

CityPULSE

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October 11 - 16, 2017

The Halloween Issue

Turn to page 11 for our SPOOKTAGULAR GUIDE



★★★★★
THE HOTTEST TICKET IN TOWN*
SUNDAY MIRROR

STARRING
DEBORAH COX

Deborah Cox is not scheduled to perform on the Saturday matinee or Sunday evening performances.

THE BODYGUARD
THE MUSICAL

OCTOBER 17-22 | MSU's Wharton Center | **OPENS NEXT WEEK!**
BROADWAY AT WHARTON CENTER
SUPPORTED BY MSU FEDERAL CREDIT UNION
WHARTONCENTER.COM · 1-800-WHARTON

East Lansing engagement welcomed by USMC Group at Merrill Lynch, The Christmas Company, Delta Dental of Michigan, and Farm Bureau Insurance.

Ghosts, ghosts everywhere

Founder of Lansing-based paranormal society heads to Bath

By EVE KUCHARSKI

If you find yourself in Bath Township next weekend, chances are you'll run into ghost hunter Brad Mikulka. He is the director of the Southeast Michigan Ghost Hunter Society, and next up on the organization's list of investigations is a weekend trip to Bath Township to the site of the 1927 school bombing that killed 44 and injured 58 — still the deadliest school massacre in U.S. history.

Bath Investigation

Saturday, Oct. 14
7 p.m.-Midnight
Bath Township
See Facebook Page

"We have been there many times, and there's always activity happening over there," he said. "I've gotten permission from the Police Department to be there after hours, and we will have all the equipment, and we also have access to the graveyard where some of the victims are buried also."

This trip is completed annually by the society, though last May 18 — the anniversary of the tragedy — the group was investigating a haunted spot in another state. Mikulka said that this time, attendees can observe the ghost hunters in action and potentially see them record some evidence of spirits at the site.

Mikulka warns that investigations of haunted areas are "not like you see on TV" because they aren't as theatrical as one might imagine. Rather, they are designed to either identify spirits, or to help them

pass to the other side.

Ghost hunting seems to have been in the cards for Mikulka since the outset. After all, he did live in a haunted house.

"I was only about 2 or 3 years old. My parents and aunts and uncles said they never felt it to be threatening, but they didn't know what was going to happen next. It kept everyone on edge," Mikulka said. "As I got older, they would tell me stories."

Those stories would fuel a desire to learn about the world's spiritual side that would never fade with age for the ex-marine. He said that in his childhood home, it all started with a loud bang that startled his mother and aunt.

"She said, 'My first impression was that somebody missed the corner and crashed into our house, but when we ran into the living room, there was nobody there,'" Mikulka said.

Mikulka said.

Things escalated when Mikulka's father saw a visitor on his way to work.

"He worked third shift, and he heard footsteps coming down the hallway. 'Your mom wasn't home. I heard them coming toward the living room where I was. They were around the corner, but when I looked there wasn't anybody,'" Mikulka said. "There was a shadow, somebody walking through our living room toward our kitchen."

After a few more incidents — the sounds of animals fighting in the basement and locks being mysteriously undone from the home's interior — the events hit their peak.

"My mom was getting freaked out, so my uncle came over and spent the evening. She put him on the couch, and she slept on the

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Dynamic Duo

Two friends collaborate to create crown jewel exhibit at How-To Halloween event

By EVE KUCHARSKI

If you've seen the Mystery Machine driving by, a double-coffined Munsters Dragula car zooming past, encountered a Jurassic Park SUV or seen the "Ghostbusters" Ecto 1 hearse parked on the street, you're not hallucinating. A Lansing duo has been taking the time to create realistic replicas of movie-themed rides, and they're spot-on.

Aaron Aikman, 46, is one half of the car building team. The CATA bus driver said that his love of creating and collecting cars started long before he built any of his unique vehicles. His obsession with automobiles started when he was 14 and first learning how to drive. Eventually, his obsession would allow him to amass a collection of 15 antique and vintage vehicles and one sports car. A few years ago, Aikman tried his hand at bringing a Munsters icon to life.

"It's built just like grandpa's Dragula, but I have two coffins on it instead of one. I built that coffin car in six months — that is our own custom-built frame — all my engineering," Aikman said.

Though six months might seem quick, the Mystery Machine took just as long. However, the fastest build was Ecto 1, taking only three weeks to construct.

"My friend Jerry came to me and said, 'Hey, how would you like to convert your hearse into the 'Ghostbusters'

car because it's the exact twin to the new 'Ghostbusters' that's coming out?' I have to give him a lot of credit, because he's the one who did all the vinyl on that," Aikman said.

That friend is Jerry Jodloski, 50, who is also the reason the full-scale replica of the Mystery Machine came to be.

"Him and I both loved Scooby-Doo as children and this was his idea for his How-To Halloween event," Aikman said. "He wanted a new display for this year."

That display will be one of dozens at the upcoming How-To Halloween event. Jodloski is the founder of the festival, as well as its event director and its self-appointed "mad scientist."

"It all kicks off the downtown Lansing Zombie Walk. It's a part of our festival, along with a brand-new after party on Saturday called the Invasion," Jodloski said.

How-To Halloween is a cross between a Maker Faire and Halloween Festival. Jodloski describes it as a "neat place for people to show off the things that they've done and built, and for people to learn how to do these things, too."

The all-ages festival is made possible by a collaboration of local maker groups, the Lansing Entertainment & Public Facilities Authority and local vendors. Kids under 12 can expect to get some early Trick-or-Treating done, with a map to candy stations strewn across the Lansing Center. Children will also get a look at toy-hacking with tinkrLAB, the kid-oriented maker space. At that station, children are welcome to take apart old toys and fit them back together to create their own unique playthings.



Photo by Jerry Jodloski

The Mystery Machine will appear at the upcoming How-To Halloween Festival.

For attendees looking to get their hands dirty with STEAM (science, technology, engineering, math and the art of design), the festival's Mad Scientist Laboratory will host interactive exhibits from local vendors like REACH Studio Art Center and ITEC Lansing.

Fans of cosplay can rejoice, too. How-To Halloween will showcase a variety of accomplished cosplayer groups, like Squirrels Creations and 501st Legion.

"This year is our first major sponsorship from Celebration Cinema, and we couldn't be happier about that because they're all about giving a theatrical-themed event," Jodloski said. "We want to give people that experience that you can't get at home. It's absolutely a perfect fit."

Jodloski said that his obsession with the theatrical started at a young age, too.

"My mom made a homemade Batman costume for me. I thought it was the coolest thing ever," Jodloski said. "As I

got older, I really wanted to create the same memories that I had that meant so much growing up."

Perhaps that's why Jodloski and Aikman get along so well; both have a commitment to bringing the theatrical to life.

And already, Aikman is cooking up another project. Specifically, it's a 1988 Pontiac Trans Am.

"I'm in the process of building Knight Rider now," Aikman said. "I will have KITT, at least the body, ready in six months so that I can drive him next summer."

The whole project will cost Aikman upwards of \$8,000 to complete, but when asked why he continues his expensive hobby, his answer is simple.

"It's all about the kids," Aikman said. "If you were to see how happy kids get when they see my 'Ghostbusters' car or my coffin car, the Mystery Machine, it's rewarding. It's rewarding to see the smiles on kids of all ages."