

David's Haunted Manor scares ... yet again

October 17, 2019



David's Haunted Manor has been a Crescent City staple since its days as a "haunted yard," in 1999, when David Holcomb was just a kid.

His more elaborate "manor" will come to Crescent City again this Halloween with the help of his wife, Jo'Ann, and their two children, Vincent and Annabelle.

"Growing up as trick-or-treaters, there were wonderful experiences for me as a kid. Nowadays, not so much probably for kids. Unfortunately, people don't go out of their way to decorate their yard," David Holcomb said. "[The manor] is my way of giving back."

To say Halloween is the family's favorite holiday is a bit of an understatement, considering they practically live in a haunted house for the month of October.

When Holcomb was young, his family hosted the manor in their yard on Halloween. Each year, it kept growing, as did his passion for the holiday. It grew so large, he decided to host it at the Del Norte County Fairgrounds.

Finally, he partnered with the nonprofit Friends of the Crescent City Harbor to bring the event to a vacant building. This is the third year he has partnered with the nonprofit.

Holcomb found his match in Jo'Ann, who says she married into the Halloween festivities, although she loves them just as much. "I mean, I always liked it. But, no, I met him and he came with the haunted house. That

was part of the marital contract,” she said.

With creativity and inspiration from classic Halloween movies, the couple made and also found costumes, scarecrows, monsters and even a casket to turn their love for Halloween into something residents can enjoy. Every October, they turn a vacant building into a maze of spooky rooms and dimly lit hallways in a matter of weeks.

“It’s so fun, and I get to expand, make new things, and it’s really rewarding. It’s nice to give back to community,” David Holcomb said.

In groups of six, attendees will follow him through tarp-covered hallways and into rooms with cages, clowns, chainsaws, and costumed volunteers ready to jump out and scare.

Every year, they feature many of the same elements, such as a forest, an asylum and a clown room. But they vary the rooms, so each year is new in that regard.

They buy a significant number of their dummies from other haunted houses, as well as online and at after-Halloween sales.

One item that makes an appearance in different scenes every year is their “gently used” coffin. The coffin originally belonged to a terminally ill man. He ended up going into remission, getting a divorce and having to sell the coffin to split the couple’s assets. Before he let it go, though, he took a parade ride in it.

That is just one of the unique props filling the rooms of the manor. What makes each room feel truly haunted, however, are the volunteers that hide amidst the props and scenes.

Volunteers of all ages, with parental consent, participate in the spooks. The Holcombs lend their attire, and volunteers - some as young as 6 - dress up and spook visitors from this Friday through Halloween. Last year, there were more than 40 volunteers.

Despite all the scariness, attendees do not necessarily have to be brave ... the manor is open from 6-7 p.m. for “small scares.” The first 15 minutes will be a sensory walk with the lights on, a new addition this year for people who experience sensory overload.

Then, hardcore scaring commences at 7:00 and goes until 9:00, except on Halloween night, when it stays open until 10 p.m.

At the end of Halloween season, the Holcombs take down their extensive manor and pack it away until the next year - but not before going to Medford on Nov. 1 for the after-Halloween sales.

David’s Haunted Manor will be at 201 Citizen Dock Rd. in Crescent City from Friday through Sunday, Oct. 18-27, and then Tuesday through Thursday, Oct. 29-30. People who wish to volunteer can call Jo’Ann Holcomb at 707-954-8374.

