

Librarian's Shelf by Brad Hruska

Halloween Fun @ the Columbus Public Library!

I consider myself very blessed to have three wonderful children that have provided my bride and me with a number of cherished memories and laughable moments over the years. Some of the greatest recollections I have of my "little ones" involve Halloween. I can recall when Brennan, four at the time now 13, attended my parents' annual grandkids' Halloween party. He was dressed in a small green and orange clown suit and wanted to participate in bobbing for apples. When his turn came, he dove into the water with all he had. He came up empty, but had the biggest grin on his face.

I can picture Alena, three at the time now ten, walking from house to house throughout our neighborhood, carrying a large bag of candy, with her big brother. She was dressed as a Disney princess and her bag of treats was so heavy that it literally tilted her to one side, but Alena would not give up her "tandy" for anything.

I can envision my youngest, Bekka, four at the time now 6, wearing a hand-me-down bear costume that was at least twice her size. She independently made her way up to every house on the block with her siblings, often stopping to hoist the bear head up, so she would not miss out on any Halloween festivities.

The best part about these memories is that I can revisit them every time the Columbus Public Library sets out its awesome collection of Halloween picture books, which includes one of my favorite Halloween texts that I enjoyed reading to my little ones during this time of year, "Mouse's First Halloween" by Lauren Thompson.

In Thompson's tale, readers encounter Little Mouse, a very curious and easily frightened creature, who goes out "[o]ne spooky night when the moon [is] bright" and encounters some strange and unusual objects. At first, our furry friend perceives these findings as haunting and scary. Upon further inspection, however, Mouse realizes that they are not so scary after all. The only terrifying things about the items are his initial thoughts.

For instance, when Mouse notices flickering in the distance, he assumes the worst when in reality, it is merely a friendly, smiling jack o' lantern eager to greet him. Children, like Mouse, often have these same feelings regarding things that are different and unfamiliar. But after being shown that there is nothing to be afraid of, these fears quickly subside. Thompson's story does an excellent job reiterating this point, enabling children to enjoy the upcoming holiday fun.

So if you have little ones who will be experiencing the fun of Halloween, be sure to stop by the Columbus Public Library and treat them to some friendly, Halloween tales like Lauren Thompson's "Mouse's First Halloween." I am sure no matter what title you select, your little ones will be amused and intrigued. If you have questions about Thompson's mouse tale or would like other great Halloween recommendations, please contact me at (402) 564-7116 opt. 4.

And don't forget that the Columbus Public Library will be partnering with the Downtown Business Association (DBA) to provide a Trick-or-Treat event for families on Thursday, October 27, from 4-7 PM at Frankfort Square. Come and make cool Halloween crafts and then visit the library for a tasty treat!