

American Legion Post 77

October Newsletter



Hubert M. Smith



The American Legion 105th National Convention in New Orleans, Louisiana

Mountains Devastated by
Flood 2024
pg 7-9

Post 77 Member

Greg Bias

wins

1st Place

Interview Part 2 - pg13



American Legion members of the Department of NC sign our department sign at the convention.



NECman from North Carolina David Shore casts our vote for Commander LaCoursiere Jr.



Members from all departments parade colors around the ceremony to celebrate the installation of our new American Legion National Commander.



Members from American Legion Post 77 enjoy a meal while attending the National Convention in New Orleans. From left: Wendy Edmisten, Willa White, Brian White, Ashton Cody, Bill Boyette, Shuford Edmisten.



The American Legion 105th National Convention

The American Legion held it's 105th National Convention in New Orleans, Louisiana August 23rd-29th. Eight members from Post 77 attended, including Legionnaires and members from the Auxiliary Unit 77 and Sons of the American Legion Squadron 77. James LaCoursiere Jr. of Connecticut was installed as the new National Commander of the American Legion at the convention on August 29th.



New National Commander James LaCoursiere Jr. receiving his National Commander cover during his installation.

Post 77 October Canteen/Events

October 8th: Executive Board Meeting

October 17th: Free Veteran's Breakfast in Canteen

October 19th: Sons of the American Legion Meeting

October 24th-27th: Fall Conference in Raleigh, NC

October 26th: Marine Corps League Meeting

October 31st: Auxiliary Hosting Trunk or Treat



Please Contact Canteen for
possible event Changes
following storm damages
and as recovery continues
Legion Post events are
subject to change without
notice



State of Emergency WNC

RECOVERY BEGINS

Storm Systems moved through WNC bringing heavy rains, wind gusts 45+ across several states. FL, GA, SC, NC, TN and more areas effected.

Clean up and rescues begins and continues, and our thoughts and prayers go out to all those effected by the storms and those emergency crews and volunteers, cable crews, and transportation crews essential to getting communities back to normal.

The next page is a list of common disaster relief agencies and organizations.

Post 77 also has supplies for those in need in the upstairs hall provided by Winterville, NC, Post 43 in Kingston, and Boneyard Harley Davidson.

Here's a list of contacts for emergency relief:

National Emergency Relief Organizations

1. Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)

- **Phone:** 1-800-621-3362 (FEMA)
- **Website:** www.fema.gov
- Provides disaster assistance and recovery support for individuals and communities affected by major emergencies.

2. American Red Cross

- **Phone:** 1-800-733-2767
- **Website:** www.redcross.org
- Offers shelter, food, and recovery assistance in disaster-stricken areas.

3. National Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster (NVOAD)

- **Phone:** 703-778-5088
- **Website:** www.nvoad.org
- Coordinates relief efforts among non-profit organizations, churches, and community groups in disaster areas.

4. Salvation Army Emergency Disaster Services

- **Phone:** 1-800-SAL-ARMY (1-800-725-2769)
- **Website:** www.salvationarmyusa.org
- Provides food, shelter, and long-term recovery assistance to those affected by disasters.

5. United Way Worldwide

- **Phone:** 1-800-892-2757
- **Website:** www.unitedway.org
- Supports disaster relief and recovery efforts by mobilizing volunteers and resources through local United Way offices.

Health & Medical Emergency Services

1. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)

- **Phone:** 1-800-232-4636 (TTY: 1-888-232-6348)
- **Website:** www.cdc.gov
- Provides public health information and guidance during emergencies such as pandemics or hazardous spills.

2. National Poison Control Center

- **Phone:** 1-800-222-1222
- **Website:** www.poison.org
- Available for emergency advice on poison exposure and hazardous substances.

-
- 3. **Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) Disaster Distress Helpline**
 - **Phone:** 1-800-985-5990 (Text: "TalkWithUs" to 66746)
 - **Website:** www.samhsa.gov
 - Provides crisis counseling for people affected by disasters and emotional trauma.

Local Utility and Safety Services

1. **National Gas Emergency Contact (by provider)**
 - **Phone:** Varies by provider. Most major gas companies have 24/7 emergency lines to report leaks. Contact your local provider or call **911** for immediate threats.
2. **Power Outage Reporting (by provider)**
 - **Phone:** Varies by provider. Check your local electricity provider's website for outage reporting and assistance.

General Emergency Contacts

1. **911 - Immediate Emergency Services**
 - For fire, medical emergencies, and crime-related emergencies, call **911**.
2. **National Suicide Prevention Lifeline**
 - **Phone:** 988 (Call or Text)
 - **Website:** www.988lifeline.org
 - Provides confidential support for individuals in suicidal crisis or emotional distress.
3. **National Domestic Violence Hotline**
 - **Phone:** 1-800-799-7233 (TTY: 1-800-787-3224)
 - **Website:** www.thehotline.org
 - Offers support and resources for individuals facing domestic violence.

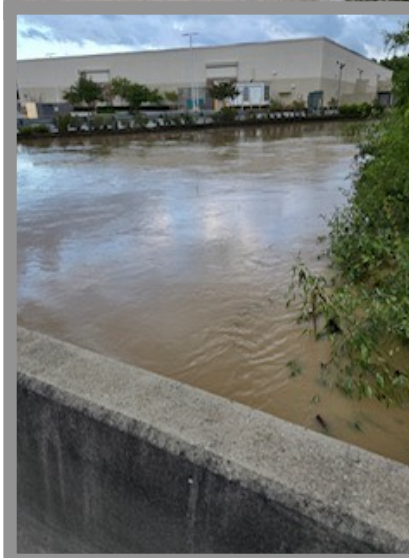
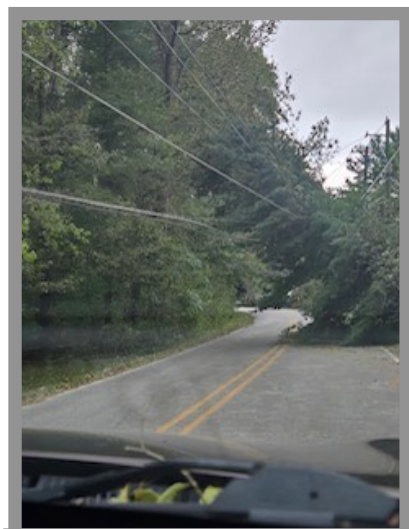
State and Local Emergency Management Agencies

For localized emergency relief, each state and region has its own emergency management office that coordinates local disaster response. You can find your state or county emergency management contact information via:

- **National Association of State Emergency Management Agencies (NEMA):** <https://www.nemaweb.org>

These resources provide a comprehensive network of support in the event of any disaster or emergency across the U.S.

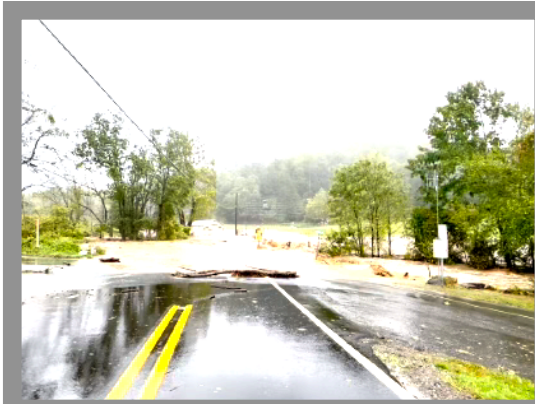
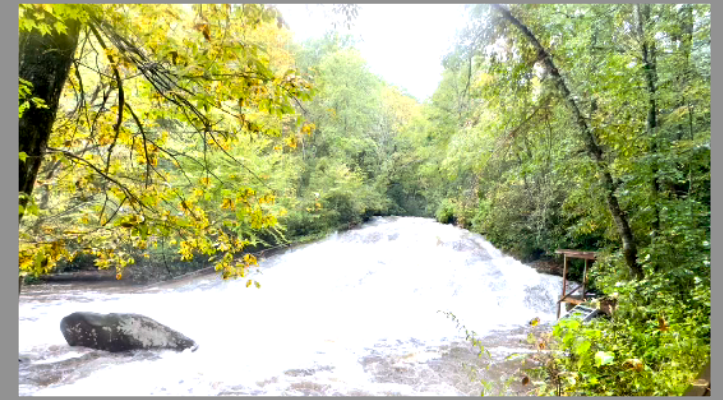
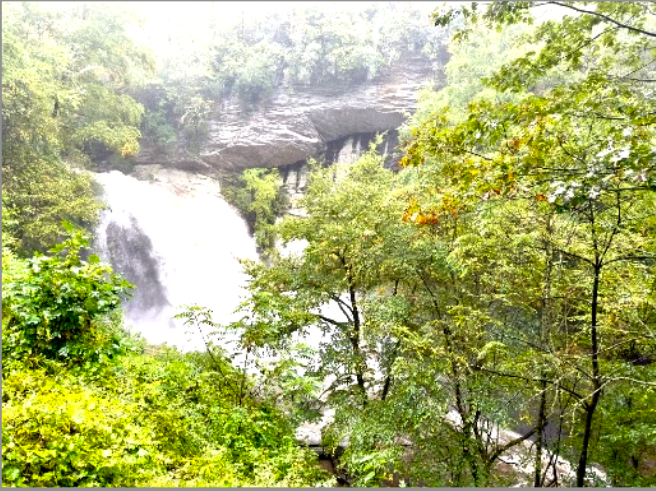
Photos of damage from hurricane Helene across Western North Carolina in Hendersonville and Fletcher. Trees in homes, major flooding, and lines down.



Photos supplied by Mimi McKenzie and Ashton Cody



WNC_Flood2024: Photos by Greg Bias



Legislative Update:

1

Continuing Resolution

Passed preventing
Government shutdown until
20Dec2024

Remind to ALL members

American Legion is a
NON-Partisan
Veteran Organization

Meaning no political side is supported

We encourage ALL members to vote!

2

Veteran Improvement Commercial Driver License (VA CDL) Act Passes

“S. 656 and H.R. 2830 make a much-needed change to veteran educational assistance programs, expanding job opportunities for the brave men and women who serve our great nation.”

According to edwards.house.gov

“When the brave men and women in our armed forces return home, the last thing they should have to worry about is red tape preventing them from achieving the American dream that they fought to defend,” said **American Trucking Associations President and CEO Chris Spear.**

Henderson County Honor Guard



The Henderson County Honor Guard lines up for a presentation of colors for the Apple Festival opening ceremony in Hendersonville, NC on August 30th, 2024.



The Honor Guard prepares to lead the Apple Festival parade in Hendersonville, NC on September 2nd, 2024



Members of the Honor Guard marching in the Apple Festival parade September 2nd. The Honor Guard performed four funeral ceremonies in August and one funeral ceremony in the month of September for fallen veterans.



Post 77 Membership



**Annual
Membership
dues:**

\$50

Discover the perfect volunteer opportunities tailored to your interests. The American Legion passionately backs its community through a myriad of avenues, whether by directly engaging in the Department of Veterans Affairs Voluntary Service program, forging connections with nearby National Guard and reserve units, or extending a helping hand to local charities like Habitat for Humanity and the Red Cross. Additionally, the Legion dedicates itself to nurturing youth through various programs and activities, including but not limited to American Legion Baseball, Jr. Shooting Sports, Oratorical competitions, and Boys and Girls State.

[-legion.org/join](https://legion.org/join)



Greg Bias Interview

Part 2

Not One, But TWO!!! First Place Medals in Local VA Art Competition

American Legion Post 77 Member Greg Bias Wins 2x first place medals in local Charles George VAMC Veteran Art Competition. Congratulations Greg!

Editor: Congratulations on recent wins, tell us how does it feel to now be an award winning photographer?

Greg B: (smiling) Thanks, it's such an accomplished feeling. Stomach turning nervousness for weeks leading up to walking down the atrium stairs at the VA and navigating displays finding my first photo with First place Medal. WOW! That's when all those positive feels overwhelmed me, and I was smiling ear-to-ear, only to double such a feeling hearing from my wife my other photo won first place. It's really cool feeling.

Editor: That's local you move on to national competition, correct?

Greg B: Yes, local VA send pictures of my photos to national held May 2025.

Editor: What next for you?

Greg B: I am already thinking of next year's photos I am going to submit. Next step is plan more hiking trips and get out there taking more photos. I've got my mind set on winning next year's people's choice. Their was a lot of incredible paintings and pictures displayed this year, so I know my goal will require my best work.

Editor: We look forward to hearing Part 3 of your interview after VA and American Legion Auxiliary Co-presented VA Arts competition May 2025.

Editor: How did your submitted photos do at WNC State Fair?

Greg B: I submitted 4 photos and won 2 ribbons on same photo. My railroad and tunnel black and white photo from up in Virginia, won first place and best of show!



Greg Bias Photo -WNC State Fair Competition 2024

WNC State Fair Art Competition

Greg Bias

- American Legion Post 77 Member
- DAV Chapter 14 Life Member
- VFW Post 9157 Life Member
- Marine Corps League Member

Wins Best of Show and 1st Place

Amateur Photographer Competition

JOIN TODAY

Son's of American Legion

<https://www.legion.org/about/american-legion-family/sons-of-the-american-legion>

OPEN DAILY

**American Legion
Post 77**

Canteen

H e n d e r s o n v i l l e , N C



216 4th Ave W Hendersonville NC 28739





*Join Us on
Facebook!*

American Legion Programs

Community

- American Legion Riders
- National Emergency Fund
- Operation Comfort Warrior
- Temporary Financial Assistance

- **Volunteering!**

AMERICAN LEGION POST 77

**Happy and Safe
Halloween!**

31 October 2024



**Free Halloween Coloring
Activities** [Pages 22 - 23](#)

Flag Retirement Ceremony Team Needs You!

By ChatGPT

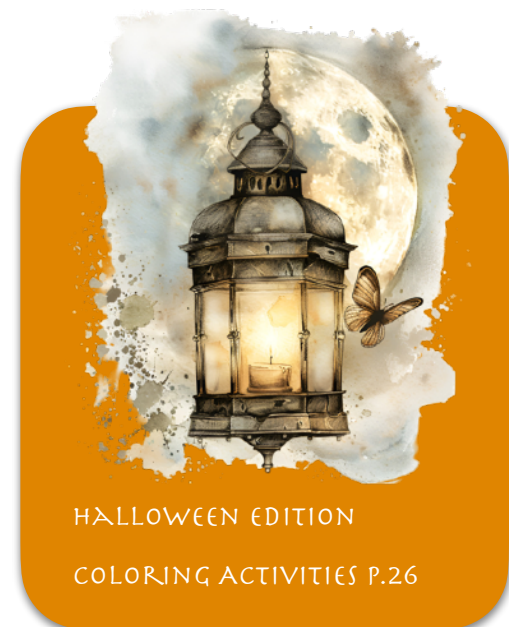
The Meaning and Process of a U.S. Flag Retirement Ceremony

The U.S. flag stands as a powerful symbol of the nation's ideals, history, and the sacrifices of countless men and women who have fought to defend it. Over time, flags naturally wear out due to weather and age, and when a flag becomes torn, faded, or no longer suitable for display, it must be retired in a respectful and dignified manner. This process is known as a flag retirement ceremony.

The Meaning Behind Flag Retirement

Flag retirement ceremonies are significant because they honor the life of the flag as a representation of the United States and the values it upholds—freedom, democracy, and unity. Retiring a flag with respect ensures that even as it reaches the end of its physical life, it continues to be treated with reverence. The U.S. Flag Code, a set of guidelines established to protect the flag's symbolism, recommends that worn or damaged flags be “destroyed in a dignified way, preferably by burning.”

Flag retirement also serves as a reminder of the sacrifices made by those who have served the country, particularly military personnel who have fought under the flag. For many, the ceremony is a moment of reflection on patriotism, national unity, and the enduring values of American democracy.



HALLOWEEN EDITION

COLORING ACTIVITIES P.26

The Process of a Flag Retirement Ceremony

A flag retirement ceremony is both formal and respectful, often organized by veterans' organizations such as the American Legion or the Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW). Here is the typical process:

- 1. Collection of Flags**

Before the ceremony, worn or damaged flags are collected from individuals or organizations. Local American Legion posts or scouting groups often organize collection points where people can drop off flags in need of retirement.

- 2. Ceremony Opening**

The ceremony often begins with the Pledge of Allegiance or a moment of silence to honor the flag and the nation. It is common for veterans, community leaders, or youth organizations to participate.

- 3. Inspection of the Flag**

Before retirement, each flag is briefly inspected. The inspection symbolizes the attention and care given to the flag during its service and recognizes its symbolism. A flag deemed no longer serviceable is then prepared for retirement.

- 4. Retirement by Burning**

The recommended method for retiring a flag is by burning it in a dignified manner. The flag is respectfully placed into the fire, while attendees remain silent or salute in respect. Often, participants share reflections or prayers to honor what the flag represents.

- 5. Final Disposal**

After the flag has been completely consumed by the flames, the ashes are typically collected and buried to ensure that no part of the flag is left unattended. Some organizations also hold a brief moment of reflection during this final step.

- 6. Closing Remarks**

The ceremony usually concludes with a speech or remarks that reflect on the flag's significance. The closing reinforces the values of patriotism and respect for the nation's symbols.

American Legion Post 77 host two flag retirement ceremonies per year - Contact Post Commander Banks if interested in joining the ceremony team! Flags are collected not only in Henderson County, but surrounding counties as well.

Volunteers needed to collect, Transport, and retire with dignity (ceremonial fire)

Fire Safety Week : 6-12 October 2024

Article 1: 10 Essential Fire Safety Tips for Your Home

-ChatGPT

October is Fire Safety Month, a perfect reminder to ensure your home is protected from fire hazards. Following these simple yet effective tips can make a significant difference in preventing fires and keeping your family safe.

1. **Install Smoke Alarms:** Ensure smoke alarms are installed on every floor, including inside bedrooms. Test them monthly, and replace batteries at least once a year.
2. **Check Electrical Outlets:** Avoid overloading outlets or using frayed extension cords. Unplug small appliances when not in use.
3. **Create an Escape Plan:** Develop and practice a family fire escape plan. Ensure everyone knows two ways to exit each room and where to meet outside.
4. **Use Heaters Safely:** Space heaters should be at least three feet from curtains, bedding, and furniture. Always turn them off when leaving the room or going to sleep.
5. **Be Careful in the Kitchen:** Stay in the kitchen when cooking. Keep flammable items like towels, pot holders, and wooden utensils away from the stove.

6. **Store Flammable Materials Properly:** Keep matches, lighters, and other flammable substances in a secure, child-proof location.
7. **Inspect and Clean Chimneys:** Have your chimney inspected and cleaned annually to prevent creosote buildup, which can cause fires.
8. **Don't Smoke Indoors:** If you smoke, do so outside. Make sure to extinguish cigarettes in a sturdy ashtray or container with water.
9. **Keep Fire Extinguishers Handy:** Place fire extinguishers in key areas of your home, like the kitchen and garage, and know how to use them.
10. **Install Carbon Monoxide Detectors:** In addition to smoke alarms, install carbon monoxide detectors to alert you of harmful gases from burning materials.

By following these fire safety tips, you can drastically reduce the risk of a fire in your home and ensure your family is prepared if one occurs.

Department NC Fall Conference 2024

24–26 October 2024

Hilton North Hills Raleigh

The History of Fire Safety Month

-ChatGPT

Every October, we celebrate National Fire Safety Month—a crucial campaign aimed at raising awareness about fire prevention and safety. But how did this month come to be, and why is it so important?

The origins of Fire Safety Month date back to **The Great Chicago Fire of 1871**, one of the deadliest fires in American history. Starting on October 8, the fire blazed for two days, killing around 300 people and destroying over 17,000 structures. Although the cause of the fire is debated, it became a turning point in how cities viewed fire prevention.

In response to this disaster, **Fire Prevention Week** was established by the National Fire Protection Association (NFPA) in 1922, commemorating the anniversary of the Chicago fire. The goal was to educate the public about fire hazards and promote strategies to prevent home fires. As public awareness grew, Fire Prevention Week evolved into Fire Safety Month, with October becoming a time to reinforce life-saving fire safety practices.

The NFPA continues to lead this campaign by partnering with fire departments, schools, and community organizations across the country. Each year, they introduce a theme highlighting specific fire risks and prevention measures. Over time, the emphasis has expanded to include wildfires, electrical fires, and other safety concerns.

By recognizing Fire Safety Month, we honor the past while focusing on the future—ensuring that everyone is prepared and informed to prevent tragedies before they start. Whether through educational programs, fire drills, or home inspections, this month serves as a vital reminder that fire safety is everyone's responsibility.

Halloween Safety Tips for Adults and Children

-ChatGPT

Halloween is a fun and spooky time filled with costumes, candy, and outdoor adventures, but ensuring everyone's safety is key to having a great night. Whether you're trick-or-treating with kids or attending adult-themed events, here are some essential safety tips:

For Adults:

1. **Driving Safety:** Drive slowly in residential areas, especially during peak trick-or-treating hours. Watch for children who may dart into the street unexpectedly.
2. **Party Safety:** If attending or hosting a Halloween party, drink responsibly and arrange transportation if needed. Keep an eye on decorations like candles or fire hazards around flammable costumes or décor.
3. **Home Preparation:** Ensure your home is safe for visiting trick-or-treaters by clearing walkways, providing adequate lighting, and securing pets.



Halloween Safety For Children:



1. **Costume Safety:** Choose flame-resistant costumes, and ensure they are the right size to prevent tripping. Bright or reflective elements help increase visibility in the dark. If using masks, make sure they don't obstruct vision—face paint is often a safer alternative.
2. **Supervision:** Young children should always be accompanied by a trusted adult. If older kids go out alone, plan a route with them in advance and agree on a time to return home.
3. **Street Safety:** Always use sidewalks and cross the street at crosswalks. Trick-or-treaters should carry flashlights or glow sticks to stay visible to drivers. Remind children to look both ways before crossing the road.
4. **Candy Caution:** Inspect all candy before allowing children to eat it. Discard any unwrapped or suspicious-looking treats.

With these simple precautions, Halloween can be fun, safe, and filled with happy memories for everyone. Stay safe and enjoy the spooky season!

Coloring Activities





The History of Halloween in American Society: From Ancient Rituals to Modern Revelry

-ChatGPT

Halloween, celebrated on October 31, is a beloved holiday in the United States, filled

with costumes, candy, and spooky decorations. But how did this quirky and festive day evolve into the cultural phenomenon we know today? The history of Halloween in America is a rich tapestry woven from ancient traditions, immigration patterns, and modern consumerism.

Ancient Roots in Celtic Tradition

Halloween's origins trace back over 2,000 years to the ancient Celtic festival of **Samhain** (pronounced sow-in), celebrated in what is now Ireland, the UK, and northern France. Samhain marked the end of the harvest and the beginning of the dark, cold winter—a time associated with death. Celts believed that on the night of October 31, the boundary between the living and the dead blurred, allowing spirits to roam



the earth. To ward off these spirits, people lit bonfires and donned costumes made of animal heads and skins to disguise themselves from wandering ghosts.



Christian Influence and the Arrival of "All Hallows' Eve"

By the 9th century, as Christianity spread across Europe, the Catholic Church sought to incorporate pagan festivals into its calendar. In 1000 A.D., the Church designated November 1 as **All Saints' Day**, or **All Hallows' Day**, to honor saints and martyrs. The evening before, October 31, became known as **All Hallows' Eve**, eventually shortened to Halloween. Despite this Christian overlay, many of the ancient Celtic traditions persisted, including costumes, bonfires, and beliefs about spirits.

Halloween in Colonial America

Halloween made its way to America through waves of European immigration, particularly in the 19th century. However, during the colonial period, Halloween celebrations were limited in Puritan-dominated New England due to its pagan roots. Instead, colonial Halloween celebrations were more common in the southern colonies, where traditions from the European harvest festivals merged with Native American autumn celebrations.

"Play parties" were a common form of celebration, where neighbors gathered to share stories of the dead, tell fortunes, and sing songs. The **early American Halloween focused on community and harvest rather than ghoulishness or commercialism.**

Irish Immigration and the Rise of Halloween Traditions

The massive Irish and Scottish immigration waves in the mid-19th century played a pivotal role in popularizing Halloween in America. The Irish brought with them the tradition of **jack-o'-lanterns**, originally carved from turnips or potatoes, inspired by the myth of "Stingy Jack." In the U.S., the more readily available pumpkin was adopted as the canvas of choice, which became one of the most iconic Halloween symbols.

Irish immigrants also brought the custom of **trick-or-treating**, which evolved from earlier practices like "souling," where people would go door to door offering prayers for the dead in exchange for food.

The 20th Century: Halloween Becomes a National Holiday

By the early 20th century, Halloween was becoming more widespread in American culture. Community leaders sought to curb some of the mischief and pranking that had become part of Halloween, promoting the holiday as a family-friendly occasion. In the 1920s and 1930s, the first **Halloween parades** and **trick-or-treating** traditions began to take shape, encouraging children to dress in costumes and collect candy from neighbors. This helped cement Halloween as a children's holiday.

The post-World War II era saw a major Halloween boom. With suburban neighborhoods flourishing, the concept of trick-or-treating exploded in popularity. This era also saw the rise of Halloween as a commercial powerhouse, with candy companies, costume manufacturers, and retailers capitalizing on the growing demand for spooky festivities. By the 1950s, Halloween had solidified itself as a major cultural event in American society.



Halloween Today: A Celebration for All Ages

Today, Halloween is one of the biggest holidays in the U.S., second only to Christmas in terms of spending. It has grown far beyond its origins as a religious or harvest festival. For many, Halloween is a time to embrace creativity, express themselves through elaborate costumes, and indulge in haunted house visits and horror movie marathons.

The holiday has also transformed into a celebration for all ages. While children still participate in the traditional trick-or-treating, adults now engage in their own festivities, from costume parties to pumpkin carving competitions. Halloween's appeal lies in its unique

ability to blend playfulness with the eerie, offering something for everyone.



A Cultural Evolution

In just a few hundred years, Halloween has evolved from a solemn Celtic ritual into a vibrant, light-hearted holiday that celebrates both the mystical and the macabre. Whether it's through spooky decorations, elaborate costumes, or sweet treats, Halloween continues to captivate the American imagination and remains a cultural staple that reflects the country's love of tradition, transformation, and creativity.

As Halloween continues to grow and adapt, it stands as a testament to the blending of old and new, and how customs from around the world can become an integral part of American culture.

POST 77 Canteen Open Daily

American Legion Post 77 Newsletter

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