

Zombie Hunt is family fun benefiting St. John Ambulance

Trick-or-Treating is in doubt. Vampires now have to maintain social distance. Witches are having to re-think their morning broompools. Goblins are recalibrating whatever it is they usually do at this time of year. But zombies? They're all around York Region, if you know where to look ? and St. John Ambulance of York Region is here to help.

If you're looking for a way to have some spooky, but family-friendly fun this Hallowe'en season, look no further than the York Region Zombie Hunt, hosted by St. John Ambulance.

On now through October 31, the York Region Zombie Hunt is a large-scale 31-activity scavenger hunt that allows families to get out into their towns and cities in a safe way, participate in some spooky activities, all the while helping build community spirit.

It is a fundraiser not only for St. John Ambulance (SJA), but is also a way to support local business.

?Our original plan was to do a Zombie Walk because we felt it tied in well with our youth programs, but now we can't have a whole bunch of people together! says SJA York Region's Jason Colterman. ?We brainstormed and figured we could do this like a scavenger hunt with prizes and instead of walking down Yonge Street dressed as zombies, we're working with local businesses to help support them as well.?

The Zombie Hunt kicked off October 1 and since its launch participants have been able to enjoy several activities, most of which will still be available for participants who join in mid-stream.

One of their first events was a collaboration between organizers and an area-based makeup artist who provided tutorials on how to harness the power of theatrical makeup to unleash the zombie within. Another activity, this time in partnership with Reptilia, was a photo-op with a live tarantula.

?There are a lot of activities happening and we're still working on getting it all together,? says Mr. Colterman. ?You can sign up at any point and almost all of the challenges can be done at any point as well. They are just going to be promoted on certain days. You can still capture the zombie makeup tutorial package, post the photos online, and you'll be entered into a draw ? and every challenge has a draw.

?This is a great event that not only supports St. John's but it creates an entertaining atmosphere for you and your family while also supporting the local community as well. All of our sponsors are all local sponsors within York Region. So, we're not going after supporting great big corporations and whatnot, it is really a grassroots community-building exercise. And it's fun for the whole family; it doesn't all have to be super-scary and it doesn't all need to be pumpkin patches!?

Proceeds from the Zombie Hunt will benefit a variety of local programs spearheaded by the St. John community, including youth leadership programs which gets teens out in their neighbourhoods for community-building and self-improvement, their Medical First Responders programs, and their popular therapy dog initiatives.

?Our medical responders are not the paramedics [from the Region], they're all volunteers and they volunteer their time to help the local community,? says Mr. Colterman. ?Some of them may be paramedics, nurses or doctors in their day-to-day work life, but they commit their time to giving back to the community as volunteers and help those who are in need, which is an incredible thing to do.?

To participate in the 2020 Zombie Run, registration is \$10 per Zombie, \$25 for a ghoulish family of two adults and up to three children, or \$150 for a team of up to 10 individuals.

Registration and further information can be found at yzombiehunt.com.

Everyone who registers will receive a Zombie Survival Kit this November. All prize draws will take place in the first week of next month.

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