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Conejo Valley & Malibu

Your Local Pet Resource Publication

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OCTOBER 2025

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Spooky Tongue Twister Phrases

- He thrusts his fists against the posts and still insists he sees the ghosts.
- Creepy crawler critters crawl through creepy crawly craters.
- Dracula digs dreary dark dungeons.
- Ghostly ghouls gather gleefully to golf on ghostly golf courses.
- Gobbling gargoyles gobbled gobbling goblins.
- Horribly hoarse hootin' owls hoot howls of horror in halloween haunted houses.
- If black cats could blow bubbles, how big of bubbles would black cats blow?
- If two witches would watch two watches, which witch would watch which watch?
- Professional Pumpkin Pickers are prone to pick the plumpest pumpkins.
- Transylvanian Tree Trimmers are trained to trim the tallest Transylvanian trees.
- Several spooky slimy spiders spun sulking by the sea
- The ochre ogre ogled the poker.
- Six slippery snails, slid slowly seaward.
- Which witch wished which wicked wish.
- I wish to wish the wish you wish to wish, But if you wish the wish the witch wishes, I won't wish the wish you wish to wish.

Kale Pulling

This hearty green vegetable is now a fashionable menu item but, once upon a time, kale stalks were used to predict your romantic future. In Robert Burns's poem 'Halloween', young men and women pull stalks from the ground after dark with their eyes closed or blindfolded. According to Scottish folklore, the length and shape of the stalk was said to represent your future lover's height and figure. Even the amount of soil left clinging to the roots was symbolic – a generous coating indicated future wealth and a clean stalk suggested lean days ahead.

Barks & Meow's Express!

CV - OCT 2025

Protectors and Good Omens

While black cats are sometimes portrayed as bad luck in Western cultures, many traditions see cats as bringers of good fortune and protectors against evil spirits.

***Celtic lore**: The Cat Sìth was a fairy creature resembling a large black cat with a white spot on its chest. Leaving out a saucer of milk for the Cat Sìth on the Celtic holiday of Samhain (an ancestor of Halloween) was believed to bless a household with good luck.

***Norse mythology**: The goddess Freyja rode a chariot pulled by two large cats. As the goddess of love, beauty, and fertility, her feline-drawn chariot associated cats with good fortune.

***Asian traditions**: In Japanese culture, the *Maneki-neko*, or "beckoning cat," is a popular talisman that brings good luck and fortune. In China, cats are seen as guardians who ward off evil spirits.

Fun Trivia

*Famous Halloween cats include Salem from Sabrina the Teenage Witch, Thackery Binx from Hocus Pocus, Church from Pet Sematary, and the cat in the movie Cat's Eye. Other famous cats with a connection to the Halloween aesthetic are Jiji from Kiki's Delivery Service, Wednesday from The Addams Family, and the unnamed cat from Coraline, and not forgetting Pyewacket, as the cat familiar in the 1958 film Bell, Book and Candle.

*In Tasseography - fortune-telling by tea leaves - a cat signifies false friends and deceit; someone lies in treacherous ambush, probably a false friend - 'beware'!

*Dogs are believed to be aware of the presence of ghosts, and their barking, whimpering or howling is often the first warning of supernatural occurrences.

*There really are so-called vampire bats, but they're not from Transylvania. They live in Central and South America and feed on the blood of cattle, horses and birds.

*Famous haunted houses include the Winchester Mystery House in San Jose, California, the Lizzie Borden House in Fall River, Massachusetts, the LaLaurie Mansion in New Orleans, the Myrtles Plantation in St. Francisville, Louisiana, and the Whaley House in San Diego, California.

*Halloween started in Europe with the ancient Celtic festival of Samhain, celebrated over 2,000 years ago in what is now Ireland, the UK, and northern France. The Christian church later influenced the holiday, and by the 9th century, October 31 was known as All Hallows' Eve across Western Christendom, a name that evolved into Halloween.

GHOSTLY JOKE

The Genie & the Manager

A junior manager, a senior manager and their boss are on their way to a meeting. On their way through a park, they come across a wonder lamp. They rub the lamp and a ghost appears.

The ghost says, "Normally, one is granted three wishes, but as you are three, I will allow one wish each."

So the eager senior manager shouted, "I want the first wish. I want to be in the Bahamas, on a fast boat and have no worries." Pfuffff and he was gone.

Now the junior manager could not keep quiet and shouted, "I want to be in Florida with beautiful girls, plenty of good food and lots of cocktails." Pfuffff, and he was also gone.

The BOSS calmly said, "I want these two idiots back in the office after lunch at 12:35pm!"

QUIZ

1. What were originally used as the first Jack-o'-Lanterns?
2. Which famous magician actually died on Halloween?
3. What is a lycanthrope?
4. Who is said to haunt the White House Rose Garden?
5. Phasmophobia is the fear of what?
6. What is the name of the black cat in the movie "Hocus Pocus"?

ANSWERS

1. Turnips. 2. Harry Houdini. 3. Werewolf.
4. Dolly Madison. 5. Ghosts. 6. Binks.

Animals Synonomous with Halloween

*Ancient Romans believed that owls were bad omens and their cries were thought of as a sign of death. Since owls only come out at night, they are also thought of as evil spirits.
*A wolf's cry in the night is a piercing sound that is not only used to frighten us on Halloween but also shows up in movies just before things get really scary.
*Creepy crawly arachnids can certainly give people the heebie jeebies. After all, what's Halloween without a few black spiders and hanging webs?
*Tales of toads and witches are a big part of Halloween. They are found in witches' brews.
*It is believed that bats would fly around witches' fires to catch the moths that were drawn to the light and heat.

Guinness World Records

*According to the Guinness Book of World Records, the largest collection of haunted dolls is outside Mexico City on the Island of Dolls ("La Isla de las Muñecas"). Collector Don Julian Santana Barrera built the collection over more than 50 years before he passed away in 2001.

*The largest Halloween gathering was achieved by 17,777 participants at an event organized by the New Orleans Saints and NBC Sports (both USA) at the Superdome in New Orleans, Louisiana, USA, on 31 October 2010. The attempt was filmed as part of the nationwide broadcast of "Sunday Night Football" on NBC during which the New Orleans Saints defeated the Pittsburgh Steelers.

TAROT CARDS

Tarot cards go back to the 1400s. Based on a series of epic poems written by Francesco Petrarca, the cards mimicked the entire human existance from love, chastity, death, time, fame and eternity. As time went on the Tarot deck evolved from the 6 suits to the 4 suits we have today, staves, wands, cups and swords. Those with the ability were able to decipher the hidden meanings in the cards and by using the cards, a person's past and future could be determined.

Halloween Quiz

Q: How did World War II affect trick-or-treating?

A: Sugar was the first commodity to be rationed in the U.S. during the war, starting in 1942, so candy distribution had to be adjusted accordingly. When the ration was lifted in 1947, though, candy production and the popularization of trick-or-treating picked up.

Q: Which first lady was the first to decorate the White House for Halloween?

A: Mamie Eisenhower IN 1958.

Q: What was Bram Stoker's original name for Dracula?

A: Count Wampyr. Wampyr is the German word for vampire. Stoker changed the name to Dracula after seeing the name in a book he borrowed from the library while on summer vacation in 1890.

Q: What is "souling" and what do people ask for door to door?

A: Soul-cakes. The tradition of going door to door and singing and collecting soul-cakes (small little cakes to commemorate the dead) began in the 15th century. This activity didn't involve any costumes or threats to trick but likely influenced our modern day tradition of "trick-or-treating."

Halloween Folklore/Superstitions

*According to an old folk tradition, if you wear your clothes inside out and walk backwards on Halloween, you will see a witch at midnight.

*To break a mirror will supposedly bring you seven years bad luck. The belief that a broken mirror brings bad luck most likely has its origins in the simple fact that reflections of ourselves are uncanny and often unnerving (particularly on a "bad hair" day), so humans have long had bad associations with them. For example, the Greek myth of Narcissus, or the idea that a crack in a mirror would somehow break its charm or trap one's soul.

*Opening an umbrella in the house is to bring bad luck. there is a wide-spread superstition that opening an umbrella indoors brings bad luck, with origins potentially stemming from ancient Egypt, where it was seen as an insult to the sun god, or from Victorian England, where heavy umbrellas could cause physical harm or damage to property. While the precise origin is unclear, the belief has persisted, transitioning from a practical safety warning to a more generalized notion of misfortune, including disturbing home spirits or inviting misfortune into the home.

*Apple Bobbing, also known as 'ducking' or 'dooking in Scotland, or Snap Apple Night in Ireland and Newfoundland, apple bobbing is an ancient Halloween tradition. The likely origins are the merging of the Celtic Samhain with the Roman fruits and orchards goddess Pomona, whose symbol was the apple. When conquering Britain, Romans introduced the apple to British soil. Already a powerful symbol in Roman culture, when Celts cut the apple in half (lengthways) they observed that the seeds formed a pentagram; a symbol they associated with fertility.

Silly Halloween Puns

1. A vampire joined the police force so he could learn the correct way to get a stakeout.
2. As one witch said to another witch, "I want one of those new computers that has a spell checker."
3. Western Union opened an office in a graveyard so the spooks could send and receive cryptograms.
4. Halloween is going to be great - I can feel it in my bones!
5. Ghosts make the best cheer-leaders. They have lots of spirit!

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ARE ON OUR WEBSITE
www.petzgazette.com

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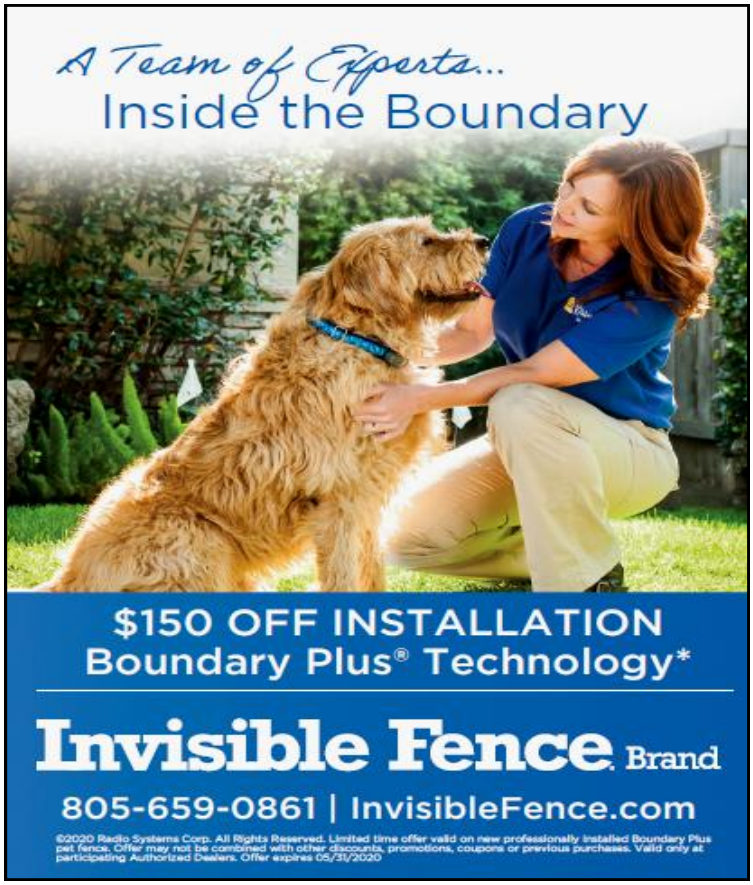
AAA Petsitting	818-269-3419
Canine Castle II	805-497-1500
Kelsey Kare Pet Sitting/DW	805-812-6900

CV PET GROOMERS

Canine Castle II	805-497-1500
Scizzors N Suds Grooming	818-706-1880

Did you know ….!

The traditional Halloween colors of orange and black actually stem from the pagan celebration of autumn and the harvest, with orange symbolizing the colors of the crops and turning leaves, while black marks the "death" of summer and the changing season.



CV - Local Pet-Friendly Outdoor Restaurants, Café's, Deli's & Coffee Shops

Restaurant	Location	Phone #
Brent's Deli	Wlk Vlg	805-557-1882
East Coast Bagels	Wlk Vlg	805-494-9099
Finney's Crafthouse	Wlk Vlg	805-230-9950
Naughty Pine Brewing Co	Wlk Vlg	805-906-2140
Tifa Chocolate & Gelato	Wlk Vlg	805-796-1893
Crown & Anchor	Wlk Vlg	805-497-0070
Little Calf Creamery & Café	T.O/WLV	805-497-2000
Longevity Coffee	T.O.	805-836-2849
Snapper Jack's	T.O	805-494-9777
Thousand Oaks Fish & Chips	T.O.	805-495-1614
MythPoint Bistro	T.O.	805-443-4242
Toppers Pizza Place	T.O	805-495-4444
The Tipsy Goat	T.O	805-494-9996
Valentino's Pizza & Deli	T.O	805-380-4969
Breakfast Café	Oak Park	818-865-8807
Tony's New York Pizza	Oak Park	818-706-6074
Agoura's Famous Deli	Agoura Hills	818-889-9113
Tifa Chocolate & Gelato	Agoura Hills	818-879-0685
Caffe Aroma	Newbury Park	805-375-7150
Country Harvest Restaurant	Newbury Park	805-375-4598
Saffron Indian Restaurant	Newbury Park	805-499-7115
Pickles Deli	Newbury Park	805-480-4800
The Sandwich Spot	Newbury Park	805-375-3400

OCTOBER 2025 EVENTS #1

Blessing of the Animals

Saturday, October 4, our 6 PM worship service will move outside to the big back parking lot. This is a worship service where you can bring your pets!!

Country Spirit's Nancy Lee will lead music. We will read scripture, hear a homily reflecting on a myriad of stories from the Bible that pertain to animals, and say a word of blessing over all the pets.

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Halloween in the Park AND Trunk or Treat

Wednesday, October 29th
5:30PM - 8:00PM

For participating partners & contest times scan here

Costume Contest, Games, Food Trucks, Vendors, Crafts & More

Community Center
1605 E. Burnley St., Camarillo

For more details:
www.pvrpd.org/events
805.482.1996

OCTOBER 2025 EVENTS #2

Blessing of the Animals

1st Sunday of October - 10:15 am Outside Service

stfrancischurchofsimi.org

Bring your furry, feathered, hooved, or scaly friends to St. Francis of Assisi Episcopal Church for our annual Blessing of the Animals service, a time-honored tradition celebrating the special bond between humans and their animal companions.

Join us on St. Francis' Day, October 5th at 10:15 AM as we gather on the church patio located at 280 Royal Avenue, Simi Valley, for a special Sunday Service and to receive individual blessings for our beloved pets.

All are welcome to attend this heartwarming interfaith service and luncheon. Mark your calendar and invite your family, friends, and pets to join us for a memorable and meaningful experience.

We ask that all animals be leashed or crated while attending services.

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Halloween!

OCTOBER 2025 EVENTS

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CONEJO VALLEY

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Barkingham Palace	Mobile	CV	805-953-6060
Canine Castle II	Retail	TO	805-497-1500
Cosmopawlitan Grooming	Retail	TO	805-380-4333
Debbie's Pet Grooming	Retail	WV	805-494-5007
Fluff City Pet Spa	Retail	NP	805-262-2460
Four Paws Mobile Pet Grm	Mobile	CV	833-444-7297
Fur-ever Pet Grooming	Retail	WV	818-597-9858
Indiana Bones Temple of Grm	Retail	TO	805-495-5421
It's Pawfect Grooming	Ret/Mob	WV	818-991-3310
Pawsitive Vibes	Retail	NP	805-490-1165
Paw Spa Mob. Grm	Mobile	CV	805-300-3310
Plush Puppy	Retail	NP	805-498-7602
Profound Hound Mob.Grm	Mobile	CV	805-885-7690
Sarah’s Sassy Pets Mob. Grm	Mobile	CV	818-835-0266
Scizzors & Suds	Retail	WV	818-706-1880
Swaggs Pet Grooming	Retail	AH	818-661-7731
The Cat Doctor	Retail	TO	805-416-2650
The Grateful Groomers	Mobile	CV	805-409-0841
The Shaggy Chic Grm Spa	Ret/Mob	OP	818-879-9663
Zoomin Groomin Mob. Pet Spa	Mobile	CV	818-495-9954

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Whether you prefer retail or mobile groomers, we have compiled a list of local pet groomers to pamper your precious pet! Give them a call or click on your preferred groomer to view their details.

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All Animals Veterinary Hospital 23815 Ventura Blvd, Calabasas, CA 91302	818-600-1838
Animal Clinic Of The Oaks 575 E Thousand Oaks Blvd, Thousand Oaks, CA 91360	805-496-1122
Animal Hospital of Thousand Oaks 1772 E Avenida De Los Arboles, Thousand Oaks, CA 91362	805-493-5540
Arboles Animal Clinic 413 E Avenida de Los Arboles, Thousand Oaks, Ca 91360	805-492-2430
Borchard Veterinary Clinic 2223 Michael Dr, Newbury Park, CA 91320	805-499-1977
Caring Hands Veterinary Hospital 1020 E Avenida De Los Arboles, Thousand Oaks, CA 91360	805-492-4951
Conejo Valley Veterinary Hospital 3580 Willow Lane, Thousand Oaks, Ca 91361	805-495-4671
Dr. Allison Tashnek Mobile Vet Serving Conejo Valley,Simi Valley & Moorpark & Camarillo Areas	805-410-4086
VCA Camino Animal Clinic 700 N Moorpark Rd, Thousand Oaks, CA 91360	805-497-0969
Midtown Veterinary Clinic 3333 Kimber Dr, Ste D, Newbury Park, CA 91320	805-498-6694
Newbury Park Veterinary Clinic 1536-A Newbury Rd, Ste A, Newbury Park, CA 91320	805-498-3684
Kanan Veterinary Hospital 652 Lindero Canyon Rd, Ste B, Oak Park, CA 91377	818-532-7434
Paw Works Veterinary Hospital 1625 E. Thousand Oaks Blvd #A, Thousand Oaks, CA 91362	805-870-9908
Slaton Veterinary Hospital 3900 E. Thousand Oaks Blvd, Ste 101 Westlake Village, CA 91362	805-269-6696
Townsgate Pet Hospital 2806 Townsgate Rd, Ste C Westlake Village, CA 91361	805-230-1999
The Cat Doctor 760 Thousand Oaks Blvd, Thousand Oaks, CA 91360	805-495-1678
Veterinary Angels Medical Center 29348 Roadside Dr, Agoura Hills, CA 91301	818-865-1800
Veterinary Specialty & Emergency Center **(24/7 Emergency)** 2967 N Moorpark Rd, Thousand Oaks, CA 91360	**805-492-2436**
Village Veterinary Hospital 822 Hampshire Rd, Ste G, Westlake Village, CA 91361	805-496-0883
VCA Westlake Village Animal Hospital 31166 Via Colinas, Westlake Village, CA 91362	805-497-4900
VetsASAP.com Mobile Veterinary Care (Ventura Co)	844-838-7272
Western Veterinary Center 4990 Reyes Adobe Rd, Agoura Hills, Ca 91301	805-957-7387

If there are other Veterinary Services we may have missed, please let us know so they can be included in this list. THANK YOU

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HALLOWEEN

Black Cat Superstitions

In Scotland in 1590, the witch John Fian and other members of his coven, were charged with having raised or attempted to raise a storm so as to drown King James VI of Scotland (and the first King of England) upon returning from Denmark. Fian and his accomplices used cats, by flinging them into the sea to effect their devilish purpose.

What is a witch's hat called?

The cone-shaped hat worn by most fictional witches is called a pointed hat. Pointed hats have been associated with witches for centuries. In fact, the earliest known depiction of a witch wearing a pointed hat is from a 14th-century manuscript. There are a few theories about why witches are associated with pointed hats.

Spiders have also been thought to have mystical powers because they can spin webs. In ancient times, this ability caused them to be associated with magic, and again witchcraft. So again, it's fitting that they would be associated with Halloween.

Did you ever wonder where the whole Jack-o-Lantern thing came from? Well, before there were flashlights and glow sticks, Irish people used to carve out turnips and put a candle in them for a lantern. When they came to America, they noticed there weren't many turnips, but lots of pumpkins, so they used pumpkins instead!

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WHY ARE PEOPLE SO SUPERSTITIOUS ABOUT CATS?

Is there any other animal on Earth so surrounded by myth and superstition than one of our most popular pets — the housecat? Simultaneously revered, considered bad luck, considered good luck, feared and beloved, cats are the subject of folklore and stories that go back centuries and continue even today. Why do we harbor so many beliefs about cats? After all, who's ever heard of a black dog bringing bad luck?

Cats have always held a mysterious spot in world culture. In ancient Egypt, cats were worshipped as gods. India and China both had cat fertility goddesses — Sastht and Li Chou, respectively. Irish folklore features a big black cat named Iruscan. And the Vikings worshipped Freya, the cat goddess of love and beauty.

Not all cultures, however, viewed cats quite so lovingly. The Hebrew story of the vampire Lilith tells how she would take the form of a black cat and prey on newborn babies. In the Middle Ages, many believed that cats associated with witches, as many lonely old women fed and cared for strays. Another belief was that witches actually took the form of cats so they could roam the streets incognito.

The most popular cat superstition is that you'll have bad luck if a black cat crosses your path. We found an interesting explanation for this one. When Egyptians began worshipping the black cat goddess Bast, Christians became convinced that black cats were demons in disguise, and burned many felines. They believed that if a demon crossed your path, it created a barrier of evil, severing you from God and heaven.

Other cat superstitions include:

- One white hair on a black cat is good luck.
- Kittens born in May have special powers.
- Black cats protect fishermen at sea.
- Put a cat in the empty cradle of newlyweds, and a baby will arrive soon.
- If a cat sneezes three times, someone will catch a cold.
- Cats have nine lives.
- Rubbing a cat's tail on the eyelid will cure a sty.
- When a cat washes its ears a lot, it will rain.
- Having a cat in a theater is good luck.
- If you kill a black cat, you sacrifice your soul to the devil.
- Cats can suck the breath from sleeping children.

It stands to reason that these superstitions originated through a combination of so many ancient rituals, worshipping and demonizing of cats. But why do we believe and carry on these superstitions in the first place? Cornell University psychology professor Tom Gilovich says it's just the way our brains work; that we look for cause and effect where none exists [source: Spencer].

For example, take the legend that cats can steal the breath of children. This superstition likely came from a cat snuggling up with a baby for warmth, or sniffing the baby's mouth because of the smell of milk. Or, more tragically, perhaps a baby died from sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS) and the family cat happened to be in the room.

Whether or not these superstitions have any truth to them, we bet your stomach still flutters a bit when a black cat crosses your path.

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Dining out with your Dog!

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East Coast Bagels	Wlk Vlg	805-494-9099
Finney's Crafthouse	Wlk Vlg	805-230-9950
Naughty Pine Brewing Co	Wlk Vlg	805-906-2140
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List your pet-friendly establishment here for FREE! (space permitting)

HALLOWEEN
Pet Safety Tips

NO SWEETS FOR YOUR SWEETIE
Keep your pets away from candy (especially chocolate); avoid placing bowls on the ground.

KEEP PUMPKIN AWAY FROM THE PUMPKIN
Decorative plants can be toxic candle-lit jack-o-lanterns are fire hazards if tipped over.

COSTUMES ARE OPTIONAL
Don't force on an unwanted costume. Most pets prefer birthday suits.

NO TRICK OR TREATER GREETERS
The front door is a high traffic area. Doorbells and knocks can upset even the friendliest pets.

MUST SHOW I.D.
Spooked pets can get lost. Microchip and tag them in case they get out.

PARTY POOPERS ARE OK
Some pets are happier in a quiet room away from the party.

Petz Gazette.com

Silly Halloween Jokes

*Where does a ghost go on vacation? **Mali-boo.**

*Why didn't the mummy go to school with the witch?
He couldn't spell.

*Why did the vampire read the newspaper? **He heard it had great circulation.**

*Why did the skeleton run away? **Because a dog was after his bones**.

*What do you call a witch's garage? **A broom closet.**

*What do you call it when a witch's black cat falls off a broomstick? **A catastrophe.**

*Who's the scariest body builder of all time?
Dr. Frankenstein.

When witches go riding
And black cats are seen,
The moon laughs and whispers
'Tis near Halloween

- Author Unknown

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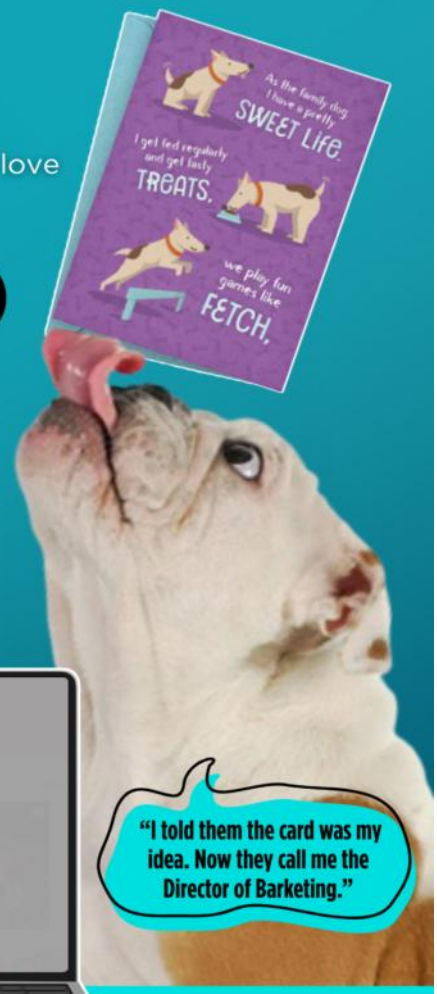

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HORSE TRIVIA

Fun Halloween Horsey Facts

- 'Puca' was an Irish spirit and shape shifter and often took the form of a horse.
- Horses can eat pumpkin (in small doses!). Or why not scoop one out and fill it with goodies like apple and carrot junks! Your horse will root out the treats (before or after they smash the pumpkin with their hooves!)
- In traditional folklore, The Headless Horseman (from the short story, 'The Legend of Sleepy Hollow' by Washington Irving) was a Hessian artilleryman who was killed during the Battle of White Plains in 1776.
- Buying pink and red hoof boots are a great addition to a Halloween horse costume!
- The Celtic goddess of fertility, Epona, is the protector of horses, mules and donkeys and is also the goddess of breeding.
- Superstitiously, horses manes & tails were plaited with ribbons to keep them safe from witches.
- Supposedly, copper pennies in a tank will prevent moody behavior in mares. (not sure how true this is).

SILLY HORSE JOKES

1. A horse walks into a bar. The barman confuses idioms with jokes and offers him a glass of water, but can't make him drink.

2. I put a bet on a horse to come in at 10 to 1 – and it did! Unfortunately all the others came in at 12.30.

3. Where do horses go when they're sick? The horsepital.

4. I put a bet on a horse that had excellent breeding. After the horse left the starting gate, he stopped and closed it behind him.

5. A horse walks into a bar. "Hey," says the barman. "Yes please," says the horse.

6. What do you call a horse that can't lose a race? Sherbet.

7. Have you heard the one about the runaway horse? It's a terrible tale of WHOA!

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All for Love Animal Rescue	805-445-3535	Call for Details
Animal Foundation of America	805-905-9951	Thousand Oaks
Animal Rescue Volunteers	805-579-8047	Simi Valley
Bubbles Dog Rescue		Los Angeles
C.A.R.L.	805-644-7387	Call for Details
Cassie's Cat Cafe	805-232-4228	Ventura
Cats at the Studios	818-341-8936	Call for Details
Cat's Cradle Rescue	805-485-8811	Ventura
DaisyLu Ranch		Camarillo
Dobies & Little Paws	805-524-5102	Fillmore
Dog Days Search & Rescue	805-551-9706	Simi Valley
Eastwood Ranch Rescue/Adoption Ctr	818-338-1551	Agoura Hills
Friends of Milo Foundation		Simi Valley/LA
Furry Funding	855-777-7007	Westlake Village
Healthcare for Homeless Anim.	818-483-4228	Ventura County
Herman Bennett Foundation	805-445-7171	Ventura County
Humane Society of Ven. Co	805-646-6505	Ojai
Karma Rescue	310-512-7833	Los Angeles
LIFE Rescue	818-707-2007	Westlake Village
Lucy Pet Foundation	805-499-5829	Thousand Oaks
Mad Love Animal Rescue	213-364-2353	Los Angeles
Military Animal Project	805-551-1168	Ventura County
Paw Works	805-852-1744	Ventura/Oxnard
Petcare Foundation	213-403-0129	Los Angeles
Pink Paws	805-492-1885	Thousand Oaks
Pivot Educational Outreach	805-889-4800	Ventura County
Purrmaid Café & Adoption Center	805-419-6116	Camarillo
Purrrlandia Cat Lounge & Cafe	818-230-2724	Thousand Oaks
Save A Rescue	888-440-6467	Nationwide
Shelter Hope Pet Shop	805-379-3538	Thousand Oaks
Serenity Place Rescue	818-999-4022	Call for Details
Simi Valley Missing Pets	805-522-7867	Simi Valley
SPARC	805-525-8609	Santa Paula
Surfcat Café & Adoptions	805-500-7125	Ventura
The Little Angels Project	818-515-5461	Agoura Hills
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Ventura Co. Animal Services	805-388-4341	Camarillo/SV

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Superstitions from around the World
(page 1)

"Knocking on Wood" (*Indo-European, Celtic, or possibly British)*
Any list of superstitions would have to begin with arguably the most well-known and universal superstition: 'to knock on wood.'
The actual origins, and even meanings, of the phrase are as varied as the cultures which use it, with some suggesting roots in the Indo-European or Celtic belief that spirits good and bad resided in trees who could be either called upon for protection or chased away by knocking on their home, and others (particularly Christians) linking the practice to the magical power of the wooden Crucifix. Most likely among the different theories, historians have attributed the superstition to a 19th-century British children's game called "Tiggy Touchwood" in which young players claimed immunity from being tagged by touching the nearest piece of wood. Adults picked up on the habit and the phrase (the British still say "touch wood" today), and the rest is history. As with many superstitions, there are subtle variations and sometimes not so subtle varying origins. Italians 'touch steel' rather than wood, perhaps more related to iron horseshoes; Poles and Russians touch unpainted wood, Turks knock twice, Latin American's knock on wood with no legs.

"Throwing Salt Over Your Shoulder" (*European/Christian, ancient Roman)*
Perhaps the next most common superstition, at least in the West, involves tossing salt over one's shoulder. Like 'knocking on wood,' this superstition also involves the idea of 'warding off evil' - in this case, the Devil himself. In Leonardo da Vinci's The Last Supper, Jesus' betrayer, Judas Iscariot, is portrayed as having accidentally spilled salt. Since Judas was associated with doing something bad, the argument goes that, ipso facto, so was salt, and throwing it over your shoulder would blind the devil waiting there.

"Step on a Crack, Break Your Mother's Back" (*African and European folklore)*
Another superstition involving something cracked or broken being associated with bad luck is the superstition of "stepping on a crack" as foretelling, or even causing, harm to a family member. As with mirrors, cracks—in the earth, on a sidewalk, or almost anywhere—have long been seen as portals to the realm of the supernatural, for both good and ill. To step on those cracks might be to invite or release unwelcome spirits into the world ready to do one harm.

Superstitions from around the World (continued)
(page 2)

“Lucky Pennies” (*Ancient Roman, English, American)*
The idea that finding a penny would bring good luck also originates in folk beliefs—in this case based on the idea that metal, regarded by many ancient cultures as quite valuable, was sent by the gods to protect those whom they favored. Pennies being made from metal, find them and you’ll have good fortune. But, be careful: some say the luck could break either way, and that if you find a penny tails up, you should turn it over and leave it for the next person or you’ll actually have bad luck.

“Lucky Horseshoe” (*Ancient Roman, Celtic/British Isles, Europe*)
The most famous story of a horseshoe bringing good luck, however, refers to the story of Saint Dunstan, who apparently worked as a blacksmith prior to attaining sainthood. The story goes that, one day, the Devil rode into Dunstan’s shop requesting new shoes for his horse. Dunstan, recognizing the Devil, played it off nonchalantly, and, rather than nailing the shoes to the horse, nailed one to the Devil's foot instead. In agony, the Devil agreed never to enter a house with a horseshoe nailed above the door if Dunstan would simply agree to remove the shoe.

“Black Cats” (European folklore)
Though cats have often been associated with good luck rather than its opposite and were even worshipped as gods in Ancient Egypt, things took a turn for the worse for our dark-colored feline friends sometime around the Dark Ages when, in 1232 AD, a papal bull by Pope Gregory IX declared them an “incarnation of Satan”, according to People magazine.
Things only went downhill for black cats from there, with people of the Middle Ages burning them in bonfires on Holy Days like Shrove Tuesday, the first Sunday of Lent, and even Easter, and with the Puritans in America connecting them to the practice of witchcraft. Also, the color black has long been associated with evil and death, which didn’t help matters for our furry friends who had the misfortune of being born the color of night.

Superstitions from around the World (continued)
(page 3)

"Friday the 13th" (*European/Christian)*
Like the number 7 for the Romans, magical significance has been attached to the number 13--but this time, it's unlucky rather than lucky. The number 12 has requently been seen as positive (12 months of the year and 12 signs of the zodiac, for example, or 12 days of Christmas and 12 tribes of Israel), naturally making its nearest neighboring number to the north negative.

"Fingers Crossed" (*Western Europe, Pagan & Christian)*
The superstition of crossing one's fingers bringing the lucky "finger-crosser" good luck comes from pre-Christian, Pagan times in Western Europe, when the practice of making a cross with your own and the index finger of another person was thought to concentrate the forces of good spirits and to seal a pact or a wish with the fellow-crosser.
Over time, people realized they could simply bless their own wishes by crossing first their two index fingers, and then later simply the index and middle fingers of one hand, which is what we do today.

"The Number of Four" (China)
As we've seen with numbers like thirteen and seven, numbers are frequently assigned different magical significance or status depending on the culture in question. For the Chinese, the number "four" is a no-no, due to the similarity in its pronunciation, in Chinese, to the word for "death."

"Curse of the Evil Eye" (Mediterranean and Middle East)
It's a common belief—spanning the Mediterranean, Middle east and South Asia—that's been held for thousands of years that to achieve too much success would be to invite the anger or inspire the envy of the gods, who would then smite the unfortunate individual with a reversal of fortune. In response to the fear of this curse, people across the ancient Mediterranean began fashioning amulets and beads with an image of an 'evil eye', sometimes referred to as nazars, which would then help ward off that horrible, untoward fate.

Superstitions from around the World (continued)
(page 4)

"Tucking Thumbs in Inside of a Cemetery" (*Japan)*
Like the fear of the word "four" in China hinging on the similarity, in its pronunciation, to the Chinese word for "death," the Japanese similarly tuck in their thumbs when in a cemetery visiting the graves of dead relatives. This comes from the connection between the Japanese word for "thumb" and its meaning as the "parent finger". To tuck in one's thumbs in inside a cemetery, then, is to protect one's parents from death.

"Giving Yellow Flowers" (*Russia)*
Like numbers, colors have frequently been assigned symbolic significance, like black being seen as the color of bad luck and red the color of passion. In Russia, yellow flowers in particular are seen as problematic as they are thought to represent infidelity, separation, or even death!

"Sweeping Feet" (*South America)*
If you happen to be on a cleaning spree in Brazil, you will want to steer clear of brooms. Or at least be careful. South Americans believe that if your feet are swept over by a broom you will remain single for the rest of your life. The curse can be broken, if you immediately spit on the broom. The exact origins of this superstition are unknown, but legend has it that a woman who cannot keep house, does not a good wife make.

"Itchy Palms" (*Caribbean)*
Depending which palm of yours begins to itch, you may find yourself in the Caribbean with a bit of extra spending money, or in the red. It is a common belief that an itchy left palm means you will owe money soon, whereas an itchy right palm means money is coming your way. There is an explanation that might tell us why such a distinction. The left hand seems to hold passive energy, and the right hand active energy which symbolically could explain the coming in and out of money.

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