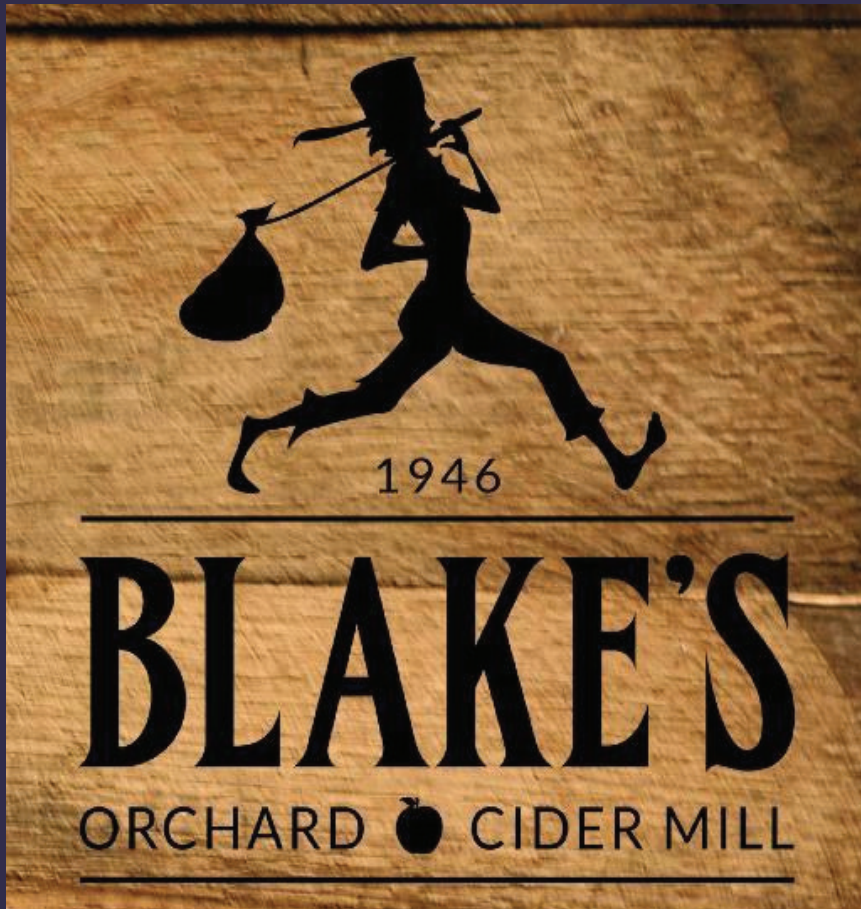


POPPING THE BUBBLE

Each week we bring you some fresh activities and places to try outside of the Grosse Pointe community



WWW.TWITTER.COM

By Katelyn Carney
EDITOR

This time of year *The Walking Dead's* new episodes give rise to the belief that one could outwit and outlast Rick and his crew in a zombie apocalypse. Blake's Zombie Paintball Safari allows you to test that theory while you partake in Halloween hysteria without getting the pants scared of you.

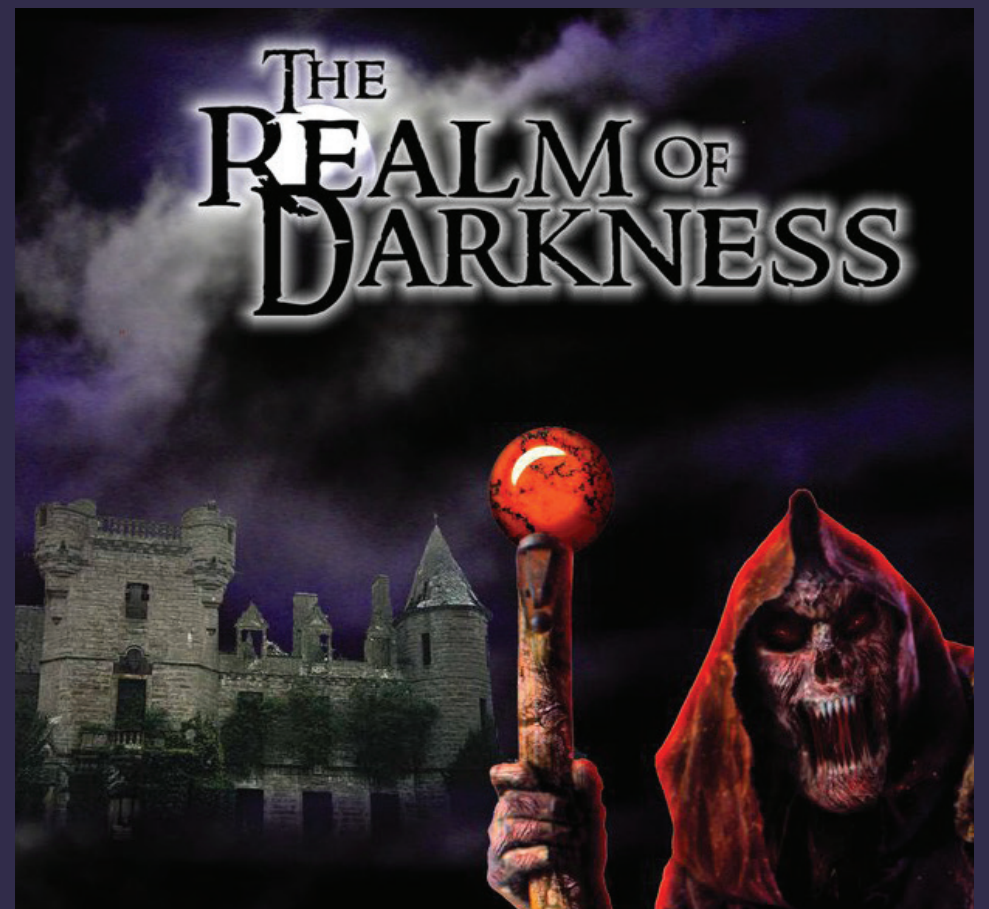
Located at 71485 North Avenue, Armada, Blake's is home to the traditional family-friendly cider mill that we all know and love. But at dusk, the gun-toting tractor engines roar as hundreds of would-be zombie slayers shell out \$20 to take a 20 minute tour through the orchard. Participants get the chance to fire missile-like paintballs, splattering zombies with a little more pep in their step than those on AMC at 9 P.M. It truly is appropriate for all ages as riders' biggest fear is running out of ammunition, which is unlikely when your guide offers refills at \$10 a pop throughout the course.

Despite frigid temperatures that al-

most froze your finger to the metal trigger, not a complaint was heard. Most of the marksmen wandered over to enjoy a warm apple cider and cinnamon sugar donut while regaling stories of their killshots or near misses.

Two words of warning to those who plan to visit: one, the wait on Friday and Saturday nights can get lengthy (up to three hours) but Sunday nights are much quicker. Two, going to the final scene of *Zombie Mayhem* where you unload the last of your bullets, don't waste them early on the fake zombies because the live ones approach the ride once most of the ammo is spent. Hold back until you see the reds of their eyes, then light them up.

In addition to their paintball attraction, Blake's also offers a haunted hayride, three-story haunted house and their signature Spooky Land 3-D Maze. This apple orchard is worth the drive as it has much to offer and appeals to many different tastes. Blake's Zombie Paintball Safari is the perfect way to celebrate this Halloween season.



WWW.HAUNTWORLD.COM

By Katelynn Mulder & Darcy Graham
STAFF REPORTER & INTERN

With a creepy backstory and eerie atmosphere, the Realm of Darkness Haunted House in Pontiac is a spooky place to visit.

The tour is set so that each party is sent through the haunted house on its own. Throughout the attraction, there are different themes such as a old manor, an evil scientist's lab and a butcher shop.

Tickets cost \$23, giving access to 45 unique rooms. There's also a \$33 ticket that adds an additional 18 rooms to the haunt. While this may make it sound like the haunted attraction is huge, it only takes roughly 10 minutes to complete, making it difficult to truly become scared.

Loud noises, animatronics and actors are used often to create only a few jump scares. However, after the initial shock wears off, there was no real reason to feel afraid, as no one ever gets chased and dragged away from their group.

Realm of Darkness had beautiful decorations, sound effects and acting. The actors wore realistic makeup that varied from person to person, and they get close and personal with visitors running their hands through visitor's hair, touching their faces and talking to them. Many characters look like props, adding to the scare and prove their haunting abilities.

Living up to its name, the Realm of Darkness is extremely dark. The use of lighting in different areas helps to conceal actors and make visitors nervous. Still, the nervousness never turns into real fear.

While it makes for a pretty good time, this haunted house fails to truly scare, so those looking for the fear factor may want to look elsewhere.

Realm of Darkness is open Friday and Saturday 7:30 p.m.-1 a.m. and Sundays 8 p.m.-11 p.m. now through Nov. 1.

Slaughtered at Sundown

By Trevor Mieczkowski & Abbey Cadieux
INTERN & STAFF REPORTER

Walking up a moonlit dirt road to Slaughtered at Sundown's eerie red barn captures the creepy, rural feel of the Armada attraction. The line to get in wraps outside the haunted barn and is full of people waiting for their turn to get spooked. While waiting, visitors meet a wide variety of costumed characters and hear bloodcurdling screams from inside the barn.

Once finally at the front of the usually long—but well worth the wait—line, visitors are greeted by someone who lends them 3D glasses. Slaughtered at Sundown goes beyond traditional costume scares and stimulates each visitor's senses. Visitors say their final goodbyes to those still in line before disappearing into the action.

While in the barn, victims are faced with many challenges and frightening encounters. The first room has psychedelic neon paint splattered on the walls which really brings out the 3D aspect of the adventure. Just past that room is where the real fun begins. First, visitors are sent off into narrow, pitch-black halls that lead them from one chamber to another, screaming in one and laughing in the next. At the end of the trip, they are brought back to the line and are met with funny looks and laughter from spectators in line.

After the haunted barn, there is an option to go on a haunted hayride on a long path through a corn field and deep into the woods. On the ride, actors in gruesome costumes jump out from the shadows, and visitors are exposed to countless other frightening scenes. After the hayride, they can enjoy free cider and donuts. The generally friendly staff makes up for the absolute horror going on inside.

With excellent actors and unorthodox scare tactics, this is a great place to spend a chilly October night.

Slaughtered at Sundown is located in Armada and is open Friday, Saturday and Sunday nights through Oct. 31.



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