

Halloween fun at Potton's senior apartments



THE SCOOP

MABLE HASTINGS

An enthusiastic group of Potton's seniors, friends, municipal officials and organizers gathered at the Potton Apartments on Friday for a Halloween party including supper, music, door prizes and fun.

Organized by Roseleen George, who has been doing the lunchtime meals for the residence five days per week for the last two years, this event was the second musical evening she has made possible. The activity was originally planned for the enjoyment of those living in the apartments but it was expanded to include other seniors and neighbours in the area who wanted to attend. Roseleen was assisted by volunteers Clara Cote and Brenda Whitehead, who were a

big help with decorating and running the evening.

"Many seniors don't drive and as fall comes it brings with it the colder weather and often the elderly don't get out much to socialize," explained George. "Rather than sitting and staring at the four walls, if I can organize events like this one, close to home, I am happy to do it."

Most of the seniors residing at the residence were in attendance.

At 4 p.m., supper was served, followed by dessert and coffee. Around 5 p.m. violinist Emilien Brulotte, accompanied by two talented guitarists had the crowd up and dancing. Anna Tomera, a local senior, also sang for the group. There were door prizes as well. A small donation was requested from those who attend and this helped to cover any costs for the performers.

"I can't tell you how great it felt to see a 96 year old gentleman dancing the two step and smiling from ear to ear," said George. "His daughter had joined him for the event and she told me how happy it made her father and what a great time she herself had."

The last event, held a couple of weeks ago, featured the musical talents of



COURTESY

Friday evening was a scary affair at the Potton Apartments.

Shirley Spencer and Arnold Davis. A third evening with other musicians is being planned for early December and will include a Christmas dinner and lots of other festive fun.

"We appreciate the time and talents of anyone who plays music, performs comedy, magic..." added George. "To attend, people need only call me and let

me know they are coming."

There is a very positive feeling when entering the Potton apartments. With its big spacious dining area and reception room, it is the perfect location for good times, happy memories and the sharing of community fun.

For information about future gatherings, contact George at 450-292-5638.

Missisquoi North Youth Centre haunted house was a scream in Potton

By Mable Hastings
MANSONVILLE

Last Saturday evening, youth members of the Missisquoi North Youth Centre, Former Youth Involvement, and Students Against Destructive Decisions and volunteers organized and ran the annual Youth Centre Haunted House in Mansonville.

Preparation took weeks and the actual event was an all-day affair for Julia Eldridge, Jessie Lee Johnson and Rachelle Lachance, the primary leaders who worked on the planning, make-up and decorating with a wonderful group of some 20 volunteers who put the plan into action. Outside the building, youth centre staff set up a Halloween themed photo booth and photos were taken of all youth and families who stopped by. There was also free hot chocolate and coffee served by one of the staff and this was a great way to warm up eager trick-or-treaters and their parents. Approximately 150 people passed through the haunted house, while some debated and then decided it was just too scary!

Treats were available for those who



MABLE HASTINGS

Saturday in Mansonville featured a haunted house at the youth centre.

did not want to go beyond the front door.

One parent commented that the stop at the Youth Centre gave families a gathering place where they could chat, warm up and regroup as they headed

off to another of the festive haunts. From one end of town to the other and every direction in between, Mansonville went all out this year with many houses filled with dressed up ghouls, goons and goblins.

The Round Barn offered a shadow puppet show; the Optimist Club had a decorated stop in the center of town and, perhaps because the event fell on a Saturday evening and people had more time to prepare, it seemed that everyone joined in the fun.

Another parent commented how proud she was of the people of Potton who had made such an effort for the children. "For a small town," she said, "Mansonville really is amazing."

Diane Marcoux, a municipal councillor, stopped from house to house and captured photos along the way. She, too, felt that people had outdone themselves.

For the Youth Centre, the more children and families who came through and then offered words of appreciation and encouragement for the effort made was all the fuel they needed to start preparing for next year's haunt.

"This is how we give back," explained Johnson. "For the three of us, it is our favorite holiday and if we can bring something back to the Youth Centre and its programs, like the rest of FYI and SADD, we are happy to do it."

Dishpan Hands

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I still went to the many hours of trouble to co-ordinate another costume for Angus this year, because he deserves that. He loves to dress up, and I knew that even if it was for a few moments only, it was deeply worth it. That's another thing that people with special needs family members have to often justify - the bother. We can sense the subtle ways that they feel included, and the minute reactions that show their interest or involvement. We know the rewards of the bother.

With a carnival theme at Haunted

Beechmore's party this year, our family became the performers of the old-school Silver Circus. Our costumes were all black, white and silver with touches of purple. My youngest was our ringmaster, my step-daughter our performing horse, my step-son our tattooed strongman, and my guy was our Voodoo Villain. I was the circus clairvoyant. Angus was our silver-maned lion.

As a rule, I spend 90 per cent of my time at the party on the dance floor, but this year was different. This year, Angus wanted to stay. And so, I spent my time with him, gladly, enthusiastically and

with so much pride. This was a portal experience, as my beautiful boy enjoyed his time, with so many people, with loud music and strange costumes. He stayed as long as his siblings did - when 11 p.m. hit and I was rounding up the other three to head a few minutes away to Gramma's, that is when Angus left too.

As I drove back to the party, after all four were in jammies, with make-up removed and teeth brushed, under Gramma's tired, but watchful eye, I felt so grateful for this portal. It is the kind of energy that never goes away.

There are no small victories. For a special needs family, the good moments last, and the great moments last forever. I will look back on Halloween of 2015 at Beechmore Manor as one of the best nights of motherhood for me. Thank you to our wonderful hosts, Léo and Louis-Philippe, who don't really know the magic they have brought to our community. It has meant the world to our family.

For all of you out there who are starving for those glimmers, hang on for the silver linings, because they power the world.