

The Maple Lake MESSSENGER

Messenger Extra, September 2018

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M&M: Where quality service and safety are No. 1

By Brenda Erdahl

In 1973 Roger and Karen Millner started M&M Bus Service in Annandale. Forty-five years later, the company has evolved into a three-part, multi-functional business that continues to be family run.

M&M Express Sales and Service

M&M Express Sales and Service is Central Minnesota's leader in outdoor power equipment, with inventory ranging from tractors and snow blowers, to handheld mowers, leaf blowers, chainsaws and other yard care needs. What started with one store in Maple Lake off Division Street West, has turned into four locations that include sites in Buffalo, Big Lake and Brainerd.

"We have different product lines in different locations, so if we don't have what you're looking for here in Maple Lake, we may carry it in one of our other stores," Scott Millner said.

An authorized Mahindra, Stihl, Husqvarna Power, Toro, Echo, Cub Cadet® and Exmark dealership, M&M Express Sales and Service carries a large selection of new and pre-owned inventory at its four stores for both commercial and personal use.

A popular item that's been flying off the shelves recently are battery powered, hand-held equipment, Millner said. Major brands like Echo, Stihl and Toro are producing quality chainsaws, trimmers, blowers and lawnmowers that don't require gas or carburetors, making them easier to use and reducing mechanical issues.

Echo, for instance, uses a 56-volt battery and lithium technology

in its products, which equates to higher power that will continue to run after more charging cycles. Echo's battery system works with multiple types of Echo equipment.

"They're perfect for people with smaller yards," Millner said.

All sales are backed by a professional service and parts department for customers' ongoing maintenance and customization needs.

M&M Express Sales and Service is conveniently located at 530 Division Street West in Maple Lake; 600 Hwy 55 East in Buffalo; 580 Humboldt Drive in Big Lake and 13380 Hwy 25 in Brainerd.

Visit, www.mmexpress-sales.com to find a list of all the brands the four stores carry.

M&M Express Lube and Car Care Center

M&M Express Lube and Car Care Center on Division Street West in Maple Lake is more than just a quick lube. M&M technicians offer bumper-to-bumper service on any vehicle including RVs and utility trailers. They offer free diagnostics and a shuttle service as well.

"We will pick up vehicles all over town at any commercial address or business for service. We don't have loner cars, but we will bring people home," Millner said.

"We just do what we can to provide good service," office manager Darcy Bichler added. "With the Maple Manor so close we help a lot of elderly customers who don't have anybody else. We pick up vehicles, jump their vehicles, help however we can."

The crew at M&M also have

Business Buzz

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strict ethics on charging for diagnostics.

"We do not charge for a diagnostic scan," Bichler said. "Some businesses you walk in the door and you are being charged to scan a vehicle. We choose not to."

Tires

With winter just around the corner, making sure the tires on your vehicle are weather-ready is an important step to being prepared for icy roads. When it comes to tires it's all about the tread. The tread is what gives drivers control on roadways, Millner said.

"On a front-wheel drive vehicle you can get going on icy roads, but with insufficient tread the tire will suddenly break contact with the road surface. Come in and we'll evaluate the condition of the tread of your tires and determine if they will perform well this winter. You don't want that first snowfall to hit and find that your tires don't perform at all," Millner said.

M&M offers a wide variety of tires to choose from and they come with a lifetime of free rotations at the Maple Lake store.

Batteries

Batteries are another item to put on your winter-preparedness checklist. M&M not only sells batteries, technicians will evaluate the charging system and the battery condition.

"We are the most qualified in town to evaluate those condi-



The M&M team offers bumper-to-bumper service on any vehicle plus free diagnostics and a shuttle service. They are, from left, Kris Porter, Mike Tomes, Kody Orn, Robert Bower and Meghan Latham.

(Photos by Brenda Erdahl)

tions and to sell batteries," Millner said.

Fast Lube

The fast lube part of the business is fast and efficient. No appointment is necessary, Bichler said. We work on a first come, first serve basis. Typically, the wait is not long, she said. If customers choose, they can sign up for an e-mail reminder when they need to have their oil changed again. The automated system keeps track of recommended maintenance schedules and lets customers know when their vehicle is due.

Fleet Services

M&M Express Lube and Car Care Center also offers fleet services, which means they will manage the service and maintenance on a company's fleet of vehicles, including record keeping.

For more information call

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M&M Bus Service Inc.

M&M Bus Service Inc. is where it all started. In 2000, the Millners expanded to Maple Lake, taking over duties that previously belonged to Mooney Bus Co. The No. 1 priority of M&M Bus Service is safety. The students they transport are their No. 1 concern in all aspects of the business, from hiring drivers to planning school bus routes.

The company has received numerous awards over the years for their dedication and is a leader in the industry. The company headquarters in Annandale is also the corporate office of the Minnesota School Bus Operators Association. The MSBOA is responsible for organizing and hosting bi-annual seminars and conferences for

operators where safety is always a major focus.

Hundreds of operators from around the state attend these conferences to share their experiences, improve their training and learn the newest strategies on school bus safety.

The MSBOA is also responsible for industry changes at the state level. They work with lobbyists to improve laws to best benefit the students they transport. Because of the MSBOA, as of 2010, all buses must be manufactured with a drop-arm crossing gate. The organization also played a role in raising fines for stop arm violations.

M&M's multi-faceted operation makes it a unique and valuable part of the community. For information on becoming part of the M&M Bus Service team call 320-274-8313.



Above, left, Mike Tomes works his magic on this engine. With winter just around the corner professionals at M&M Express Lube and Car Care encourage motorists to have their tires and batteries checked. M&M offers a variety of tires to choose from and they come with a lifetime of free rotations. Center, M&M Express Sales and Service is located off Division Street West in Maple Lake with additional stores in Buffalo, Big Lake and Brainerd. Right, is M&M Express Lube and Car Care Shop Manager Kris Porter.

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Mischief Night pranks put the 'ha' in Halloween

Come the end of October, people across the country eagerly await the tricks and treats of Halloween. Plenty of fun is to be had on October 31, when hordes of costume-clad children and adults scour neighborhoods on the hunt for the best candy. But prior to Halloween comes the trickery, jokes and gags of Mischief Night.

Mischief Night also may be referred to as Cabbage Night, Goosey Night, Moving Night, Mat Night, or Devil's Night. In parts of the United Kingdom, it's known as Mischievous Night, Miggy Night, Corn Night, or Trick Night.

Mischief Night is October 30 (or November 4 in some areas of the UK) and began as an informal holiday when friends pranked one another. While Halloween is all about the treats, Mischief Night is

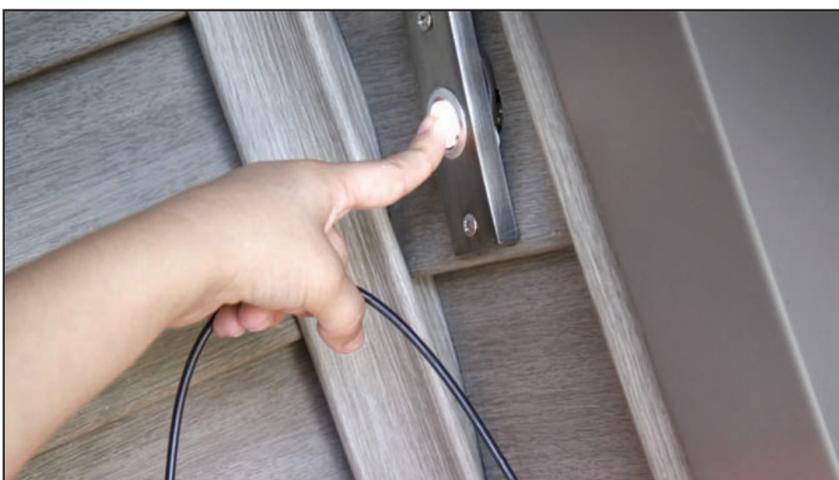
more about the tricks.

The earliest references to Mischief Night date back to 1790s Britain. But back then the mischief occurred right before May Day. During the Protestant Reformation, much of England set out to distance itself from the treat side of Halloween because it was connected to Catholic saints. Gags and pranks were transferred to the eve of Guy Fawkes Night, a holiday that celebrates the foiling of the Gunpowder Plot to blow up British Parliament. However, in Ireland, Scotland and northern England, Halloween traditions — including good-natured pranks — were maintained. Immigrants from these areas ultimately brought these traditions with them to North America. By the 1930s and 1940s, Mischief Night became popular in the United States.

Ringling false alarms, covering trees in toilet paper, shaving cream fights, switching door mats or outdoor furniture, and ringing doorbells and running are some popular Mischief Night pranks. Much of the behavior consists of harmless fun, but Mischief Night has led to some unsavory acts, including more than 800 fires being lit in Detroit in 1984.

In order to curb destructive behavior, many communities will ban the sale of eggs and shaving cream to minors on Mischief Night. Others implement strict curfews. But that doesn't mean people looking to engage in some good-natured mischief cannot have their fun. Neighbors can host backyard mischief parties in which kids contain their antics to one or two yards.

Mischief Night precedes



Mischief Night falls on the evening before Halloween, bringing with it lots of tricks and pranks. (Photo submitted)

Halloween and is still popular for many people. Keeping pranks fun and harmless ensures that this tradition can stick around for years to come.

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The most haunted places in North America

Mysteries and the macabre take center stage come Halloween. Many people feel that lingering spirits may cling to hotel rooms, hospitals and old buildings. The following are some sites, courtesy of Conde Nast, Reader's Digest and National Geographic, that may prove pleasing to those who like a taste of the paranormal each October.

- Howard Street Cemetery, Salem, Mass.: The Salem Witch Trials were a shocking part of American history. Many different people were accused of witchcraft and sorcery and executed for their alleged crimes. Howard Street Cemetery, where Giles Corey, a convicted offender is buried, is said to host the paranormal.

- Eastern State Penitentiary, Philadelphia, Pa.: This once strict enforcer of solitary con-

finement was built in 1829 and housed prisoners until 1970. Peals of disembodied laughter, pacing footsteps and shadowy figures have been reported on the premises.

- Keg Mansion, Toronto, Ontario: The Keg Mansion was once the private residence of industrialist Hart Massey and his family. Legend states that, after the death of Massey's daughter Lillian, her maid was so overcome with grief that she took her own life. A ghostly image of a maid hanging by her neck has frequently been reported at the property.

- LaLaurie Mansion, New Orleans, La.: Marie Delphine LaLaurie was a Louisiana socialite who threw lavish parties. But she also had a dark and grisly side. When a fire broke out in the residence, police responded and discovered muti-

lated slaves in the attic. LaLaurie fled New Orleans, but it is believed the phantom screams of her victims can still be heard at night.

- Hotel Monte Vista, Flagstaff, Az.: This hotel is purportedly home to various specters and paranormal guests. Room 210 was plagued by someone who hung raw meat from the chandelier. An infant's wretched cries have sent people scurrying. And two women who were thrown from the third floor now haunt and try to smother male guests in their sleep.

- Fairmont Banff Springs Hotel, Banff, Alberta: This is the site of a number of terrifying ghost sightings, including an entire murdered family. Many believe a retired head bellman in uniform continues to haunt the hotel.

- San Fernando Cathedral, San Antonio, Texas: This is the

oldest church in Texas and is stunning to behold. But during the nighttime, visitors may feel the hair on their necks stand on end. During renovations, workers unearthed bones, nails and military uniforms. Visitors report orbs and shadowy figures in photographs, as well as figures in hooded clothing.

- RMS Queen Mary, Long Beach, Calif.: This luxury ship carried Hollywood celebrities before being repurposed into a World War II ship that transported troops. Eventually, the ship was permanently docked in California, and is reportedly haunted by those who died aboard, such as a young sailor crushed in the engine room.

Haunted places dot the globe and can make interesting travel locations for those who wish to discover what goes bump in the night.



The following are some sites, courtesy of Conde Nast, Reader's Digest and National Geographic, that may prove pleasing to those who like a taste of the paranormal each October. (Photo submitted)

How to talk to kids about Halloween safety



It can be hard for parents to get kids to grasp the importance of being safe on Halloween. The following strategies might make that task easier. (Photo submitted)

Come Halloween, youngsters' attentions are understandably focused on costumes and candy. Their parents, however, are likely more concerned with their kids' safety.

Trick-or-treating kids might not pay much mind to safety. As a result, it can be hard for parents to get kids to grasp the importance of being safe on Halloween. The following strategies might make that task easier.

- Discuss costumes well in advance of Halloween. Many kids are so enthusiastic about Halloween that they know which costumes they hope to wear long before October 31. Parents can discuss potential costumes well in advance of Halloween before kids even know what they want to wear. Doing so gives parents a chance to encourage kids to choose bright costumes that will make them more visible to drivers on Halloween night. Waiting to discuss costumes increases the likelihood that kids will already have an outfit in mind, making it harder for parents to convince them to choose something safe.

- Explain that some tailoring might be necessary to make gathering all that candy a lot easier. Superman doesn't trip on his cape in the movies, and youngsters dressed up as the Man of Steel shouldn't trip on their

capas, either. When kids pick costumes, explain to them that you might need to do some tailoring before they go trick-or-treating. Explain to kids that costumes should be trip-proof so they can seamlessly go from house to house in search of their favorite goodies.

- Create a bag or bucket design day. Depending on what kids will use to carry the candy they accumulate this Halloween, parents can plan a bag or bucket design day a few days in advance. Kids will enjoy this chance to get in the Halloween spirit, and parents can encourage youngsters to decorate their bags and buckets with reflective tape that will make them more visible to drivers.

- Talk up trick-or-treating with friends. As Halloween approaches, parents can discuss how much fun kids will have going door-to-door with many of their friends. This is a good way to ensure kids trick-or-treat in large groups, making them more visible to drivers. In addition, kids trick-or-treating in large groups might be too busy joking with their friends to notice when one or two parents tag along as chaperones.

Parents can discuss Halloween safety with their children in ways that make it fun to be safe while trick-or-treating.

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	1 	2	3	4	5	6
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Silver Creek Township Meeting, 7 p.m. Corinna Township Meeting, 7 p.m. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maple Lake Chamber of Commerce meeting at BUCC, 12 p.m. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Legion Riders Meeting, 6:30 p.m. at Legion Club 		
7 <ul style="list-style-type: none">Lion's Breakfast 8 to Noon	8  Columbus Day	9	10	11	12	13
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Late Start 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Chatham Township Meeting, 7 p.m. American Legion Meeting, 7:30 p.m. Late Start 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hasty-Silver Creek Sportsman's Club Meeting, 7 p.m. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sons of the American Legion, 8 p.m. Lions Club Meeting, 7 p.m. at The V 		
14	15	16	17	18	19	20
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Corinna Township Meeting, 7 p.m. High School / Elementary Conferences 4-7 p.m. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maple Lake City Council Meeting, 7 p.m. Albion Township Meeting, 7 p.m. Corinna Township Meeting, 7 p.m. Maple Lake Township Meeting, 7 p.m. Elementary Conferences 4-7 p.m. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Elementary All-Day Conferences 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wright Saddle Club Meeting, 7:30 p.m. Maple Lake Legion Auxiliary, 7 p.m. 	FALL HOLIDAY- No School	FALL HOLIDAY- No School
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Knights of Columbus Meeting, 7 p.m. at St. Timothy's Church 		 Halloween Carnival
28	29	30	31 			
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wright County Snowmobile Assoc. Meeting, 7:30 p.m. at Legion Club 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Business Trick or Treat Halloween 			

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