

Published October 27th, 2021

## Parents hope for fun Halloween from the past

By Jennifer Wake



An arch of jack-o'-lanterns light up this Lamorinda home's entryway. Photo Sora O'Doherty

addresses around Corliss Drive) for Halloween.

Lafayette resident Eric Rubin and his wife last year put together a scavenger hunt throughout Burton Valley. "We made the boys (13 and 10 years old) along with three friends each, split up into teams and we uploaded all the clues to an app that they downloaded. They got points for finding specific items (witch on a broom, three small black cats, the word boo etc.) and the first team to get to our friend's house was the winner and they got the choice of a huge candy bar or a huge bag of gummy worms. It was super fun and the boys loved it."

This year they're also going back to the previous way of doing things, with minor adjustments. "Door to door, masked," said Rubin, who is working on costumes that have built-in masks.

Local health officials suggest that those who are planning on traditional outdoor trick-or-treating should wear a face mask or keep their distance from others to help reduce risk of getting COVID-19. They also recommend using hand sanitizer frequently and washing hands before eating any treats as well as keeping gatherings, both indoors and outdoors, small.

One Halloween tradition in Lafayette involved closing streets on Moraga Boulevard and Merriewood Drive, which would see hundreds of costumed kids running from house to house on Halloween. This year, however, those streets will be open to street traffic with potential parking restrictions erected for that evening. According to Engineering and Public Works Director Mike Moran, both neighborhoods had initially asked for the streets to be closed, but later withdrew their requests.

At the Oct. 12 Lafayette City Council meeting, several parents expressed their concerns during the public comment portion of the neighborhood road closures discussion, noting that people who have come to expect certain roads to be closed on Halloween may be unpleasantly surprised.

Lafayette resident Meghan Mitman, who was one of several residents who championed the street closure in the past, said neighbors withdrew the request for street closure due to "concerns about the need to take personal liability to provide for a safe facility on the city's right-of-way." She realizes it will be "less of a block party feel if we just close the shoulders to parking."

Burton Valley parent Abigail Fateman described previous Halloweens on Merriewood when there was no street closure as a very scary experience. "It's a great place to be, but there can be hundreds of thousands of people that descend on the Merriewood/Silverado loop in front of the elementary school. It's the place the neighborhood goes. It's fun, it's a great place to be. but if we're not going to close the street, it would be in our interest to create a safe space where people can move."

Jessica Lordan was planning on taking her kids to Moraga Boulevard for Halloween, but was surprised to hear that closing streets needed to be brought to the city by residents. "This year, Fauci did say, 'Go out; go trick-or-treating!'" she said. "And parents are taking it to heart."

Grace Dixon who lives near Moraga Boulevard said she'd like to see the city close one side of the street to parking, since there are no sidewalks on that street. She said she gives away about four bags of Costco candy to trick-or-treaters each year, and she loves seeing all the kids. "It's one of the best things all year!"

With many COVID restrictions still in place on Halloween last year, door-to-door trick-or-treating became almost non-existent. This year, however, is shaping up to be a bit more like those of Halloweens past.

Moraga mom Jennifer Pierce said her family stayed in their neighborhood and trick-or-treated with their neighbors last year and then had dinner outside and watched an outdoor movie. This year they are planning on going to a cul-de-sac gathering the night before Halloween and possibly stopping by another costume house party.

"On Halloween night we will trick-or-treat with some friends in their neighborhood," Pierce said. "So, more back to normal somewhat."

Judy Sin also expects this year to be a bit more like normal versus last year when some Los Perales classes did a check point candy hunt (with map and a list of

she exclaimed.

The Lafayette City Council planned to bring the topic of street parking closures on Halloween back for discussion at its Oct. 25 meeting, after Lamorinda Weekly went to press.

Diane Claytor contributed to this article.

Reach the reporter at: [jennifer@lamorindaweekly.com](mailto:jennifer@lamorindaweekly.com)

[back](#)

Copyright © Lamorinda Weekly, Moraga CA