

parties, parties, parties

into the 80s

Find a sock? Party. Do your laundry? Party.

By Peg Sheldrick

Planning parties is such sweet sorrow now that Skylab has fallen and togas are passe. The potential host or hostess faces the chilling question, "What can I do that's different?" It's a horrifying dilemma that no young person should have to go through.

To help you through this puzzling party identity crisis, some suggestions follow, merely to pique your creativity and suggest something fresh to replace the usual dreary bacchanal.

For starters, why not give your celebration a local flavor? How about:

-an ASUN Election Nostalgia Party. This one could go on for weeks. Games to play include Results, Results, Who's Got the Results? as well as Ethical Hide and Seek. As for refreshments, perhaps some loaves and fishes for the Munson party.

-an Osborne Got Another Raise Party. Serve lots of food and invite as many of your teachers as possible. They can probably use a good meal.

-a Life in the Big Eight Party. Games could include Parking Place Scavenger Hunt, Guess the Mystery Dorm Food, and the perennial Regent-Student Sneer Down.

You can also base your party on a situation of wider scope. For example:

-a Reeferware Party. Inspired, of course, by the Tupperware Party, which permits homemakers to shop for needed utensils in the privacy and convenience of their own living rooms, the Reeferware Party would fulfill a similar function for those affected by the new paraphernalia bill. Brownies, of course, are a must for refreshments.

-a Farewell Wake for Disco. Possibly your absolute last chance to get away with wearing a three-piece white suit, this salute to a fading trend could feature a Bee Gees Simper-Alike Contest and a prize for anyone who can successfully tell one Donna Summer tune from another.

-a Bert Parks Relief Fund Party. "Cause" parties are always fun, since they seem to give some moral rationale for mispent hours of youthful decadence. And

who more than old Bert deserves our concern? Monies generated will go toward getting the grand old man of the Miss America Pageant an agent and a hair transplant.

Parties with a musical orientation are always a good time. Why not try:

-a Punk Party. Only uninvited guests will be allowed in. Razor blade necklaces and tire chains should be offered as the door prize, Long Distance Spitting and Pin the Tail on the Helpless Animal Contests would be apropos. For refreshments, what else but cardboard pictures of food, nail polish, and raisinettes?

-a Come as Your Favorite TV Hit Record Offer Personality Party. Only one Slim Whitman will be admitted.

-a Linda Ronstadt Music Party, featuring costumes from every decade since rock began, from all styles of music. Mock Turtle soup and imitation anything would serve for refreshments.

Occult theme parties can be amusing and often spirited. You might want to try:

-a Seance Party. Try to raise something difficult to contact and potentially non-

existent, such as Chuck Barris's conscience, or Rona Barrett's intellect.

-an Amityville Horror Surprise Party. You and a group of friends gather at the house of an unsuspecting acquaintance and re-enact the events of that popular thriller. A million laughs for everyone-except, perhaps, the unwitting victim.

-an Exorcist III Party. Invitees would take turns spitting up pea soup and trying to twist their heads completely around.

One of the hardest things to plan about a party is when to have it. Any occasion will do, but if you feel the need for a specific event, the following are just a few of the holidays you can use as an excuse for a celebration:

Edward Everett Horton's Birthday (March 18th)

The Anniversary of the Last Time You Did Laundry

National Club-a-Vegetarian-with-a-Leg-of-Lamb Week

The Arrival (One Year Late) of a New Movie in Lincoln

A Live Episode of Saturday Night Live Finding a Lost Sock

Costume-clad party-goers create different identities

By Bill Graf

Two members of a witch's coven loom in the shadow of a full moon. A passer-by becomes disturbed by the scene and although his life is in no danger, he makes haste to put as much distance between himself and the evil-looking figures.

The witches break into uncontrollable laughter. Not because they make a practice of striking fear into strangers' hearts. But rather it's because their costumes for the evening's costume party have proven frightfully convincing.

Each witch stamps out his cigarette butt, one gives his cape a whirl and they enter the house to join the others who have assumed a special identity for the night.

"Costume parties can be a freeing experience and a lot of fun," said Richard Dienstbier, chairman of the UNL psychology department.

Dienstbier explained that there hasn't been any formal research done on why people go to costume parties. But he said, "A costume frees the person from acting in a way that everyone expects."

He said that especially when someone chooses a costume that is totally contrary to their personality they may abandon their every-day role and step into another reality for the duration of the party.

Linda Stuart of Theatrical Costumiers of Omaha said "escapism" is part of the fun of costume parties.

Depending on the customer and the costume, she said, "They can lose their identification and become that person."

"There's a little of that in all the people that come in to get a costume," she added.

Also depending on the costume is the price of the identity transformation.

Costumes at Fringe and Tassel in Lincoln, range from \$10 to \$20 for the evening or weekend, Terri Moran said.

However she said the bulk of their costumes are around \$15.

Bob Carroll of Deluxe Costume World said their rates varied from \$12 to \$30.

Carroll said the most commonly asked for costumes are of animals, clowns and saloon girls. But this year, he said, "nothing is as big as Miss Piggy."

Darth Vader isn't as popular as he was a few years ago, but according to Carroll, the character refuses to die as a favorite in costume shops.

Stuart said the favorites at their shop are also animals and saloon girls. But occasionally they get some strange requests.

"A couple wanted to go to a party as a Q-Tip and an ear. Another person wanted to go as a crow's nose. And we've had requests for the Fruit of the Loom characters."

Stuart explained that they tried to make the Fruit of the Loom costume. "But we didn't get the grapes finished," she said.

All of the costume shop employees interviewed said that Halloween is their big day. But they also do costumes for parades, plays, advertisements and theme parties which help make the costume business profitable year around.

Moran said they have supplied a pimp and hooker party, a roaring twenties party, toga parties, a Valentine's day massacre party, a M*A*S*H party and a funeral party.



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