

# Mountain House Duo Hosts Halloween Events For a Cause, Raise Nearly \$7K for Charity

By Nora Heston Tarte  
photo by Bryan Harrison



Kriss Veit & Dallas Williams  
House for four and a half years, are known by the community as the people with “the Halloween house.” They take the holiday very seriously, decorating their yard with fog, candles, gargoyles and more. It has become a popular attraction for families in the neighborhood – and beyond.

“It stops traffic,” Williams said.

Last year the duo punctuated their efforts with a Halloween party for charity, but the event was kind of last minute. Still, they pulled in \$1,100 collected from party-attendants made up of family and friends.

This year they went all out.

Williams and Veit started early. They printed full-color fliers; handed them out to everyone they knew (and then some) and invited the entire Mountain House community to a full-blown rager thrown the weekend before Halloween, October 25. Guests were asked to spare \$20 for a donation.

The party lasted well past the 12 a.m. end time as people ate and drank food prepped and provided by the hosts, as well as listened to music spun by a DJ. Servers and bartenders added to the event.

“We were attracting so many trick or treaters [with our decorations] we wanted to do something good with it,” Williams said of their decision to go big. Even with help from their friends – including Mountain House residents Kaye Schmed, Katie Lynn and Giselle Andrade – Williams and Veit ended up shelling out a hefty amount of cash for the party. In fact, the party cost more than the \$1,000 they raised that night.

They didn’t repay themselves a dime from the money raised for charity, they said.

Next year they hope to cut costs by asking residents to donate their services. Not having to pay out of pocket for the food, alcohol and DJ would be a big help, they admitted. Although, Williams said Scotty at the Good Time Tavern in Livermore hooked them up with a killer deal on booze.

A huge Halloween extravaganza wasn’t enough for the over-zealous twosome. The following week, they hosted a haunted walk and fundraiser on Halloween night.

Williams said they “did up” their backyard to create a scary walk-through for trick or treaters. Again, they asked for donations from those who attended, but didn’t require it.

“We don’t want to turn people away because they think they have to pay,” Williams said. “We really do this because we like to.” Still, he admits they could probably raise more if they really pushed the donation.

Another damper was the rain. Williams said they only saw about half the number of trick or treaters they usually see.

So why did they decide to donate to the hospital? In addition to admitted difficulty teaming up with a local organization, the charity just seemed to fit.

“It’s really for kids,” Veit said of Halloween. “We thought that was kind of associated with a children’s hospital.”

Now, the two said they have heard so many good stories – hundreds of stories – about people affected by the hospital and its staff, that they have no intentions of switching gears.

As if the two events weren’t enough, Williams and Veit opened their house again on November 1

A few kind words from a stranger helped Dallas Williams power through the event-packed two weeks he and fiancée, Kriss Veit, planned for Halloween.

As Williams tells it, he was on his way to work between two eventful weekends celebrating the holiday when he stopped at the Wicklund Market for some coffee. As he was leaving, a stranger stopped him to tell him how amazing their charitable work was with USF Benioff Children’s Hospital Oakland. He shared that his son, who was sitting in the car, would not be here today without the help of the hospital. The stranger thanked Dallas and walked away.

Williams said those words on the day after a huge Halloween party that raked in \$1,000 for the hospital perked him up. It reminded him why the hard work was worth it.

A year later, the couple’s Halloween festivities have raked in \$6,822 for the hospital.

Williams and Veit, who have lived in Mountain House for four and a half years, are known by the community as the people with “the Halloween house.” They take the holiday very seriously, decorating their yard with fog, candles, gargoyles and more. It has become a popular attraction for families in the neighborhood – and beyond.

for the annual Pub Crawl put on by their neighbor Ron Dillon, owner of Vino 100 in Tracy.

As part of the pub-crawl, teams of ten decorated houses in the community like pubs. Participants paid \$20 each for the event, which was then split amongst houses to use for decorations, food and alcohol. Because Williams and Veit already had a fully decorated house and plenty of leftovers, the team decided as a group to add their allotment - \$290 – to the charity fund.

Williams’ employer, Cisco Systems, matched \$1,400 in donations made by their employees, totaling approximately \$2,800 from the company alone. The company also donated a web designer to the cause who helped Williams and Veit get set up with an online platform for collecting donations. The website, <http://halloweenfundraiser.org>, is still open and accepting donations until Thanksgiving.

After all was said and done, Williams and Veit had hosted three large events in the name of charity. “We’re just exhausted,” they agreed.



And while the events of the past few weeks have given them pause about hosting as part of the St. Patrick’s Day pub crawl, Williams and Veit fully intend to continue with their Halloween traditions next year, admitting it’s expected of them now.

Despite the large price tag associated with their over-the-top party, Williams and Veit are proud of their accomplishment. “Overall, we raised so much money we feel pretty good about it,” Williams said.