



The OHC Newsletter

Featured Haunt: The National Capital Graveyard

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Our Feature Haunt for this inaugural newsletter is **The National Capital Graveyard.**

Gary is the proud Haunter of this homegrown graveyard. He has been decorating his home for over 25 years.

This graveyard is filled with lights, tombstones and various home made props. The name of this haunt actually came from the local

TV station that did the weather on Halloween's Eve. On average the National Capitol Graveyard has over 300 Trick-or-Treaters every year. And the neighbors love his set up, especially his 2 year old grandson!

Gary has loved Halloween ever since he was a child, and still loves it better than Christmas!! So when did he get bitten by the Haunter's

[\(Continued on page 2\)](#)



THE NATIONAL CAPITAL GRAVEYARD, OTTAWA, ONTARIO,

The Halloween-L List is a mailing list that was set-up for people who have a great interest in Halloween decorating, inside and out. [\(click here to join\)](#)

Special points of interest:

- Quick & Easy Props
- Creepy Treats
- Links to Free Pumpkin Stencils (page 9)
- Free Coffin Invitation (page 10)

Interview: Voice Over's by Halloween L-List's Legendary Vern Graner

If you happen to be part of the "Halloween L-List", then you will know "Vern" for his amazing voiceovers he creates for many Haunter's on the Halloween L-List.

Hi Vern! Can you tell us a bit about yourself?

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Featured Haunt continued...

Bug? Believe it or not when he was a child. The displays he saw in the neighborhood really left an impression on him.

The first prop he ever made was a free standing Dracula, and he has created over 12 props to date.

I asked him what is the coolest prop you have made?

“I made 2 coffins with Dracula in one and a skeleton in the other.”

Gary typically begins planning his graveyard in September and begins building his props around the 1st week in October. Most of his prop ideas are his own creations but some come from other sources, i.e., friends, and from pictures of other props he’s seen. He does get a little bit of help from the wife but he does most of the prop building himself.

So what does your wife think?
“She thinks I’m crazy!” *L*

So how long does it take him to set up the National Capitol Graveyard?

“A good week to set up.”
And believe it or not he only spends about \$50.00 per year. Wow! But if money was no option he’d set up the whole block as one big graveyard with lots of fog.

So why does he decorate his yard year after year? Like



Gary & his Haunt.

most of us, we do it for the kids, and we enjoy it. His wife even say’s **“He’s the biggest kid of them all.”**

As one of OHC’s Members, Gary is a fountain of information and ideas, and with 25 years of decorating experience you can understand why I chose to feature his haunt in the first issue of the OHC Newsletter.

Have a Happy Halloween!

Vern’s Legendary Voice Over’s Continued....

I’m a married guy 41 yrs old, I live in Austin Texas with my wife and two kids Nicholas and Samantha . I have worked many types of jobs but most of them were involved with technology or music/ multimedia.

How long have you been making voiceovers?

In the 1980’s I worked for a couple of radio stations in the Rio Grande Valley area of Texas. When you work at a radio station, you get “air” time and “talent” time. For talent time, you find a basket of scripts in your “inbox” with music beds and instructions to cut “spots”. You just read the script over the music and try and make it fit in the time allotted (30 seconds/60 seconds etc.) I did this type of work while I also had a band and was working as a sound engineer for a bunch of local acts mixing live music and making recordings. I’ve had recording gear of one type or another to use for music engineering from that time on.

What type of equipment do you use?

For the Halloween-L recordings, I was using the following:

[\(Continued on page 3\)](#)

Vern's Legendary Voice Over's Continued....

- Audio Technica AT3060 Tube Condenser Mic (in shock mount)
- Tascam M216 low noise recording mixer
- Yamaha SPX90 Digital effects processor
- Ibanez DD1000 Dual digital path delay
- Yamaha GC2020b compressor/limiter/ducker
- Alesis MIDiverb III
- PC w/Windows XP & SONAR 2.2XL

How many voiceover requests do you get per year?

Well, I hadn't done **any** for the list until around the middle of July of this year. I noticed some people discussing the need for more professional sounding voicing, and how hard it was to get the type of sound they wanted using the little cheap microphones that come with most home Pcs. Also some had "gender" issues (hard to sound like a 400-pound demon-man if you're a 120lb young lady!) So, I made a post to the list offering to do a few voicings and placed a link to a couple of "demos" I did. The demo's are called "TheRaven.mp3" and "Mansion.mp3" and are still located here:

<http://www.mugbbs.com/voiceover/>

Where do you get your material/scripts from?

Since I offered to do the service for the list, the Halloween-L members have been sending in scripts they would like voiced. In some cases, I may rearrange them a bit or improvise if I think it would "flow" better, but for the most part the scripts are created by the list members.

How long does it take to make a voiceover?

This would depend on the length of the voiceover itself and how much of the work I have to do in finding the right effects and background music etc.. On average I'd say it's about 1 minute per second of output. So a 30 second spot is maybe 30 minutes. It's slower when I start and goes faster as the night wears on... I usually start on them after the kids are in bed and I can get some quiet time... My wife has opened the door on occasion to "shush" me when my maniacal laughter was loud enough to wake the baby.. ;)

How long should a voiceover be?

This would be entirely depending upon the purpose for which it is created. If it is designed to give the "back story" of a haunt it should not be so long as to "bore:" the patron. If it's going to be used to "spook" people and is triggered by an event (foot pad or motion sensor) this would probably be much shorter. I have had some go much longer and some very short. It depends on the application and what the person asks me to do.

Are your voiceovers strictly for Haunter's or have they been used at Haunted Theme parks and in the commercial industry?



**VERN & SAMI
JAMMIN'**



**'THEN PATCHED THE
PHONE INTO THE
MIXER, CALLED THE
NUMBER AND ASKED
TO SPEAK WITH
THEM USING THE
DEMON VOICE! ...'**



GRANER SOUND

[\(Continued on page 4\)](#)



Vern's Legendary Voice Over's Continued....

I've had a couple of the people I've voice scripts for tell me they plan to use them at the entrance to commercial haunts, but I have not heard direct feedback from anyone with video or some such that showed a prop with my voice coming out of it... yet.. (I'm still hoping that will happen! I think it would be cool to see!) I have also made sure to mention that a commercial use would require the music be "cleared" for use and subsequently have had to make careful music choices. For home haunters, I have sometimes composed some music, which I have placed as "public domain" so there is no copyright encumbrances, and on others I have used music sent to me by Hedstrom Music (<http://www.hedstorm.net>) with their permission to use as backing tracks for list members.



What do you enjoy most about your Voice Over Work?

Oh, the ticker tape parades, the adoring public fawning for autographs, the paparazzi the... uh.. well ok, so maybe It's not the fame (since there really isn't any!) ;) It would have to be the ability to give some people the benefit of my meagre talents in return for the incredible amount of information and support I've received from the list since I discovered it. Also, it's nice to exercise some of the skills I spent time honing years ago. Frankly, it's really great to hear the feedback from the list members when they like the work.

I played a bit of a game with one list member who had sent in a phone number for me to call if I had questions. I set up the efx and the voice processor to have the most demonic, evil voicing I could find. I then patched the phone into the mixer, called the number and asked to speak with them using the demon voice! They were really freaked out by that! :)


Please feel free to add any further information that you feel our readers should know.

If anyone is interested in having some voicing work done for a commercial project, I would be willing to entertain offers as I have recently done some "music on hold" announcements for money. :) Though I'm not actively seeking to do this for a living, it is an interesting and fun diversion as well as another nice note for my resume. Besides, I have the gear all set up and I know how to make this type of thing fairly easily now. :)

Thank you again Vern, I've listened to your work and it is AWESOME!.

Thanks for the kind words and the opportunity to "talk" with your members :)

Vern Graner



"I worked for a couple of radio stations in the Rio Grande Valley area..."

How To's

The Mummified Head

or "The Head Waiter"

by Martha Stewart Holiday Magazine

Crumple 10 paper towels and several swaths of gauze (enough to cover the display area) Dip each in brewed coffee, and set it to dry, in their crumpled state, where they won't be disturbed. This will give the towels and gauze a wrinkled, veiny appearance. Then prepare the foam mannequin head: Mix a solution of 2 tablespoons flour, 1 tablespoon corn syrup, and 1 tablespoon of coffee. Stir with a craft stick (Popsicle stick), then use it to apply a thin layer to one section of a Styrofoam head. Uncrumple paper towels, and spread over that section; repeat until surface is covered. You can place the gauze on a tray, and the head in the center, or display him on a sideboard of buffet, or make him the center piece on your dinner table.



Rotten Eggs & Centipedes

by Martha Stewart

Hollow out eggs: Use a utility knife to make a small hole at each end. Pierce yolk with a straightened paperclip; blow out contents either with your mouth or with an ear syringe.

In a bowl mix strong black tea with a splash or white vinegar. Add eggs, and cover with a plate to weigh them down. When desired shade is reached, remove shells and blow out tea mixture (this is where an ear syringe comes in handy). Let them dry over night, then coat in petroleum jelly (Vaseline) for a slimy sheen.

For Centipedes just go to your local Canadian Tire or Tackle Shop and pick out fishing lures that look like centipedes. Push a straightened paper clip 2 inches into head; clip excess with wire cutters. Bend worms in to realistic shapes and arrange with eggs.

How To's Continued...

Floating Ghosts

by N. Huston



These are really easy to make and add a really cool effect to your haunt. Don't bother using helium since the coldness will cause them to deflate, remember this is Canada and Halloween is usually quite cold. Your own hot air will bring these Ghouls to life. *s*

Snap one or two glow sticks (I prefer to use the green ones) and insert them into a white balloon; inflate balloon and tie it closed. Use a black Jiffy marker and draw on your ghoul's face. Don't press too hard or else the balloon will pop. Make 2 more and tape them with clear tape for indoor use), and if it's not too windy outside I usually use duck tape them to the tree or to the brick on the house.

I find putting them together in groups of 3 looks best.

Spider Sacks

This prop is relatively cheap and easy.

Materials:

4 pairs of White panty hose
6 Styrofoam balls (various sizes) (Michael's Crafts or Walmart)
Cob webs (at least 4 bags)
Plastic Spiders

Cut the panty hose legs off. Wrap the Styrofoam balls with a bit of cob webbing. Inset a Styrofoam covered ball in to each panty hose leg. Stretch some webbing around the sack , hang from ceiling or doorway with tacks or transparent tape. Arrange plastic spiders in the webbing.

Another alternative is using cotton balls, instead of the Styrofoam balls. And to give your spider sack an eerie glow crack a small green Glow stick and insert inside the cotton balls.

Have you got a How To Project that you would like to appear in the next OHC Newsletter? Then email your How To Instructions and Pictures to;
victoria.snell@rogers.com
Subject: OHC How To

Please note Pictures should show the various stages of your build.

Hosting a Monster Bash (Party)

Two Weeks Before

- Make a list of tasks to do between now and the day of the party
- Invite your guests. Remember to keep the numbers manageable so you'll be able to keep things under control.

Invitation Suggestions:

- Paper coffin invitations (see page 7)
- Cut out pumpkins, ghost or tombstones out of construction paper and print your details on the front or back.
- I personally like using the website www.evite.com to send out my invitations.

One Week before

- Plan out your menu. Keep in mind that salty and greasy snacks make guests thirsty. High-starch and protein foods such as meats, veggies, cheese and light dips and breads are good choices.
- Make out 2 shopping lists once your confirmed guest list.

One for **Non-Perishable Food Items** and one for **Perishable Food Items**.

Don't forget to include your bar necessities including non-alcoholic drinks.

Note: **Purchase perishable food items 1-2 days before the party.**

Main Event

- Set up the bar and food areas in an out of the way location.
- Include non-alcoholic drinks
- Close the bar at least one hour before the end of the event. Start offering coffee, tea and dessert to guests.
- **NEVER** allow anyone who is impaired to drive home. (Be sure to have extra cash on hand in case someone needs to take a taxi home) Remember you may be held legally responsible for the actions of your guests.

Recipes

Goblin Glogg—Non Alcoholic

Makes about 16 cups

12 ½ oz can of frozen concentrated orange juice, thawed

1 cup lemon juice

4 cups Club Soda

8 cups orange sherbet

1/3 cup maraschino cherries

5 cups Ginger Ale

Measure orange juice concentrate, lemon juice and club soda into a large punch bowl. Add sherbet and cherries. Stir. Add Ginger Ale. Stir gently. Recipe provide by ~ Cooking for the Seasons by Company's Coming Publishing.

[...more Recipes continued on page 7](#)

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Recipes continued

The Witch's Brew

Alcoholic Drinks

by Food and Drink Magazine LCBO

DEATH BY CHOCOLATE

In a blender add 1/2 oz dark crème de cacao, 1/2 oz Kalhwa, 2 tsp chocolate syrup and 2 scoops of chocolate ice cream.

Blend until smooth and pour in to a cocktail glass. Pour 1/4 oz cherry brandy on top and garnish with a cherry.

The Black Cat Cosmo

In a cocktail shaker filled with ice add 1 1/2 Blavod black vodka, 1/2 oz Cointreau, 1/4 fresh lime juice and 2 oz cranberry juice. Stir well and strain into a martini glass.

The Pumpkin Patch Martini

In a cocktail shaker fill with ice add 1 oz vodka and 1 oz

The Witch's Cauldron's Creations

PETRIFIED CHEESE LOG

by Martha Stewart Holiday

Mix 5 oz blue cheese with 2-3 drops of food coloring (if desired); then combine 5 oz of softened cream cheese. Roll into a log, wrap in plastic,. Refrigerate until firm. Unwrap and toll log in black sesame seeds,. Serve with crackers.

Witch's Fingers

Yield: 5 dozen

1 cup Butter, softened
1 cup Icing sugar
1 Egg
1 tsp Almond extract
1 tsp Vanilla
2 2/3 cups Flour
1 tsp Baking powder
1 tsp Salt
3/4 cup Almonds, whole blanched
1 Tube red decorator gel (optional, not pictured)

In bowl, beat together butter, sugar, egg, almond extract and vanilla. Beat in flour, baking soda, and salt. Cover and refrigerate 30 minutes. Working with one quarter of the dough at a time and keeping remainder refrigerated, roll heaping teaspoonful of dough into finger shape for each cookie. Press almond firmly into 1 end for nail. Squeeze in centre to create knuckle shape. (Accompanying picture showed long rolled shape with bulge at centre for knuckle; you puff it out rather than squeeze it in.) Use a knife to make slashes in several places to form knuckle.

Place on lightly greased baking sheets; bake in 325F (160C) oven for 20-25 minutes or until pale golden. Let cool for 3 minutes. Lift up almond, squeeze red decorator gel onto nail bed and press almond back in place, so gel oozes out from underneath. You can also make slashes in the finger and fill them with "blood."

Remove from baking sheets and let cool on racks. Repeat with remaining dough.



(Picture collected by B. Christensen, Toronto, Ontario)

[...more recipes continued on page 8](#)

Recipes continued...

SAVOURY BRAIN SHRIMP SPREAD

Collected by .Christensen, Toronto, Ontario

(makes 2 brains)

- 1 (10 3/4-ounce) can cream of mushroom soup
- 8 ounces Philadelphia cream cheese, softened
- 2 (.25-ounce) envelope unflavoured gelatin, softened in 1/2 cup water
- 1 bunch green onions, chopped (optional)
- 3 pounds cooked shrimp, coarsely chopped or puree depending on the texture you want to achieve
(or 1 pound crab meat)
- 1 cup mayonnaise
- 1 Tablespoon lemon juice
- Tabasco or Creole seasoning to taste

Heat soup, undiluted, and mix in the cream cheese. Stir in softened gelatin and blend well. Fold in remaining ingredients and pour into a lightly-oiled brain mold. Chill until firm and serve with your favourite crackers.

Product Review: Pumpkin Master's Carving Books

Pumpkin Master's Carving Books are top notch. I purchased "Creatures" and the "Lettering/Custom Carving Patterns" from Yankee Harvest Online Country Store (<http://www.yankeeharvest.com>). Unfortunately I have not seen the pattern books for sale in Ontario, but I did see some Pumpkin Master Carving Tool's for sale in Zeller's.

The pattern books are very well written. They give you carving instructions, tips for each pattern. do's and don'ts, and a troubleshooting guide. There is also a great pumpkin pie recipe, so if you do mess up your carving you can always make it in to a pumpkin pie! Yummy!

The patterns are graded on their difficulty level; easy, moderate or challenging. The patterns can be reduced or enlarged on a photocopier to fit your pumpkin, so you never use the pattern in the book. You just photocopy the pattern (adjusting for size), adhere it to your pumpkin, transfer the pattern, and commence carving!

The "Creatures" pattern book comes with 8 patterns, and the "Lettering" pattern book comes with 7 patterns plus 4 styles of alphabets. I was so impressed with these books that I plan on purchasing the "Sensational Shadows" & "Silhouettes" Pattern Books.



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Product Review Continued : Pumpkin Master's Carving Books

And if you thought that pumpkin carving was a waste of time and money, think again. There is a Pumpkin Carving Contest, with a grand prize of \$1500.00 US! Details are available on the website and inside every pattern book.

Links to Free Pumpkin Carving Stencils

- Pumpkin Masters FREE Templates <http://www.pumpkinmasters.com/freepatterns.html>
- Me On A Pumpkin FREE Templates <http://www.meonapumpkin.com/freestuff/freestuff1.html>
- Create your own stencil by KRAFT <http://kraft2.promotions.com/kookykitchen/page.do?page=stencil.html>
- Free Stencils from Hershey's <http://www.trickortreats.com/activities/stencils.asp>

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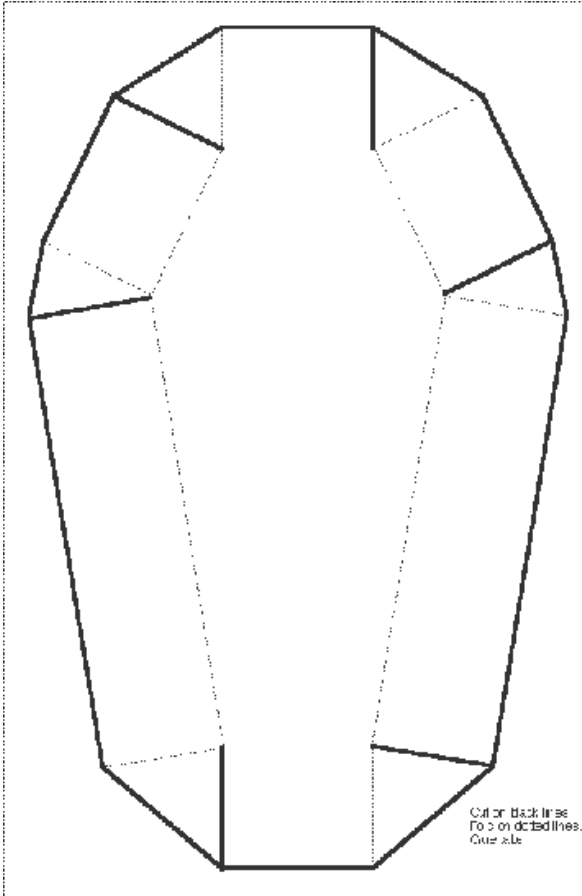
Works of Art—Pumpkin Carving



Courtesy of Christie's Crypt



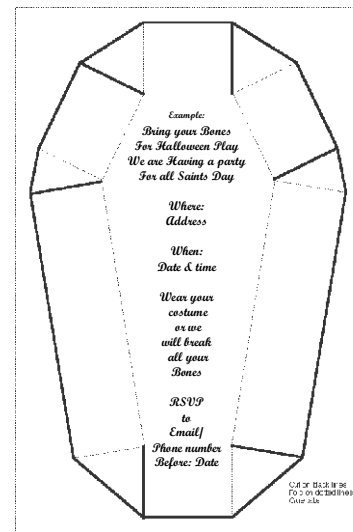
Coffin Invitation



Blank Coffin Invitation

Example:

Simply copy and paste the blank Coffin Invitation in to a Power Point document . Insert a text box and add your personalized touch to your invitation. Print and cut out.



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About Us

The OHC Newsletter is a FREE quarterly electronic newsletter for OHC Members.

What you can look forward to in an OHC Newsletter:

A Featured Haunt - In each issue we feature a "home grown" haunt in our newsletter. This is your chance to show off. Members are encouraged to email photo's and a description of their haunt.

Interviews - Each issue we feature an interview with a different haunter/professional from the haunt industry.

How-To's - Each issue features how-to's for creating everything from tombstones to full size props, to decorating your home "crypt" and hosting a Monster Bash (Party), there's something for everyone.

Product Reviews - Features reviews on various products, i.e.: books, magazine's, video's CD's, etc. available to the Home Grown Haunter.

**“EVERYTHING FROM
TOMBSTONES TO FULL
SIZE PROPS, TO
DECORATING YOUR HOME
“CRYPT” AND HOSTING A
MONSTER BASH...”**

Comments and Suggestions:

All comments and suggestions are greatly appreciated. This was my first newsletter, so it can only get bigger and better from here!!

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Haunting Ontario 365 Days a Year!



Gary's Wife & Grandson,
National Capitol Graveyard 2003

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