

# **HALLOWEEN PARADE 2020**

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, our family decided that we did not feel safe trick-or-treating this year. There were 5,778 positive cases in Eau Claire county but the city of Eau Claire still decided to hold trick-or-treating hours.

My daughters and I planned an alternate activity for the neighborhood kids who did not feel comfortable going door to door on Halloween. The kids wanted to show off their costumes to their friends and neighbors but felt that they also still wanted to receive candy. The conclusion: a parade!

We started by making a route that parade goers could walk in a safe manner (little traffic, etc.). We made fliers with all the needed information attached and put them in neighbors' mailboxes (see picture of the invitation to attend). Families had to RSVP if they wanted to have a treat bag at the end of the parade.

After the fliers were distributed, RSVP's were coming in slowly. I was nervous that maybe people felt that I was over-reacting to the dangers of COVID and didn't want to attend. My fears were calmed as families decided to attend and thanked me for planning a safe family friendly activity. A week before the event, I had 37 kids to make treat bags for! I had only prepared 20 and had to enlist friends of mine to prepare more! We had them all packed a week ahead of time so the bags were quarantined before handing them out.

The day arrived! I was again nervous, thinking about how I would be able to keep this event as safe as possible with 37 kids and their families coming! I should not have worried. The people of the neighborhood were extremely respectful of each other. For the most part, they stayed in their family groups, kept a 6 ft spread, and most of the parade walkers wore masks.

As we walked around the mile route, people had lawn chairs out in the driveways to wave and admire the costumes. Neighbors cheered on the parade goers and stopped to chat at times. The kids were excited to see everyone dressed up. To keep that parade goers busy, we made a Halloween decoration scavenger hunt for the kids to complete. Turnout ended up being close to 40 kids and approximately 20 adults walking in the parade. The children enjoyed picking up their treat bags at the end and went home to discover what was inside.

I wanted to write a short account about this event, even though it doesn't seem to be too different than what may happen during a normal Halloween. If you scratch under the surface a bit, you can find that this was not a normal Halloween for people at all. One child who walked in the parade told me that she was so glad to attend because she had not seen her friends since March when the pandemic began. She knew her mother wouldn't want her to trick or treat. She told me that "this saved Halloween". From a parade watcher point of view, it was different. I had one neighbor call me and thank me for planning the parade because she and her husband could not see their grandchildren in their costumes this year

and that it was a joy to see all the kids from the neighborhood. Thanks should go out to all the neighborhood families that participated! Without them, none of this would have happened!

I was able to take away some life lessons from the parade: 1.) During a pandemic, people **can** come together and safely enjoy each other's presence even if being physically distant, 2.) It is in times of grief and struggle where you get to know your neighbors and feel a bit more like a community, and finally 3.) Things won't be done the same during the COVID pandemic, but that does not mean it can't be done better.

Please see a few pictures below of the Halloween Parade! I hope that you enjoyed reading my account.

Thank you,  
Carin Keyes

Contributors: Carin, Elise, and Ginny  
Photos by :Carin Keyes and Corinne Paral



## NEIGHBORHOOD HALLOWEEN PARADE

October 31st at 4pm

As an alternative to trick-or-treating this year, we wanted to plan a fun and safe event for the kids in the neighborhood.

If interested in participating, here are two options:

1. Your family can participate by being in the parade  
OR
2. You can just enjoy watching the parade

Parade route: See map on back

Kids/families in parade line up at the corner of Lehman and Fear St. at 3:45pm. We will march around the parade route (about 1 mile) while maintaining physical distancing. There will be a treat bag at the end of the route for each child who participates (these bags will be packed one week ahead of the parade to ensure safety).

For those who want to watch the parade, please maintain physical distancing. Please don't hand out candy. Greetings and compliments about costumes are welcome.

If you are interested in being in the parade, please call/text Carin Keyes by Wed Oct. 21 at 715-450-9227 so we can be sure we have enough treat bags for all of the kids.









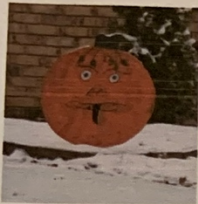
# Halloween Parade Scavenger Hunt



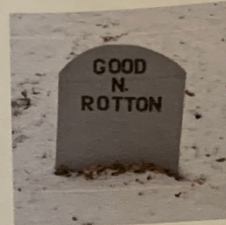
5  
witches



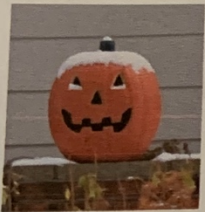
1  
bat



1  
pumpkin face



9  
graves



23  
jack-o-lanterns



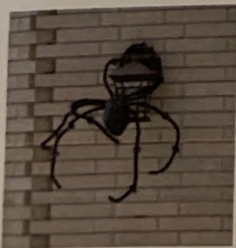
1  
green monster



6  
ghosts



6  
skeleton ghosts



8  
spiders



9  
skeletons