

Editor's notes:

I love old movies. I watch old black and white flicks with endless pleasure. The good guys and even the bad guys speak in complete sentences, nay, even in riveting paragraphs. Today's youth, accustomed to never-ending clichés and mind-numbing, repetitive, politically correct phrases rarely get to hear interesting dialogue, spoken well by talented actors.

In order to remedy this deficiency, I will be sharing some of the more memorable dialogues (or monologues) from the silver screen. I also invite our readers to send in their favourite lines (Warning: *Dude, where's my car?* and *May the force be with you!* will be left on the cutting room floor.)

If you are sending in a dialogue delight, please identify the movie and, if possible, some of the accompanying background. Send a note to Helix, to my attention (Chrystyna) or email me directly at cdpedde@openweb.ca. Please include your name and the company you work for, so I can credit you properly.

This month's favourite speech comes from Orson Welles' classic *The Third Man*. Actor Joseph Cotten standing atop the Ferris wheel, says *"In Italy for 30 years under the Borgias they had warfare, terror, murder and bloodshed, but they produced Michelangelo, Leonardo da Vinci and the Renaissance. In Switzerland they had brotherly love; they had 500 years of democracy and peace, and what do they produce? The cuckoo clock."*

In the original Roman calendar, a year was based on the lunar cycle and had 10 months and 304 days. Each year began in March and ended in December, with a period of festivals in between until the next year was ready to begin. October was originally the eighth month, so called because "octo" is Latin for "eight."

Here are some of the important dates that we look forward to in October:

St. Francis of Assisi Day, Blessing of the Animals, October 3 -- In addition to his vow of poverty, St. Francis of Assisi was celebrated for his compassion to animals. On his feast day (the day of his death), the church honours his memory by hosting a "Blessing of the Animals" ceremony -- either on that day or the first Sunday in October.

Years ago, church members adorned their farm animals - sheep, chickens, oxen, cattle, goats, and horses -- with garlands of flowers and lead them to the altar, where a priest said a prayer for them and sprinkled them with water. Today, domestic pets, including cats, dogs, birds, and fish, are the primary honorees. Some parishioners bring photos of their animals.

October 2005, Volume 21-2

Leif Erikson Day, October 9 -- This day commemorates the discovery of North America by this Viking explorer more than 500 years before Christopher Columbus. Iceland, Norway, Denmark, Sweden, and Finland celebrate it as well.

Thanksgiving Day, October 10 -- The first Canadian Thanksgiving was celebrated in 1578 in what is now Newfoundland. Martin Frobisher, an English explorer, had established a settlement there in his (unsuccessful) quest to find a northwest passage to the Orient. He held a ceremony to express thanks for surviving his long journey. During the American Revolution, British loyalists fled to Canada, bringing American Thanksgiving traditions with them. In 1957, Parliament officially made the second Monday in October "a day of General Thanksgiving to Almighty God for the bountiful harvest with which Canada has been blessed."

Changing of the clock, October 30 -- Standard Time resumes in most time zones across North America at 2 a.m. on October 30. Remember to "Fall Back" one hour before going to bed the previous night.

Halloween, October 31 -- Halloween dates back to an ancient fall festival celebrated by the Druids in Ireland, Great Britain, and Northern France. They would gather around a bonfire and don animal heads and skins, the precursor to our masks and costumes. After the invasion of Britain by the Romans in 43 A.D., the festival was merged with two Roman celebrations, Feralia -- a late October commemoration of the passing of the dead -- and the day to honour Pomona, the goddess of fruit and trees, whose symbol was the apple.

This led to the tradition of bobbing for apples on Halloween. Jack o'lanterns were first carved out of beets and turnips in Ireland as representations of dead souls. When the Irish came to America, they couldn't find an adequate supply of turnips or beets, so they used pumpkins.

A grandmother pretends she doesn't know who you are on Halloween.

-- Erma Bombeck

Top 10 scariest movies

If you're hosting a Halloween party, you may want to play some of these selections from film critic Stephen Wagner:

- | | |
|--------------------|--------------------------------|
| 1. The Exorcist | 2. The Haunting (1963 version) |
| 3. Jacob's Ladder | 4. Poltergeist |
| 5. The Sixth Sense | 6. Rosemary's Baby |
| 7. The Omen | 8. The Innocents |
| 9. Psycho | 10. The Shining |

The Story of Werewolves



Anthropologists date the lore of werewolves to various points in history, with some citing as the first written account the Biblical story of King Nebuchadnezzar of Babylon. He was condemned by an angel to live like a wild animal for seven years. His hair grew long, and his fingernails came to resemble claws. In one ancient Greek legend, Zeus turned King Lycaon into a wolf, thus spawning the term "lycanthrope" for "werewolf." Herodotus, a

Greek historian of the 5th century B.C.E., told of the Neuri, a sect of people who turned into wolves for brief periods once a year.

According to legend, humans turn into werewolves after being cursed, bitten by another werewolf, or consuming the raw flesh of a rabid wolf. Brad Steiger, author of *The Werewolf Book*, theorizes that people are attracted to the notion of werewolves because it plays out desires for power or revenge. "The werewolf tradition . . . sought to release the beast within and accomplish the transformation of human into wolf."

Polling on the Paranormal

- ☐ A recent Gallup poll on beliefs about paranormal phenomena found these interesting statistics:
- ☐ Fifty percent of Americans believe in psychic or spiritual healing and extrasensory perception (ESP).
- ☐ Twenty-eight percent believe in mediums, people who can communicate with the dead.
- ☐ A third believe in ghosts and telepathy.

Dr. Michael Shermer, author of *Why People Believe Weird Things*, says these numbers are not surprising given the proliferation of television shows on the paranormal in recent years.

Analysts at Gallup added that these beliefs are not unusual even in the "Information Age" because "Americans' need to believe in matters beyond mortal ken is greater than ever."

Happy Halloween!



BOO! Actually, there is nothing frightening about Helix. We specialize in scary delivery situations, though. Wonder how you are going to get something critical delivered intact and on time? We're always here for you. **453 0501!**

An apple a day . . .

An apple a day keeps the doctor away is probably the best known fact about apples. Since October is traditionally known as Apple month, here are a few more facts about this delicious fruit:

- There are 2,500 apple varieties grown in the United States and Canada, and 7,500 varieties grown worldwide.
- Apples grow in all the states, but 36 raise them commercially. The United States is second only to China in apple production.
- There are 7,000 apple orchards in Canada; the leading province is Ontario.
- Apple trees take four to five years to produce their first fruit. The average tree yields 20 bushels per year.
- The average North American eats 65 apples a year.

There's more to Louisiana...

All the news in recent weeks has been about the terrible devastation that has beset the battered state. Here's some information about Louisiana that's not storm related.

On October 20, 1803, the U.S. Senate ratified the purchase of the Louisiana territory, an acquisition of 885,000 square miles extending from the Mississippi River to the Rocky Mountains, doubling the size of the United States. Earlier in the year, President Thomas Jefferson had sent James Monroe to Paris with authorization to spend up to \$10 million to buy New Orleans. But Napoleon Bonaparte, needing money for his war with Great Britain, offered to sell all of Louisiana for \$15 million. The Senate approved the purchase by a vote of 24 to 7.

[Editor's note: Do you think the state will be up to celebrating their 202nd anniversary on October 20?]

The Origins of Candy Corn

The Halloween treat candy corn was invented in the 1880s by George Renninger, an employee of the Wunderle Candy Co. of Philadelphia. Making the candy was labour-intensive, as each colour of the mixture had to be poured separately into kernel-shaped molds, but the unusual confection was a big hit. The Goelitz Confectionery Co. began making candy corn in 1898 and, as the Jelly Belly Candy Candy Co., is doing so today. In the early 1900s, when so many Americans were farming, the corn-shaped candy was especially popular -- so much so that confectioners tried making candy in other vegetable shapes, including turnips.

Candy manufacturers sell more than 35 million pounds of candy corn (about 9 billion kernels!) a year, with Halloween accounting for 75 percent of annual sales.

