

Trick Or Treat

by Lynne Belluscio

I recently read where a mom told her kids that their Halloween candy had to last until Easter and their Easter candy had to last until Halloween. I don't think we had that agreement in our family but it sounds like a good idea. My husband always told me that he and his brother would go out trick or treating for a couple of days, just to make sure they got as much candy as they could. I remember going out for UNICEF with a decorated milk carton. Usually people would give candy and money which was great.

I asked around to see if anyone still went around for UNICEF and discovered that the Presbyterian Church has handed out UNICEF boxes. I know that a few years ago, some kids figured out that there was no one checking up on them and they could keep the money. So people were hesitant to give for UNICEF. I think it's a sad commentary on our society.

UNICEF - the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund was formed during the first United Nations

General Assembly meeting on December 11, 1946. Its original purpose was to collect supplies and funds for the children impacted by World War II. UNICEF was organized as a temporary agency of the UN but soon became a permanent agency. Today, the words "International" and "Emergency" have been removed from the name but it is still known as UNICEF.

In 1950, Mary Emma Allison, the wife of Presbyterian minister in Bridesburg, Pennsylvania, near Philadelphia, thought it might be a good idea to have kids in their community go door-to-door collecting money instead of candy on Halloween. They decorated milk cartons and collected \$17 which was given to UNICEF.

In 1953, the United States Committee for UNICEF started promoting the trick-or-treat

program and provided small orange collection boxes. When UNICEF won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1965, President Lyndon Johnson wrote: "Your Halloween Trick or Treat Day has helped turn a holiday too often marred by youthful vandalism into a program of basic training in world citizenship." Two years later Johnson declared October 31 to be UNICEF Day in the United States. Comedian Danny Kaye was the UNICEF ambassador, and often appeared on television, showing children in foreign countries receiving help from UNICEF. Through the years UNICEF has adopted a variety of projects that help children throughout the world. In 1969, over 3 and a half American children were trick or treating for UNICEF. Over \$144 million has been collected through the Trick

or Treat program for UNICEF.

Keeping up with the times, and trying to avoid the deception of where the money is going, in 2008 introduced a cell phone text messaging donation program as well as a MySpace and Facebook page. If you are so inclined I urge you to look at their web site. But part of me thinks that asking kids to trick or treat on behalf of more unfortunate kids in the world is what it should be about. It teaches life lessons, and as President Johnson said, training in world citizenship.



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