

COVER STORIES

October Is A Harvest Of Fun

Gather your little ghosts, goblins, monsters, Harry Potters, witches on broomsticks and princesses, and join participating Petaluma downtown merchants for the annual “Trick or Treat Trail”. The fun begins on Halloween day, Monday, October 31st at 3 PM and lasts until 5. Merchants in Petaluma’s historic downtown area will be handing out Halloween candy and other seasonal goodies. Participating merchants will display orange and black balloons. It’s a spook-tacular way to celebrate a safe Halloween. For more information, call the Petaluma Downtown Association at 707.762.9348.

On Saturday, October 29th, from 11 AM to 1 PM, The Plaza North and Petaluma Plaza Shopping Centers will hold their annual **Bill Soberanes Halloween Festival**. The legendary Argus-Courier columnist is forever linked with Halloween due to his involvement with Harry Houdini séances beginning in the 1950’s. World-renowned Hungarian magician Houdini died on Halloween in 1926, having made a pact with his wife Bess to make contact with her from the grave. Bess held séances for ten years before giving up, but others around the world have continued the efforts. Petaluma séances were by invitation, held in local Victorian mansions, and continued after Soberanes’ death in 2003 at the Petaluma Historical Library and Museum. No séance will be held at The Plaza North and Petaluma Plaza festival, but the event is always fun for kids and adults alike. The Plaza North and Petaluma Plaza Shopping Centers are located at the northwest corner of North McDowell and East Washington in Petaluma. For details, call 707.762.2234.

The First Annual Occi-



Occidental Harvest Market Festival will be held Friday and Saturday, October 28th and 29th. The weekend activities will start on Friday at 1 PM with the annual **Children’s Halloween Parade** featuring costumed students and staff from Salmon Creek School parading down Main Street in Occidental. Occidental Merchants and Businesses will then be serving up “Tricks and Treats” for children and festival attendees all weekend.

On Friday, festivities will continue at the Occidental Bohemian Farmers Market near Howard’s Station Café and will include a **Scarecrow Contest**, pumpkin and face painting activities for children, a pumpkin carving demonstration a raffle by local artist Chris Hataway, a Paella Feed by Chef Gerard Nebesky, celebrity chef presentations, live music and a chance to visit local farmers’s booths for the last time this season. Admission to the Harvest Market Festival on Friday is free.

On Saturday, Occidental businesses and restaurants will be serving up special Halloween goodies and treats. Saturday evening there will be family fun activities at the Occidental Community Center at the corner of Bohemian Highway and Graton Road, including a special **Haunted House and Carnival**. These events are fundraisers for the Occidental Y Extension which funds after school pro-

grams. For more information, call 707.874.9407, or visit occidental.org.

Get into to “spirit” of an old fashioned Halloween with Heritage Homes of Petaluma’s “**Halloween House Tour**” on Sunday, October 30th. Take a step back into Victorian-era Halloween celebrations and decor at each of the vintage homes on this unique walking tour. Watch a Victorian Parlor Séance and visit a house decorated as a Witch’s Castle. The tour departs at 6 PM from the Petaluma Historical Library & Museum on the corner of Fourth & B Streets in downtown Petaluma. Tickets may be purchased when you arrive and cost \$15 for adults and teens, \$5 for children 12 and under. The tour will last about 3 hours. All proceeds from this tour will benefit Heritage Homes’ fund to save at-risk buildings. For more information, call 707.762.3456 or visit heritagepetaluma.com

El Dia de Los Muertos (Day of the Dead) is a Mexican festival celebrating the lives of family, friends and relatives who have died. The festival is based upon pre-Hispanic death practices and Roman Catholic religious rituals, specifically the feasts of All Saints’ Day and All Souls’ Day, November 1st and 2nd. During these days, it is said, the dead joyously return to visit their living relatives.

In Petaluma, from October 15th through November 2nd, activities will include a **Procession of Giant Puppets**, a performance by Folklorical Ballet Netzuahualcoyotl, a workshop on “**Making Traditional Sugar Skulls**”, art exhibits, and a wide range of “altares con ofrendas”. These alters are beautifully prepared and decorated by local residents in honor of family and friends who have died. HeebeJeebe and Boomerang join the Petaluma Arts Council in providing **community alter space** for El Dia de los Muertos in the hallway of the LanMart Building, 12

Kentucky Street in downtown Petaluma. Community members are encouraged to bring photos and remembrances of deceased loved ones for these alters. From October 22nd through November 10th, the Gallery Upstairs at Boomerang will host “**Alternate Dias**”, area artists’ interpretations of the Day of the Dead. A reception for the artists will be held on Saturday, October 23rd, from 6 to 8 PM. The Gallery Upstairs is also located in the LanMart Building at 12 Kentucky Street in Petaluma. For more information, call 707.773.3222.

The opening ceremony will feature Mariachi music, bilingual story-telling and a performance of traditional songs from Veracruz, La Hausteca and Jalisco.

All events are open to the public and will be free. A full schedule is available at PetalumaArtsCouncil.org or by calling Margie Helm at 707.778.9922 or Abraham Solar at 707.769.4195. Those interested in helping with the procession can call Kat Lilith at 707.762.3053. The Petaluma Arts Council has issued a call for art for the Fine Arts exhibition. Anyone interested should call 707.766.5200.

On Sunday October 30th, from 1 to 3 PM, the Sonoma County Museum will also hold a “Day of the Dead Community Celebration”.



THE PETALUMA POST

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There are plenty of places for Halloween outings in the Petaluma Area. Here are just a few:

Grossi Farms, at 6652 Petaluma Hill Road across from Sonoma State University, has U-pick pumpkins, hayrides, an organic vegetable stand, and a hay pile to climb. They're open every day in October from 9 AM to dusk. Call 707.664.1602 for details.

Along with picking pumpkins, you can milk a cow and eat your fill of fresh ice cream and cheese at **Springhill Jersey Cheese'** working dairy farm, 4235 Springhill Road. They're open 9 AM to dusk daily. Call 707.762.3446 for information.

Petaluma Pumpkin Patch & A'Mazing Corn Maze, at 550 Stony Point Road, just off Highway 101 and Petaluma Boulevard North, offers a 4-acre corn maze open daily from 10 AM and Friday and Saturday nights until 10 PM (when you can try to navigate the maze at night). They also have already-picked pumpkins, Indian corn, gourds, and squash. Call 707.763.3132.

Adobe Pumpkin Farm, at 2478 East Washington at the corner of Adobe Road, has a corn maze, weekend hay rides and BBQ, a haunted barn, and U-pick pumpkins. They're open daily from 10 AM. For more information, call 707.763.6416.