



Catharine Kendall Emerald

The MAiZE, located outside of Eugene, is one of 61 corn mazes in the United States. It occupies 10 acres of land at Lone Pine Farms. Beginning Oct. 13, The MAiZE will begin holding 'haunted' evenings.

From Husk till Dawn

*Lone Pine Farms expects people to get lost —
in its corn maze, that is*



The MAiZE is made of silage corn, which grows much faster and taller than most types of corn — so tall that visitors cannot see over it.

By Mason West
Oregon Daily Emerald

When you're on a path lined on both sides with corn husks 15 feet tall, it can be easy to lose your sense of direction. This is the fundamental principle behind The MAiZE, a corn maze just outside of Eugene.

Well, actually, the maze in the Eugene area is just one of 61 scattered across the country. This particular maze spans 10 acres, roughly a half-million square feet, and was designed to commemorate two horses named Jim and Polly, who were famous for their carriage rides at Lone Pine Farms, the host of The MAiZE.

It was designed by Brett Herbst, who, with 102 corn mazes under his belt, is the leading corn maze designer in the world.

The idea of a the corn maze is not that far off from the hedge mazes found in Europe, but corn mazes are a lot easier to come by. The Lone Pine Farms maze was planted in July, and the corn was plenty tall in time for the Sept. 16 opening date.

Nick Joslin, co-manager of The MAiZE, explained that not all corn will grow this fast or even to such heights. The corn used for The MAiZE is called silage corn and is specifically grown for cattle. Unfortunately, Joslin said it is unlikely that any cow will see a kernel of the maze corn. A small sacrifice made in the name of fun.

Being in the maze itself is great fun, but it can be intimidating. Walking by husks of corn that can be longer than your thigh, you wonder which turn will lead you out.

Fortunately, you don't have to wander through depending completely on luck. At the entrance of The MAiZE, you take a "passport," a card with 10 questions that you will answer when you come to posts in the maze corresponding with the numbers. A correct answer will tell

you the correct direction to turn. There are numerous passports with questions in different themes including sports, corn, the Bible, and interactive. The interactive passport has participants do things such as counting the words in the "Hokie Pokie." Joslin warns that it can be confusing because of individual interpretation.

There are also two bridges in the maze, which give you a perspective on where you are — sort of. The bridges aren't tall enough for you to see the paths well from above.

While wandering through the corn, you hear voices of fellow sojourners, but it isn't often that you run into them. When you do, you exchange advice and spare rations. Some people even know some tricks of the trade.

"Any path I haven't taken, I make a line in the straw on the ground to find a new route," Kate Carlson, a Eugene resident, said.

Others have more problems than solutions.

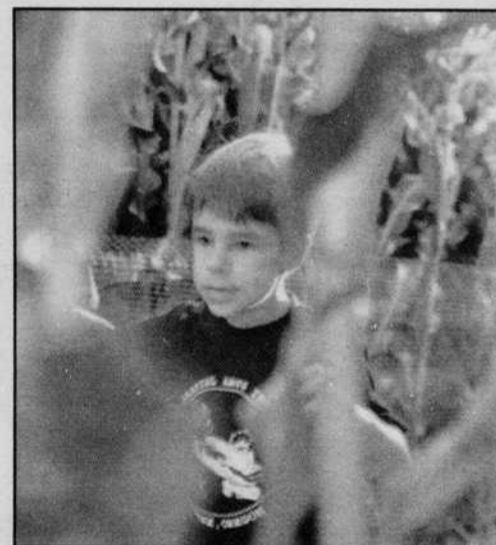
"I'm too small," 4-year-old Alex Nicolson said.

The average person can walk the correct path of the maze in 30 minutes, but it takes most people an hour to get through. But that time spent is homage to the time spent making the maze.

Craig Easterly, co-manager of The MAiZE, is one of only two people who cleared the more than three miles of paths that comprise the area over the summer. Easterly said there's no secret as to how he and his girlfriend made it happen:

"Two people. Two hoes. Early mornings."

If early mornings aren't your forte, and you also want a little extra excitement, The MAiZE will hold "haunted" evenings starting Oct. 13. Joslin and Easterly are still looking for volunteers to help with the haunting. Call 546-0164 for details.



Four-year-old Alex Nicolson of Dexter leads his grandmother through the corn maze. Sometimes visitors develop strategies to get themselves through the maze, which usually takes about 30 to 60 minutes.

