

Changing Faces



Men 'dragging' out Halloween outfits

BY BRET SCHULTE
Senior Reporter

While not toasting the monarchy's lavishness, local queens will be in attendance at Halloween parties Friday.

According to retailers, women's clothing is being dragged out of stores hand over hairy fist by college males seeking costumes for the holiday. Although many would argue, transvestites are fashionable — for Friday, at least.

"I have noticed that a lot of the younger kids are cross-dressing," said Charles Seger, manager of Goodwill Industries thrift store, 3910 N. 27th St. "Some of the men are buying women's dresses and heels. It seems to be a fad."

Long seen as the perfect opportunity to express hidden desires and long-suppressed personal fantasies, Halloween is frequently the holiday of choice for covert self-expression.

Ranging from 6-foot bongos to strands of DNA, costumes of college students are exercises in originality, diversion and unabashed shock value — not to mention self-expression. A Goodwill employee who identified herself only as Linda said, "I think it shows their fantasies."

Indeed, in lieu of recent sexual scandals by prominent figures, it seems male fantasies are being enacted by locals as well.

"I know two guys that are going as French maids," said Karen Jordan-Anderson, owner of Second Wind, 1640 O St. "(Another) bought a girl scout costume from my store."

Other Lincoln residents are dressing to either emulate or mock those same sex scandals. Gail Hohl, owner of Boog's Rock 'N Roll Boutique, 122 S. 52nd St., was recently visited by a guy looking for a pink garter belt and hose.

"He wanted to be Marv Albert for Halloween," she said. "Where else in town would you get that stuff? So he came here."

While most retailers refused to comment on the Freudian implications of going in drag for Halloween, they agree that most men don't know a lot about women, especially when it comes to dressing like one.

"Guys that aren't practicing transvestites that come in for women's costumes tend to giggle a lot," Jordan-Anderson said. "I love it when we can just cut to the chase instead of tip-toeing around it."

Many retailers said transgender Halloween costumes are nothing unusual, but their popularity this year seems to have perked up a bit, said Phyllis Spahn, owner of Fringe and Tassel Costumes, 735 O St.

"We always do a certain amount of cross-dressing, but it seems to be a bit more than usual (this year)," Spahn said. "I would say men are dressing more flashy now, usually in longer, fancier dresses that are beaded."

Experiences at the Salvation Army aren't quite so glamorous, Linda said. Most men who are looking at women's clothing usually end up looking like their grandmother, she said.

"A lot are going as old ladies," Linda said.

But this doesn't mean they don't care about how they look.

"We have to match accessories for them," she said. "I had one customer who wanted everything to match: his shoes, his hat, his necklaces. He was a construction worker."

Although most retailers have different experiences with men's taste in women's clothing, most agree men love women's hair.

But gentlemen don't necessarily prefer blondes.

"Guys certainly enjoy putting on the hair," Jordan-Anderson said. "Guys prefer red wigs, much more so than blondes, last year and this year."

Spahn believes it's better not to ask about details this time of year when she is renting out certain accessories.

"The main thing we are selling is a lot of wigs," she said. "But we don't know what they are using them for."

Regardless of personal taste, the growing acceptance of cross-dressing in our society is perhaps most noticeable during the Halloween season, when everyone is allowed to be someone else.

Jordan-Anderson's costume shop is based on this very principle of expression.

"I love it when they come in and say 'I need a dress,'" she said.



PHOTO ILLUSTRATIONS BY SANDY SUMMERS/DN
TRAMPS, VAMPIRES AND VICTIMS will be among those during the dark Halloween night. The capes, velvet and crosses worn by these cemetery marauders are courtesy of Boog's Rock 'N Roll Boutique, 122 S. 52nd St. Makeup is by Anne Marie Terrell.



Costume ideas vary from risque to tacky

BY BRET SCHULTE
Senior Reporter

Instead of digging out old costumes from a graveyard of dead ideas, check out local retailers for original costume concepts at prices that won't kill you.

Fringe and Tassel Costumes, 735 O St., is a Haymarket retailer specializing in rental costumes, both factory-made and store originals. To complete any costume, Fringe and Tassel also offers a variety of accessories, including makeup, wigs, hand-cuffs and prosthetics.

Employee Paul Pearson says people are showing plenty of skin this year, and the fastest costume to go has been the harem girl, closely followed by, ironically enough, flappers — women liberated from traditional sex roles in the 1920s. The store offers a variety of complete costumes and assists in piecing together original ideas.

Boog's Rock 'N Roll Boutique, 122 S. 52nd, boasts a unique and appropriately frightening collection of gothic, leather and lace apparel for the

"I have retro stuff ... that people will come in and buy if they are going as the Brady Bunch."

JENNIFER JOHNSON
Ruby Begonia's owner

Halloween season. According to owner Gail Hohl, the traditional vampire concept is still a popular one, but the actual costume has changed a bit since the days of Bela Lugosi. Hohl recommends heavily studded, thigh-high, 5-inch heeled boots; a bustier; and a long brocade velvet or satin dress. Whips also are available, she said.

But the biggest seller this year for women are Santa's helpers' suits that come with a matching hat and g-string.

"You would want them to sit

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