

Back by popular demand — Creepfest on Costigan

Miltonians invited to visit
annual Halloween haunt

By Stephanie Hounsell
CANADIAN CHAMPION STAFF

Enter... if you dare.

Bloodcurdling chills and thrills will fill the air tomorrow night at Creepfest on Costigan. But beware. It won't be for the faint of heart.

For the fourth year in a row, Carl Ryder is inviting kids and adults alike to his outdoor Halloween haunt at 1147 Costigan Rd., where his driveway, garage and front yard have been painstakingly transformed into the stuff of horror movies.

Picture chainsaws, Dracula and, of course, lots of blood.

His is one of a number of Halloween displays that have been popping up around town in the spirit of the season.

"I just love doing it — I've always been fascinated with Halloween," said Ryder, taking a break from hanging spider webs.

Residents are invited to swing by the Creepfest starting at 6:30 p.m., when they can make their way — six or seven people at a time — through a dark, covered maze full of spooky surprises.

What you might encounter, nobody knows.

Except Ryder, of course, who's been working on the haunted maze for the past few weeks with his partners in crime, co-worker Jim Wild and 15-year-old Thomas Marshall.

Special effects include strobe lighting, fog machines, trap doors and plenty of bone-

chilling sounds.

"We've had to do a lot of MacGyver stuff," Ryder said.

Despite the ghoulish nature of the project, it's actually a labour of love for the three big-hearted creators, who say they enjoy nothing more than seeing kids delightedly frightened on Halloween.

"It's always about the kids," Wild said.

That's why they said they wouldn't dream of charging admission.

The ambitious production, which is different each year, includes 15 costumed people who congregate in spooky scenes along the maze, Ryder explained.

All in all, it'll take about 20 people to stage the one-night haunt.

Of course, both safety and fun are key.

More than once in the past youngsters have decided halfway through they wanted to leave. Ryder said he and the other volunteers always keep an eye open for these kids, and are quick to provide a welcome escape.

This year they're thinking about giving kids a code word to yell if they get too scared and want to leave.

The three constructors are all horror-movie buffs who say Halloween is their Christmas.

"I love scaring people and I love getting scared," said Thomas, who became involved after visiting the display last year and asking if he could help with the next one. "This makes us happy — seeing other people happy."

Stephanie Hounsell can be reached at sthiessen@miltoncanadianchampion.com.

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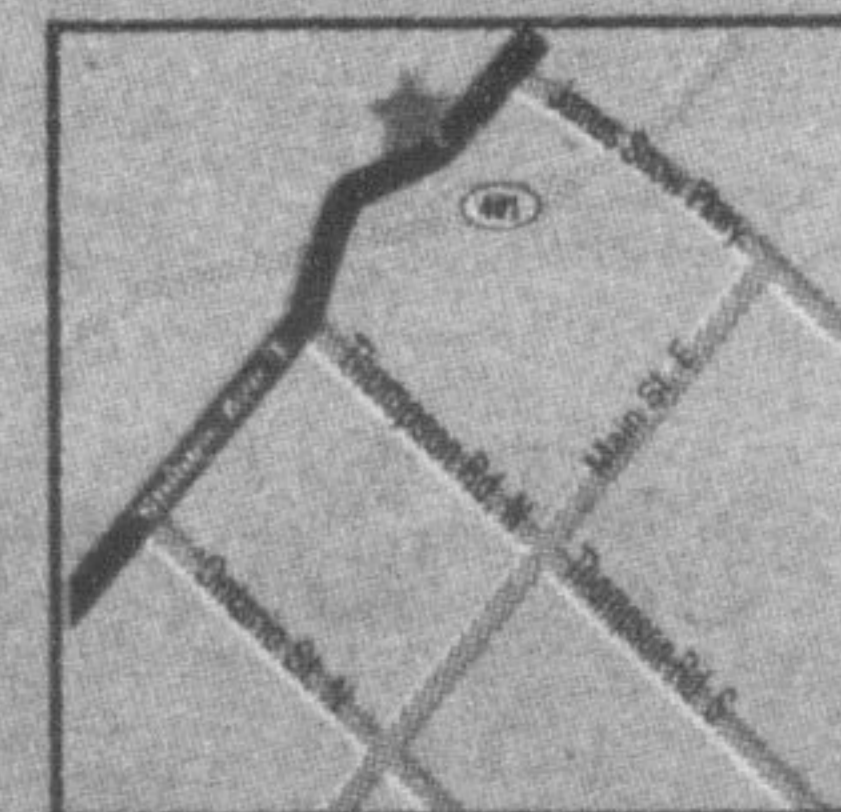
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