

**I KNOW THAT THERE IS NOTHING BETTER FOR PEOPLE THAN TO BE HAPPY AND TO DO GOOD WHILE THEY LIVE.**

**Ecclesiastes 3:12**

# **HALLOWEEN**



*“BOO TO YOU!”*

**ACTIVITY: Halloween Party**

**SUPPLIES NEEDED:**

- \*\* Staff members and residents willing to dress up in Halloween costumes
- \*\* Spooky music for DVD player
- \*\* Decorations to create atmosphere
- \*\* Ballots for voting
- \*\* Numbers on cards for each contestant
- \*\* Refreshments of choice

## Introduction:

Every autumn when the leaves had fallen to the ground and appeared as a crisp blanket that covered the Ozark hills and dells all around the Elk Creek, Missouri countryside, it provided motivation for my sweet old grandpa upon arising to yell out to my grandma, "THE FROST IS ON THE PUMPKIN, Noree!" As a part of that refreshing change in landscape, children everywhere could be seen taking turns burying one another under a thick covering of leaves until totally hidden from sight; an exciting requirement when playing the game "Dead Man". Then, unbeknown to all those around, the child that was totally hidden would suddenly jump up with a mighty shout, scaring the "living daylights" out of those trying to anticipate his actions. Without fail, under the scrutiny of vigilant mothers, this game seemed to always occur just after they had bathed their children in that old fashioned galvanized tub filled to the brim with water that was laboriously drawn by hand and carried from the well; making ready for the time when a full week's worth of dirt had to be diligently scrubbed away. However, given the fact that each fall this was a well established custom, the ever vigilant mothers would resolve in their minds that fun took priority over being clean from top to bottom. After all, how many times would childhood occur; a pattern of thinking that always took place in every mothers reasoning process.



These were the autumn days on the farm, when cellar shelves were sagging under the weight of canned goods stocked and ready for the cold winter days that would soon arrive. Labor in the fields had been finished just in time for a well deserved respite; God's way of providing a break from working under the hot summer sun until hands were callused and sore.

Thus, in good and perfect time, every fall like clockwork, my grandpa's eyes would wander toward the old dresser that held his flannel shirts and incredibly scratchy, long handled underwear; necessary clothing that was replaced by Santa Claus every Christmas, without fail.



**Elk Creek School**

Then, as October 31<sup>st</sup> grew near, neighbors from far and wide would begin planning the community celebration that would be held at the Elk Creek School. Instead of being just one room, it actually had two spaces that were set up as

classrooms. It was for every celebration that community members entered the doors at the far right that served as a cafeteria and entertainment center. A beautifully painted vaudeville type canvas on a roller serving as a curtain in front of the stage provided a backdrop for every celebration.

Moms and dads then arrived in vehicles with little spooks all dressed up in the back seat, unable to sit still as they imagined themselves as the winner of the “ugliest contest.” Costumes were simply large sized clothing stuffed with pillows for the lower part of the attire. The only expenditure was possibly a mask purchased from the dime store that would be worn by generation after generation within each family. After the judging had ended, homemade games were run by adults; including a favorite called bobbing for apples.



*By Caleb Zahnd from USA - Bobbing for apples*

Treats were usually apples, popcorn, cider, and candy corn; which everyone was grateful to receive.

These were the yesteryears that most residents in the healthcare facilities recall with great fondness. This generation of “givers” was accustomed to making sure others “received”. It was not about what you didn’t have, but family centered love and affection. Yet, just as Activity Director Tim Trafford stated earlier in this collection, the child within these old people he serves is still there just waiting to come out! And...COME OUT IT DID AT HALLOWEEN! The residents in the following photographs are an example of what it means to live in the present and enjoy each moment of their lives.



In order to substantiate this statement, the writer would like to share an incident that occurred with her parents long after their three girls all had homes of their own. The child within the two empty nesters emerged one Halloween and showed its face to unsuspecting neighbors. Prior to arriving at the community center for a Halloween celebration, these two had a barrel of laughs by dressing up and knocking on a friend's door while in route. As their two long time friends stood at the door wearing surprised and amused expressions, their small son looked into familiar eyes that were peering at him through the holes in the mask and shouted, "I have seen those blue eyes somewhere!" Thus, knowing that "curiosity is thought to kill a cat", the husband followed the two rebel rousers in his pick-up truck to solve the mystery. Shining his headlights on the vehicle the two masked bandits quickly entered, to his delight, he recognized that it belonged to his one and only church pastor. Trick or treat! Priceless, indeed!

As you observe the photographs of the 2016 Halloween party, you are invited to key in on the faces of the residents as they either participate or judge the entrees. It is important to keep in mind that many of these old souls are actually being given the opportunity to "receive" for the first time in their lives! What fun!

# **IT'S PARTY TIME!**



# **TREATS ARE READY!**



**PEANUT BUTTER AND  
JELLY! ACTIVITY  
DIRECTORS TIM  
TRAFFORD AND MELODY  
CHILDERS ARE DRESSED  
FOR ACTION!**

**WE'VE WORKED  
HARD! EVERYTHING  
IS IN ORDER!**







**WE ARE OFF!**

**THE LEAD CAR OUT IN FRONT  
SETTING THE SPEED ON THE  
TRACK FOR AN EXCITING  
HALLOWEEN!**



**Les dressed as THE HOBO FROM ROGERSVILLE holding his number for all to see! Right behind him attired as the State Farm Representative hurrying to take a phone call is asked by an onlooker, "And....WHAT KIND OF PANTS ARE YOU WEARING?" His reply, "Tan Kakis." (Do you think that was a set up?)**



**ENTRY AFTER ENTRY! ZOO KEEPER MURLENE AND DOG WALKER WANDA WERE TWO RESIDENTS MAKING THEIR DEBUT!**



**CHOICE AFTER CHOICE!**



**Holy Halloween! Batman!  
And.....Robin!**



**WAIT A MINUTE! DO I HEAR BUZZING?**

**“SO MANY  
THEY SEEM TO**



**PEOPLE!  
BE SMILING!**



Ladies and gentlemen, at this point, it is imperative to pause and focus a bit on subjects that take precedent over everything else in the hearts and minds of elderly people. Children! Puppies! If you want to check this out, just let a little child enter the room and observe the reactions of the elderly residents. It will appear as though you can see love dripping from their expressions like honey from a comb. First you will hear, "Oh.....Oh.....isn't she cute?" This will be followed by hands reaching to stroke the little one. Just repeat these actions in regard to a puppy entering the facility. So, what is the meaning behind this explanation? Simply stated, when these little ones arrived on the scene, the adult contestants didn't have a chance. Let's see if this is true!

## TIME TO VOTE



Ballots were passed out. Contestants were lined up in front of the residents so a decision could be made that was hard, indeed. They thought and thought! You could have heard a pin drop on the carpeted floor. This was serious business to each and every one!



**Look how intent on making the right choices the residents appear. They are not discussing decisions with anyone. They are taking their responsibility of judging as a serious matter!**

**Above all, it is important to remember that you are observing a very polite generation of people. They were taught to have manners and always keep the feelings of others in mind. That was simply the code of honor that prevailed when these elderly people were raised. These were the accepted rules of the society!**



# THE WINNERS ARE:

1



2

3



ARE YOU SURPRISED?

PROBABLY NOT!



# TREATS OR WITCHES BREW?



Actually, it is dry ice with hot water poured on top (Be careful doing this) to create drama. Here comes the cider.







**YUM!**





# HOBO FROM ROGERSVILLE SERVES



**HAPPY  
HALLOWEEN!**