

Early Aptos Halloween pranks

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Halloween in early Aptos was an emotional safety valve for boys. For them it corresponded to the German "Fasching;" it was a time when they could put aside their inhibitions by playing practical jokes on the older generation.

Fortunately for their elders, there was one inhibition that country boys could not put aside: they could not bring themselves to destroy anything of value. They had worked hard, along with other members of their families for the vehicles, the fences, even the shrubs and

flowers that they owned, so any destruction that accompanied their pranks was purely accidental.

One amusing thing about the boys' pranks was the amount of effort that went into them. Had their parents asked them to do as much hard work in two or three hours they would have felt much abused. But between dark and midnight the pranksters frequently expended more energy than they would have in a day of heavy farm work.

The first order of business was to discover how many chairs and benches had been forgotten in front yards and on hotel porches. Then, moving with remarkable silence, the boys suspended them, one by one, from the steel foot-spikes on the telegraph poles that lined the railroad.

Next came the gates. Carefully lifted from their hinges, they were rehung to produce grotesque effects—ornate iron gates on tumbled-down fences,

red gates on green fences, tall gates on low fences, and an old barnyard gate on the big white school fence.

The big, unwieldy school gates were hauled up on ropes into a big tree or suspended from a trestle or bridge.

Perhaps most energy was spent in such things as taking a buggy or wagon to pieces, hoisting the parts to a roof, and reassembling them there. A surrey or spring wagon atop the school portico was no unusual sight the morning after.

Signs came in for much shifting about. A new car was almost certain to have a "For Sale" sign tied to it. The dressmaker's sign

was a natural for the blacksmith shop, as was the gasoline sign for the cider works. Because members of the Baptist Church were leaders in the fight for local option, the church porch was usually the recipient of all the moveable beer and liquor signs.

Soaping or candling windows was not a practice of Aptos boys, probably because all the stores in the village heavily shuttered their windows every night in the year.

But the more ingenious of the pranksters came equipped with tick-tacks to attach to front doors or windows. Lacking these, they hung light sticks or pods on long strings and put them where the wind would beat them against a window or wall.

The local constable tried to curb the mischief by patrolling the village, but what could one man accomplish against a swarm of mischief-bent youngsters? Besides, the constable was often elected, not because he would make a good police officer, but because he needed the salary. In the case of one really cowardly man, it was the main feature of the evening to lure him into a section where there were bushes on each side of the road and to have several concealed boys fire guns into the air, while one threw a handful of pebbles in his direction. He always obliged by rushing home for the evening.

Many parents deplored the mischief and sought to mitigate it by giving a Halloween party in Hihn Hall. But after an evening of bobbing apples in big tubs, carving pumpkin heads in competitions, and absorbing quantities of cider and pumpkin pie, most teenage boys wandered about the village looking for excitement.

Once one group of them, still in uniform of Watsonville High School cadets, took refuge from a supervising adult in the bushes that then topped the cliff above the present Seacliff Beach. They had barely concealed themselves when a Great Dane that had followed them growled and lunged into the bushes. Someone produced a flashlight, to reveal the dog with a skunk in his jaws.

A uniformed boy received full blast of the pole-cat's anger. The dog dropped the dead skunk, and the furious boy seized it by the tail and hurled it far over the cliff. Screams of anger came from the beach, where the odoriferous body had landed in the middle of a Sunday school weenie roast.

Much outnumbered by an angry contingent of boys swarming up the cliff, the would-be pranksters hustled off silently to home and bed.

Editor to talk to GOP women next Wednesday

Mike Culbert, editorial director of the Berkeley Gazette and Richmond Independent, will speak on "The American Revolution," at the monthly luncheon meeting of Cabrillo Republican Women at 12:30 p.m. Wednesday at Imperial Star Restaurant, 2505 Cabrillo College Drive.

Culbert will talk about changes occurring in college and university towns since students have been given the vote.

Members are encouraged to bring their husbands to the meeting.

Reservations may be made by calling Mrs. J. I. Thomas, 475-3419 or Mrs. Richard Marinovich, 688-4471. Price is \$2.50 for the luncheon.

Volunteers continue work at the club's boutique workshop in the Rancho del Mar Shopping Center, Aptos. Members are creating decorative Christmas items for the boutique sale to be held Nov. 26.

Sewing class still open

Interested persons may still enroll in an advanced sewing class sponsored at 7:30 p.m. Thursdays by Santa Cruz Adult School in the Santa Cruz High School homemaking building, room 3.

Naomi Cartwright is instructor. Emphasis will be given to pattern adjustment, correct garment fitting and detailing. Fee is \$1. Prospective students may register with the instructor in the classroom.

Santa Cruz Adult School is also sponsoring an on-going program in Braille transcript of texts and printed materials into Braille.

Girl Scout activities

Brownie Troop 1042 of Valencia School, Aptos, visited Natural Bridges State Park in Santa Cruz Tuesday to observe Monarch butterflies.

Senior Girl Scout Garen Shea of Troop 1072 accompanied the group and explained about methods of tagging the butterflies. Outing leaders were Mrs. O. M. Hueter Jr., Mrs. Gary Watts and Mrs. Douglas Chapman.

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A camp-out and hike at Big Creek Camp on McCrary property in Davenport was the recent activity of Aptos Troop 1012.

Leaders of the two day outing were Mrs. R. I. Jensen and Senior Girl Scouts Susan Kerr and Erika Schuierer.

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La Selva Beach Girl Scout Troop 1002 held a cook-out Oct. 20 at New Brighton Beach State Park.

Leaders were Mrs. E. M. Pope, Mrs. C. L. Howder and Mrs. J. D. Moore.

Members planted seeds at the La Selva Beach Clubhouse grounds as a service project and plan to later deliver plants to hospital patients.

Girl Scout pins were presented to Andrea Bruno, Carolyn Cahalan, Jennifer Clark, Valerie Connell, Susan Fawcett, Diane Howder, Kathleen Kerrigan, Katy King, Cindy Kinslow, Susan Minge, Jan Moore, Julie Ruso, Lorie Ruso and Viki Young.

Moscone Demo Women's Club speaker today

State Senator George Moscone will discuss "California's Crisis in Education" at a noon luncheon of the Santa Cruz Democratic Women's Club today at the De Laveaga Golf Lodge.

Moscone is described as an "unannounced candidate for the Democratic gubernatorial nomination in 1974" in a press release from the Democratic Woman's Club.

He has been Democratic floor leader in the state senate since 1967, a year after his election. Moscone has served for five years on the senate judiciary, education, and elections and reapportionment committees.

He is also a member of the committee on industrial relations, the joint legislative budget committee, the joint committee on legislative ethics, and the state school building finance committee.

He represents San Francisco in the state senate.

The public is invited to hear Moscone speak.

Luncheon will be served at noon, following sherry at 11:30 a.m. Reservations may be made by calling Mrs. Floyd Estess at 426-3717 or Mrs. Walter Young at 438-1421.

'Who'll teach the teachers?'

"Who Will Teach the Teachers," will be topic of Richard Pfaff, guest speaker at a cultural session to be sponsored by English Language service of Volunteer Service of Santa Cruz County at 7:30 p.m. Nov. 4 in Santa Cruz Library community room.

Pfaff is counselor for 44 graduate teacher interns at the