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Halloween Spook-tacular

Familiar superstitions continue to be believed in

By Liz Glazier
Rocket Assistant Focus Editor

"Don't step on a crack or you'll break your mother's back!"

Many have heard this superstition, but where did this superstition, and others like it, come from? Though most superstitions started back when Christianity was forming, many continue to be practiced and believed today.

According to the dictionary, a superstition is an irrational belief that an object, action or circumstance not logically related to a course of events influences its outcome.

Doug Chalich, a sophomore criminal justice major, admits to being superstitious and has an idea of why he and other people believe certain things.

"People are probably superstitious because they want to believe in something that may seem unlikely or improbable," said Chalich, 20.

One of the most common superstitions that people still believe in today is the crossing of fingers for good luck.

Crossing her fingers is something that 20-year-old junior Heather Sowalla, a geography and environmental studies major, learned to do growing up.

"When I was little, my grandma would always tell me to cross my fingers for good luck," Sowalla said.

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Picking the perfect pumpkin (and making it last)

1. Look closely at the skin of the pumpkin and avoid pumpkins that have cracks or splits.

2. Squeeze the pumpkin: A fresh one will be solid. Pass up the ones with soft or sunken spots.

3. Don't carry the pumpkin with the stem, support the bottom of it with your hand.

4. Keep pumpkin in your house or outdoors and it will remain good for several months. Freezing nights will cause them to mush, so bring them inside at night.

5. Wiping the pumpkin with bleach water will reduce rot and decay.

ENJOY!

Source:
"Picking the Perfect Pumpkin,"
Dennis Patton

Haunted attractions provide thrills for locals

By Liz Rekowski
Rocket Contributor

While some students feel they may be too old to go trick-or-treating anymore, many can still get a good thrill by visiting some local haunted houses and other Halloween-themed attractions.

The Cheeseman Farm in Portersville, Pa., celebrating its eighth year in Halloween celebration, is home to several Halloween activities.

Currently open every Thursday, Friday, Saturday and Sunday, their last day of activities is Nov. 3.

Their Fright Farm, which starts at dusk, includes a hayride to take people to each attraction, including a haunted maze and five haunted houses.

Eric Viletto, a junior marketing major, said he enjoys what Cheeseman Farm has to offer for Halloween.

"I really like the corn maze because the strobe lights are disorienting," Viletto said.

Viletto, 21, said the actors are also hard to distinguish from inanimate scarecrows

throughout the dark maze, which can cause an extra scare.

On Fridays and Saturdays, admission to the Fright Farm is \$12, while the cost is \$10 on Thursdays, Sundays and on Halloween, with the cost of admission giving visitors access to all the farm's attractions.

"We think we have a unique setting which makes it a really fun time," said Betsy Cheeseman, the owner of the Cheeseman Farm. "We have 60 acres and use it all for the event."

There are 50 actors working at the Fright Farm to help scare guests.

According to Cheeseman, guests should plan on having at least an hour to get through all of the attractions, not including any time that may be spent waiting in line to enter.

But big scares aren't for everyone, so the Cheeseman Farm also holds the Cheeseman's Pumpkin Festival, a no-scare event. The festival is held every Saturday and

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SUBMITTED PHOTO
Brandon Shenefelt and Jenna Moss take a break from the haunted attractions at Cheeseman's Fright Farm on Oct. 21. The Fright Farm has attractions including a haunted maze and five haunted houses.

Facebook, Martha Stewart among costumes students will wear

By Amber Wilhelm
Rocket Contributor

When going through rough times in their lives, many people often wish they could be someone else, even if just for a day.

Luckily for them, Halloween is just around the corner, and the tradition of costuming around as something other than what they really are could be just the ticket they need to escape from their everyday lives.

From ancient folk customs in Ireland with religious overtones to a modern way for people to express themselves at a fall party, Halloween costumes can often reflect a person's personality or the pop

culture of America.

"I'm going to be Facebook," said Ben Dearing, a junior accounting major who said he's also considered wearing an inflatable Santa Clause costume he owns. "I'm going to wear a blue shirt with the Facebook writing and I'm going to poke people."

But Halloween costumes weren't always just for fun and entertainment. In fact, there are two stories about the origins of dressing up on Oct. 31 that come from Ireland.

According to a book called "Halloween: An American Holiday, An American History" by Lesley Pratt Bannatyne, Halloween didn't come to North America until the mass influx of Irish immigrants

in the mid-1800s.

It was believed by the Celtic people, centuries before the time of Christ, that the Lord of the Dead, Samhain, would gather all the lost souls for sentencing on the night of Oct. 31.

The spirits of the beloved ancestors of the Celts were welcomed home for the night with offerings of bread and wine, and it was thought that the unwanted dead wandered out in the darkness.

The Celts would disguise themselves as ghouls so that these malicious souls would mistake them for one of their own, while masked villagers would trick the spirits by leading a parade

to the town limits, where sacred bonfires burned.

Though Halloween isn't quite so dramatic



PHOTO COURTESY OF MCT CAMPUS

today, the idea of costumes has lived on.

Sarah Valentine, a junior elementary education major, said that at a costume contest last Friday, she won second place.

"I was Deb from Napoleon Dynamite," Valentine said. "I had a pink prom dress with huge puffy sleeves."

Lara Smith, a sophomore art education major, had a current-events-related costume.

"I was Martha Stewart," Smith said. "I had a jail shirt on with an apron over top."

But dressing up as a pop-culture figure isn't just for girls.

Joe Valenza, a junior

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