

Hearse: corpse caddy for the common folk

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days and weekends," says Beto Santa Maria, a member who drives a black 1978 Superior Cadillac with the custom license plate 1DAYU2.

Hearse ownership is not required for club association. Merely having an interest in the cars and paying the low yearly dues will get anybody into this quirky club.

"But why would anybody want to own a hearse?" many would ask. The answer is simple.

After getting past the horrible fuel mileage and all the darned ghosts and dead people goo, a hearse is a very practical, quality-built vehicle. Where else can a buyer get an affordable, used Cadillac that sports a heavenly smooth ride, has low miles, was well-maintained, and can haul a stack of plywood? Think of a hearse as a budget Escalade.

For those new to these unique cars, here is a short history lesson. A hearse is a car that has been heavily altered by a company independent from the initial auto manufacturer. Cadillacs are the most common, though Buick and Lincoln hearses

are not uncommon. Changes are made to a special commercial chassis so that the car can be used to perform a set of tasks quite different from a normal passenger car. These changes include a stretched wheel base, custom metal or

do not know is that those trademark chrome S bars on the roof sides, known as Landau bars, are a stylistic kick back to the devices used to

Most members possess their own hearse, some of which are driven daily for such common chores as getting groceries and going to work. The few members who do not yet

out a half dozen compact parking spaces. Style is very much a consideration when looking to purchase a used hearse.

"Once upon a time there were many hearse building companies such as Superior, S&S, Miller Meteor and Eureka," says Lamond.

"[These] and a score of other independent and smaller companies were all bought up by the parent company Accubuilt.

Just about every new hearse produced comes from an Accubuilt factory so they mostly all look alike.

"The real charming hearses are the older cars built before one company owned all of the brand names," Lamond added.

Most of the club members seem to share his opinion and huge retired hearses from the 70s are what passersby are most likely to see cruising the streets on this frightful holiday season.

If you would like more information on 'Hearing Around', or know where there is a hearse or ambulance for sale, then don't hesitate to contact Craig Lamond via e-mail at: hearingaround@hotmail.com

PHOTO BY Jesse Lamond



fiber-glass cargo oriented body work, rollers on the rear floor for easy stiff loading, and heavy duty parts on all corners. Something that many people

and lower the convertible tops on carriages and early auto's.

the mystical world of hearse ownership, a land where gas prices become secondary to looking cool and a driver can look forward to parking sideways to wipe

Cheap chills, cheap thrills, cheap costumes

Michaele Cooper
THE CLACKAMAS PRINT

Visit high-tech haunted houses, get lost in a giant corn maze, explore buildings thought to house real ghosts and put together a costume to die for, all without leaving the metro area this Halloween.

Many haunted houses in Portland offer visitors the opportunity to be scared silly. Two star attractions this year are "Dr. Saito's Screamlund" and "Scream at the Beach." "Dr. Saito's," located at Oak's Park, is the oldest haunted house in Portland. It features two different haunts: "House of 1,000 Screams" and "The Underground."

A little further down the road is "Scream at the Beach" at the Jantzen Beach Mall. Four scary tours are available, including "The Forbidden Temple," "Baron Von Goolo's Museum of Horrors" and "Alpha Station 13." The Baron's Museum

rates number one with 'Mad Martian,' an online haunted house guru.

"From the talking slime monster to the cats that eat dynamite, this is without a doubt the most twisted haunted house I have ever seen," writes 'Martian' on his web site, found at www.madmartian.com/halloween.

As far as cool effects go, Beaverton's "Spooky Town" is the place to be. Run by a movie special effects company, "Spooky Town" is renowned for its amazing effects, including real fire. The theme of their stunt show this year is pirates and mummies, completed by a pirate ship.

For the over 21 crowd, the Portland Art Museum is hosting a party on Oct. 31 at 8 p.m. The "Haunted Halloween Hoedown" will offer horror movies, a costume contest, door prizes and a variety of

drinks ranging from beer to cocktails.

For those interested in supposedly genuine haunted houses, there are quite a few in the Portland area. The McLoughlin House is a must for those who wishing to encounter a "real" ghost. Admission is \$4 for adults, and tours are available until 4 p.m. Wednesday through Sunday. The house is located on Center Street and 7th Avenue.

Those in the Forest Grove area might be interested in Knight Hall at Pacific University. Allegedly, a ghost that has been dubbed "Vera" haunts what is now the university's music department, but was once a private house.

Other possibilities for ghost sightings include the first frame house built in Oregon City, the Ermatinger House, which rests after two moves at 6th Ave and John Adams and the Falcom Apartments in north Portland, which have not one but

three ghosts lurking in the shadows. One more is The Witch's Castle in Forest Park, rumored to be violently haunted with "ghost wars." This stone shack was once a trading post during the 17th century, at a crossroads of two trails leading to the Oregon Coast.

All these activities deserve a worthwhile costume. A trip up McLoughlin Boulevard or through the Hawthorn district will reveal dozens of secondhand shops, offering a million and one ideas each for the perfect disguise.

Because of the great selection that thrift stores offer, completely original outfits can be produced. Don't conform to the standards of black cats and dead cheerleaders, or any of the other typical facades seen around every corner; try something new.

For example, be a pop star. The amount of '80s clothing offered at secondhand stores like Value Village

goes beyond count. Also consider dressing as a video game or cartoon character.

Another possible route is making cheesy ideas as real as possible. Realistic pirates, witches and storybook characters would make interesting costumes. The key word is "realistic." For these costumes, check out vintage stores like The Red Light at 3590 S.E. Hawthorn.

Other good stores for economical costume ideas are Goodwill and Salvation Army, both at various locations, Red White and Blue on McLoughlin Blvd, the Metro on SE Hawthorne and Atomic Lily on East Burnside.

With the abundance of haunted houses, both man-made and allegedly genuine, and a plethora of prime costume shops in the metro area, Portlanders should have no trouble dressing to kill and having a screaming good time for Halloween 2003.

Try New! Dia de los Muertos!

(That's "Day of the Dead" to you gringos.)

Dia de los Muertos is a traditional Mexican holiday honoring the dead. It is celebrated every year at the same time as Halloween and the Christian holy days of All Saints Day and All Souls Day (Nov. 1 and 2). It's a great time to remember dead family members, and rejoice in the fact that you are still alive.

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