A plan for a COVID-19 Halloween

The idea: As the COVID-19 pandemic continues to ravage the U.S. and the world, causing economic turmoil and forcing most to alter the their daily lives, the virus also has robbed many of traditional celebrations, from Easter and Mother's Day to birthdays and family vacations.

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With health officials predicting a **resurgence of the virus** this fall, many states still on some form of lockdown this summer, and some school systems anticipating children may not return to normal schedules until 2021 at the earliest, autumn and winter festivities may be next in the crosshairs.

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This Halloween project will aim to provide children throughout Gold Beach with a free packet of candy and non-candy treats during the last week of October if they are unable to go trick-or-treating due to local stay-at-home orders, parental concerns about the virus, or other COVID-19 related issues.

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Halloween may be different this year, but through the generosity of donors and sponsors, we hope to provide a bit of **happiness and normalcy** for the children of Gold Beach during this time of uncertainty for them and their parents.

How it will work:

* We will take monetary donations, donations of individually packaged candy, and possibly other Halloween goodies (coloring books, stickers, etc) up until October 15th. We will start stuffing bags after the 15th. All donors will have name printed on a sheet of paper included in the goodie bag.
* We will have parents sign their kids up (any child under 18). They should specify if there are any dietary needs, and what the age group is… i.e. 0-7, 8-13, 13 +. Sign-ups for the treat bags will be closed on October 15th, so that we know how many kids there are in advance.

Additional thoughts:

​**Q: How will the Halloween Packs be distributed?**

A: Beginning in September, a link will be posted on our site to allow parents to register their children to receive Halloween Packs. Children should be age 18 and under, and Fun Packs will be limited to one per child. The goal is to have enough funding to provide a substantial Halloween pack to each child registered.

**Q: What will be inside the Packs?**

A: Packs will contain candy, stickers, trading cards, coloring and activity pages, and other related items

**Q: It's not even October yet. Isn't it a little early to be thinking about Halloween?**

A: It might be a little early to think about Halloween (we know some people who would disagree...), but it's never too early to start fundraising. For a project of this type to be successful, fundraising needs to begin at least several months in advance to ensure adequate resources are available.

**Q: What happens with this project if COVID-19 is no longer an issue in October?**

A: We will join the world in celebrating when COVID-19 is no longer a problem! However, with health experts predicting a resurgence of the virus this fall and no vaccine expected for at least 12-18 months, there is a good chance the pandemic could affect trick-or-treating in all or part of the U.S. this Halloween. Even if the virus has ceased by then, there are many children throughout the country unable to trick-or-treat during any given year due to illness, location, socio-economic issues or other obstacles, and the project's focus will shift to them. All Halloween Fun Packs produced through this effort will be distributed regardless of the cause.

Added ideas to include if interested:

* Gold Beach Main Street is currently still planning on having our 130 year celebration at the Event Center on the Beach on the day of Halloween. If we are still able to hold this event at that time, then the plan would be to pass out Halloween Fun packs at the event. However, we also realize that we might not be able to have our 130 year celebration, in which case we have a backup plan for distribution. A “reverse parade” can be held in the parking lot of the Event Center, with one way in and one way out, where the cars drive through stationary “floats”. Any business, entity, or organization can set up a display…. Like a trunk-or-treat, but instead of having people pass out candy they just have a display. The Halloween fun packs will be passed out either at the beginning or end of the reverse parade in this case, and individual groups will not be handing out their own bags in order to reduce contact.
* Although we have not yet gotten full plans drawn out or approved by boards, a few entities have already mentioned their interest, including: the City of Gold Beach, the Curry County Event Center on the Beach Manager
* With enough early planning, I think a lot of groups and individuals would donate, as it is an activity directly related to the benefit of children during the pandemic. Applying for a Gold Beach Community Fund grant could be easy as well.A group of people riding on the back of a truck

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