**Halloween**

**Halloween is a lot easier since I installed a drive-thru! *(Kevin Fagan, in Drabble comic strip)***

**My husband, then in the Air Force, was called in to work on a Saturday. Noticing he wasn’t wearing his uniform, our 4-year-old wondered, “Daddy, aren’t you going to put on your ‘costume’?” *(Doris Posey, in Country Woman magazine)***

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**Americans are expected to spend $6.9 billion on Halloween costumes, candy, and decorations this year, an average of $74.34 per person, according to the National Retail Federation. That's down from a peak of $8 billion in 2012, but more than double what consumers spent on Halloween a decade ago*. (Los Angeles Times, as it appeared in The Week magazine, October 23, 2015)***

**Americans spend some $5 billion to $7 billion a year on Halloween. *(American Profile magazine, October 10, 2010)***

**Americans will spend $2.6 billion on Halloween costumes this year. The most popular outfits evoke Miley Cyrus during her notorious VMA performance, the characters of reality show hit Duck Dynasty, and Breaking Bad’s Walter White. *(The Wall Street Journal, as it appeared in The Week magazine, November 1, 2013)***

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**Ancient Celtic people hid themselves in ghoulish disguises on October 31, so that any malicious spirits they encountered wouldn’t recognize them as human. *(American Profile magazine)***

**My little cousins were asked if they believed in any of the spooky legends about Halloween. “No,” answered the oldest. “But we do believe in candy!” *(Mary Yoder, in Country Woman magazine)***

**A grandmother pretends she doesn’t know who you are on Halloween. *(Erma Bombeck)***

**Two little neighbor girls about the same age, one Christian and one Jewish, were constant companions. After one Easter holiday, the grandfather of the Christian girl asked her what her friend had received for Easter. The girl looked at her grandfather in surprise, and said, “But Grandpa, you should know that Becky is Jewish and she wouldn't get anything for Easter.” Then she went on to explain patiently, “You see, I’m Easter and she’s Passover. I’m Christian and she’s Hanukkah.” Then with a big smile, she added, “but I’m really glad that both of us are Halloween.” *(Buddy Westbrook)***

**Billy shows a very small broom to his brothers and says to them: “See this whisk broom? It’s what baby witches fly on!” *(Bil Keane, in The Family Circus comic strip)***

**After It's the Great Pumpkin, Charlie Brown premiered, Charles Schultz was overwhelmed with candy shipments from children who were concerned for Charlie because he got rocks in his Halloween bag. *(The Daily Chronicle)***

**Grandma: “Maybe we’ll pass out bubble gum for Halloween.” Gabby: “Okay, what kind? Watermelon, cotton candy, sour apple, strawberry, grape or lemonade flavored?” Grandma: “When did they stop making bubble gum flavored bubble gum?” *(Steve Breen, in Grand Avenue comic strip)***

**On Halloween night our telephone rang and, as is our custom, I answered, “Trick or treat!” I heard a chuckle at the other end of the line. Then the operator said, “Your treat is a call from your daughter. The trick is, she’s calling collect. Will you accept the charges?” *(John I. Beavers, in Reader’s Digest)***

**6.4 billion kernels of candy corn will be produced by Brach’s for this Halloween. Sunday is National Candy Corn Day. *(Brach’s confections, as it appeared in the Rocky Mountain News, October 26, 2005)***

**From a Celtic festival celebrated 2,000 years ago, Halloween has evolved into a fixture of American culture that encompasses spooky folk traditions – from early Scottish and Irish immigrants to German, African, Haitian, English and Dutch beliefs and customs. *(American Profile magazine)***

**Halloween night in the western suburb of Chicago was cold and stormy, and few children ventured to our door. After about an hour of inactivity, the bell finally rang again, and a small boy dressed as a clown greeted us with a loud “Trick or Treat!” As we ushered him in out of the storm, we asked what he would like from our big bowl of treats. “Just dump the whole bowl in my sack,” he said. “Nobody else is coming tonight.” *(Barrie Blackburn, in Reader’s Digest)***

**More than 93 percent of children go trick-or-treating every year. Eighty-four percent of kids ranked candy and gum as the top items they hope to receive when they go trick-or-treating. Ninety percent of parents admit to sneaking goodies from their kids’ Halloween trick-or-treat bags. Bite-size chocolate candies are the most popular type of candy (76 percent). Eighty percent of adults plan to hand out candy to trick-or-treaters. Plastic pumpkins with handles remain the trick-or-treating container of choice, followed by plastic bags and pillowcases. *(National Confectioners Association, as it appeared in the Rocky Mountain News, October 31, 2005)***

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**Can I wear my Halloween costume for Easter? *(Bil Keane, in The Family Circus* *comic strip)***

**Wolverine: "Trick or treat!" Lady: "A wolverine costume! How incredibly realistic!" Wolverine: "You have no idea, Lady!" *(J. C. Duffy, in The Fusco Brothers comic strip)***

**Boy: “I can’t decide if this is a good costume for trick-or-treating. A giant Snickers bar? On the one hand, all the candy being passed out will seem puny by comparison, so people might subconsciously want to give me more to compensate. But on the other hand, maybe they’ll think I have plenty already, and thus will be extra skimpy. What I need to do is consult a psychologist. Dude, I’ve said that for years.” *(Bill Amend, in Foxtrot comic strip)***

**$48.48: the amount, per person, Americans will spend on Halloween costumes this year, according to a survey by The National Retail Federation. That would be $3.29 billion in all, up from $43.57 billion and $3.12 billion in 2004. *(Rocky Mountain News, October 27, 2005)***

**What will the hip kids be wearing this Halloween? According to a National Retail Federation poll of children and parents, here are 2005's top costumes:
\* Princess - 11.8%
\* Witch - 5.2%
\* Spiderman - 4.5%
\* Monster - 4.1%
\* Darth Vader - 3.9%
\* Superhero - 3.9%
\* Star Wars Character - 2.5%
\* Batman - 2.4%
\* Ninja - 2.3%
\* Clown - 2.3% *(Rocky Mountain News, October 18, 2005)***

**The top Halloween costumes last year were witches and vampires for adults, and princesses and Spider-Man for kids. *(American Profile magazine, October 10, 2010)***

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**Father: “Gosh! I could've sworn I just heard a creepy voice calling my name! And now I hear chains and heavy footsteps!” Son: “Boo!” Father: “Oh, it's just a ghost! I was afraid my mother-in-law was here!” *(Kevin Fagan, in Drabble comic strip)***

**I was so ugly as a kid we never had a jack-*‘*o-lantern. They just stuck me in the window. *(Rodney Dangerfield)***

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**First woman: “I think I'll decorate the house for Halloween.” Second woman: “OK, but nothing too gory. Last year’s decorations were so scary that six little trick-or-treaters ran away crying. And that’s a bad thing!” First woman: “But it’s Halloween!” *(Jan Eliot, in Stone Soup comic strip)***

**While teaching first grade at our Lutheran school, I conducted an annual Bible character pumpkin decorating contest. The whole family was encouraged to get involved with their entry to make it an enjoyable family project. One year, a boy brought in a particularly ferocious-looking pumpkin he had named “Goliath.” I admired it and asked him if his father or his mother had carved the face. He answered, “No, it was my grandfather. He has a good memory.” *(Jane Miller, in The Lutheran Witness)***

 **One day last month I opened my morning newspaper and saw a cartoon depicting a child in a department store saying to his mother, “Look, Mommy! Christmas decorations. It must be close to Halloween.” *(Joy O. Daane)***

**It may be only the beginning of October, but Halloween decorations have been in stores for weeks already. Last year, Americans spent nearly $6 billion on the holiday, including an average of $23 each on costumes and $20 on candy. *(Kiplinger’s Personal Finance, as it appeared in The Week magazine, October 7, 2011)***

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**Bela Lugosi only made $3,500 from the movie Dracula, but acquired a role for life. He was buried in his vampire costume. *(Ripley’s Believe It or Not!: Book of Chance, p. 18)***

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**I dressed up my dog as a mailman for Halloween. He bit himself. *(Christina Melton, in Reader’s Digest)***

**A young Lutheran lad told his mother he was dressing as the Pope for Halloween. His mother explained that the Pope was not a Lutheran and suggested that he dress up as something else. He thought about it, then asked his mom if it was okay for him to be vampire, “Are vampires Lutheran?” *(Rev. Joel Pinnt, in The Lutheran Witness)***

***\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\**A bunch of young kids in a large family were enjoying Easter eggs and chocolate rabbits. One of them, remembering experiences of trick-or-treating, remarked, “Easter tastes better than Halloween, and you don't have to ring a lot of doorbells.” *(A Treasury of Humor, Ballantine Books)***

**It’s the eve of All Saints, when we carve pumpkins, dress up in costumes and go door-to-door in search of treats. The holiday has certainly evolved from its Celtic origins of about 2,000 years ago, when it indicated the end of the summer harvest and the onset of a long, cold winter. Today’s celebration is less about weather than about crazy parties, scary costumes and lots of candy. *(Maria Cote, in Rocky Mountain News)***

**Animal: “So how do you get the candy on Halloween?” Child: “You wear a scary mask, ring a doorbell, and when someone answers, you yell, ‘Trick or treat’. Then you get a treat to keep you from playing a trick on them.” Animal: “Oh, so it's a day of legal extortion?” Child “Just when I thought Halloween couldn’t get any cooler!” Animal: “OK, now I'm scared.” *(Wiley, in Non Sequitur comic strip)***

**Fun holiday facts: 80 percent of Americans decorate their homes for Halloween. Magician Harry Houdini died in Detroit of gangrene and peritonitis resulting from a ruptured appendix on Halloween in 1926. The original Halloween film directed by John Carpenter in 1978 cost just $320,000 to make. It ended up making over $50 million worldwide. People have believed for centuries that light keeps away ghosts and ghouls. Making a pumpkin lantern with a candle inside may keep you safe from all the spooky spirits flying around on Halloween. *(***[***www.bbc.co.uk***](http://www.bbc.co.uk/)***, as it appeared in the Rocky Mountain News, October 31, 2005)***

**Why Halloween has failed to catch on: The French flirtation with Halloween is over, said Claire Gatinois in Paris' Le Monde. For a while, back in the late 1990s, it looked as if the Anglo-Saxon holiday would become a Gallic tradition. French parents not only dressed their children in little ghoul outfits and took them trick-or-treating, but many even donned costumes themselves and wore them in bars, just like in New York or London. This year, though, while some kids were still soliciting on the streets, there was nary a grown-up spook to be seen. Are we seeing a backlash against the Americanization of our culture? Not really. Instead, analysts point to the influence of the Catholic Church. Beginning in 1999, French priests became vocal in their criticism of the "devaluation of All-Saints Day," a holy day just after Halloween. Catholics instead turned back to their own religiously sanctioned dress-up day: Mardi Gras, the carnival day of excess that comes before the self-denial of Lent. Costume retailers say February business has been increasing steadily in the past few years, as French adults go all out to celebrate the carnival. "French consumers have made their choice." Halloween is just for the kids. (*The Week magazine, November 16, 2007)***

**In an effort to get back to the original meaning of Halloween – the eve of All Saints’ Day – one church held a Halloween party in which the children of the parish dressed in costumes representing saints. One lad was a puzzle to the people who planned the party. He was dressed in a football uniform. “You mean,” he exclaimed, “you’ve never heard of the New Orleans’ Saints?” *(Tulsa World)***

**Halloween: The fright before Christmas. *(Arthur J. Tognazzini)***

**Go Green for Halloween: The ghosts and ghouls are scary, yes, but even more frightening is the waste that Halloween creates. A U.K. study found that costumes from 19 retailers alone generate 4.5 million pounds of plastic waste each year, Fortunately, Halloween lends itself to biogradable décor. Arrange pumpkins, gourds, hay, and cornstalks outside. Scoop out gourds to make natural flower vases, and assemble squash, tinypumpkins, pine cones, and leaves under a bell jar for indoors*. (Reader’s Digest, October, 2022 issue)***

**Along with the usual sticks of gum and squashed candies, my two young trick-or-treaters came home Halloween night with something a little different in their sacks. In orange cellophane, neatly tied with black ribbon, was a packet of homemade treats -- a candied apple, a couple of cookies, a square of nut fudge -- and this typewritten note: "Grandmotherly, cookie-making type, will baby-sit, in this neighborhood, for a reasonable fee." *(Mrs. J. L. Gallagher, in Reader's Digest)***

**Boy: “Who are you supposed to be?” Pumpkin: “I’m the Great Pumpkin from ‘Peanuts’.” I’m the legendary creature that Linus so patiently waited for on Halloween.” Boy: “Are those bits of a security blanket in your teeth?” Pumpkin: “I added a touch of irony.” *(Bill Amend, in Foxtrot comic strip)***

**It is a holiday of magic and mystery, and one, through a peculiar blending of culture and custom, that is uniquely American. *(Lesley Bannatyne, in Halloween: An American Holiday, an American History)***

**My three-year-old granddaughter was visiting us and we were about to have lunch. Rachel sat with her hands properly folded and eyes closed as I began Grace. “In the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost.” Immediately Rachel's eyes flew open. “You are not supposed to say ‘the Holy Ghost,’” she admonished. “You're supposed to say ‘the Holy Spirit.’” Then, afraid she may have hurt my feelings, she quickly added, “You can say ‘the Holy Ghost’ at Halloween.” *(L. M. Shaw, in Catholic Digest)***

**Gabby: “I’m ruined. We’re in the supermarket with a cart full of cheap Halloween candy and there’s the most popular girl in school! This humiliation will be permanently seared into my memory. Psychologically, you can’t escape such trauma!” Grandma: “Come on, Gabby, it’s time to check out and leave.” Gabby: “You can check out anytime you like but you can never leave!” *(Steve Breen, in Grand Avenue comic strip)***

**Billy says to his Mother after holding up his skeleton costume at the store: “This would get me lots of candy ‘cause I’d look really hungry.” *(Bil Keane, in The Family Circus comic strip)***

**I love Halloween. The Christmas decorations look so nice in the department stores. *(The American Legion magazine)***

**Grandma: “You're using TV to come up with Halloween costume ideas? Try using your imagination.” Child: “Using your imagination' isn't listed on the channel guide.” *(Steve Breen, in Grand Avenue comic strip)***

**No bad habits: If you’re in Alabama, don’t dress up as a nun, priest or rabbi for Halloween. Impersonating “a minister of any religion” is punishable by fine or jail. *(Nina Vizcarrondo, in Time)***

**Grandma: “Any luck coming up with Halloween costume ideas?” Child: “We're watching television for inspiration.” Three hours later Grandma notices that they are still watching TV and says to them: “So, I take it you'll be going as zombies?” *(Steve Breen, in Grand Avenue comic strip)***

**Grandma: “Kids, I've got an idea! We'll make your Halloween costumes this year! I've saved some old tablecloths, tin cans, bread ties, egg cartons, and paper towel tubes.” Child: “So, we'll be going as recycling bins?” *(Steve Breen, in Grand Avenue comic strip)***

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**The jack-o’-lantern evolved from a medieval Irish tradition of using carved-out, candlelit turnips as lanterns. The turnips were placed on gateposts to ward off evil spirits. Irish immigrants in America began using the more easily carved native pumpkin for their jack-o’-lanterns. *(American Profile magazine)***

**Irishmen escaping the Great Potato Famine brought the traditions of Halloween trick-or-treating and jack-o'-lanterns to America in the 1840s. On Halloween, Irish peasants begged the rich for food and played practical jokes on those who refused. To avoid being tricked, the rich handed out cookies, candies, and fruit. These days, Halloween is all about parties, candy, and costumes. *(The Daily Chronicles)***

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**I wonder if Halloween is the one day of the year Lady Gaga wears sensible slacks. *(Jimmy Kimmel, in Reader's Digest)***

**Kids in Halloween costumes outside a darkened house: “We know you’re in there, Mr. Wampler, so turn on the light and come out with your hands full.” *(Stan Fine, in National Enquirer)***

**Lucy: “Tomorrow night is our big night, Linus. All you have to do is walk up to a house, ring the doorbell, and say, ‘Tricks or Treats!’” Linus: “Are you sure that’s legal?” Lucy: “Of course it’s legal!” Linus: “Good. I wouldn’t want to be accused of taking part in a rumble!” *(Charles Schulz, in Peanuts comic strip***

**Halloween has changed. Remember when they had big candy bars? Now it's these small things. This year someone gave me a One Musketeer bar. Do we really need Halloween? We have terrorists, snipers and anthrax. Oh, no, there's a witch! Oooooooo, I'm scared! A kid came to the door last week dressed as a snowman. I said, “Hey, are you Frosty?” and the kid said, “No, I’m Ted Williams.” *(Jay Leno)***

**Little girl: "Why are you writing a list of scary things?" Heart: "Because I'm making a haunted house for Halloween!" Little girl: "Really? The pop-out-and-scream-in-your-face kind? With ghosts and monsters and junk?" Heart: "And cut-off limbs and bloody eyeballs!" Little girl: "That's horrible!" Heart: "Totally gross and frightening!" Little girl: "Sounds like you need a partner." Heart: "Misery loves company." *(Mark Tatulli, in Heart of the City comic strip)***

**My six-year-old son was excited about his Halloween costume. “I’m going to be the Pope,” he said. “Ian, you can’t be the Pope,” I said. “You’re not Catholic. You’re Lutheran.” Ian hadn’t thought about that. So he considered his alternatives. After a few minutes, he asked, “Is Dracula a Lutheran?” *(Jenny Crane, in Reader’s Digest)***

**If you attend a Halloween party, expect to see convicted swindler Bernie Madoff, who is the model for one of the most popular Halloween masks this year. “It’s perfect,” said one Madoff mask buyer. “You carry around a bunch of fake hundreds and throw them all over the place.” *(New York Daily News, as it appeared in The Week magazine, October 23, 2009)***

**We continue to adjust to each other, an adjustment that started 19 years ago and will never stop because we each continue to grow and change. We will always be different. I think of anniversaries as a time for roses and dinner; she prefers Mexican food and a movie. For Halloween she thinks apples are a good treat; I say, since when did Halloween have anything to do with nutrition? Don't mistake it for a solid marriage. There is no such thing. Marriage is more like an airplane than a rock. You have to commit the thing to flight, and then it creaks and groans, and keeping it airborne depends entirely on attitude. Working at it, though, I know how hard it has been, or how worthwhile. *(Michael Grant, in San Diego Union)***

**A black cat crossing your path signifies that the animal is going somewhere. *(Groucho Marx)***

**Billy: “Math is a lot more fun when you’re counting Halloween treats!” *(Bil Keane, in The Family Circus comic strip)***

**Although Halloween always has had spooky, otherworldly connections, Bannatyne *(Lesley Bannatyne, in Halloween: An American Holiday, an American History)* says it wasn’t until the 1978 movie Halloween that the holiday became associated with violence and horror. Considered a horror film classic, Halloween was filmed in 21 days on a budget of $320,000 and became the highest-grossing independent movie of its time. *(American Profile magazine)***

**Mr. & Mrs. Wilson observe Dennis wearing his devil costume at Halloween and say to each other: “He’s definitely overqualified for that job.” *(Hank Ketcham, in Dennis the Menace comic strip)***

**Patient: “Can you give me something for my abdominal pain?” Doctor: “Well, we don't know what's causing the pain -- and we don't want to mask the symptoms.” Patient: “Couldn't we just mask them until Halloween?” *(Chris Browne, in Raising Duncan comic strip)***

**All my life, my parents said, "Never take candy from strangers." And then they dressed me up and said, "Now go beg for it." *(Rita Rudner, comedian)***

**Trick or Treat:**

**59% of Americans plan to participate in some type of Halloween activity this year, according to the national Macerich Shopping in America poll.**

**56% of them plan to wear costumes.**

**49% of those planning to wear character costumes chose Spider-Man, making Spidey the most popular choice.**

**10% chose Shrek, who came in second. (*Rocky Mountain News, October 11, 2004)***

**More than 93 percent of children go trick-or-treating every year. Eighty-four percent of kids ranked candy and gum as the top items they hope to receive when they go trick-or-treating. Ninety percent of parents admit to sneaking goodies from their kids’ Halloween trick-or-treat bags. Bite-size chocolate candies are the most popular type of candy (76 percent). Eighty percent of adults plan to hand out candy to trick-or-treaters. Plastic pumpkins with handles remain the trick-or-treating container of choice, followed by plastic bags and pillowcases. *(National Confectioners Association, as it appeared in the Rocky Mountain News, October 31, 2005)***

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**The National Retail Federation says Americans will spend $310 million on pet costumes this year. While that’s only a small part of the total $6.9 billion consumers will shell out for candy, costumes and décor, the category is popular and growing, say retailers and pet owners. *(Suzanne S. Brown, in The Denver Post, October 24, 2013)***

**Top pet costumes for 2013: 1. Pumpkin. 2. Devil. 3. Hot dog. 4. Bee. 5 Cat. 6. Witch. 7. Bow tie. 8. Pirate. 9. Dog. 10. Ghost. *(National Retail Federation, as it appeared in The Denver Post, October 24, 2013)***

Americans are expected to spend $370 million on Halloween costumes for their pets this year -- $70 million more than last year. An estimated 15 percent of the population will buy outfits for their pets. *(Time.com, as it appeared in The Week magazine, October 19, 2012)*

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**On Halloween, we placed a phonograph near the front porch to greet the trick-or-treaters with the sounds of frightened cats, howling wolves and eerie organ music. During the evening we opened the door to three youngsters dressed as monsters -- a very small child flanked by two slightly older ones. Referring to the little one in the middle, one older boy shyly asked, "Would you mind turning off your record player? It's scaring Dracula." *(John H. Socolofsky, in Reader's Digest)***

**Last Halloween, the usual pranksters were out. The high price of eggs didn't stop most of the local boys from stocking up on them for throwing and smashing. So when the county judge, who also owns a restaurant, caught some boys with a supply of eggs, it was his duty to pronounce judgment. He took the "prisoners" to his restaurant, where he and his wife cooked a 10 p.m. sausage-and-egg breakfast for the "convicts," and then released them. Small-town law and order had struck again. (*Darilyn Stringer, in Reader's Digest)***

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**The name for the Halloween pumpkin comes from an old story that the Irish brought with them to America. The story is about a stingy old man named Jack. He was so stingy that when he died, he could not get into heaven. He was left in darkness. So Jack put a glowing piece of coal in a hollowed-out turnip. And he traveled with his “jack-o-lantern” as he looked for a resting place. *(Betty Debnam, in Rocky Mountain News)***

**It’s the great pumpkin shortage, Charlie Brown. A cool, damp summer in the Midwest and New England has decimated the U.S. pumpkin crop, leading to higher prices and shortages across the U.S. as Halloween approaches. *(USA Today, as it appeared in The Week magazine, October 2, 2009)***

***\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\**After returning from trick-or-treating the little girl thinks to herself: “A penny. A tic tac. A life-saver. A stick of gum. Boy, trick-or-treating during a recession is a real drag.” *(Steve Breen, in Grand Avenue comic strip)***

**Mom: “Before we go pumpkin picking, I want to go over a few rules! Stay close to me. Don’t roll, toss or drop any pumpkin or gourd. Don’t get lost in the straw maze. Last time we had crying all the way home!” Kids: “Okay!” Mom: “I wasn’t talking about you two!” Dad: “Look! A hay ride!” *(Pat Brady & Don Wimmer, in Rose Is Rose comic strip)***

**Dolly says to Santa Claus: “We wanted to trick-or-treat at your house, but we can't go off our block.” *(Bil Keane, in The Family Circus comic strip)***

**Heart: “Well, this is it, Dean. Our last week of school!” Dean: “Finally!” Heart: “Before you know it we’ll be tearing around on our scooters, downing ice pops by the ton, and looking for pennies and cool rocks at the bottom of the pool!” Dean: “I wonder where Mrs. Horn goes during the summer.” Heart: “Back in her coffin, I bet.” *(Mark Tatulli, in Heart of the City comic strip)***

**A trick-or-treater came to my door as Rocky, dressed in boxing gloves and satin shorts. But soon after I gave him some goodies, the child returned for more. “Aren’t you the same Rocky who left my doorstep several minutes ago?” I asked. “Yes,” he replied, “but now I’m the sequel. I’ll be back three more times tonight, too.” *(Good Clean Fun Web site)***

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**$51: The average amount shoppers plan to spend on Halloween activities this year, up 3.6 percent from 2004. *(Macerich Co., as it appeared in the Rocky Mountain News, December 26, 2005)***

**Americans spend, on average, about $65 per person to celebrate Halloween, with $23 going toward costumes, $20 for candy, $18 for decorations, and $4 for greeting cards. *(USA Today, as it appeared in The Week magazine, November 9, 2007)***

**Americans spend twice as much on what as they do on cookies? According to the Nielsen Marketing Group, Americans spent an estimated $3.4 billion last year buying cookies. So to answer the question, we have to find something on which we spent $6.8 billion last year. And that would be . . . Halloween. That’s how much we shelled out last year for costumes, pumpkin-carving kits, spooky decorations and all that candy. FYI, our cookie and Halloween outlay put together don’t match the $13 billion we spent renting videotapes last year. *(Rocky Mountain News)***

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**Father: “What are you doing?” Son: “Trying to decide what states I’m going to hit trick-or-treating tomorrow.” Father: “You said ‘states.’ I assume you meant ‘streets.’” Son: “Now then, I should probably go east to west to take advantage of the time zones.” *(Bill Amend, in Foxtrot comic strip)***

**Grandma: “Don’t feel bad that you were unable to buy Halloween costumes. When I was little we didn’t have store-bought costumes, we made our own. And we weren’t driven around while trick-or-treating, we walked and we got penny candy, not these new, giant candy bars.” Little girl: “So why do you always call them ‘the good old days’?” *(Steve Breen, in Grand Avenue comic strip)***

**The story of Halloween goes back over 2000 years to the ancient Celts. Druidic priests regarded the day as the end of the year. Not only was it their day for celebrating the year's harvest, but October 31 itself was also the day of Samhain, a festival for honoring the dead. In order to appease the wandering spirits they believed roamed at night, the Celtic priests made fires in which they burned sacrifices, made charms, and cast spells. Portions of the Celtic holiday of the dead eventually passed into Christian culture after the Romans conquered the Celts and tried to bring the Celts into the “Christian fold.” It eventually became apparent to the church leaders that the Celts, in spite of their conformation to some aspects of Christian culture, were stubbornly sticking with elements of their old religion. So, in the 7th century A.D., the church moved its All Saints' Day, a holiday for honoring early Christian martyrs, from a day in May to November 1, thus associating it with the old Druid death rituals of October 31. By the 10th century A.D., the Catholic Church had added a new holiday, All Souls’ Day. This day was set aside to honor all of the dead, not just the early Christian Saints. Celebration of Halloween came to America with early Irish and Scottish immigrants. By then, though, it had already started to lose its mysterious overtones and was becoming merely a harvest celebration: a night of bobbing for apples, eating popcorn, and telling ghost stories around a bonfire. It was already changing into the holiday for children with which we in the 20th century are so familiar. *(Judy Mackenzie & David Milster, in LakeCrestPark Messenger)***

 **Grandpa: “I hate to be the one to break this to you, Nelson. But your superman costume does not enable you to fly. Nor does it give you super strength, x-ray vision, or protection from Grandpa’s tickling!” *(Brian Crane, in Pickles comic strip)***

**One Halloween, when my grandson Christopher was 3 years old, his older brother Matthew dashed into the room in his Power Rangers costume. “Run for your lives!” Christopher screamed. I leaned over and quietly told him that Grandma was too old to run anymore. He thought for a moment, smiled and yelled, “Walk for your lives!” *(Joyce Hambacher, in Country magazine)***

**Our son, making his first Halloween visit and wanting no part of tricks, sang out, “Treat . . . or treat!” *(Diana Sundberg, in Country Woman magazine)***

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**Trick-or-treating as we know it today became popular between 1920 and 1950. *(American Profile magazine)***

**Trick-or-treating for UNICEP began in 1950 in one Pennsylvania school and now is a national campaign that has raised nearly $160 million to provide clean water, food, medicine and other assistance for children worldwide. *(American Profile magazine, October 10, 2010)***

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**Heart: “Halloween was a total washout! I spent all this time making a great costume, and I had to cover the thing up with a stupid coat because of a rainstorm!” Friend: “Who cares, Heart! You still got what you wanted, right?” Heart: “True, in the end, it’s all about the Snickers. But next year, I’m just cutting two holes in a sheet.” *(Mark Tatulli, in Heart of the City comic strip)***

**Heart: “Halloween is a weird holiday, don’t you think? Dressing up in costumes and begging for candy. Strange.” Mom: “Frankly I don’t see how it’s any different from our normal day.” Heart: “I don’t beg for candy! I just take it when you’re not looking.” *(Mark Tatulli, in Heart of the City comic strip)***

**With a sign that says “Pick your own punpkin,” one animal says to the other: “That’s a zucchini!” The other animal says back: “I went for the third party candidate.” *(Patrick McDonnell, in Mutts comic strip)***

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