



SEPT. 2014

HALLOWEEN MACHINE

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VAMPIRES

HAUNTED THEATRE

MONSTER CEREALS

HOW-TO HALLOWEEN

SPOTLIGHT: LEONARD PICKEL and TONS MORE!

How-To HALLOWEEN



OCTOBER 11, 2014 Lansing, MI

Every season something that sounds really cool pops up for the collective Halloween faithful, and here at HALLOWEEN MACHINE try to bring all the coolest new things to you! HOW-TO HALLOWEEN is a...well, it's...here, why don't we let Robot Pumpkin's Steve Sneed tell you all about it?

Can you tell us about the First Annual How-To Halloween event?

How-To Halloween is a family-friendly event that is dedicated to the do-it-yourself spirit of Halloween. It will take place at the Lansing Center in Lansing, Michigan on October 11th from noon until 10pm. We hope that it will be the "Maker Faire of the Haunting Season", an event that hopes to inspire people to head out into the garage (or evil laboratory) and create some cool out of the mundane. We will have people showing off their home-made costumes, Halloween yard displays, and house decorations. These items could be as simple as spider table decorations on up to full-scale Batmobiles.

We have a number of exhibitors lined up to show off their creations. My partner is going to show off his award winning Batmobile that he built over a PT Cruiser. He managed to get a mention on an NPR show that

discussed the burgeoning maker movement. We also have an Area 51 display that will have two UFOs, one of which will lift into the air over the Lansing Center.

There will be some interactive displays to keep the kids engaged. There will be a wild west shoot 'em game that allows kids to shoot at bad guys (targets made of foam core board) with Wii remotes. When a kid shoots at a target, the game knows which target was shot by which remote. If the target is "hit", it will recoil due to a pneumatic actuator. Finally a score is given that shows which kid shot which bad guy how many times. It's a fun game and the trick-or-treaters love it.

We will also have a number Star Wars elements too. The Great Lakes Garrison crew will be there with a full contingent of



stormtroopers, Jedi Knights, and various other characters from the movie, all with homemade costumes. Additionally, and we are quite geeked about this, they will set up their "Jawa Junkyard" where they will be showing off the life-sized droids they make in their workshops!

Another exhibitor we are excited about having is the Impression 5 Science Museum folks. They are going to be setting up some trebuchets for some indoor pumpkin chunkin'! Now, they are a science museum, so there's going to be some cool science-y stuff to learn at the same time.

For How-To Halloween, we are collaborating with the 5th Annual Lansing Zombie Walk people. They have scheduled their event to start at our front door, stagger to the Capitol, then return to How-To Halloween. I hear some of these zombie costumes can get quite elaborate and we are stoked about having them show them off at our event.

In addition to the Star Wars and zombie costumes, we are excited about having some of the Lansing Shuto Con people there. These people love anime and cosplay and create some incredible costume recreations of their favorite characters. We also plan to have a way for attendees to take pictures of their costumes (wearing yours to How-To Halloween is greatly encouraged) and post them to Twitter. We'll grab these pictures and will share them on the big screen in the hall.

Finally, we have the Lansing Maker Network group lined up. They will show off some of the cool things they build in their makerspace, including a life-sized Operation game and Giant Tetris. Even cooler will be their Star Trek game that allows 5 people to work together to fight Romulans.

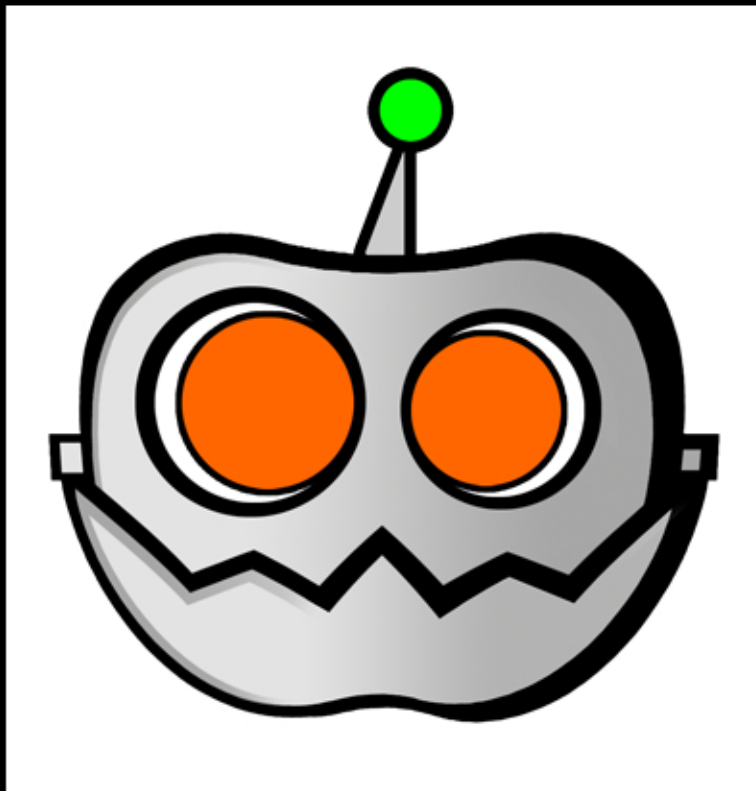
With all of this, we are trying to inspire and teach. We plan to have hands-on crafts and instructions for building these cool gadgets and displays.

Where did the idea come from?

The idea has been percolating in our brains for a while. In 2005, after living in the country where we got NO trick-or-treaters, my family moved into a neighborhood with a bunch of kids. I told my son Zack

that I wanted a Halloween project that he and I could work on that would be fun for the kids coming to our door. So he and I built a Frankenstein monster out of wood, chicken wire, tin foil, and other materials that could be "shocked" to life by the ghouls coming to our door. It was pretty low-tech, but still cool and novel. It inspired my neighbor, Jerry Jodloski (now my business partner in How-To Halloween) to create something cool the next year. So, after that we were the neighborhood to be in on Halloween; Jerry and I would build

cool, new displays each year, in a friendly competition.



What's the deal with the super cool Robot Pumpkin?

Robot Pumpkin is our logo and company name. It came as brainstorm on how Halloween can be mashed up with technology. My partner, Jerry, came up with the logo.

What kinds of contests will be there?

We plan to have a costume contest in year one. We've tossed around ideas of having a Robot Pumpkin contest where there kids will create their own version of our mascot... however they want. The skies the limit - if they want to add LEDs, sound, smoke, or whatever, that'd be great. That contest is probably coming in year 2.

We may have some sort of Halloween exhibit / invention competition in

the future.

What do you hope to accomplish with this?

We hope to inspire people to head to their garages or basements to create something fun from the junk laying around their house. We hope kids will grab their parents (or vice versa), toss some ideas around, and build something cool and share it with the world.

We hope to contribute to the growing maker movement by inspiring kids to put down the game remotes (unless they want to hack into them) and learn how to tinker. Maybe that will lead them towards a career in a STEM field.



Anything else our readers should know?

If you could include some or all of these links, this could give your readers plenty of info.

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