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A-Mazing! More games, more prizes and the always promised fun and adventure returns with Saturday opening of Hubb's Corn Maze

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Hubb's Corn Maze founders John and Tammy Peterson have done it again. For the third consecutive year, they have come up with a maze design sure to have locals scratching their heads and trying to figure out where the checkpoints are. The maze opens Saturday afternoon.

With the help of the U.S. Army's MWR (Morale, Welfare and Recreation) department at Ft. Bragg, the 12-plus acres of maze is cut out with the MWR logo as well as a tank, two soldiers, and a helicopter.

"We are really excited to have them as our master sponsor," said John Peterson, who also has a list of other sponsors including GOToyota and radio station Q-98.

"They (MWR) are in charge of anything to do with family, recreation ... whatever there is for families at Ft. Bragg, they are there to help."

If that isn't enough, the Petersons have added two colossal new slides, one 40 feet; the other feet, that sit right in front of the maze entrance.

"The giant slide is 17 feet tall and 40 feet long, and we got almost 40 feet of landing area," said John. "We have had to tweak the design a little bit because we have done two slides this year. But I can tell you, the kids are gonna love it."

Another thing the little ones will love is the all new Toddler Town, in addition to an all new game called FSI — Farm Scene Investigation. "It's a 'who dunnit' game like Clue," said John. "In one of the mazes, there will a picture on each of the six checkpoints. In each picture there will farm animals, location and weapons. The object is to eliminate suspects, weapons, and location to determine 'who dunnit' to farmer Joe. It's really cute and should be a lot of fun. If your observation is sharp, you are going to love it. It is good for field trips and the younger kids."

Old favorites are back too, the maze owner noted. The Hay Ride, Barrel Train, Straw Bale Maze and Pony Rides will all be out at the site, ready for everyone to enjoy.

This year, Peterson noted that they are offering a new master pass, which allows visitors to pay one price and enjoy unlimited rides and play.

"Is something new that we wanted to offer," he said. "It is \$14 and you get unlimited corn maze, sliding, barrell riding ... It is a nice way to be able to come out and go enjoy what you want to do for the day."

"We are also offering something else that we hadn't in the past two years," said Tammy Peterson. "That is fire pit rentals. You can rent a fire pit for two hours and bring marshmallows, chocolate and graham crackers. You just have to call us and reserve the space."

The Petersons said in the previous two years, there have been 12,000 people to walk through the mazes.

"This year, our goal is to have 12,000 to 15,000 people to come through here," said Peterson.

Like previous years, there will be local groups coming out to host the maze at Halloween.

"The Herring Fire Department and the Sampson County Sheriff's Department are coming back," he noted.

"We are adding Roseboro Fire/Rescue and the Midway High EOC classes. They come out and get half of the proceeds."

"Last year we paid out about \$8,000 to the groups," Mrs. Peterson said. "We are also having costume contests, military weekend, a senior day in October and a corn hole tournament ... We will have a lot of activities going on. But I would like to stress that during October, our main maze is not haunted. We have had people concerned about that for the younger kids. But it is separate from the Haunted Trail; the parents do not need to worry about that."

She said a lot of frequently asked questions and weather updates can be answered by checking the maze website (www.hubbscornmaze.com) or the new Facebook page.

"Facebook has bee really good for us this year in getting the word out," noted Peterson.

"We have had more calls this year than any because of the posts we do on Facebook," Mrs. Peterson added. "And on our website, you can find everything we have to offer. We are constantly updating that. If you see anything that you question, just call us."

One of the biggest questions the couple has is about weather.

"The paths are normally in great shape after it rains," said Peterson "You may have puddles, but you can walk around them."

"Just because it is raining, we are not closed," Mrs. Peterson noted. "But if there are any questions, you can call us."

Another thing that won't be missing this year is the incredible prizes (at press time, some were still being finalized) — that include an adventure for four to ZipQuest in Fayetteville, dinners, sporting tickets and much more.

The couple also has a refreshment stand on site, that will include their new Corn Nuggets, packaged in Clinton exclusively for Hubbs.

"They are so good," said Mrs. Peterson.

"Once you eat one, you can't stop," promises John.

In the two complete years at Hubbs, the couple say its' the people who make it all worth while.

"The biggest surprise to me is how far people are coming from," said John. "We have had them come from the Outer Banks, Wilmington, we had some groups from South Carolina and Virginia ... We even had a girl come in from California; it is just incredible."

"That makes us feel really good," said Tammy. "Just the fact that people come out and stay with us all day and have so much fun, makes you feel good. They have fun, this is what this is all about."

The maze will open on Sept. 18 and run through Nov. 7. On Fridays, the hours are from 6-11 p.m.; on Saturday's the hours are from 1-11 p.m.; and on Sunday's from 1-6 p.m.

For more information on the maze click on to www.hubbscornmaze.com or call 910-564-6709.

To reach Doug Clark call 910-592-8137 ext. 123 or send e-mail to sisports@heartlandpublications.com.

Hubb's Corn Maze founders John and Tammy Peterson stand in front of two new slides at the maze this year.(Photo by Doug Clark)

A photo image of what this year s corn maze will look like.

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