

### Celebrating Halloween!

**Trick-or-Treat** - Lauren Karplus

Trick-or-treating has been a tradition in the United States since the early 1900s. From 1820-1930, more than 4.5 million Irish immigrants arrived in America and introduced the practice of “guising” on All Hallow’s Eve. The tradition of “guising” involved dressing in costumes and going from house to house demanding sweets, money, or fruits. From the 1930s-1950s, the practice remained controversial, as some adults viewed it as a form of extortion or begging. Over time, the tradition morphed and also grew in popularity such that now, over 93% of American children go trick-or-treating every year.

Children dress in costumes and go door-to-door in their neighborhood saying “trick or treat!” If you do not give them a piece of candy, they may play a trick on you. Don’t worry- this is usually an empty threat these days. Some common etiquette tips for trick-or-treating are outlined here:

Parents of younger children should accompany them. Only trick-or-treat on October 31<sup>st</sup> during the hours designated by your local government.

Children should say “trick-or-treat” when the door is opened and “thank you” when they receive candy.

Children should wear costumes.

Only trick-or-treat at houses where the front porch lights are on, as this is a symbol that the owner of the house has candy to give.



**Pumpkin Carving** - Nick Dunn

Halloween calls to mind an enchanted world beyond what can be seen or explained. It harks back to a time before streetlights and cell phones, when the sight of a floating, flickering, bright-orange smile in the night might belong to a friendly sprite or a terrifying ghoul or simply a hollowed-out, carved pumpkin with a small candle inside. Not only does pumpkin carving contribute to Halloween ambience, but the seeds may be cleaned, salted, and roasted for a healthy snack. And of course, pumpkin carving makes a great social event, as you work together, share tools and templates, and enjoy one another’s conversation and creativity.

Join ISSS and fellow international students for pumpkin decorating at the ISSS/IEI Halloween Party from 7-10pm on October 29<sup>th</sup> at Latzer Hall, YMCA. Cost is \$3 in advance, \$5 at the door.



**Costumes** - Jennie Avery

Ghosts and goblins and witches, OH MY! Halloween is coming and when it arrives you may find yourself walking down the street, surrounded by many groups of ghastly ghouls. Traditionally, children (and some adults) dress up on Halloween for parties and trick-o-treating. But where did this tradition originate? The origins of Halloween can be found in a Celtic festival called Samhain, which is often translated as “summer’s end.” The celebration of Samhain, held on October 1- November 1, marked the end of the harvest season, and it was believed that during this time the souls of the dead could more easily enter the world of the living. People would wear costumes to disguise and protect themselves from these spirits. It was common for people to dress as the spirits themselves, and it was believed that giving them food would ensure good fortune in the year to come. Today, costumes range from ghosts to kittens to superheroes. They can be scary, cute, or creative. If you’re interested in dressing up for Halloween, check out the **advice column** on Page 4 for some information on how to choose the right costume!

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# “Falling” in Love with Champaign-Urbana

Melissa Chin

Now that the Fall season has officially arrived, it is time for us to start embracing the wonderful things that come with the cooler weather, such as comfy sweaters, hot spiced beverages, beautifully-colored leaves and PIE (Apple Pie, Pumpkin Pie, Pecan Pie, Sweet Potato Pie...how do we choose??). Fall has something for everyone, whether you're a trickster who likes scaring your friends with Halloween pranks, or whether you're an aspiring chef looking forward to wowing your guests with your gourmet Thanksgiving creations. If you're looking for some ways to celebrate this season to the fullest, consider taking advantage of the following Fall activities in the Champaign-Urbana area.

## Local Treasures



### Visit Allerton Park

Allerton Park, an estate and retreat center that is owned by the University of Illinois, hosts plenty of [events](#) throughout Fall season. You can also choose to roam the grounds of the park on your own. Try to visit before the end of the season so that you can see all of the beautiful Fall colors in the gardens and trails! ISSS will be hosting a [hiking trip](#) at the park on October 16<sup>th</sup>. Please email Lauren at [lkarp12@illinois.edu](mailto:lkarp12@illinois.edu) for more details.



### Check out Hardy's Reindeer Ranch

Although [Hardy's Reindeer Ranch](#) is best known as a Christmastime destination (they have 16 Reindeer and 5 acres of Christmas trees!), they also have plenty of activities for you to enjoy during the Fall season. You can challenge yourself to complete the farm's [Corn Maze](#) either in the daytime or at night under the moonlight. You can also go on Hayrides and Reindeer Tours. If this sounds like fun, Join ISSS on October 15<sup>th</sup> for a [Weenie Roast](#) at the ranch.

### Head to Curtis Orchard

From hot apple cider to pumpkin patches, [Curtis Orchard](#) has everything that there is to love about Fall. At Curtis, you can pick your own apples, select the perfect pumpkin from the pumpkin patch, and choose from a variety of local souvenirs, baked goods, and sweet treats in the gift store. You can also enjoy live entertainment on weekends during September and October.



## Scary Things

### **The Haunt at Bonesaw Mill and Baldwin Asylum**

I personally will never, ever go to a Haunted House, but for those of you who like people in creepy costumes jumping out of dark corners and other nightmare-inducing experiences, you will be able to find plenty of opportunities to lose sleep this season. Check out [The Haunt at Bonesaw Mill](#) in Champaign or [Baldwin Asylum in Rantoul](#).

### **Brainstorm Escapes: Rise of the Zombie Pets**

Brainstorm Escapes is a company that offers team-based challenges in which participants have 60 minutes to escape a series of rooms in order to piece a mysterious story line together. In "[Rise of the Zombie Pets](#)," their Halloween-themed challenge, you will have to work together to escape a mad scientist's house before he turns you and your friends into his own brainwashed Zombie pets.

# Fall Recipes

Do you like to cook? Are you hungry for a traditional taste of Fall in the US? Look no further! The Cultural Newsletter staff is sharing their fall recipes with you! Happy cooking! (And eating!)

## Lauren's Sweet and Creamy Butternut Squash Soup

Ingredients:

- 3 tablespoons olive oil
- 1 butternut squash, peeled and cubed with seeds removed
- 1 1/2 teaspoons allspice
- 1/2 teaspoon ginger
- 1 teaspoon nutmeg
- 1 teaspoon cinnamon
- 3/4 cup water
- 1 quart milk
- 1/2 cup brown sugar (packed)
- 1 pinch cinnamon (for garnish)



Heat olive oil in a large frying pan on low.

Add squash and spices.

Stir-cook on low for three minutes and then add water.

Cover pan and increase heat to level six.

Allow to steam for ten minutes.

Remove from heat and blend contents of pan in a food processor/blender with 1/2 quart of milk.

Pour mixture into a pot and add brown sugar.

Heat to medium-high while stirring in the remaining milk. (The amount of milk added is variable to desired texture.)

Sprinkle soup with cinnamon garnish when ready to serve.

## Jennie's Pumpkin Pie

Ingredients:

- 2 large eggs
- 3/4 cup granulated sugar
- 1/2 teaspoon vanilla extract
- 1/2 teaspoon salt
- 2 teaspoons pumpkin pie spice
- 1 can (15 ounces) pumpkin
- 1 cup half-and-half
- 1 unbaked 9-inch deep-dish pie shell



Preheat oven to 350 degrees.

Mix together eggs, sugar, vanilla, salt, pumpkin pie spice, and pumpkin until combined.

Add the half-and-half to the mixture and mix until combined.

Pour mixture into the pie shell.

Bake in preheated oven until the center of the pie is set (not jiggly/wiggly) – about one hour.

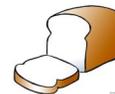
Remove pie from oven and refrigerate until completely cool.

Enjoy! (Preferably with a GENEROUS scoop of whipped cream on top)

## Nick's Fried White Bread Dressing, East Tennessee Style

Ingredients:

- 1 loaf of white bread
- 1/2 cup chopped onion
- 1/2 cup chopped celery
- 2 Tablespoons poultry seasoning
- Chicken broth or vegetable broth (for vegetarian)
- Bacon grease or pure olive oil (for vegetarian)



Tear up white bread. Add onions and celery. Sprinkle the poultry seasoning on. Add chicken broth incrementally until the dressing is stiff enough to form a patty, but sloppy enough to make it difficult to handle. Put some oil in the bottom of an iron skillet and turn on medium high. Fry the patties on each side until firm and lightly browned.

This can be done in advance and placed in fridge to be warmed in time for the meal. Of course, granny and pappy always liked theirs fresh from the frying pan.

## Melissa's Rosemary and Garlic Sweet Potatoes

These sweet potatoes are a delicious and savory side dish to add to any home-cooked meal. To make them, you will need:

4 large sweet potatoes (or about 1/2 - 3/4 of a potato per person)

2-3 tablespoons of olive oil

6 cloves of chopped garlic (I really like garlic, but feel free to use less!)

1 sprig of rosemary (chopped)

1-1.5 teaspoons of salt

Ground black pepper to taste



Pre-heat your oven to 350° F. After cutting the sweet potatoes into medium-sized cubes, place them into a large mixing bowl. Add the olive oil, garlic and rosemary to the bowl and toss (mix) all of the ingredients together until the garlic and rosemary are evenly distributed across the potato cubes. Sprinkle half of the salt onto the potatoes and toss again. Sprinkle the other half of the salt, as well as your black pepper, onto the potatoes and toss one more time.

Spread to the potatoes evenly onto a baking sheet covered with aluminum foil and place in the oven. Roast the potatoes for about 30-40 minutes, or until they are soft enough to penetrate with a fork.



# College Football

Nick Dunn



Feel that crisp, cool air? See those leaves changing from lush green to brilliant orange? It can only mean one thing: college football season's back!

The 12-15 game season is the culmination of a whole year's effort: recruiting high school and junior college players, strength and conditioning work in the gym, spring and fall practices and scrimmages (practice games), and tireless study of film and playbooks. All of this for a few 60-minute games that take place over about three and a half hours every Saturday.

A few reasons to watch college football:

It's fun! The game is fast, intense, hard-hitting.

It's social! Connect with friends, family, even complete strangers around your love for your team.

It's cultural! Deepen your experience of American and university culture by immersing yourself in this uniquely American tradition.

It's fun! So fun, it's worth repeating.

A few reasons to watch Illinois football:

Support your school! You've come so far to become an Illini. Show the world your support by wearing Orange in Memorial Stadium.

We're going to be good soon! With a new head coach in NFL great Lovie Smith and a renewed focus on recruiting top talent, the Illini are poised to rise in the Big Ten Conference. Get in early and let everyone know you were a fan from the start.

Recognize Illini in the NFL! If you already follow the NFL or play fantasy football, keep an eye out for Illini. We all enjoyed watching Josh Ferguson play here the last few years; now he's having an immediate impact on the Indianapolis Colts offense. Support your fellow Illini now while you can; perhaps one of your favorite players will make it big!

How to get into Illini football:

Get tickets and go to games: [tickets.fightingillini.com](http://tickets.fightingillini.com)

Watch and listen. Games are often shown on ESPN or the Big Ten Network, or you can listen on [fightingillini.com](http://fightingillini.com) (English and Mandarin broadcasts).

Tailgate with ISSS on October 8th before the Purdue game. We'll be grilling burgers and hot dogs, playing games, and enjoying the ambience of a major college football game. We'll start at noon, with many of us heading in to the game at 2pm. For directions and information, please contact Will Baptist at [wbaptist@illinois.edu](mailto:wbaptist@illinois.edu) or Nick Dunn at [nickdunn@illinois.edu](mailto:nickdunn@illinois.edu).



## Ask Igor the I-20

Do you have a cultural question Igor could answer? If so, please email [lkarp12@illinois.edu](mailto:lkarp12@illinois.edu) with your question, and Igor will try to answer it in our next cultural newsletter.

Dear Igor,

I've been in America for 3 months now, but I still haven't made any American friends! I've been to a few social events and I just don't seem to connect with anyone. They are so confident and loud. I am into sports and video games (e-games), but I don't know anyone who plays here. How do I make friends?

Sincerely,

Looking for a friend

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Dear Looking,

So you think you've got problems! I've been living in America for 30 years and I still haven't made any American friends...Just kidding!

But do take a deep breath and relax. Remember that whenever you move- be it to a new neighborhood, a new city, or a new country- it takes time to meet people and find a new group of friends. It sounds like you are right on track. You have attended a few social events, but haven't really found your crowd yet. That's normal. Maybe try finding an RSO (Registered Student Organization) that is based around one of your hobbies or interests. There, you are bound to find people with similar interests. The great thing is that there is no shortage of places to meet people on campus. Check out the "Get Involved" section of the ISSS website and get matched with an American host family via the International Hospitality Committee. Attend activities and events hosted by your department or college. Sign up to volunteer with the Office of Volunteer Programs. Ask that nice American in your group project to get coffee or go ice skating with you. Another big one is to start out casually talking to classmates about work assignments, and then transition from "study buddies" to friends. You've already been very brave to step outside of your comfort zone to work/study in a new country. Now, take your bravery to the next level and use "small talk" at the social events you attend to make new friends.

Take care,

Igor



Dear Igor,

I am invited to a Halloween party and am not sure if I should wear a costume. Should I wear a costume and if so, what kind of costume is normal? Help!

Sincerely,

Halloweenie

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Dear Halloweenie,

Wear a costume! Costumes are 100% cool at a Halloween party (otherwise it would just be called a party). Some costumes are easy to make at home, whereas others you might rent or buy from a local costume shop. Costumes range from scary (Witch, ghost, axe murderer, tax collector, border control agent, etc...) to punny ('cereal' killer, snakes on a 'plane', binders full of women), to professional (cop, nurse, doctor, firefighter). Whatever you choose, try not to pick a costume which stereotypes an ethnic group you do not belong to, as many Americans might feel like you are making fun of that group.

Take care,

Igor

### Idiom Corner

Lauren Karplus

#### As cool as a cucumber

Example: Suzie was as cool as a cucumber before her big presentation.

Means: Someone who is very calm and untroubled by stress.

#### The lights are on, but nobody's home!

Example: With Frank, I feel like the lights are on, but nobody's home.

Means: This person is not very intelligent.

#### Small talk

Example: "Great weather we're having, isn't it?"

"Yes, it is!"

Means: An informal conversation style typical in America in which the content of the discussion is not important, but rather serves to create social cohesion and a sense of belonging.

## ISSS Favorite Halloween/Scary Movies



Do you love watching scary movies?! Yeah, me neither, but some people do. For those of you who like watching movies that give you nightmares, here is a list of the ISSS staff's favorites. Enjoy!

**Erin:** *The Shining*—This psychological horror film is the first movie that comes to mind when I think of a movie with a ton of suspense. It takes place at the mountain-isolated Overlook Hotel, which is 25 miles from the closest town. Find out what terrifying events take place when a new hotel caretaker and his family move into the property.

**Jessica (and Martin!):** *Cabin in the Woods*—Jessica says: I don't enjoy horror movies but this one gets a pass for being a 'horror comedy'. Both scary and funny, you can trick your friends who hate horror movies into this one by telling them it's a comedy. And Martin says: A very self-aware horror/mystery film that plays with many traditional genre tropes, making for an incredibly entertaining film. The most fun horror movie I've seen in the past 5 years.

**Kirby:** *Sleepy Hollow*—The movie is based on an American tale that was published around 1820, which was one of the earliest examples of American fiction. The story centers around a town called Sleepy Hollow and its hauntings and terrors from the Headless Horseman. In this adaptation, the town recruits Ichabod Crane to investigate after a series of gruesome beheadings.

**Lauren:** *Nightmare before Christmas*—It's my favorite Halloween movie because Halloweentown perfectly encapsulates all the things I love about Halloween.

**Leo:** *Rosemary's Baby*—Mia Farrow turns in an amazing performance in a deliberately paced horror drama. No jump scares or cheap gimmicks in this film, just great writing and naturalistic directing from Roman Polanski. As the suspense in the film rises, you see the tension build in Farrow's face and physical expressions. It all culminates in a gut-check shocker of an ending. Along with *Eraserhead*, not a film to watch while pregnant.

**Melissa:** *World War Z*—It's definitely not a Halloween-themed movie, but I think that it's just as scary. The movie is about a worldwide zombie apocalypse, which sounds typical. However, when you factor in the superhuman physical abilities that these zombies possess (they run, jump and climb over things really fast), it makes for a much more stressful situation. This movie will make you think that the *Walking Dead* crew doesn't have it so bad.

**Nick:** *Army of Darkness*—Scientists and historians have long debated the central question of this film: "What if a department store clerk magically transports back in time to an enchanted Middle Ages kingdom, armed with nothing but a chainsaw, a double-barrel shotgun, and pithy one-liners?" Answer: Men respect him, women swoon, and the kingdom is saved, because the evil dead become, well, more dead. Hail to the king, baby.

**Stephanie:** *Scream*—"What's your favorite scary movie?" the killer asks. I love this movie because not only is it from the 1990s, but because it is a scary movie that pokes fun at scary movies, vocalizing how all scary movies have some type of set plot that they all must follow, as this movie does. *Scream* keeps you guessing as to who is killer might be throughout the movie, with an awesome plot twist at the end.

Have anything that you'd like to see in future Cultural Spotlight editions? Sports, holidays, local wildlife? Let us know! Email Jennie Avery at [jsavery@illinois.edu](mailto:jsavery@illinois.edu) with your suggestions for future content!