

THIS WEEK  
IN  
REAL LIFE

## INSIDE TODAY

Get inspired by  
Random Acts of Greenness

See Page C14

## INSIDE TODAY

Is it better for you  
to lift weights slowly?

See Page C15

## REAL LIFE

PEOPLE • FASHION • FOOD • WELLNESS • GREEN GUIDE

EDITOR: YVONNE JEFFERY 403-235-8658 Fax: 403-235-7379

WWW.CALGARYHERALD.COM

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 17, 2008 C12

GET EEEK-O  
FRIENDLY

THE GREEN GUIDE

Check out our guide to living green at  
calgaryherald.com/greenguideHave a healthier Halloween  
without spoiling the funEMMA GILCHRIST  
CALGARY HERALD**L**ike many of our traditions, Halloween finds its origins in the land.

The modern-day rituals of dressing up in costumes and carving pumpkins can be traced to the ancient Celtic festival known as Samhain, a celebration of the end of the harvest season in Gaelic culture.

But in the past 2,000 years, Halloween has come a long way and now, like so many of our traditions, it has become a multibillion-dollar shopping event.

Today's hyper-commercialized and sugar-coated festivities don't come without their detractors.

Trick-or-treating, once scrutinized primarily for health concerns in an age of soaring childhood obesity, has now come under the environmental spotlight, as well, thanks to the onslaught of individually wrapped treats (gasp!) and its general culture of excess.

"Even a generation ago, you'd get one piece of candy per house. And the generation before that it was about collecting pennies for UNICEF," says Corey Colwell-Lipson, founder of Green Halloween, a U.S. movement that started last year in Seattle.

But it's not just about candy. From costumes made from oil (read: plastic) to disposable decorations, whatever you see in your garbage at the end of Halloween is just the tip of the iceberg.

When you look at plastic, for instance, you need to consider every step from the extraction of oil to the resources used to build, operate and maintain the manufacturing factory — which is all well and good if the product is still going to be in use on Nov. 1.

In David Suzuki's new book *Green Guide* (Grey-stone, \$19.95), he writes: "By reducing your consumption of goods by one kilogram, you can save approximately 200 kilograms of natural resources and prevent 200 kilograms of waste and pollution."

In other words, reducing your consumption can have a huge ripple effect across the supply chain — any day of the week.

But it makes sense that environmentalists have put the spotlight on events that tend to create an exorbitant amount of waste, from conferences to Christmas.



Leah Hennel, Calgary Herald

**Calgary kids are getting in the spirit of an eek-o-friendly Halloween with creative costumes that don't require the purchase of new items. From left: Parker Beatty, 6, loves nature, so he's dressed as the late Crocodile Hunter, Steve Irwin; Riley Beatty, 8, put dad's shirt and tie to good use in this mad scientist outfit; and Kaden Hecker, 4, might just be the youngest skateboarder you've seen.**

## ALSO SEE

■ Green Halloween Guide  
C13

On these days, a little extra thought can go a long way to reducing waste. That's why the non-profit, grassroots Green Halloween movement has caught fire this year and spread across the States.

Greenhalloween.org offers tips for parents, kids and schools on planning a more wholesome holiday, including costume and decor ideas, crafts and activities and a neighbourhood action kit.

So, what exactly does it mean to have a green Halloween? The U.S. movement works with three guiding principles:

■ **Good for people.** This includes our own families as well as the people who make, grow or sell the products we consume or use. Healthy treats and treasures fall into this category.■ **Good for the planet.**

This means making choices that have the least impact on the Earth. It could involve simply consuming less or reusing costumes, for example.

■ **Good for the community.** You can do this by supporting businesses whose practices support the well-being of communities, or by raising money for charity.

Colwell-Lipson stresses that parents shouldn't pull their hair out trying to meet all three criteria, or be kept up at night with nightmares of spoiling their children's fun.

Even if you meet one of the criteria this Halloween, you're likely to be way ahead of the pack. "You've got to start somewhere," she says.

As for spoiling the fun, Colwell-Lipson says the idea for the Green Halloween movement actually started while witnessing her daughters' reaction to unconventional treats in 2006.

"Some of the people handed out things that weren't conventional candy and the parents stood in shock and wonder as the girls got so excited," she says. "Kids are excited about little polished rocks and feathers."

Indeed, kids can get excited about a costume party in the park, creatively piecing together an outfit out of mom and dad's closet or getting a rock instead of a piece of candy.

And greener, healthier Halloweens aren't just on the radar south of the 49th parallel.

Kerry Kaufman, founder of Calgary eco-education service Green Plan-It, says plenty of Calgary parents are getting imaginative with their children's costumes this year.

"It's amazing how many people aren't buying costumes," she says, noting most parents are simply flexing their creative muscles, but some are doing it to

lessen their environmental impact.

Kaufman will be giving out pencils this year and is looking for healthy treats (see Page C13 for ideas), which are sure to cost more. But by moving away from piling a whole scoop of candy into each child's bag, she'll achieve two goals: a smaller footprint and an affordable Halloween.

"If you're only giving one of them away, you can offset the price," she says.

As volunteer co-ordinators spread the Green Halloween message in their communities across the U.S., raising money for local non-profit groups in the process, Colwell-Lipson says the concept ties together two of parents' most fundamental concerns.

"I don't think you can separate healthy kids from a healthy planet," she says.

THE GREEN GUIDE RUNS EVERY FRIDAY  
IN REAL LIFE. HAVE AN ENVIRONMENTAL  
QUESTION? E-MAIL EGILCHRIST@  
THEHERALD.CANWEST.COM

## EDITOR'S NOTE

Today marks the launch of our bigger, better coverage of all things green. Along with an expanded Green Guide — which has just celebrated its first anniversary — Herald reporter Emma Gilchrist will be bringing you Random Acts of Greenness and Eco News on a regular basis. If you have environmental news to share from work, school or home, we'd love to hear from you: Just send an e-mail to [egilchrist@theherald.canwest.com](mailto:egilchrist@theherald.canwest.com). And read on for inspiration from fellow Calgarians and from people around the world.

— Yvonne Jeffery, Calgary Herald

## VITALS

Accessories  
for Africa**FUNDRAISER** • It's not too early to start thinking about Christmas presents.

Here's a way to buy gifts for your family and help raise money for destitute grandmothers raising orphaned grandchildren in Africa.

The third annual Purses for Africa sale will take place Oct. 18 at the South Calgary Community Association (3130 16th St. S.W.) from 10:30 a.m. to 3 p.m.

For more information, call 403-931-3539 or check out [pursesandprojectsforafrica.org](http://pursesandprojectsforafrica.org).

You'll find an array of funky felted, knitted and sewn bags, plus baby and toddler hats and accessories, just in time for winter.

Last year's sale raised more than \$16,000.

All money raised will go toward the Stephen Lewis Foundation's Grandmother's Campaign.

Tens of thousands of grandmothers are helping to raise more than 13 million HIV-AIDS orphans throughout Africa.

— Shelley Boettcher, Calgary Herald

## Chin up, ladies

**WORKSHOP** • When your boss criticizes you, you a) tell him to go to hell; b) go to the bathroom and cry; or c) spit out your coffee and then proceed with a and b.

If you chose any one of those — first, pull yourself together, woman, and check out an upcoming workshop at Women's Health Resources (1441 29th St. N.W.) called Handling Criticism.

You'll learn skills and attitudes to help you react in a much more positive, calm and confident way. Good for you in general, and good for your career.

The workshop will be held on Oct. 22 from 6 to 8 p.m. and costs \$35 to attend.

For more information or to register, call 403-944-2260.

— Michelle Magnan, Calgary Herald

ROBIN  
SUMMERFIELD

## Where's Noted?

Noted, the pop culture and trends column written by Calgary Herald writer Robin Summerfield will no longer appear regularly in Friday's Real Life section.

Instead, look for her column inside various Real Life sections during the week. It will still cover a broad range of topics — all with a quirky look at how we live.