



The Haunting Experience Celebrates Legacy of Live Scare Actors in Minnesota's Longest-Running Haunted Hayride

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The Haunting Experience continues to distinguish itself through its dedicated team of live scare actors who bring authenticity and unpredictability to every visit, particularly on Minnesota's longest-running haunted hayride. Unlike attractions that lean heavily on technology or pre-recorded effects, this family-owned operation relies on human performers, actors, artists, builders, and support staff, who craft personalized interactions that have defined the experience since 1986.

The Haunted Hayride takes center stage as visitors board tractor-pulled wagons for a journey through darkened forests and the eerie ruins of the fictional Wilhelm Steelworks. Along the trail, live actors emerge from shadows, portraying maniacs and monsters in carefully timed scenes that blend tension with moments of dark humor. The mobile format allows for dynamic encounters where performers adapt to each group's reactions, creating memorable, unrepeatable moments that guests frequently highlight in feedback.

This emphasis on live performance stems from the Zywiec Family's founding vision. What started as a modest hayride has grown while preserving the core element of real human interaction. The seasonal crew

trains extensively to maintain safety boundaries while maximizing impact. Actors never cross established lines, and clear rules protect both guests and performers. Prohibitions against running or touching actors ensure a controlled environment where the scares remain enjoyable rather than chaotic.

Bill Zywiec, Owner of The Haunting Experience, shared: "Our scare actors are the heart of what we do. They study timing, improvise within character, and turn each hayride into a living story. After nearly 40 years, it's this human connection that keeps visitors coming back season after season."

The hayride complements the property's other offerings without overlapping. The indoor Haunted House delivers close-quarters hallway terrors with dark entities that appear in tight spaces. The newer Massacre attraction provides an intense outdoor cornfield walkthrough with permitted light physical contact for guests 13 and older. Together, these create layered options for different comfort levels, while the hayride serves as an accessible entry point for groups and first-timers.

Google reviews and visitor comments consistently praise the actors' energy and creativity. One recent guest noted the hayride's strong opening scene and theatrical elements that set it apart from other attractions. Another highlighted how friendly non-haunting staff balanced the intense scares, making the overall visit welcoming. A third reviewer, familiar with top-rated haunts nationwide, described the experience as worth the trip specifically because of the live performances and attention to detail.

The attraction's location along Highway 61 in Cottage Grove places it conveniently for Twin Cities residents, with ample parking and straightforward access. Operations run rain or shine, supported by covered waiting areas. Concessions prepared on-site offer warm snacks to round out the evening, and group rates for 20, 50, or 100 people accommodate schools, businesses, and large family gatherings.

Beyond the scares, the team's commitment extends to maintaining the property's legacy. Each year involves fresh scene updates, prop maintenance, and actor rehearsals that build on decades of institutional knowledge. This continuity has helped The Haunting Experience endure as a regional staple, where multiple generations share stories of memorable nights on the hayride trails.

The live-actor focus also supports broader accessibility. While the evening haunts deliver thrills for thrill-seekers, the daytime Fall Fun Fest on select dates removes the actors entirely, allowing lights-on tours, free non-scary hayrides, pumpkin painting, art projects, and goat petting for younger visitors and cautious families.

As preparations advance for the upcoming season, the emphasis remains on quality live performances that honor the attraction's roots while evolving with audience expectations. The result is an experience that feels personal and immersive rather than mass-produced.

The Haunting Experience stands as a family-owned haunted attraction in Cottage Grove, Minnesota, established in 1986 by the Zywiec Family. It features a Haunted House, Minnesota's longest-running Haunted Hayride, the Massacre cornfield experience, and daytime Fall Fun Fest activities, delivering seasonal Halloween entertainment to visitors from the Twin Cities and beyond.

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For more information about The Haunting Experience, contact the company here: The Haunting Experience Zywiec Family 651-459-3001 info@hauntingexperience.com 10900 E Point Douglas Rd S, Cottage Grove, MN 55016

The Haunting Experience

Welcome to The Haunting Experience, the scariest of all the Halloween attractions and haunted houses in Minnesota.

We invite you to visit us this October?if you dare.

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