

## Editor's notes:

In the spirit of Hallowe'en this month, here's a true story from Romania. It seems that politicians there drafted a law calling for psychics to be taxed and regulated, even to the point where they would be liable should their predictions be wrong. (Only politicians could come up with a moronic idea like this. It would never occur to them to hold themselves to the same standards where they, too, would be held liable for promises and predictions that failed.) The psychics didn't take this lying down. In retaliation, the psychics, many of whom are self-described witches, threatened to curse the lawmakers, and the proposed regulation was dropped.

If only politics were so simple here in Canada. We could find some witches who would threaten to put curses on our politicians and then, abracadabra, they would change their bad policies.

Here are a few dates to consider this month:

**World Smile Day, October 1** -- Created by artist Harvey Ball, creator of the ubiquitous "smiley face," who believed that all of us should devote one day each year to smiles and kind acts.

**World Egg Day, October 8** -- The International Egg Commission sponsors this on the second Friday of October. It estimates that egg-producing chickens lay 820 billion eggs a year. The top five producers are China, the United States, Japan, Russia, and India.

**Hallowe'en, October 31** -- Hallowe'en began with the ancient Celts, who marked the last day of October as their New Year's Eve. Surveys show that Halloween, derived from the Christian observation of All Hallows E'en, now surpasses our own New Year's Eve in popularity.

### Black Cats and Bad Luck

The superstition that a black cat crossing your path will bring bad luck dates back to the Middle Ages, when felines were said to be spirits in animal shape that served witches. It was also believed that witches could take on the form of black cats, making people suspicious of all such animals.

### Lullaby for your pooch

Music really does sooth the savage beast (although the actual quote is "Music has charms to soothe a savage breast," from a 17th-century play by William Congreve). A music label called Hats Unlimited is marketing a CD designed to calm dogs. Scientists mixed the sound of classical music with ambient sounds like dogs barking, crows crowing, and human conversation. The result? A mix tape that helps dogs chill. The CD, "Dreams for Dogs," retails at \$26 or so.

## Trick or Treat

Costumes and trolling for treats can be traced back to pagan and Christian rituals from the Middle Ages.

In Britain and Ireland, poor people would beg for food door to door in exchange for prayers for the dead on the day before All Souls' Day (November 2). This practice, called "souling," evolved from a European pagan tradition. The wearing of costumes and masks originates in Celtic traditions of attempting to placate evil spirits by copying them.

Immigrants from Scotland and Ireland brought the tradition of "guising" to the New World, with children going through their neighbourhoods requesting food and coins, usually in exchange for a dance or poem.

The term "trick or treat" in print was seen in Alberta in 1927, and in *The Oregon Journal* newspaper in 1934.

Trick-or-treating had become an established fixture of American popular culture by the 1950s, when Walt Disney produced a cartoon called "Trick or Treat" and an episode of the popular TV show *Ozzie and Harriet* showed children overwhelming the Nelson household in search of candy.

Today, the only way to avoid costumed kids on Hallowe'en is to hide in your house with the lights off -- but where's the fun in that?

### Welcome to *Sprint Delivery Service* customers!

Effective October 1, 2010, we are merging the messenger and courier clients of ***Sprint Delivery Service*** into Helix Courier Limited. We would like to thank Sprint owner Matt Akins for his invaluable help in putting the transition process together and for his ongoing participation in keeping everything on track. Like Matt, we here at Helix have a dedication to superb service. We have a wide range of services available and welcome questions and comments about how we can meet all of your courier and messenger needs. Sharon Coll, here at Helix, is head of our transition team and is always available to discuss your needs at 519-453-0501.

Matt Akins continues to operate Sprint Moving Service - [www.theeasymove.ca](http://www.theeasymove.ca) - and looks forward to quoting on and serving your residential and commercial moving needs. Call him at 519-204-4779.

## A Collection of Riddles

1. You must keep it after giving it.
  2. Runs smoother than any rhyme,  
Loves to fall but cannot climb.
  3. You feed it, it lives,  
You give it something to drink, it dies.
  4. Alive without breath, as cold as death,  
Never thirsty, ever drinking,  
All in mail, never clinking.
  5. Lighter than what I am made of,  
More of me is hidden than seen.
  6. I am so simple that I can only point,  
Yet I guide men all over the world.
  7. My life can be measured in hours,  
I serve by being devoured,  
Thin, I am quick; fat, I am slow,  
Wind is my foe.
  8. I go around in circles,  
But always straight ahead,  
Never complain,  
No matter where I am led.
  9. You break it even if you name it.
  10. He who makes it does not keep it,  
He who takes it does not know it,  
He who knows it does not want it,  
He who gathers it must destroy it.
  11. The root tops the trunk of this backward thing,  
That grows in the winter and dies in the spring.
  12. I walked and walked and at last I got it,  
I didn't want it, so I stopped and looked for it;  
When I found it, I threw it away.
- A. A compass    B. Fire    C. Icicle  
D. A thorn    E. Silence    F. Your word  
G. A wheel    H. A fish    I. Water  
J. Iceberg    K. A candle    L. Counterfeit money

### Answers:

1F; 2I; 3B; 4H; 5J; 6A; 7K; 8G; 9E; 10L; 11C; 12D

*Money is better than poverty, if only for financial reasons.*  
-- Woody Allen

*I finally know what distinguishes man from other beasts: financial worries.*  
-- Jules Renard

## Money changes everything -- or does it?

Maybe they can afford to spend more money on therapy, but wealthy people apparently don't enjoy life as much as the rest of us. That's the conclusion drawn from studies reported in the journal *Psychological Science*.

In one study, researchers surveyed 374 employees of a Belgian university, from cleaning crew to high-level administrators.

In a questionnaire, they were asked to rate their enjoyment of various life experiences: Completing an important project, going off on a romantic weekend getaway, etc.

The wealthier respondents reported less enjoyment of such experiences than their less well-off counterparts. And showing some respondents a picture of a stack of Euros before taking the questionnaire tended to decrease enjoyment regardless of financial status.

A similar experiment at the University of British Columbia appeared to produce similar results. Some subjects were primed with a photo showing a stack of money, and all of them were asked to eat a piece of chocolate after completing the questionnaire. Observers noticed that respondents tended to eat their chocolate more quickly and enjoy it less.

Money doesn't buy happiness, and if these experiments mean anything, wealth may actually limit our ability to enjoy the simple things in life.

## Halloween Holiday Trivia

Orange and black are Halloween colors because orange is associated with the Fall harvest and black is associated with darkness and death.

Jack o' Lanterns originated in Ireland where people placed candles in hollowed-out turnips to keep away spirits and ghosts on the Samhain holiday.

Halloween was brought to North America by immigrants from Europe who would celebrate the harvest around a bonfire, share ghost stories, sing, dance and tell fortunes.

Tootsie Rolls were the first wrapped penny candy in America.

The ancient Celts thought that spirits and ghosts roamed the countryside on Halloween night. They began wearing masks and costumes to avoid being recognized as human.

Halloween candy sales average about 2 billion dollars annually in the United States.

Chocolate candy bars top the list as the most popular candy for trick-or-treaters with Snickers #1.

Halloween is the 2nd most commercially successful holiday, with Christmas being the first.

Bobbing for apples is thought to have originated from the Roman harvest festival that honors Pomona, the goddess of fruit trees.