

# Making Halloween memories

Anyone who knows me knows I'm a fan of Halloween. I have always dug the idea of being able to be not only anyone you want or anyone you wish you could be, but also that to the extreme. The whole beauty in the macabre is also fascinating to me.

I think the memories I have of Halloween have solidified that holiday as the least stressful and most rewarding holiday. I guess I think of it as the calm before the storm.

When I was a kiddo, my grandma, Mary Jane (Niemojowski) Kowalczyk, loved Halloween just as much as any holiday. Holidays always seemed like a good time to be a great hostess, and my grandma did a fantastic job at that. Everyone who has been to her gatherings, regardless of how well she knew them, felt like family and at home before the event was over.

She always went all out with the treats, like majority of the subdivision in Tinley Park, Ill. She always bought little baggies and put several different kinds of treats in them so everyone could get at least one thing they liked. The baggies, with traditional Halloween decorations printed on them, could fit a large handful of candy in them.

I remember one year I had mentioned that the same people had come trick-or-treating at her house multiple times. She just laughed and said that she didn't mind and "anyways" she didn't want the candy to go to waste.

That love of making people happy followed her to our home in Porterfield. Although the number of trick-or-treaters was far less.

We moved up here in the

MELISSA KOWALCZYK



## Something Extra

mid-90s and I had a few trick-or-treating years in my system. One of which, my family went trick-or-treating in Marinette where my dad's uncle lived on Georgia Street. They really went all out at that time. One place even gave out handmade popcorn balls, which they also tossed to our parents, who were waiting for us on the sidewalk.

There was also a house where someone jumped up from a bed that looked like it was part of the Halloween decorations and scared us as we were walking back to the road. I think they were dressed like some kind of wolf, but I couldn't tell you for sure at this point. I mean that was years ago, plus I was too busy running away at the moment.

Shortly after that, I felt like I had outgrown trick-or-treating, I loved helping hand out treats to the kids, in some kind of a costume, of course, since I couldn't outgrow that part of the holiday.

I remember one particular year when I found a particularly terrifying mask with gloves that matched. They looked like red-dish burgundy and they were demonic-looking.

Most of the kids around the area were grown up and that look was not a problem. However, the costume was particularly scary to one poor little



EagleHerald/Melissa Kowalczyk  
**Top, carving pumpkins has always been a part of my family's Halloween traditions, even if it is just to get the pumpkin seeds so we can bake them for a snack. Right, my siblings and I dressed up as various characters throughout the years. This was probably the mid 90s, where I was the clown; my brother, Brett Kowalczyk was Sonic the Hedgehog; and my sister, Jennifer Kowalczyk was a sorcerer.**



Pikachu. He got one look at the hands and looked absolutely petrified. I tore the mask off as quickly as possible, and tried to assure him it was OK. I don't think he believed me, but I proceeded to throw a lot of candy in his bag.

At best guess, that particular Pikachu is probably well into adulthood and in his late 20s or

early 30s. Sorry, Pikachu!

Nowadays we live in Menominee and get a handful of trick-or-treaters, if any. There is a trunk or treat up the street from us, and I understand the appeal, especially to parents with multiple children. Plus, it's safer than trusting complete strangers.

I still love the atmosphere of Halloween and buy and make too many Halloween

decorations, but more is always better than less with Halloween, right? And, I always have to watch a mixture of Halloween movies and TV shows, from the cute and funny to the thrillers.

Have a fun and safe Halloween and make some memories of your own.

# Peshtigo High School values vocational learning program

District partners with more than 30 businesses

Special to the EagleHerald

PESHTIGO—Peshtigo High School currently has junior and senior students learning while they work in more than 30 local businesses.

"Our area businesses are literally our partners in our vocational studies program," said teacher and Vocational Coordinator Dan Vanidestine, who receives input from local business leaders to design the curriculum. "We have listened to their concerns and needs to help shape the Vocational Studies Program."

"Our goal is to have students ready for entry level positions in their chosen fields by graduation," Vanidestine continued.

He explained that Peshtigo's Vocational Studies Program starts in the spring of the student's junior year and continues during the entire senior year. "Each vocational studies student is expected to have completed a minimum of three work certifications matching each student's chosen career field."

Two of the work certifications taught include the Snap-on Precision Measurement Instruments



Peshtigo High School seniors Nathan Rich and Ethan Barggren are part of the schools vocational studies program.

(PMI) certification and the Mike Rowe Works (MRW) Work Ethics certification. The Snap-on's PMI certification which requires students to complete 32 hours of instruction, which includes six modules of measurement including tape and rule, slide caliper, gauge, angle, micrometer and dial gauge measurement.

These skills prepare students for careers in many fields like

automotive, construction trades, millwright and machine and tool work.

The MRW certification focuses on teaching students work ethic, personal responsibility, delayed gratification and a positive attitude. Mike Rowe, most well known for his "Dirty Jobs" television series, created work readiness certification centered around these four pillars.

One of the local businesses who employs a Peshtigo student through this program is All American Dream Homes. Peshtigo senior Ethan Barggren "comes to school excited to share what he's learning in the home construction field and is very serious about making construction his career choice," Vanidestine shares. "I'm not so sure that would be the case if he didn't

have such a positive experience with the folks at All American Dream Homes."

The trades are a hidden treasure and so essential to our economy. The future of our community is dependent on youth having interest in the trades and other local businesses."

All American Dream Homes manager Megan Van Beek-Graef and owner John Van Beek explained that we have a huge shortage of anyone in the trades right now. She stated that having Ethan work there has been a "breath of fresh air." All American Dream Homes has been in business in Peshtigo since 2003, built hundreds of homes and now employs 10 people.

Megan adds, "We hope to have more students interested in this industry learn and grow with us."

The Peshtigo School District is committed to partnering with local businesses. The goal for the program is for each student to earn an industry recognized NC3 Certificate prior to graduation.

Vanidestine is grateful to all the business partners who work with the Peshtigo High School Vocational Program, which numbers more than 30. Some of those businesses include Badger Paper Mill, PHC Inc., Caterpillar, Lemke Heating and Cooling, Evergreen Tool Co. Inc. and Waupaca Foundry.

"Thank you for investing in our students' futures," Vanidestine said.

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