



TRUTH, JUSTICE AND INFORMATION FOR ALL

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE COLLIN COUNTY LAW LIBRARY

HALLOWEEN SPECIAL EDITION

OCTOBER 2013

Halloween and the Law

Halloween Tradition

The origin of Halloween dates back to Samhain, a Celtic celebration. Samhain (pronounced sow-in), represented the last day of summer and the start of a cold and dark winter. November 1 was also the start of the new year for the Celts. It was believed that the night before the new year the lines between the living and the dead disappeared, allowing the ghosts of the dead to return. To celebrate, the Celts built bonfires and adorned costumes. Once the Roman Empire conquered the Celts, Halloween evolved again. The Romans celebrated two festivals in late October, Feralia and Pomona. The symbol of Pomona is the apple, which may be how the tradition of bobbing for apples was born. Centuries later, Pope Boniface IV dedicated the Pantheon in Rome to all the martyrs, bringing about All Souls' Day, also called All-Hallows Eve and eventually, Halloween. Centuries later, between 1920 and 1950, Halloween evolved into the holiday it is today, with trick or treating, parties, costumes and decorations.

<http://www.history.com/topics/halloween>

According to the National Retail Federation, Americans will spend an estimated \$6.9 billion on Halloween, making Halloween the country's second largest commercial holiday.

(<http://www.nrf.com/modules.php?name=Dashboard&id=54>)

Given its rise in popularity over the years, it's not surprising that Halloween found its way into the legal industry.

Halloween and the Law

There are several law blogs that have written Halloween-themed posts and addressed some of the trendier ghouls, like zombies. Thelegalgeeks.com is a blog written by two attorneys focusing on, "all

things Geek." Last year, the blog addressed the legal ramifications of Jack Skellington's actions while trying to kidnap Santa Claus in Tim Burton's *A Nightmare Before Christmas*. Their analysis can be read here:

<http://thelegalgeeks.com/blog/2012/10/31/whats-this-whats-this-jack-skellington-false-impersonation/>

For those that enjoy the television show *The Walking Dead*, wired.com featured an article in which both attorneys and psychiatrists address some of the legal issues in the show. Questions posed included "Do the Undead Have Legal Responsibilities?" and "How Does a Zombie Apocalypse Affect Moral Reasoning?" The article can be read here:

<http://www.wired.com/underwire/2013/04/walking-dead-lawyer-doctor/>

Thelawandthemultiverse.com is yet another off the wall legal blog written by two attorneys. Every Halloween, they take a break from their usual posts about comic book heroes and celebrate Halloween with a seasonal post. For those interested, last year's story concerning the Simpsons can be found here:

<http://lawandthemultiverse.com/2012/10/31/law-multiverse-halloween-special/>

Spotlight on the Supremes

On October 31, 2005, a light bulb exploded during Supreme Court arguments. The following exchange took place:

Justice ANTONIN SCALIA Light bulb went out.

Justice ROBERTS: It's a trick they play on new chief justices all the time.

Justice SCALIA: Happy Halloween.

Justice GINSBURG: That's the idea.

Justice ROBERTS: Take your time.

Justice SCALIA: We're even more in the dark now

Copies of these articles are available in the library, or from the law librarian via email:

droberts@co.collin.tx.us

**Contact
Information:**

Diane L. Roberts
Law Librarian
Email: droberts@co.collin.tx.us

Bethany Fansler
Assistant
Law Librarian
Email:
bfansler@co.collin.tx.us

Hours of Operation:
Monday–Friday
8:00 am–5:00 pm

**HAPPY
HALLOWEEN**

than before.

Central Virginia Community College v. Katz, 546 U.S. 356 (2006)

Did You Know?

The Texas Business and Commerce Code defines the word Zombie as “a computer that, without the knowledge and consent of the computer’s owner or operator, has been compromised to give access or control to a program or person other than the computer’s owner or operator.” V.T.C.A. Bus. & C. §324.002.

McKinney, Texas is famous for some of its own ghosts. According to the TexPart Paranormal Research Society, a knife-throwing ghost inhabits Churchill’s Pub. Recent paranormal investigations reveal this ghost has been extremely active so far this year. Landon Winery is haunted by a ghost who moves wine bottles and jingles door handles. The old Collin County Prison, home of the last public hanging in Texas, is rumored to be haunted by several ghosts.

Collin County October Events

10/19/2013 Halloween at the Heard– The event runs from 6pm to 10pm and includes a Haunted Forest, trick or treat along the Dinosaurs Live! Trail, a costume contest for kids and an outdoor movie in the amphitheater.

10/19/2013 and 10/26/2013 Legends of McKinney Ghost Walk– a self-guided and self-paced ghost walk through historic McKinney. Ticket booklets provide maps and a storyteller at each site shares the ghost stories. Event takes place from 6pm to 10pm.

10/26/2013 Trek or Treat 5K and Fall Festival– The 5K run or walk kicks off at 8am, followed by a fall festival at the Shops at Watters Creek. The festival has duck races, hayrides, trick or treating and live music. The festival ends at 8pm.

10/31/2013 Scare on the Square– Join the shops in downtown McKinney from 4pm to 6pm as they celebrate Halloween. There is a pumpkin patch at the McKinney Performing Arts Theater and cut-out ghosts will be hidden throughout the Square!

