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Breaking down the weekend’s most spooktacular events.

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The Great Pumpkin House

The Pumpkin House has a tradition in Ceredo-Kenova for more than 20 years. The carving of more than 3,000 pumpkins is a process that has been taken on by Ric Griffith and 500 volunteers. Griffith started the tradition in 1992, and the pumpkins are put on display outside the Griffith’s 115-year-old Victorian-style house for all spectators to come and see. People come from as close as Huntington and as far as California to see the phenomenal display of pumpkins.

"Over the years I think it has grown because of the pumpkins’ response to it. When we first began, the kids from Ceredo and Kenova would be the ones who enjoyed it as they went door-to-door treating," Griffith said. "And then we began to pick up visitors from other areas and as the enthusiasm grew for it as did the volunteers."

The making of the Pumpkin House starts in September when the building of the pumpkins starts. Come Oct. 1, the pumpkins are delivered by the volunteers.

After the delivery is complete, the creative process starts. Griffith and his daughter spend the next three weeks drawing faces and scenes on the pumpkins. On average the duo draws on 100 pumpkins a day.

The week leading up to the first night of lighting the pumpkins, more than 500 volunteers come to carve the pumpkins, about 500 a day. Without the volunteers there would not be more than 3,000 pumpkins carved every year.

"You have to be, for me, the same amount of work when we did just a handful of pumpkins with 500 because you’ve gotten help from volunteers. I estimate about 600-700 people come each year," Griffith said.

Griffith started the process earlier this year in the Pumpkin House could be a part of the C.A. Barnes festival. Every year in a lean season, but Griffith has a pumpkin that will always be carved for the collection. A display is set up with Marshall University and West Virginia University logos, but alongside the WVU pumpkins is the WVU burning couch.

The tradition started as a family activity. Griffith, his wife and two daughters began carving pumpkins, which eventually filled up the front porch and spread across the yard. As the pumpkins began to attract more attention Griffith began to carve the number of carved pumpkins.

The Pumpkin House is not only a local tradition, but it has also gained national attention. It has been featured on the Ellen DeGeneres Show, The Today Show and Griffith was even contacted by a radio station in Australia. Griffith will always remember one visitor: Eight years ago an elderly woman approached Griffith with tears in her eyes because the Pumpkin House brought her back to her childhood and the feelings of being young again.

"I said ‘I want to tell you something. As you grow up you lose the wonderment of childhood.’ Griffith said, ‘Never again do you feel like you did when you got your first bicycle or on your birthday or on Christmas morning, but today I enjoyed this magic that I felt in my life and I wanted to thank you.’

Ric Griffith can be contacted at rohrbach@marshall.edu.
By LACHEL HOUSE
THE PARTHENON

The 12 members of the College Football Playoff selection committee left the Thundering Herd out of its rankings, but Marshall University is looking to the Los Angeles public relations firm Conference USA hired to bring attention to its season.

Steve Brener, president of Brener, Zwikel & Associates, said he has firm hopes to maximize the visibility of the Herd nationally. “We aim to publicize the team and their success, so that the 12 members of the voting committee will be well informed and aware of their success this year,” Brener said. “In the end, it will be up to the 12 members to decide the four best teams in the nation.”

Brener said his team is going to do national radio shows and satellite television tours to get the message out to the public. His firm is also sending information about the Herd’s football team to contacts across the country.

The PR firm sent an email to the media highlighting certain statistics, notes and facts about the football team Monday. The email also included the individual statistics of senior quarterback Rakeem Cato and junior running back Devon Johnson.

Courtney Morrison-Archer, C-USA’s associate commissioner, said it is not uncommon for the conference to work with an outside consultant agency, especially since it wants to bring attention to Marshall’s campaign. “In this instance, we felt the story of Marshall football was a great one to tell,” Morrison-Archer said. “Why not do what we could to tell it the best and most effective way possible?”

C-USA also hired a public relations firm to bring attention to the conference. Jason Corriher, Marshall’s football sports information director, told USA Today the conference is using the Herd’s success for publicity. “We’re the ones that they’ve used to pursue some publicity for the league because of our national ranking,” Corriher said. “It helped our cause and our league.”

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SEAN HAMMERS PROSECUTER
ELECTION ADS
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Herd looking to bring attention to its season

Marshall's Darryl Roberts (7) blocks Nate Terry as the Thundering Herd takes on Florida Atlantic University Saturday at the Joan C. Edwards Stadium.
Civil War Days celebrate history of oldest Huntington area

Friday:
7 p.m. Lecture series at Guyandotte Baptist Church
Hounded history tours at Guyandotte Library until 10 p.m.

Saturday:
9:30 a.m. Opening ceremonies at VFW post 9729
10 a.m. Camps open to public until 4 p.m.
11 a.m. Meda Carroll House
12 p.m. Methodist scenario
12:45 p.m. Kaff
1 p.m. Stand crispy baby Lee's campers special for kids
Meet the generals at the Roamer House
Civil War wedding at Guyandotte Baptist Church
Hounded history tours at Guyandotte Library
3 p.m. Memorial service (VFW)
4 p.m. Church service until 3 p.m. (VFW)
4:30 p.m. Camps open to public
5 p.m.cinema
6 p.m. Court Marshall
7 p.m. Atanade
8 p.m. Attempted burning of the Carroll House

Sunday:
10 a.m. Memorial service (VFW)
11 a.m. Camps open to public
1 p.m. Scenarios, marching table
1:30 p.m. Court Marshall
2 p.m. Rade
3 p.m. Attempted burning of the Carroll House

Guyandotte Civil War Days will celebrate its 25th year Friday through Sunday. Civil War Days began in 1989 and features lectures, tours, war reenactments and a Civil War era-style wedding. Formed 61 years before Huntington, Guyandotte is the oldest town in the area.
COMING UP NEXT...

Get ready for Halloween weekend in Huntington. Make sure to follow The Parthenon on Twitter and Instagram to keep up with everything happening this weekend. @MUParthenon

All weekend Halloween events

Cooper Family Farms Cornfield Maze
Milton, WV
Maze: 5 p.m. - 10 p.m. Friday noon - 10 p.m. Saturday 1 p.m. - 5 p.m. Sunday
Haunted maze: Friday and Saturday
$8

Guyandotte Ghost Tours
Guyandotte Branch Library
Saturday and Sunday
7 p.m. to 10 p.m.
Free, but must have a ticket

Haunted Trail
Dreamland Pool
Kenova, WV
Nightmare at Dreamland:
8 p.m. to 11 p.m. Friday and Saturday
$5

Cameron Park Spooktacular
Fridays and Saturdays
6 p.m. to 11 p.m.
$14.99 Fridays
$19.99 Saturdays

The Pumpkin House
748 Beech St.
Kenova, WV
Friday, Saturday and Sunday
6 p.m. to midnight

Friday, Halloween

Sigma Phi Epsilon 'Haunted House'
6 p.m. to 9 p.m.
$5
All money raised goes to Big Brothers Big Sisters of the Tri-state

Running Dead Sk Zombie Fun Run
Ritter Park
6:30 p.m.
$30

Halloween Party with Downtown King and Freekbass
V-Club
8 p.m.
$10

Monster Mash Halloween Party
Pullman Plaza Hotel
10 p.m. to 2:30 a.m.
$10 Must be 21

Saturday

Heritage Farm 'Way Back Weekends'
10 a.m. to 3 p.m.
$10
Heritage Farm Museum & Village
3300 Harvey Rd. Huntington, WV 25704

Marshall women's swim team vs. Vanderbilt and Xavier
Noon
Cam Henderson Center

Women's Studies Masquerade Ball
6:30 p.m. to 11 p.m.
Don Morris Room in the Memorial Student Center
Students: $15
Non-students: $25

Sunday

11th Annual Marshall University and St. Mary's Marathon and Half Marathon
7 a.m.
Race begins and ends at Joan C. Edwards Stadium

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