

Time to scream for Halloween

Spooky holiday calls for freakish costumes

w Aatifa Sadiq
World Editor

As Halloween rolls around the corner, the excitement to find the perfect unique Halloween costume rises. Every year, individuals hunt for an original costume idea that hasn't been played out. While realizing that this is nearly impossible, *West Word* offers a guide to popular costumes, so that shoppers can at least find what everyone else is wearing and make adjustments.

It seems the popularity of the *Pirates of the Caribbean* has made a major impact on costume designs. Stores have stocked their shelves with various pirate costumes. One can find simple pirate shirts to complex outfits with velvet coats, beards, and swords. One can also find Captain Jack Sparrow and Will Turner wigs and hats from the movie. There is also a wide variety of accessories to go with these costumes. Accessories include straight-bladed or curved swords, various daggers, skull eye patches, plastic pirate boots and pistols.

Another costume which has always been at the head of the costume list is skeletons. This year there is a wide variety of costumes that put a twist on the usual skeleton. Some have combined the skeleton image with the zombie to make the costume more gruesome and realistic. Other skeleton costumes include more detailed and gory portrayals of skeletons, some with intensified blood.

This year, stores have stocked up on various clown costumes. However, these aren't your average happy clown costumes, but resemble IT and Homie the Clown. These costumes usually come with a poofy rainbow wig and one can choose from a variety of different masks. These masks are usually white and painted with gruesome facial expressions. Some have blood dripping from their mouths, while others have scary smiles plastered on them. If one wishes to scare friends and family, the clown costume may be a perfect fit.

While one may go for a scary look, others might like a more outrageous costume. Stores have a wide range of costumes and accessories for those who want to dress up as pimps this year,

although the might want to save these costumes for outside-of-school activities. Accessories include gold canes, large necklaces with dollar symbols hanging from them, glittery glasses in the shape of money and many others.

A rather unkind costume type which has emerged in stores this year is stereotypical nerd. There are various masks that exaggerate the nerd image. These masks depict the nerd as an overweight individual with big round black glasses. The skins of these masks have fake acne and the masks also show buck teeth with braces. One can easily wear a plaid t-shirt and pants to complete the

costume.

Other masks that are interesting include ghouls, mummies, vampires, and celebrities such as Ben Franklin, Elvis and the Simpsons, which are definitely worth consideration.

Old staples include various scream masks. Unfortunately, no new twists have been added to these masks, except the occasional burst of blood. Equally pedestrian are angel and devil masks. Stores have simply put out the same black and maroon feathered wings or the orange and red plastic ones.

If store-bought costumes are not to one's liking, then better luck might be found in making them at home. Costume and party stores have various make-up sets and effects to make one's costume unique. These can easily be found by browsing through Party City.

Finding the right costume may be a difficult task, but with a bit of effort, one can find something that is unique.



Party City features a wide selection of ghoulish masks. Photo by Aatifa Sadiq

Navy Fear doesn't live up to name

w Sarah Masanek
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Chicagoland provides a vast selection of haunted houses, but most are in distant suburbs such as Tinley Park or Grayslake. For those who prefer not to travel great distances to have the wits scared out of them, Chicago's Navy Pier annually provides its own house of horrors called Navy Fear.

Each year, Navy Fear features a different theme. This year's theme is nautical and titled Demons of the Deep. It's located in the back of the pier, and the gloomy atmosphere of the Lake Michigan in October adds to the scary effect. The venue is a tent, so it's very dark inside, which adds to the potential terror.

Unfortunately, the boring performances and uninteresting props make for a sub-par haunted house. Overall, Demons of the Deep is more fun than scary.

The house isn't as well done as those found in the suburbs, especially considering the inflated price of \$14, not counting the extortionist parking rates. There are an adequate number of performers, but they don't really increase the fright. Their antics become predictable after the first few encounters. The low budget costumes and decorations aren't much different from those with which one might decorate the family home. Furthermore, Navy Fear doesn't feature

as many special effects, such as black lights or speakers, as houses one might find at places like Six Flags. The entire experience is shorter than other houses, lasting for only about 15 minutes.

Demons of the Deep does have some interesting aspects, including a large, colorful display outside. Professional pictures are taken in line and can be purchased later. Other positives include numerous rooms, which needed to be entered and exited, making it easy to be surprised and frightened.

The house is now open every day until Halloween 4 p.m.-10 p.m. with late night closings at midnight on Oct. 27-28.

Navy Pier is located at 600 E. Grand Ave. in Chicago.



Demons of the Deep, part of Navy Fear. Photo by Sarah Masanek