

Top-rated Haunted Forest takes over Sheppard's Bush this Saturday



By Brock Weir

Aurora's Haunted Forest has been a draw for tourists from around Aurora and beyond looking for thrills and chills under a starry sky, and this year organizers are planning on pulling out all the stops. After all, as a member of the Top 100 Festivals & Events in Ontario list, they have a reputation to maintain!

Thousands are expected to turn out at Sheppard's Bush this Saturday night, October 27, from 6 ? 9 p.m. for the experience, which features not only a family-friendly trail, but one designed for bigger kids, weaving in bone-chilling sights and sounds.

Wrist-bands, your admission to the event, are on sale now at many locations across the community, including the Aurora Family Leisure Complex, Aurora Town Hall and the Stronach Aurora Recreation Complex. They must be purchased in advance.

?This is one of the Top 100 Festivals & Events in Ontario and we have kept this position for a number of years, which is really an achievement to do and that is greatly attributed to the amount of effort that goes in to make the experience different,? says Shelley Ware, Special Events Coordinator for the Town of Aurora. ?Even though we still have a family trail each year, we try our best each year to shake it up and make it fresh so that people still want to come back year after year. This is one of those events where the entire family can age with the event because you can go when your children are small and still be going when they are in their teens or even older. It is not an event that caps off at a certain age in terms of appeal.?

New this year, Theatre Aurora has joined the Haunted Forest team, along with volunteers from local Scouts, Marquee Theatrical Productions, and the Town of Aurora's Youth Engagement Committee.

?The event is getting stronger in terms of our partnerships,? says Ms. Ware, adding that a returning favourite, Casper's Scare School, is taking a new form this year: a mini school built inside a shipping container.

The thrills and chills trail, she notes, will feature more displays this year than ever before ? and you might encounter some ?zombie children? along the way.

?When you're on the next trail that's not so scary, you still need to keep all your senses intact and always be on your guard because you never know when the next thrill is just around the next tree,? she says. ?If you still haven't made your decision on whether to come out on Saturday, don't make your decision based on the weather. If the weather appears to be unfavourable, it adds to the excitement of your experience.?

For more on the 2018 Haunted Forest, visit www.aurora.ca/hauntedforest.