

Scouts refurbish hearse for Haunted Woods

<http://www.southtownstar.com/neighborhoodstar/tinleypark/2824852,102210scouthearse.article>

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[BY JEE ABBEY LEE](#)

Eagle Scouts have to be prepared for anything, even scaring the stuffing out of people.

It's not every day you see current and former Boy Scouts working on a hearse. Unless, of course, it's almost Halloween.

Five people from the Southland have spent months revamping a 1973 hearse. Four of the newfound mechanics are Eagle Scouts, and Craig Hill is the Boy Scout committee chairman of Troop 378 of Tinley Park.



Craig Hill from Tinley Park shows a skull that he will place on a 1973 hearse he and scoutmasters have invested. (Mary Compton/ Sun-Times Media)



Adam Hill of Lockport cleans up the back of an old hearse he and scoutmasters fixed up to get boys interested in scouting. The hearse has already been in a parade. (Mary Compton/ Sun-Times Media)

The public can marvel at their work during Orland Park's annual Haunted Woods Halloween event, which starts today. This year, the Scouts are helping build an entire haunted house in the woods.

The Tinley Park troop has been assisting with the Orland Park Lions Club's Halloween fundraiser for more than 12 years. In addition to designing and creating many of the props, they help haunt the property

once visitors arrive. All of the proceeds go to the club and other local nonprofit organizations.

Hill said the mission is hardly all work and no play.

"We just have a ball messing around with these kids," he said. "We are the kids that didn't grow up."

Hill, 58, has been with the Scouts for about 40 years. This year, he has helped them fix the back fender and paint the funeral vehicle at a garage in Country Club Hills.

Later this month, the gray hearse will be painted jet black, decorated with Halloween decals and affixed with a

portable light on top.

"You don't know how far these guys search for these things," Hill said while unrolling a decal to be placed on the windows on a perfect autumn evening.

Hill's son, Adam, and his best friend, Scott Copeland - as well as car enthusiast Bill McAdaragh and Tom Bradley, who often takes leadership on Halloween projects - found the vehicle online.



Craig Hill, regional maintenance technician for the Girl Scouts, paints the hearse. (Mary Compton/ Sun-Times Media)



Scott Copeland of Tinley Park sprays paint on the inside of the front door on the old hearse. The hearse is almost done and ready to be a promotional tool for the Boy scouts. Copeland is an Eagle Scout. (Mary Compton/ Sun-Times Media)

After an unsuccessful attempt to find one in Illinois, they found a hearse in Ohio that seemed in need of only exterior work.

The five of them chipped in equally to purchase the hearse, which cost less than \$2,000. They expect the paint job to cost another \$1,000.

Copeland said they did not expect that fixing up the car would take almost four months.

"But we are so happy at our hard work and what the end result looks like," he said.

Brett Copeland, Scott's younger Brother, has also helped.

Brett likes to lend a hand to make Haunted Woods a success, although he cannot partake in all aspects of the preparation because he suffers from epilepsy, and rigorous physical activity can induce seizures.

The 19-year-old works behind the scenes, running the animatronics, and has also been working nights to help the others with painting.



Tom Bradley from Country Club Hills looks over the final project of the old hearse he and other scoutmasters have purchased to promote scouting. (Mary Compton/ Sun-Times Media)

This Halloween, Brett's hard work will likely be rewarded more than with the usual Boy Scouts' words of gratitude, as he is only one board of review away from obtaining Eagle rank.

According to his brother, Scott, the highest title as a Scout means more to Brett than to most members.

"My father passed away in 2004, and this group as well as myself promised to my father before he passed away at age 52 of lung cancer that we would get my brother to the Eagle rank," Scott Copeland said.

HAUNTED WOODS

Orland Park Lions Club Haunted Woods Presents Forest of Fears

Today through Sunday, and Oct. 28 through Oct. 30, 2010, 7 to 10 p.m. each day.

14800 Ravinia Ave, Orland Park

\$8.00 general admission, children 5 and under free with paying adult

\$2.00 discount with donation of nonperishable food item (limit one item per admission)

Information at orlandparklionsclub.com/halloween.htm



Bill McAdaragh from Tinley Park holds a "Toe" tag as the key ring for the hearse they have restored. McAdaragh, a long time Eagle scout is collecting anything creepy or out of the ordinary for the hearse. (Mary Compton/ Sun-Times Media)



Craig Hill, a chairman with the Boy Scouts puts a coat of paint on an old hearse he and a few scoutmasters invested time and money. The men, who have been involved in scouting for thirty years and more will use the hearse to get more boys involved in scouting. (Mary Compton/ Sun-Times Media)