

FACTORY: OSD students embrace scares for a cause

(Continued from Page A1) said Ed Robertson, founder and co-director of the annual fundraiser for the Oregon School for the Deaf (OSD) in Salem.

The Nightmare Factory opens Friday Oct. 4. The factory's other dates this year are Oct. 5, 11-12, 25-26 and 29-30. Tickets are only \$10 the first weekend and go up to \$15 after that. Group rates are available. Hours are 7 to 11 p.m. on Fridays and Saturdays and 7 to 10 p.m. on weekdays.

Planning for this year's scares began almost immediately after Halloween passed last year, but Robertson and LeFerve, Nightmare Factory co-director, have created a well-oiled machine. Robertson noticed an opportunity to bring a haunted house experience to Salem when he moved to the area 32 years ago.

"We started in nine bedrooms and now we have a space with more than 60 individual rooms all created by the

students and volunteers in the community," Robertson said.

Jenna Odey, an OSD student, first experienced the haunt as a visitor nine years ago. She's been an actor in it ever since.

"I started out as a clown character, but it evolved into Meaoud," Odey said. If you find yourself being menaced by a croquet mallet-wielding clown wearing the skin of someone else, that's Meaoud.

Student Jamila Walker's Sally the Screamer character is a result of her vocal ability.

LeFerve's Mr. Booger started out as a character confined to a wheelchair eating all the weird things he could find and emitting a memorable laugh. LeFerve later rebirthed the character as a clown, but the laugh remains the same and it's become a hallmark of the whole experience.

"I went down to the courtroom after work last week and went through security. After I was on the other side I started



KEIZERTIMES/Eric A. Howald
Kivo LeFerve's Mr. Booger is waiting for you this month at the Nightmare Factory, an annual production and fundraiser for the Oregon School for the Deaf in Salem.

laughing about something and the security guard said, 'You're Mr. Booger?' They recognized me from the laugh," LeFerve said.

For \$40, guests can take Mr. Booger's Wild Ride, in which the victim is handcuffed to a wheelchair and pushed through the house while the actors are allowed to lightly touch them. Those wanting to up the fright factor in a different way can visit on Nov. 1 or 2.

"Those are Pitch Black nights," Robertson said. "We turn out all the lights and it's you, a crappy glowstick and good luck."

About 1-in-7 visitors during Pitch Black nights bail before finishing the experience.

The Nightmare Factory is

the largest annual fundraiser for OSD and proceeds have paid for new laptops, new books, a new gym floor, new playgrounds and trips for students ranging from athletics to haunted house conventions.

Beyond that, Robertson and LeFerve use the behind-the-scenes aspects of the experience as career training for students.

"There's marketing, makeup, design, construction, technical theater and acting that goes into this," Robertson said.

Izzy Zachary said finding ways to scare helped her overcome her natural shyness.

"I kind of feel bad about the little kids whose parents drag them through, but the best is scaring the dad or boyfriend who thinks they are tough," Zachary said. "I'm usually a

shy person and it's helped me get out of that."

Student Jolinda Mathis said her art skills have soared in the few years she's been part of the effort.

Robertson strives to create new rooms, new animatronics or other elements every year and people return to Nightmare Factory year after year to see what he and the students have cooked up.

"I think what surprises people most when they come is that a school is putting this on, and they know they can come back because there will be something, somewhere that is different," Robertson said.

The Nightmare Factory is located on the OSD campus at 999 Locust Street N.E., in Salem. Use the bathroom before you go.



Kim May

Salem author at KCC

Kim May, author of *The Moonflower*, will visit the Keizer Cultural Center for a presentation on Wednesday, Oct. 23, at 6:30 p.m.

May will talk about her path to becoming a published author, read from her recent novel and answer audience questions.

Admission is free. The Keizer Cultural Center is located at 980 Chemawa Road N.E.

May said she collects genres like a crazy cat lady collects strays. She has written in fantasy, sci-fi, thriller, young adult fiction, historical fiction, steampunk and poetry.

Copies of her books will be available for purchase at the event.

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