

For consideration – September 14, 2023 Temagami Regular Council Meeting

Good Day, Temagami mayor and council.

I am writing you as the chief organizer of the Temagami Haunting of the Fire Tower Trail event in 2022.

Our community organized event last year was an unprecedented success. Please refer to attached Temiskaming Speaker articles.

In retrospect, I feel we will be able to charge tickets for the event and raise considerable funds. Last year we asked for food donations to our food bank.

As we all witnessed, the "Haunting of the Fire Tower Trail" event was a tremendous success, drawing residents and visitors alike to our beautiful town. Its spooky charm and unique atmosphere captured the imaginations of everyone who attended, creating lasting memories and fostering a sense of community spirit. The positive feedback and enthusiasm from participants indicate that there is great potential in this event.

We had extensive coverage from local media, including an interview on CTV and two articles in the Temiskaming speaker. Our initial announcement this year has already received 4.5 thousand views in facebook.

With this in mind, I would like to propose that we elevate the "Haunting of the Fire Tower Trail" event to the status of a municipal festival this year. By expanding its scope and duration to encompass an entire weekend, we can transform it into a grand celebration that includes a dance, local vendors, parades, and various other activities to cater to a wide range of interests and age groups.

Here are some key benefits and objectives of this proposal:

Economic Boost: A weekend-long festival will attract more visitors from neighboring communities and beyond, stimulating local businesses and creating additional revenue streams for our town.

Community Engagement: By involving residents in the planning and execution of the festival, we can strengthen community bonds and provide opportunities for local talent and creativity to shine.

Tourism Promotion: Temagami's natural beauty and cultural heritage will be on full display, encouraging visitors to explore our town and its attractions, leading to potential repeat visits in the future.

Youth Involvement: Events like parades and dances are likely to engage younger members of our community, fostering a sense of pride and belonging.

Long-Term Vision: By establishing the "Haunting of the Fire Tower Trail" festival as an annual tradition, we can set the stage for it to become a sustainable social and economic engine for our municipality in the years to come.

I believe that this proposal aligns with our shared goal of enhancing the quality of life in Temagami and ensuring its long-term prosperity. I kindly request that you consider this proposal and explore the possibilities it presents. I am more than willing to offer my time and expertise to assist in planning and organizing this event if it receives the council's approval.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. I look forward to discussing this proposal further and working together to make Temagami's future even brighter.

If Council feels that this event should be organized independently, I would ask that the municipality waive fees for a) the arena hall rental for a dance, b) the Bunny Miller theatre for a film festival, c) use of the fire tower museum and trail apparatus (electrical, etc.) for logistics, storage and preparation and allow use of the Train Station parking lot for shuttle pickup, allow the closure of Jack Guppy Way for the event itself and allow for a parade and vendors as may present themselves in the event organization.

In short, I am asking that Mayor and Council direct staff to either

- a) Sanction the event as a municipal festival (in which case the funds obtained through ticket sales, etc. will be directed to the municipality), or
- b) Allow the specified municipal assets to be used in the event without charge, (in which case the funds obtained through ticket sales, etc. will be directed to the organizers of the event for cost recovery (bus rentals, hot chocolate, etc.) with excess put into an account for next year's event)

Thank you
John Shymko
59 O'Connor Drive and Island 195, Lake Temagami
Temagami, Ontario
905 320 4187

Municipal Budget 2022

	58.74	paper masks
+	112.96	silicone bike lights
+	67.75	electrical wire
+	46.31	Halloween lights
+	74.55	Halloween artifacts
+	59.85	wireless relays
+	87.84	hardware
+	6.53	charter bus
+	370.85	charter bus
+	20.00	batteries
+	121.62	trail supplies
+	22.91	trail supplies
+	22.44	lights

=	\$1,072.35	

We had about \$185.00 in unsolicited donations and I personally contributed about 1500.00 to the event.

Excerpt from November, 2023 staff report:

October 29 - The Haunting of the Fire Tower Trail

Estimated attendance – 600 to 700 actual participants

100 to 200 – left lineup before reaching shuttle bus

300 or more – saw lineup from highway and carried on to other destinations

This was an astounding success. We had coverage from organic social media sharing, the Temiskaming Speaker, Yahoo News, The North Bay Nugget, North Bay Today, and a six-minute interview on CTV by Tony Ryma.

I believe there will also be follow up stories by the North Bay Nugget and the Temiskaming Speaker.

We had approximately 30 volunteers, four of which were councillors from our next council. We received financial support from six local businesses and about 30 community members, in addition to supplies being donated by volunteers.

Living Temagami somehow dealt with the traffic overflow and coordination. Special thanks goes out to community member Robert Mills, who donated his time to operate our shuttle.

The shuttle bus was attacked by zombies en route, and narrowly escaped a frightening fate.

Once spectators arrived at the beginning of the trail, they were warned of strange goings on at the trails by the parks director, such as faces in the trees, lost children and witch squatters.

People walked through the haunted woods with sounds of wolves and great beasts coming from within the forest.

A skeletal ghoul guided them to a spectacular view of the area and a haunted tower, complete with moving giant bats, ghost images rising in the air.

A witch's cauldron awaited them and attempted to barter for their children.

They escaped the witches and were attacked from below going across a darkened bridge, where a zombie lifted it's head from the leaf littered ravine.

A second scenic lookout revealed itself to be lost, child's room, complete with frightening dolls and a giant sized jack in the box.

A long walk through a darkened wood followed, complete with strange children, gorillas, chainsaw maniacs, body collectors, butchers, a complete crime scene, body bags hanging from trees, cannibal beasts and oath takers.

Finally, people were treated to a bonfire, hallowe'en treats and hot chocolate.

About 1000 dollars in goods and 500 in cash was raised for the food bank.

Temagami preparing a haunting event



[Editorial Staff editorial@northernontario.ca](mailto:editorial@northernontario.ca) October 26, 2022 [Happening Now](#)

TEMAGAMI (Staff) – The spirit of Temagami is alive and well, and will be coming fully to life on Saturday, October 29, with The Haunting of Caribou Mountain Fire Tower Trail.

The Temagami Recreation and Parks committee, with the help of community volunteers, individuals, service groups and businesses, are creating a series of community-built horror scenes with live actors.

Admission to the event will be a cash donation to the Temagami Food Bank, or a donation of a non-perishable food item.

In case of rain, the evening's event will be moved to the Temagami arena which will be transformed into a haunted house.

John Shymko stated in an email that he came upon the idea for the Halloween community activity when he and his wife lived in Burlington and were exploring the surrounding area. They came upon Elora and discovered the Twilight Zoo established in 1996 by resident Tim Murton, a film industry scenic artist.

"He created a number of little ghouls and put them on the corner of his house. The neighbourhood response was wonderful and each year he continued to add to the display," Shymko said.

The Twilight Zoo has since expanded with a number of Elora community activities now taking place throughout October.

Shymko related that he called Murton and asked if he would mind if Temagami did something along the same lines, and Murton gave him his support, but urged Temagami "to remain yourselves. Give it your own twist."

The Haunting of the Fire Tower Hill will bring people from the Temagami Train Station by shuttle bus to the site where there will be Zombie Territory signs, Go Back warning signs, and strobe lights. No other vehicles will be allowed on the road to the Fire Tower Hill after 4 p.m., but the shuttle bus will be making continuous loops between the two sites. Those arriving at the train station by vehicle are asked to park at the train station or a municipal parking lot. Living Temagami will have the train station open where there will be a Halloween display. Washrooms will be available at the train station. There are two outhouses at the tower but there is no running water, noted Shymko in a press release.

"Be prepared to walk the 750-metre length of the trail," he stated. "This may be a frightening experience, so we do not recommend young children and those who frighten easily attend."

When visitors return to the parking lot, the shuttle bus will be available to return them to the train station in downtown Temagami. Guests are welcome to snap their own pictures while there.

Earlier in the day, at 2 p.m., there will be a daylight walk at the site, "where we will be happy to show the little ones what we are doing and how everything works," Shymko added. At that time the

Temagami Public Library will have someone to read spooky stories to children at the tower museum level parking lot, he added.

Shymko envisions a future regional activity where neighbouring communities might participate and monsters might roam the entire area, going from town to town to share the spirit of Halloween.

For more information call 705-948-1001 or email recreation@temagami.ca.

Temagami preparing a haunting event was last modified: October 26th, 2022 by Editorial Staff



There was no trouble as Carol Lowery greeted children with a bowl of treats and a witchy smile during the afternoon session of The Haunting of Fire Tower Trail event held on October 29. Over 800 people attended the evening event, which was scarier than the child-friendly afternoon tour of the area around the Temagami Fire Tower. (Staff photo by Sue Nielsen)

Haunted trail scares up donations for food bank



Editorial Staff editorial@northernontario.ca November 2, 2022 Community

Sue Nielsen

Speaker Reporter

TEMAGAMI — Perhaps the spookiest, most deranged place in the Temiskaming region last weekend was the Haunting of Fire Tower Trail event in Temagami.

If you were tricked into taking part in the Temagami Recreation and Parks experience on October 29, then you likely had wicked fun from start to finish.

“The weather was perfect and the entire community is to be thanked,” said Recreation and Parks director John Shymko in an email interview.

He estimated between 800 and 900 people attended the first time event.

“We had between 700 and 900 people. We were expecting 200,” said Shymko in an email interview.

“We had at times, 200 to 250 people lined up for the shuttle.

And it was all for a good cause – donations went to the Temagami Food Bank.

TERROR ON THE TRAILS

There was no shortage of ghosts, witches, zombies and the like as people were bused to the Temagami Tower site to enjoy a fright or two.

“A shuttle bus took people to the tower trails from the Temagami Train Station, but enroute the bus was attacked by Zombies, narrowly escaping a frightful fate.”

Shymko said once people arrived at the trails “they were warned of strange goings on such as faces in trees, lost children and witch squatters.”

To add to the terror on the trails, people walked through wooded areas with the sounds of wolves and great beasts coming from the forest.

A skeletal ghoul provided guiding services around the haunted tower, complete with moving giant bats and ghost images floating in the air.

A witch's cauldron was set up and from there people walked across a darkened bridge where a zombie lifted its head from the leaves below.

A long walk through a darkened wooded area provided thrills and chills with a crime scene, body bags hanging from trees, chainsaw maniacs and more.

And finally, people were treated to a bonfire, some Halloween treats and hot chocolate, noted Shymko.

Children were taken for a tour of the Temagami Tower in the afternoon, as the evening event was not recommended for the faint of heart or for children.

A total of \$1,000 worth of food was collected during the evening and \$500 cash was raised for the Temagami Food Bank.

Shymko was proud of the donations and quick to point out the Haunting Trail event was a community-based endeavour made possible by help from volunteers and a planning committee.

He said the event was meant to bring the community together in a fun way and get them involved in a grassroots kind of event.

“We will be having a debriefing meeting this week and there is talk of turning this into a multi-everything, multi-community festival next year.”

Haunted trail scares up donations for food bank was last modified: November 2nd, 2022 by Editorial Staff



Temagami Parks and Recreation
and the community of Temagami
presents

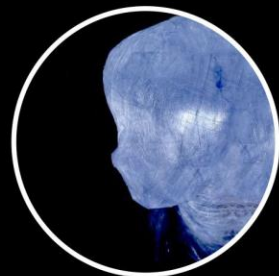
THE HAUNTING of the Fire Tower Trail

Saturday, October 29, 2022

6:30 pm to 10:30 pm

**please bring a non perishable
donation to the food bank**

shuttles leave from train station parking lot









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