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## 18th Annual Haunted Trail to be Hosted by UM and Park Commission

OCTOBER 19, 2007 BY ADMIN



OXFORD, Miss. – Changing fall colors and “Pumpkins for Sale” signs hint that Halloween is just around the corner, and that can mean only one thing for University of Mississippi students majoring in park and recreation management.

For the 18th consecutive year, PRM students are busy preparing for their annual Haunted Trail at Oxford’s Avent Park, scheduled 6-10 p.m. Tuesday and Wednesday, Oct. 30-31. Admission is \$4 for adults and \$3 for children age 12 and younger. Children under age 8 must be chaperoned by an adult. A special Haunted Egg Hunt for children age 8 and younger is set for 5 p.m. Tuesday, Oct. 30, and is free to the public.

Designed, programmed and operated jointly with the Oxford Park Commission to offer enjoyment to the community, the event is also a fundraiser for the PRM student organization, said Kim Beason, associate professor of park and recreation management. He said that this year’s goal is to raise at least \$2,500, about twice as much as last year, when one night was canceled due to rain.

“All proceeds this year will go into the Park and Recreation Management Majors Association account to support student professional development and PRM student association events,” Beason said. “In past years, we have donated all proceeds to Katrina Hurricane Relief, our Lance Duvall Park and Recreation Majors Scholarship Fund and other charitable causes.”

The event has been called “a horrific success,” drawing as many as 1,200 visitors over the two-day period in previous years. Sounds of chainsaws and haunting music set the eerie atmosphere intended to frighten the anxious visitors that walk through the trail. PRM students play the role of entertainers as they dress up in scary costumes and re-enact scenes from popular horror flicks.

Organizing the trail furthers vocational knowledge for PRM majors by allowing them to gain real-world programming experience and application of what they have learned in the classroom, Beason said.

“This is a perfect example of programming as an applied science,” he said. “Students must serve as cast members, perform public relations, conduct and develop risk management plans, and evaluate and coordinate the program with another organization.”

Although scaring visitors can be amusing, some PRM students find more thrill in guiding the visitors through the haunted trail. Keith Gaskin, a junior PRM major, was a haunted trail guide last year.

“As a guide, you get to see every scene and see what is going on,” he said. “I get to see the expressions of people and that’s really fun.”

Park and Recreation Management is part of the Department of Health, Exercise Science and Recreation Management in the School of Applied Sciences.

For more information about the Haunted Trail or assistance related to a disability, contact PRM at 662-915-5555. To learn more about the School of Applied Sciences, visit

<http://www.olemiss.edu/depts/applied?sciences/>

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