

THE GREEN GUIDE



Leah Hennel, Calgary Herald

The parents of Jos Payn, 4, found a great homemade dragon costume at a garage sale. Bradley Gurtler, 11, is a tabletop complete with spaghetti made from wool.



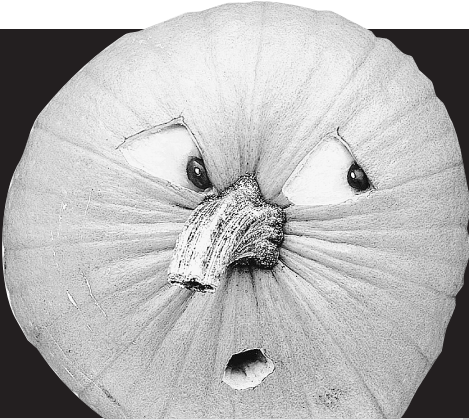
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Brooklyn Fee, 5, keeps it simple as a cat; Eight-year-old Tyler Fee's Frankenstein head is made from an upside-down milk jug; and Will Kaufman, 5, is wearing his goalie gear.



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Hayden Beatty, 3, is a hockey player; Taylor Hecker, 7, dons her dad's graduation hat to be a graduate; and Tate Kaufman paired camo gear with a painted box to become a tank.



GREEN HALLOWEEN GUIDE

Here, we cover your bases to get your little goblins on the road to a greener Halloween this year. Keep in mind that the first rule of going green is always reduce. What you don't buy is just as important as what you do buy. These tips come from greenhalloween.org and Green Plan-It's Kerry Kaufman. We also found some of our creative (and free) costume ideas at familyeducation.com.

Treats

- First off, collect treats in a reusable bag. The good ole' go-to would be a heavy duty pillow case.
- Don't go overboard by giving oodles of treats.
- Cut back on candy by giving out some "treasures," such as polished rocks, stickers, soy or beeswax crayons, glass beads, seeds or Play-Doh (you could make your own).
- To ease your fears of getting egged, make a basket with a mix of candy and non-candy treats and let kids pick what they want.
- Keep your eyes open for healthier treats from responsible companies (companies that make healthy food are often thoughtful about their packaging). Both Planet Organic and Community Natural Foods have healthy Salba snack crisps and organic lollipops on offer this Halloween. Community Natural Foods also has Denman Island chocolate pumpkins, Green & Blacks organic chocolate bites and Kettle Valley fruit leathers.



Costumes

- The key to a green costume is recycling and reusing. Add a dash of creativity and you just may have the best costume yet.
- Kaufman suggests hosting a costume swapping get-together and letting kids pick out their favourites.
 - Dig through the dress-up bin and see what exactly is in there and check out children's consignment shops for previously partied-in costumes.
 - Let your child's imagination lead the way. Look through old clothing for inspiration. Dad's dress shirt circa 1970 just might inspire a mad scientist outfit, while Mom's leftover '80s gear could inspire a mini-Madonna.
 - Familyeducation.com offers up all sorts of hilarious and affordable costumes, from static cling (wear all black and pin lighter coloured socks, underwear, ties and bibs all over yourself) to grandma (roll knee-highs down to your child's ankles, put rollers in hair, carry a big purse and wear bright lipstick, slippers and glasses).
- Here are some other ideas from care2.com:
- Mother Earth: Wear brown, green and blue clothing and attach stuffed animals to your body. Weave flowers in your hair.
 - Be a globe by cutting a large piece of cardboard into a circle and making a hole in the middle, big enough to fit around your waist. Add fabric or suspenders to hold it around your middle, and paint it with non-toxic paint. Make your body black with stars on it and paint your face like the moon. (Or adjust to make it daytime.)
- Take it up a notch by being global warming. Keep with the globe base, then add a thermometer in your mouth, lots of blush to your cheeks and carry around a spray bottle to keep "sweaty." (Possibly more of an adult costume idea.)
- For some eco-funny, dress up like David Suzuki or Al Gore. For Suzuki, just visit davidsuzuki.org, where you can download a Suzuki mask and print it out on recycled or reused paper. Wear a Suzuki-esque outfit, add the mask and hand out leaflets from the David Suzuki Foundation.

Decorations

- It can't be said enough: less is more.
- If you do decorate your house, make sure you save the decorations from year to year, so there isn't as much waste.
- Involve your kids in picking a pumpkin by making a family trip to a farmers' market. "Make sure to roast the pumpkin seeds and send them to school as a healthy snack," Kaufman says.
- Make sure you compost your pumpkins, along with your fall leaves, at one of the city's 30-plus seasonal drop-offs. Find your nearest location at calgary.ca.
- Help your neighbours out by collecting their pumpkins too, or letting them drop them off in your yard or in the back of your truck.



Events

- The Calgary Farmers' Market is hosting two Halloween events, from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Oct. 24 and Oct. 31. There will be pumpkin drawing and carving both days and on the 31st the market will be decorated, vendors will be dressed up and there will be costume parades around the venue. Sounds like the perfect way to celebrate Halloween with your young ones.
- Trick-or-treat for UNICEF no longer has kids walking around with orange collection boxes, but the program is still going strong raising money for schools in Africa through school programs here at home. Find out how to get your school involved next year at trickortreatforunicef.ca. Plus, anyone can donate to the cause by visiting the website or calling 403-270-2857.
- Attend or host a neighbourhood party that can replace trick-or-treating. Find tips for activities, games and crafts at greenhalloween.org

