When you’re a kid and you’re learning your ABCs, Halloween is a time for fun super-hero costumes and something fuzzy and cute your mom might have sewn for you—but when you’re an adult and you know your ABCs, Halloween is usually a time for scantily clad women and men’s comical inspirations. I know my ABCs very well but I had no clue what an ABC party was until the end of October 2009. When I was asked to write about this topic I had less than 24 hours to come up with something, which was fine with me because I work great under pressure. The hard part was figuring out what in the world an ABC party was! What ever happened to costume parties, lingerie/pajama parties and red light/green light parties? I knew I could not be the only person unaware of this party theme!

ABC stands for Anything But Clothes. Who would come up with this theme or even show up to this kind of celebration (I personally love clothes)? Through my very successful Google search, I found out that these ABC parties are very popular with college crowds, specifically people that like to party, and more specifically people in the Greek system. I saw pictures of very creative outfits, some not-so-creative ensembles, and tons of barely there “garments.” The common thread in many of the outfits was yellow caution tape, some form of plastic, and/or something having to do with beer. A caption I found on CollegeHumor.com embodies the idea of an ABC party perfectly: “Anything But Clothes usually turns into anything but sober.” By the looks of the photos I found, that definitely seemed to be the case.

An ABC party should be advertised with a warning and partygoers do not have to be scantily clad just because apparel is restricted. Be creative and leave something to the imagination people! I think it would be amazing to throw a G-rated ABC party in the FCS department (everything on the Internet was R-rated or worse!). With the wide variety of options under the umbrella of Family and Consumer Sciences, I think it would be very interesting to see what the students and faculty of our department could come up with for a party like this (minus the gallons of alcohol). If you were invited to an ABC party, what would your ABC outfit be? And if you’re looking for a last minute Halloween costume, you’ve got less than 4 days to figure it out!

~Stacey Gadus
JACK AND HIS LANTERN

They’re everywhere—they guard doorsteps and line lawns; they grin mischievously and bare fangs; they even manage to make their way to our dinner tables, but they’re not dinner guests—they’re Jack O’Lanterns, and they’re traditionally expected for Halloween.

Let’s start with the big orange vegetable, no wait, fruit… no… vegetable? Do you know? Pumpkins are a fruit, and they’re native to America. Before Halloween came to America in about the 1840s, people in Ireland and Scotland used turnips and potatoes to carve in scary faces, and people in England used large beets. When these immigrants arrived here in America, they brought their Jack O’ Lantern traditions with them, and someone stumbled on the big orange fruit: pumpkins.

Who, on Hallow’s Eve is Jack?? According to Irish myth and history.com, there was a man named “Stingy Jack,” who decided having a drink with the Devil was a hot idea. Somehow, Stingy Jack, who was also apparently, I think, “Sly Jack,” convinced the Devil to turn himself into a coin so they could get themselves some drinks. Once the Devil did so, Jack decided he wanted the money instead, and pocketed the now round Devil in his trousers, right beside a silver cross, so of course, the Devil could not turn back. Jack made the Devil promise to leave him alone for a year. After that year’s mark rolled around, Stingy-Sly Jack somehow convinced the Devil to climb a tree and pick a fruit for him, and once Tweedle-Devil was up the tree, Stingy-Sly Jack carved a cross in it, and made the Devil promise to leave him be for another 10 years, also with the condition that if he died, the Devil could not take his soul. Well, shortly after that Jack died, and God decided he could not have such an unworthy character banging on his pearly gates, and the Devil had finally wised up and was upset he had been tricked, twice, and kept his promise to Jack, refusing to let him in the ashen gates of Hell, sending him on his dark way with only a burning coal. Jack placed the coal into a carved out turnip, and has wandered the dark earth between worlds ever since. Then, the Irish started calling world-less, Stingy-not-so-sly Jack, “Jack of the Lantern,” which in turn, because of their speaking style, became simply, “Jack O’Lantern.”

So, the tradition of pumpkin carving originally began as those immigrants I mentioned continued placing their rough-draft pumpkins in windows and doorways to scare away Stingy Jack and other evil wandering spirits. Now we use pumpkins. I don’t know that I expect Stingy-Jack to come to my door, and I wouldn’t talk to him if he did, but I do like Jack O’Lanterns and the way they make it feel like Halloween to me when I was a kid, no matter how old I get. ~Nicole J. Cappas

ARE WE THERE YET?

Sometimes just the word vacation can create a physiological effect of relaxation, and even if just for a brief moment, a respite from little daily stressors.

Exactly when that feeling of freedom that vacation can offer sets in is different for all of us, depending on your point of view. Does it start when you have a vision and know in your mind that somewhere a beautiful mountain stream is breaking free of the majestic Redwood Trees? Or is it a face of water crashing onto a pristine beach? Maybe you can taste your vacation while you are saving your money to finance the days of freedom ahead. Perhaps your vacation starts when you step out of the door with bags packed, or like most of us, upon arrival at the destination—your tent is set up on top of a mountain or you get that first look out your hotel window to the Eiffel Tower in Paris.

I know I am officially on vacation when I stop asking what time it is and begin to wonder what day it is. One thing I am sure of is that a vacation is often just our frame of mind. So go ahead: plan, save, pack and go—just recognize you’re already there if you want to be. ~Steven Bardo
DISCOVERING FCS

I remember getting my acceptance to CSUN and not knowing exactly what it was that I wanted to study. I originally came to CSUN to study communications. There was only one problem with that idea; I was not interested in anything other than public speaking. I needed an upper division elective that would fulfill more than one area on my DARS. I chose a course called Marriage and Family relations, also called FCS 340. I wasn’t sure what I was getting into, but after the first week, I knew that the topics discussed in class were exactly what I was looking for. Beyond FCS 340, Marriage and Family Relations, I have been so impressed with the course topics and more importantly the professors I have had the privilege of working with. All of the professors I have had in the FCS department have been outstanding teachers. They have not only helped me have a better understanding of my studies, but they have helped me have a better understanding for life. Discovering FCS has been truly an amazing experience for me. I can only hope that the graduate program that I will soon be entering will be even as half as enjoyable as discovering FCS has proven to be.

~Jack May

HALLOWEEN HUNT! BOO!

WORD BANK
bats
candycorn
costumedkids
creepycrawlies
frightfest
fullmoon
ghosts
ghouls
goblins
graves
hallowseve
hauntings
horrors
jackolantern
livingdead
monsters
nightofthe dead
parties
pumpkins
pumpkinseeds
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**November 5, 2009**

**11am-2pm**

**Matador Square**

(Across from University Student Union)

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**Have a safe, fun-tastic & happy halloween from us here in SAFCS!!**

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**“HEY! DO YOU HAVE SOMETHING TO SAY?”**

We want to hear what you have to say, because we know you’ve got something worth saying! Fashion, family studies, interior design, consumer affairs, education, nutrition... your option matters! We especially want to see what kind of edge or flair you have!

So please, **share**!!

Send an article to The Betty at erin.matthews@csun.edu and become a PUBLISHED WRITER!

We are a copyrighted newsletter, folks. Submit with your full name, major and option, and a picture of your lovely mug!

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