

## Haunted Mall combines hard work, fun

Four teenagers slide their money across the ticket desk. They huddle together in anticipation: there is safety in numbers. Slowly, they creep cautiously though the narrow hallways splattered with fake blood. A clown jumps out in front of them with a diabolical laugh. Screaming, the group bolts, running past the intimidating figure, not slowing until out in the fresh air.

At Watertown's Haunted Mall, this is a common event. In fact, scaring customers is the goal. An estimated 500 people a night walk through the terrifying setup every year before Halloween.

Dave Greenman, one of three current co-heads of the spook show, enjoys the good-natured fun of Halloween. Greenman has always had an underlying interest in creepy films and supernatural creatures.

"I've always loved scary movies and Halloween as a kid, and I really loved haunted houses!" Greenman said. "I found two other guys that shared that interest and wanted to see if they wanted to start our own [haunted house]."

Dr. Bill Devine, another director of the Haunted Mall, has overseen the project for the past 11 years. He was involved with the Halloween festivities for three years prior. Devine disguises himself in costumes every year, relishing the screams he causes.

Still, everything is done in good humor. Actors are instructed to scare customers, but are strictly forbidden from entering someone's personal space. This rule stays the same every year.

However, the Haunted Mall itself changes each year. New props and ideas are added in the months leading up to Halloween. Occasionally, the layout undergoes an entire renovation, rearranging rooms and corridors.

"It's like a restaurant. People get tired of the same thing every year," Devine said. "Many peo-

ple remember what props or scenes we've had. We try to make it fresh every year."

Another way the Haunted Mall stays fresh is by incorporating high school students as actors. An entirely new group comes in every few years, excited and ready to terrorize Haunted Mall patrons. Young actors add their own flair to their role, ensuring each year is unique. Junior Nancy Flaherty, one such actress, enjoys the different possibilities.

"[The best part is] all the work the visitors don't get to see," Flaherty said. "They don't know the makeup work the actors went into or the ideas that were fleshed out to truly make them jump during their visit."

In reward for their hard work, students and other actors receive unlimited pizza and water. In addition, an assorted pile of costumes, stage makeup and fake blood are available for use, letting students show off their creativity.

"Having the drama kids help works out great," Greenman said. "They act, it's what they do. Sometimes the kids' attention span isn't so great and then it seems we have to babysit. Overall, we probably couldn't have the haunted house without them!"

Adam Reeves, the third person in the trio, agrees. He coordinates actors, props and times, ensuring everything falls into place. High schoolers are not always responsible enough to communicate their plans clearly, which can lead to confusion. However, students are not the only obstacle.



Photo by: Rainie Devine

**HAVING A HAUNTINGLY GOOD TIME**— Juniors Rainie Devine and Alyssa Jensen get into the spirit of the haunted house. They put their makeup to the test while working this year's Haunted Mall.

"[The hardest part is] probably keeping all the balls in the air," Reeves said. "I am in charge of logistics, so I have to make sure the mall is satisfied with our safety procedures and I also have to make sure we have actors show up for all three nights. I have to make sure we have insurance in place, pizza for the kids and all these things that have to get done in order to finally start scaring people."

In order to combat some of the chaos, the triad works preemptively, gathering new ideas year-round. Devine builds the signature automated props seen throughout the Haunted Mall, beginning as early as January. Greenman noted having pre-standing walls, as they have had for the past few years, shortens the construction time.

"As far as time spent working on setting up the haunted house itself, I bet we are in there probably an average eight hours a week, minimum, during September and October," Reeves said.

A three-night spectacle for most Watertown citizens is a yearlong operation for Devine, Greenman and Reeves. The Haunted Mall was open Oct. 26, 27 and 28.

Rainie Devine  
Staff Writer

## Locking doors at Watertown High School

Watertown High School has gone through major changes within the last year; one of the largest and most noticeable changes being all the doors in the building are locked throughout the school day, including the concourse doors, and all patrons are being directed to the new student entrance.

Beginning at 8:30 daily and continuing until 3:30, the doors of the high school are locked. The 700 hallway door closest to LATI is monitored and opened between classes to allow students who take classes at LATI back in to the school without walking all the way around the building, helping the students to arrive at their next classes on time. According to senior Cheyenne Volk, most of the students she knows who have LATI classes walk all the way around the building to get in when they finish their class.

"I don't feel any more safe now," junior Christopher Andrews said. "Locking all of the doors, besides

the student entrance, seems like a minor fix."

Putting this system in place is a step in the right direction. Other things can be done in order for schools to be a safer place.

The school district has formed a safety committee to help study and find solutions to school safety issues within the district. This committee meets throughout the school year to discuss the implementations that have taken place and where the district could go from here.

"One thing that the school could start doing is implementing ID cards. Like the ones used in colleges," sophomore Mykel Hoffman said.

Another thing that is in the works is a secure entrance/buzzer system. The grade schools and the intermediate school have implemented this idea.

"One thing schools could do is focus more on the students, the ones who are being teased or feel as they don't belong in the school," teacher Marc Lunde said.



Photo by: Emily Alama

**SAFETY MEASURES INCREASED**—The student body, as well as the community of Watertown, must utilize the student entrance to the high school during the school day. Visitors must check in at the attendance office to enter the building as well.

WHS brought about ACB - academic coaching block. This is a time where students gather with a teacher adviser during their high school career. This allows students to have an advocate in the building and someone to help with all things school related for students.

"We are continuing to work on a positive culture in our school so everyone feels welcome, has an adult advocate and is successful in their learning," principal Michael Butts said. "School safety takes all of us looking out for each other and working together to be successful."

Change will continue to happen throughout the year as the safety committee works to help the students and faculty, as well as the community of Watertown, feel more secure in the building.

Gavin Jurgens  
Staff Writer



Photo by: Rainie Devine

**HAUNTING HOLIDAYS**—The cast and crew of the Haunted Mall hope everyone has a haunting Halloween holiday.



Courtesy Photo

### All-State members from WHS

Students from WHS headed out west to perform in the annual All-State Chorus and Orchestra performance.

This year's director was Phillip Swan, a former choral director at Watertown. He taught in Watertown for 10 years starting in 1989.

Watertown sent out 21 students total to the performance in Rapid City. Of the 21 members, 1 represented WHS on the orchestra side, Brooke Ziegler. She played the cello.

Students practice prior to attending and must audition to even be considered. They meet with all of the students from the state who have qualified and perform one large concert on Saturday evening the last weekend of October.

# Inside Look

