

Friends of the Pentwater Township Library



This year's haunted library had guests travel through a pirate adventure, on a quest for Captain Bookbeard's Bounty. The journey began by drifting through eerie docks of skeleton fishermen, where guests weaved in-between hanging bait to avoid becoming the catch of the day. Past the docks, the local jailhouse featured a fearsome pirate, who tried to get guests to hand over the keys left behind by the guard who had left his post. A bounty board, lined with wanted posters of employee's pirate personas, covered the wall next to the jail, including a warning for what was to come next, which read: "Beware the Pie-Rats!" The following area featured a raucous rodent tavern party. There were tables lined with pies and rats, rats swinging from the ceiling, and from the chandelier. At the center of the room, guests walked around a giant pie, but a group of giant pie-rat pirates popped out nearby to keep the guests from taking a slice of their treasure. After escaping the Pie-rats, guests were given one last chance to turn back from their journey, for up ahead a giant Kraken awaited them!

If they chose to forge ahead, the guests would come into a grand scene of a pirate ship doing battle with the Kraken. Tentacles sprung out from all angles, with one having its grasps on a broken mast from the ship, which hung above the scene. A member of the pirate crew fired off the ship's many cannons as guests walked by, while another crewmate struggled to fight off the monster's attacks. And looming over the scene was the gaping maw of the Kraken itself. Guests had to pass through the Kraken's toothy mouth, going into the belly of the beast. Once inside, the walls were lined with the bones of the monster's previous victims. At the end of the track, the guests emerged to find themselves at the bottom of the sea. As they walked around a fallen ship, sunken pirates lurked nearby, not willing to let go of their chests of treasure. After this, guests faced one last test of courage by making it through the pitch-black pass of Davy Jones's Locker. A skeletal pirate skulked in the area, making noises and reaching out to give guests a final fright. If the guests made it all the way through to the end, they were greeted by Captain Bookbeard himself, with his nose buried deep in his latest good read. After marking his page, he then offered up some of his candy treasure to reward the brave guest who had reached the end.

We started planning months in advance, purchasing supplies and decorations to transform our library. We closed the library at noon on Thursday October 31st, blacking out all the windows, arranging bookshelves and tables, and hanging plastic from the ceilings to create a single path through the library. We had all 6 employees on hand as well as 3 volunteers to help with the set up. In the next 4.5 hours we were able to create all the scenes listed above.

When time came for the Haunted Library to be open, 7 volunteers joined us, most in pirate costumes of their own. We stationed everyone around the library to add some live aspects to our spooky displays. Many times we were able to scare patrons walking through by just stepping out while they walked past. Most people couldn't believe how big we made the library feel by creating a winding path throughout all the sections, and they all enjoyed getting to see all the amazing displays.

Everyone successfully completed the quest and obtained the bounty (candy and prizes provided by the Friends of the Pentwater Township Library 2.0). In the span of 2 hours, 642 people came through our library...a major increase over the 496 people last year. The number has grown each year, and we hope that trend will continue.

We were amazed at the overwhelming number of volunteers that helped tear down and clean up after the event, with five additional volunteers joining the others to help. We were able to have everything taken down and placed in a side room within an hour so that we would be able to open the next morning for patrons.

