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From the archives of Liberal's hometown newspaper since 1886.

Researched and compiled by Amira Coleman, L&T Reporter



1963

Window-painting, sock hop mark Halloween

As extensive decorations ranging from carved pumpkins to imitation cobwebs spread over trees indicate that Halloween is here, Liberal in 1963 was gearing up for the fun-filled holiday as well.

The recreation committee of the Chamber of Commerce was planning a window-painting competition and a sock hop. High school students were invited to come and paint the windows of local businesses to be judged and awarded trophies by people from the Liberal Art Association.

The annual sock hop was also happening at Rindom Hall on Halloween, where dance music was to be provided, along with prize money for best costume, along with other competitions.

The winner of the Halloween window-painting contest was announced in the Times a few days after the contest took place. Teams of high school students had gone around the Liberal business district to paint “spooky scenes” on 35 participating store windows.

The J.C. Penney window, painted by Barbara Love, Lynda Wright, Dianne Carlson and Leslie Maxwell, won first place in the advanced group. The Oklahoma Tire and Supply Co. window, painted by Sandra Carlson, Susan Patrick, Sherri Long and Donetta McGuire, won the top trophy in the beginners’ group.

On a more solemn note, Deputy Sheriff Ray Melton took two men to the state penitentiary and brought one back.

Elmer Dilbeck, a convicted rapist, and Roscoe Witmer, a parole violator, were incarcerated, and T.L. Bryant was brought to Liberal to be tried for hot check charges. Dilbeck had recently been convicted, by a Liberal jury, of raping a 19-year-old babysitter, and was entered to serve a five- to 21-year term.

Witmer’s probation had been revoked, he had non-support convictions, and was in for a one- to five-year sentence. Bryant was reported to have issued five felony no-account checks in 1960 before being sent to McPherson County.

We all know that once we get past Halloween, Christmas isn’t too far behind, and Nov. 2 was not too early for the post office to begin selling the 1963 Christmas stamp.

Postmaster Jean D. Fretz said that he had plenty on hand to “meet the expected demand.” The post office had learned its lesson from the previous year, when the first special Christmas stamp was issued, and an “unexpected demand exhausted the supply in many areas,” including Liberal.

The 1963 Christmas stamp was to depict the National Christmas Tree near the White House.

Mr. John Goodley of Liberal was featured in a front-page article of the Times, Oct 29, 1963. Goodley was moving to Cedar Rapids, Iowa, along with "one of the finest antique collections" in the area.

Goodley was a Rock Island Railroad detective in Liberal for about three years, and while working and living in Liberal, he won 42 ribbons from the Five-State Fair for his collection, including one purple grand championship.

The collection consisted of brass objects and dishes, with not so much furniture. Goodley didn't know an exact amount, but the 33-year-old estimated that his collection was worth several thousand dollars.

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