been an organized effort to improve the treatment facilities and prevention programs.

However, a national organization, the National Institute for Burn Medicine, has recently started a fund rais-

ing drive campaign, with the support of the Jaycees to set up adequate burn care centers.

One of the only two United States hospitals offering doctors training in burn medicine, is the University of Michigan Hospital in Ann Arbor.

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Innecity landlord fights system, worries about future of suburbs

By CARL STODDARD

Charles Costa sits in the gut of Detroit. All around him he sees decay and death. And he has a message for the suburbs: "Water" out.

Costa's home is in Southfield and his children go to Southfield schools. But a large part of his life revolves around Detroit, where he has spent much of his last 14 years.

He is a landlord. Many have labeled him a slum landlord.

But more than that he is an outspoken voice in a city that he both loves and hates.

"This is not the stereotype landlord," he said during an interview. "We're not working out of some office building with the 'ped-in-must.' We're right here in the gut."

In this case, the gut means a two-story brick building a few blocks from the Lodge Freeway on Myrtle. The neighborhood is filled with abandoned, stripped homes, boarded-up stores and weedy lots where houses once stood.

HIS OFFICE on the second floor is decorated in deep reds, with a faded carpet and dusty furniture. The paint around the windows is peeling, and

there are gouges in the walls. "I think I have a better view here than they do at the police department or the welfare shelter. I have the best place, like a bleacher."

He pointed matter-of-factly to buildings where killings have recently taken place.

"They killed a landlord over here. They killed two caretakers over here, for the money."

He has been threatened, cut, beat and mugged, he said. But he remains. He is now one of the better known landlords in Detroit, and has on a number of occasions taken his crusade for a better Detroit to the common council.

"This is a violent business. But I stick with it because I like it," he said.

"I exist. But I'll never get rich. (In 1970 he went bankrupt.) It's not the money I'm after. I got hung up with the humane thing. Everybody has a quest."

"I picked up the biggest fight anybody can handle. I'm fighting bureaucracy, and nobody can win that fight."

He estimates that more than 90 percent of his tenants are on welfare. For them he tries to supply adequate housing, with heat and other utilities.

BUT COSTA complains that it is hard to do, because as soon as an apartment becomes vacant the plumbing is torn out, the windows smashed or stolen and the apartment becomes uninhabitable.

Then the building inspectors come, fine him and make him fix it. Things have gotten so bad, Costa said, that some landlords are trying to give their property away.

"I get calls everyday. They say 'Take my building. I don't want it,' Costa said.

"The man who owns this building across the street, he offered it to me for \$100,000. After a few shootings, a few stabblings, he offered it to me for \$10,000. No down payment. A year with no payments."

Costa didn't take it.

Costa blames much of the problem on the welfare system. He said it deprives persons of pride. It makes money lose its value when it is given away rather than earned, he said.

"It's like if you hit \$1,000 at the race track. You go out and spend it.

But if you have to work for it, you hold it tight."

Still, he doesn't place the blame for the welfare system's failure on the people, but on the federal government.

"I CAN'T be mad at the people who do it (abuse the system). I got to be mad at the people who pervert them to do it. It goes all the way to Washington."

Costa has been trying to convince the government that a new system is required. His suggestion is that the welfare money be sent directly to the landlord, thus assuring that welfare persons would have a place to stay, he said.

So far the suggestion has been ignored.

Meanwhile, he said, more and more buildings are becoming vacant in the city. But while the buildings disappear the people don't, and before long "the garbage is overflowing into the suburbs."

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