

Haunts Await Thrill-Seeking House Visitors

By Terry Hyland

World-Herald Staff Writer

During the next two weeks, shrieks of fright are expected to echo through a number of "haunted houses" in Nebraska and Iowa.

Most are operated annually as fundraisers for charitable and civic groups.

Organizers said they don't think haunted houses are a passing fad because crowds have grown over the years and the houses continue to be good money-makers.

'Not Just Kids'

"On the weekends, it's an endless line for us," said Linda Lowe, a secretary for the Omaha Federation of Labor, which helps sponsor the KQKQ Radio "Derelict's Den" at 2002 Davenport St.

"We've got a lot of people who come through twice in one night. It's a lot of grown-ups, not just kids."

The Den will be open through Halloween night.

Lori Trautman, division director for the Southeast Nebraska Division of the March of Dimes, said attendance should increase this year at the organization's "Tomb of Terror" at 108th and Fort Streets.

New and imaginative attractions help maintain popularity, she said.

"It (attendance) peaked a few years ago and went down, but I think with our location, it should go up this year."

Long Preparation

In addition to providing fun for visitors, the haunted houses also are fun for those who work in them, organizers said.

"It gives people a chance to get involved," said Craig Baugous, vice president of the Lincoln Jaycees, which sponsors a house in downtown Lincoln. "It's fun for the three weeks that we do it."

Most of those interviewed said volunteers have been working for as long as a month to build mazes, set up props and prepare costumes and masks.

From 20 to 40 people are needed each night to work some of the larger houses, they said.

Organizers said that since the key to a successful haunted house is coming up with new ideas each year, hours of brainstorming go into dreaming up scary attractions.

"Basically it's a combined output of demented minds," said Dirk Christensen, program director at KGFW/KQ106 Radio, sponsor of the Stairway to Terror in Kearney, Neb.



Wolfman Chuck Babb, left, and hatchetman Terry Sorensen ... at March of Dimes Tomb of Terror.

Bill Batson/World-Herald

Tombs and Castles Provide a Frightful Halloween

The following is a list of haunted houses that should please connoisseurs of fright:

KOIL Radio Mystery Manor, 716 N. 18th St.: Open daily (except Oct. 21) from 7 p.m. to 11 p.m. Admission, \$3. Proceeds go to several charities. Features a laboratory, 60-foot slide, more than 15 rooms and a variety of spooks and monsters.

March of Dimes Tomb of Terror, Hy-Vee parking lot at 108th and Fort Streets: Hours are 7-10 p.m. Sunday through Thursday, 7-11 p.m. Friday and Saturday. Admission, \$2 donation to the Southeast Nebraska Chapter, March of Dimes. A costume party and dance are scheduled Oct. 25. Features a "black maze that never seems to end" and a "possessed" chainsaw.

UNICEF Haunted Barn, Tara Hills Golf Course, 1001 Limerick Road, Papillion: Sponsored by the Vietnam Veterans of America, Post 148. Hours, 7-10 p.m. Sunday through Thursday, 7 p.m. to midnight Friday and Saturday. Admission, \$2.50 for adults and \$2 for children under 12. Proceeds go to UNICEF. Features "spook chutes," mazes and dozens of monsters.

KQKQ Radio Derelict's Den, 2002 Davenport St.: Hours, 7-11 p.m. Sunday through Thursday, 7 p.m. to midnight Friday and Saturday. Admission is \$3, with proceeds going to the Omaha Septemberfest Committee and the Iowa Democratic Party. Features more than 30 rooms, including devil room, morgue

and a glow-in-the-dark Jason of "Friday the 13th" movie fame.

Social Settlement Association Haunted House, 4800 Q St.: Open Oct. 25, 7-10 p.m. Admission, \$1 for adults and 50 cents for children. Proceeds go to the Social Settlement elementary and senior high school Friendship Clubs. Features a chainsaw massacre, guillotine and a mad scientist.

The Stone Castle of Terror, 38th Avenue and Leavenworth Street: Open through Oct. 31, 7-10:30 p.m. Sunday through Thursday, 7 p.m. to midnight Friday and Saturday. Admission, \$2.50 for adults and \$1.75 for children under 12. Proceeds go to the Omaha Community Playhouse. Features a mirror room, graveyard and a "terrifying train."

KGFW/KQ 106 Radio Stairway to Terror, 22nd Street and Central Avenue, Kearney, Neb.: Open Oct. 29 through Nov. 1, 7-11 p.m. Admission, \$2. Proceeds go to the Kearney-area United Way. Features a variety of special effects, eerie sounds and monsters.

Columbus Jaycees Haunted House, Pawnee Park ice skating rink warm-up shed, Columbus, Neb.: Open Saturday through Oct. 27 and Oct. 29 through Oct. 31, 7-10 p.m. weekdays, 7-11 p.m. weekends. Admission, \$1. Proceeds go to the Columbus Jaycees. Features a chainsaw massacre, Dracula and a witch and cauldron.

Lincoln Jaycees Chamber of Terror, 1018 O St.,

Lincoln: Open today and Saturday, Oct. 23-26 and Oct. 30 through Nov. 2 from 7 to 11 p.m. Admission, \$2.50. Proceeds go to the Lincoln Jaycees. Features rotating room, talking vampire, wax museum and zombie room.

Essex Day Care Center House of Horror, corner of East and South Streets, Shenandoah, Iowa: Open Oct. 28 and Oct. 27, 7 to 9 p.m. Admission, \$1. Proceeds go to the Essex Day Care Center. Features swamp monster and tunnel.

For Children, Parties Are Not So Scary

For families with younger children who want to enjoy a less frightening Halloween, the following organizations are sponsoring parties:

Omaha Childrens' Museum Halloween Fun Nights, 551 S. 18 St.: Parties for children 8 and under are scheduled Oct. 28 and Oct. 30 from 7 to 8:30 p.m. Events include bobbing for apples, storytelling and a costume parade. To make reservations, call 342-6164. The cost is \$4 for members and \$5 for non-members.

New Cassel Retirement Center, 900 N. 90th St.: Residents will hold a Halloween party for children Oct. 31 from 7 to 8:30 p.m. It will include games, a magic show and prizes for best costumes.