

Sunday Life

CENTRAL MINNESOTA



Beth Reimer uses an airbrush while applying makeup on performers at Molitor's Haunted Acres in Sauk Rapids. This year marks the 21st season of the haunted attraction. DAVE SCHWARZ, DSCHWARZ@STCLOUDTIMES.COM

An inside look at Molitor's HAUNTED ACRES

Jordyn Brown
St. Cloud Times
USA TODAY NETWORK

SAUK RAPIDS — One of Central Minnesota's favorite haunts — Molitor's Haunted Acres — has reached its 21st season of scares.

From the ride on the "wagon of doom" to the trek through the woods and, new this year, the "sinner's door," hundreds of people come through the gates each year looking for a scream.

But preparation for one of Central Minnesota's favorite haunts begins months before most people start searching for a Halloween costume. And just the amount of moving parts working to make things run smooth each night is spooky.

All hands on deck

Ron and Tammy Molitor started Molitor's Haunted Acres in 1998. Since then, it's grown to be a Halloween must-see in the area.

Preparation starts months in advance. All the structures are made by the family, Tammy said, sometimes as early as May. As soon as Molitor's wraps up its hosting of wedding receptions, they start setting up.

"The minute that last wedding is over the end of September, that next morning ... I'm telling you walls are going up," Tammy said.

Everyone is involved, including their three children Caden, Cara and Ron II who have

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Ron Molitor checks on the large animated dinosaur he operates with pulleys and levers each night at Molitor's Haunted Acres in Sauk Rapids. DAVE SCHWARZ, DSCHWARZ@STCLOUDTIMES.COM



Cory Jolly smiles while sitting for makeup before performing as Pennywise at Molitor's Haunted Acres in Sauk Rapids. DAVE SCHWARZ, DSCHWARZ@STCLOUDTIMES.COM



Performers get into costume at Molitor's Haunted Acres in Sauk Rapids. DAVE SCHWARZ, DSCHWARZ@STCLOUDTIMES.COM

Election time elicits memories for family



History
Marilyn Salzl Brinkman
Guest columnist

Politics is in the air. Political ads dominate the air waves. Political signs abound in yards, fields and byways. The signs are red, blue, white, yellow, green or whatever. Politics and politicians are everywhere.

Recently I asked myself how having a politician in the family affects family life and the individuals themselves. I asked this question of the five siblings of a former politician. They willingly told me their opinions and observations. Their comments were varied, interesting, and revealing.

B.J. Brinkman

Some of us remember that for 22 years B.J. (Bernie) Brinkman (my husband's brother) was a state legislator from 1962 through 1986 representing District 26, later District 26A, then 16B.

His son Gary remembered that the district changed every 10 years so over the years he represented towns in Morrison, Stearns, Wright and Meeker counties.

B.J.'s early plans did not involve politics but his good friend Norb Strauss, the local farm implement dealer in Richmond (and B.J.'s mentor), stepped in with advice. After observing B.J.'s dedication to public service on the Richmond school board, Strauss encouraged him to run for state representative. After

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Rep. B. J. Brinkman speaks on the House floor. He served as a legislator from 1962-86. MARIYLN SALZL BRINKMAN