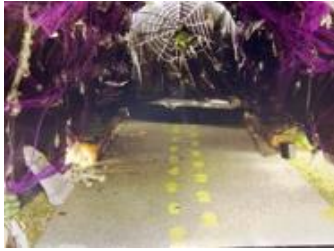


20th Anniversary: The Legend of Langley Drive

-Kim Stockberger



Every year at Halloween, I'm charmed by the mutual if not absurd agreement: For one night, we agree to turn off our ring cameras, dress a little silly and knock on each other's doors without apology. If you're in my family, there is also a running joke that our children cannot come home with us until they have collected sufficient "tax," which is to say, mom and dad's favorite candy.

THE ORIGINS:

No one can recall who started it, but over the last 20 years, **Langley Drive has become a Trick or Treating destination in Plano**. Legend has it, a young boy saw a haunted house near Plano High and asked his dad, "Can we do that on Langley," and the rest is history.

A few skeletons turned into homemade coffins, which grew into haunted tunnels and over time, neighbors joined in with their own unique end-of-driveway contributions. There have been popcorn carts, hot dog stands, a mariachi band, and even ghost drones haunting the skies. Word spread mostly through school aged children, and within a few years, Langley had to petition the city for a block party permit, so that families could walk safely with wagons and strollers, end to end from Lavery to Langley Court.

THE VIBE:

Langley is not the scariest, oldest, or most notorious Halloween street in Dallas. What distinguishes Langley is the inclusive, friendly spirit of the event, which welcomes the very littlest trick or treaters in the early hours before bedtime and the older kids as the sun goes down. It is simply a great example of what happens when a street of like-minded neighbors choose to come together for a tradition worth preserving. And when I say "choose," I mean each house chooses how much candy or special offerings to pass out and when it's gone, they turn off the lights. And not all Langley residents participate every year. It is by choice, and all agree that that's ok. It's Texas after all.

HOW TO BE A HALLOWEEN STREET:

According to residents of Langley, it started with word of mouth (easier today with social media). One haunted house in 2003, was followed by others creating more elaborate yard displays the following year and it grew. They remember no one ever went door to door. There were no petitions, no letters, no agreements; it just grew organically. One early adopter said, "do something cool in your yard, tell your kids to tell kids, then buckle up and have fun. It's one night-meet your neighbors and make it enjoyable."

FINAL THOUGHTS:

Halloween began as Celtic festival welcoming the harvest at the end of summer. We nod to that ancient tradition today, opening our doors to neighbors, saying goodbye to the heat and ushering in the fall, the holidays and the family season. The page turns Halloween night when we go to sleep and magically wake up in November. Can I get an amen?