

Librarian's Shelf by Brad Hruska

Spooktacular Reads @ the Columbus Public Library!

Halloween has always been a fun time around our house. Some of my most cherished memories regarding my children center around All Hallows' Eve. I recall when my son, Brennan, attended my parents' annual Halloween party. Brennan was dressed in a clown suit and wanted to participate in bobbing for apples. When it was his turn, he dove headfirst into the water. Though Brennan came up empty-handed, he emerged with the biggest grin.

I can picture my eldest, Alena, strolling from house to house through our old neighborhood on First Street. She was dressed as a princess and carried a large bag of candy. That bag of goodies was so heavy that it tilted Alena to one side; however, no amount of coaxing would convince her to give up her precious "tandy."

I remember my daughter, Bekka, wearing a bear costume that must have been twice her size. She independently navigated her way to every house on our block, stopping only to hoist the enormous bear head up so she could see the Halloween festivities going on around her.

These fond memories come back to me every time the Columbus Public Library displays its collection of Halloween picture books with titles like "Here Comes Halloween!" by Caroline Jayne Church and "Trick or Treat, Pout-Pout Fish" by Deborah Diesen. One of my favorite Halloween texts is "The Perky Little Pumpkin" by Margaret Friskey.

In this charming tale, readers meet two different sized pumpkins chatting in a pumpkin patch. The larger of the two laments being so big that he fears he will end up in a pie or consumed by a cow. The smaller of the two, on the other hand, is confident that he will not meet such a fate but instead be transformed into a jack-o-lantern.

Just before their conversation is about to end, a young boy and his black cat snatches up the little pumpkin and takes him to their home. The boy and pet then set to work carving the perky pumpkin into a scary jack-o-lantern with "red glowing eyes, a long nose, and teeth sharp enough to bite a bear." The lad and furry companion then set their carving on a fence post where the now fierce jack-o-lantern waits for someone to come along and scare.

That evening, "the thunder rumbled, the wind whistled, and dry leaves whispered, 'Sh...sh.'" Soon strange characters began moving around the little pumpkin; however, none of the Halloween creatures are scared or frightened by the little jack-o-lantern. Just when the little pumpkin is about to feel sorry for himself, he is whisked away to a new location with new opportunities to haunt. To find out if the small pumpkin finally has the opportunity to startle someone, check out "The Perky Little Pumpkin" by Margaret Friskey.

If you have little ones who will be experiencing the fun of Halloween, stop by the Columbus Public Library and treat them to a Spooktacular read like Friskey's, "The Perky Little Pumpkin". I am sure no matter what title you select, they will be amused. If you would like other Halloween recommendations, contact me at (402) 564-7116 opt. 4.

MARK YOUR CALENDARS FOR...

- October 21, Storytime at 10:30 a.m. & 1:30 p.m.
- October 28, StoryART at 10:30 a.m. & 1:30 p.m.
- October 28-DBA Trick-or-Treat event at Frankfort Square from 4-6 p.m. CPL will be at the Square with a craft for children to enjoy!