

# THE AMCHAM POST

A joint initiative of the American Chamber of Commerce in Madagascar and L'Express

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4 pages every Saturday

**YOUTH ENTREPRENEURSHIP**  
SPS: THE INESCAPABLE  
EVENT FOR YOUNG  
ENTREPRENEURS  
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## HALLOWEEN

# Trick or Treat : Is it funny to be frightened ?

Halloween has become an integral part of North American culture. It will be celebrated in few days. Anyways, lots of people do not celebrate Halloween because of their beliefs; others see it as childish celebrations or as only commercial opportunities.

### Halloween's origins:

a pre-Christian tradition.  
It started to be celebrated  
in the United States only  
in the 1840s.

Halloween turned into a  
family celebration in the early  
20th century ; and then  
became a multi-million-dollar  
industry.

Why would people want  
to intentionally scare  
themselves? Margee Kerr,  
a Professor of Sociology  
explains.



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### AMCHAM

AmCham's English  
Discussion new term  
starts November 5th.

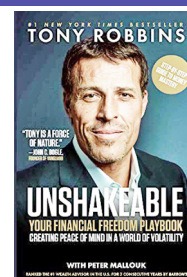
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### ANNOUNCEMENT

AmCham English  
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"New Leaders, Make  
Decisions Slowly"

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## EDITORIAL

By Timothy Fallon  
and Fiona FitzgeraldHalloween through  
the years as an American

October arrives to the United States bringing cooler temperatures, fall foliage, flannel shirts, sweatpants, and cozy evenings. This beloved time to American's offers the last glimpse of warm weather as we say goodbye to Summer. While the drop in temperature make some groan, most are excited about the ambience that accompanies the Fall. Fall in New England offers apple orchards which craft delicious products such as ciders, hard ciders, cider doughnuts, and fresh apple pies (an American Classic). Fall in California can simply make for a desperate break in hot and dry weather. All across the country the changing of the leaves means one thing: Halloween is coming. This wonderful holiday comes with pumpkin patches, haunted houses, hayrides, and an overall spooky vibe.

How Halloween is celebrated takes on many different phases throughout the years. The holiday means something completely different to an adult compared to a child. In some ways, the excitement leading up the climax on the 31st parallels the excitement that the Christmas season has. However, unlike Thanksgiving and Christmas -- holidays dedicated to giving thanks and celebrating with family -- Halloween is just about having fun, dressing up, and perhaps the most important tradition of all: carving pumpkins. This consists of going to the pumpkin patch, choosing the most perfect pumpkin you can find, gutting it, and carving a scary face into the side. Every night, a candle is lit inside the pumpkin to give the notorious orange glow of October. Halloween gives a person an opportunity for a single night to dress up as someone or something else. People spend weeks concocting the perfect costume and piecing together a look.

For young people (ages 4-18), Halloween night means trick or treating around the neighborhood with your friends. Trick or treating is the term dedicated to the act of walking door to door, and chanting "trick or treat, smell my feet, give me something good to eat." In exchange, homeowners offer a small sacrifice to the children: candy! Kids roam the neighborhood with pillow cases trying to earn as much candy as they can. A really good costume can reward you with extra candy! It is an innocent and fun evening for everybody involved and by the end of the night one feels very fulfilled -- especially in their stomachs. After years of strolling the same streets, a kid knows which houses have grumpy tenants who don't answer the door and which ones have the scariest decorations or the best candy bars. It is truly a unique and amazing night.

As the years go by and one gets older, the candy is swapped out for alcoholic beverages and massive costume parties. From the ages of 18-30, adults step it up a notch, spending copious amounts of time and money on costumes. A kid might cut a hole in a white sheet, yell "BOO!" and call it a ghost. An adult may take more extreme measures like buying expensive costumes and props, or dying their hair a different color. A classic costume could be a favorite movie character, or a princess, or a superhero. The possibilities are quite literally endless and creativity is encouraged.

As with many things in life, Halloween comes full circle. When once you were the kid trick or treating, you can suddenly find yourself with two choices: being the grumpy old person who doesn't answer the door, or joining in on the fun and passing the torch to the next generation.

## HALLOWEEN

## Trick or Treat: Is it funny to be frightened?



Jack-o'-lantern festival Powell gardens

Are you fascinated with the "spooky" and "scary"? You must be excited that October 31st is coming! Halloween D-5... Since its origin in the pagan religion of the Celts, Halloween celebrations have gained in popularity.

**A pre-Christian tradition which turns into a multi-million-dollar industry**

The Celts, the original inhabitants of the British Isles, held a feast called Samhain -- a celebration of the harvest, the end of summer and the turn of the year. Samhain led into the cold, fruitless and dark days of winter, the feast was also an opportunity to contemplate death and to remember those who had gone before.

The Celts believed that the veil between the living and the dead was thinner during this time, and the spirits of the dead could walk on Earth. A few time later, the long historical association of the Celts with the Romans led to the modern observance of Halloween, linked to the Roman festival honoring the goddess of fruit trees, Pomona.

Halloween, however, did not make its way to the U.S. until the 1840s, when immigrants from the Celtic countries of Ireland and Scotland arrived. They brought with them their tradition of Halloween, including dancing, masquerading, fortune-telling games and the practice of parading the

neighborhood asking for treats, such as nuts and fruits and coins.

**By the late 19th century, some stores began offering commercially made candy for Halloween.**

The North American observance of Halloween also included everything from minor pranks to some major vandalism, as well as a lot of drinking. By the early 20th century, however, many municipalities and churches attempted to curb this behavior by turning Halloween into a family celebration with children's parties and, eventually, trick-or-treating as we know it today.

Today Halloween just turns into a multi-million-dollar industry: candy sales, costumes, decorations, seasonal theme parks, annual TV specials and October horror movie premieres... If lots of people celebrate Halloween, others don't due to its pagan origins and its perceived association with witchcraft and the devil. Others see it as too commercial or primarily for children. One thing is sure, Halloween has become an integral part of North American culture.

**Why is it fun to be frightened?**

Margee Kerr, an Adjunct Professor of Sociology at the University of Pittsburgh, carried out a study on why people would want to intentionally scare themselves; and with her team, she found

out gains from thrills and chills. A mobile lab in the basement of an extremely haunted attraction outside Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania was set up in order to collect data from 262 guests. Directly after the attraction, guests reported significantly higher mood, and felt less anxious and tired. The more terrifying the better, they said. Feeling happy afterward was related to rating the experience as highly intense and scary. This set of volunteers also reported feeling that they'd challenged their personal fears and learned about themselves. Analyses showed that highly intense and scary activities may shut down the brain to an extent, and that in turn is associated with feeling better.

Fun-scary experiences could serve as a kind of confidence boost: maybe everything else seems like no big deal in comparison to what we experienced. Choosing to do fun, scary activities may also serve as a way to practice being scared, building greater self-knowledge and resilience.

No matter the potential benefits, horror movies and scary entertainment are not for everyone, and that's OK. But you could try this Halloween, ready for a fun scary experience?

**Source: Telegraph, the Conversation**

**Edited by Kenny Raharison**



About the American Chamber of Commerce in Madagascar :  
AMCHAM in Madagascar is a non-profit association of American, International, Local businesses and business people, and is affiliated with the US Chamber of Commerce, the largest business organization representing the interests of more than 3 million businesses of all sizes, sectors and regions.  
For further information about the benefits of membership, please don't hesitate to contact us either via email or phone.  
Email: [es@amcham-madagascar.org](mailto:es@amcham-madagascar.org)  
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**AmCham**  
American Chamber of Commerce in Madagascar

Our Sponsoring Member:






## YOUTH ENTREPRENEURSHIP

## SPS: the inescapable event for young entrepreneurs by CEE-RE



The CEE-RE team, organizer of the event, introducing what the association is doing



One space is dedicated to conferences, success stories and debates, featuring guests from the entrepreneurial ecosystem in Madagascar.

SPS (Salon des PME et des Startups) is the upcoming must-attend event for startups, young entrepreneurs and small businesses. The 2019 edition will take place at Alliance Française Andavambana on November, 1-2.

The whole entrepreneurial ecosystem will gather in one place during two days: incubators, chambers of commerce, consortium of companies, but especially young project leaders, startups and entrepreneurs.

A space will be dedicated to young businesses

and startups to exhibit their products and present the services they offer. A second space will be allocated to conferences, success stories, speed business meetings and open debates.

Mrs. Salvina Rakotavao, Vice-President of CEE-RE (Students Entrepreneurs Club), announced the theme for this year, "Youth and Growing Entrepreneurship". To her, a growing number of young Malagasy are launching their own businesses. Such visionary leaders need technical assistance to succeed in this field. The association



The event is a great opportunity for young startups to showcase their products and services.

notices that the educational system in Madagascar is not favouring the promotion of entrepreneurial culture. That is why they also chose to focus the event on "education", considering that advocating for the integration of entrepreneurship in the education program has now become one of CEE-RE's missions.

More than just discovering how a company works and how to run a company, an entrepreneurship-focused program can help young people to become independent, to

have big visions, and to achieve them. The association is convinced that education is everyone's responsibility: the private sector, the civil society, the students, and the government.

CEE-RE was created in March 2011 and has become the reference in promoting youth entrepreneurship in Madagascar. The association has now more than 200 young active members from different backgrounds.

Photo credit: CEE-RE

Edited by Kenny Raharison

## FOCUS ON U.S. CITIES

Salem, Massachusetts:  
the epicenter of a spooky October

A Halloween night in Salem (Photo by John Andrews)

Witches, wizards, ghouls, ghosts, and monsters. Is there a place where everyone's worst fears are realized? No, of course not; witches aren't real and they never have been!

Right?

Salem, Massachusetts is a town located just 21 miles north of the hub of New England: Boston. While Boston has a rich history of its own, the focus is going to be put on Salem, the home of the infamous Salem Witch Trials.

The year was 1692 in a colonial America still more than 80 years away from the drafting of the Declaration of Independence. People were not properly educated and did not have access to the wealth of information that we have today. Without the ability to obtain crucial knowledge, whose job is it to draw the line between fact and fiction?

As the legend goes, a couple of young girls began to act out -- screaming fits, murmuring under their breath, twisting and stretching their bodies into strange positions -- there was only one logical explanation: witches. So, the witch hunt began. The two daughters of a reverend and a third girl by the name of Ann Putnam were accused of practicing "devil magic," or witchcraft. The young girls instantly tossed the blame at three impoverished women in town for teaching them the "devil's magic." The three very poor, adult women were brought before a jury and sat on trial for extensive amounts of time. While two of the women pleaded innocent, a third began to speak of black dogs and red cats and yellow birds and a man who summoned her to do his dark bidding. With a seed of panic and hysteria planted, the women were thrown in jail and a slew of accusations followed.

Over the course of the next year, more than 200 people (almost exclusively women) were jailed in the name of witchcraft. Of the 200, at least 20 were executed. Most of the executions took place on Gallows Hill in Salem's town center with the method of choice being death by hanging. However a much more twisted system was used against a few unfortunate souls. It is said that the women were given the choice to plead innocent or guilty. If they pleaded guilty, they were hanged in the name of witchcraft. However, if they pleaded their innocence they were tied, thrown in the water and left to drown. If they survived, they were seen guilty of witchcraft and taken to Gallows Hill. If they died, they were deemed innocent! Fantastic! Except, they were dead.

Believe what you will or won't, fast forward to 2019 and Salem, MA is the epicenter for a spooky October. All month long people come to visit Salem to take in the history of this horrific atrocity. At Salem State University 6,000+ students begin to dress up and host costume parties and events in the name of Halloween. Everything culminates on the final day of the month when the streets are filled with people dressed as all of those ghouls, witches, and monsters that we spoke of. Come November 1st, the city returns to its natural state: a ghost town.

SOURCES: Smithsonianmag.com, USNews.com

Co-written by Fiona Fitzgerald and Timothy Fallon





## ANNOUNCEMENT

### AmCham English Discussion Seminars

The American Chamber of Commerce (AmCham) is pleased to announce the opening of the

**4th term of its Tuesday - Thursday sessions, which will start on Tuesday, November 5th, 2019.**

If you want to improve your English skills, come join the AmCham's English discussion seminars, consisting of 100% practice in a friendly and welcoming learning environment.

#### Class descriptions:

- Each class is limited to 10 participants to give you the best possible opportunity to learn quickly and accurately.
- Sessions are led by fluent English speakers having extensive experience in teaching the English language.
- Each session focuses on a variety of topic of interest to the participants.

#### Calendar & Venue:

Seminars are held at the AmCham Office, Bâtiment C1, Explorer Business Park, Ankorondrano - **all at the same time: 12:15pm-1:45pm.**

Participation fee is **100,000 Ariary** per person for all 10 sessions

(10,000 Ariary per session), or 15,000 Ariary per session for those attending "a la carte".

Anyone with basic conversational English is eligible to attend. However, preference will be given to individuals registering for the full 10 session block, and within this group, AmCham members.

Registration: Class size is limited to 10 participants, so to secure your spot, please submit payment to the AmCham office by

#### > Monday, November 4th, 2019

Special formula: Companies may have the English discussion seminars held at their offices on one condition: the client has to provide 10 participants for each class.

Another possible option under this special formula: Companies that cannot gather 10 participants but located in the same area (e.g. downtown) can make a joint session at an agreed location (e.g. in the premises of one of the participating companies). Interested parties are invited to contact AmCham in the below contact details. Registration deadline for this special formula is open-ended.

**For further information, contact AmCham at [es@amcham-madagascar.org](mailto:es@amcham-madagascar.org) / [info@amcham-madagascar.org](mailto:info@amcham-madagascar.org) or at 020 26 410 34..**

#### LEADERSHIP CORNER

##### New Leaders, Make Decisions Slowly

*When you take on a leadership role, it can be tempting to prove yourself by making early decisions fast. But until you're familiar with how things work in the company, you're at risk of judging processes and people too quickly. That's why it's important to manage your urge to "do something." Instead of acting, focus on listening to, observing, and learning from those around you. Take notes about what you hear, paying attention to when your assumptions about the company or your team are right, and when they're wrong. And make sure you talk to a variety of people. You may not know yet who's a reliable source of information, so it's easy to be overly influenced by one person's or one group's perspective. Once you feel confident about moving forward, use your new knowledge to select a critical area of focus for the year. This will help people direct their efforts and evaluate progress — both yours and theirs.*

*This tip is adapted from "Why New Leaders Should Make Decisions Slowly," by Constance Dierickx*

*Source: Harvard Business Review*

## ANNOUNCEMENT

### ENGLISH DISCUSSION GROUP – PERSONAL DEVELOPMENT

The AmCham is pleased to announce the opening of a new term for an English Discussion Group focused on Personal Development (**Wednesday – Friday sessions**).

Targeted participants: Adults who are willing to grow personally and professionally, with an ability to understand and express opinions in English, in a welcoming and friendly learning environment.

With Germain Radesa, the discussions will be focused on four famous books:

1. **"Unshakeable"** by Tony Robbins
2. **"The Richest Man in Babylon"** by George S. Clason;
3. **"Rich Dad, Poor Dad"** by Robert Kiyosaki;
4. **"The Magic of Thinking Big"** by David J. Schwartz.

#### Calendar & Venue:

The term will start on:

#### > Wednesday, November 13, 2019

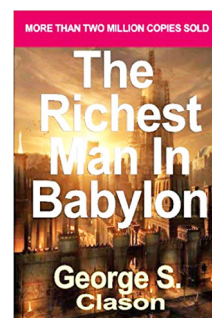
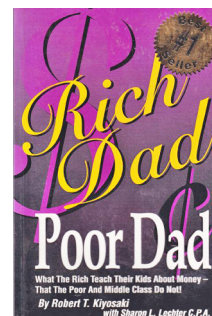
Seminars are held at the AmCham Office, Bâtiment C1, Explorer Business Park, Ankorondrano – **every Wednesday and Friday all at the same time: 12:15pm-1:45pm.**

Participation fee is 100,000 Ariary per person for all 10 sessions

Registration: Class size is limited to 10 participants, so to secure your spot, please submit payment to the AmCham office by

#### > Tuesday, November 12, 2019

**For further information, contact AmCham at [es@amcham-madagascar.org](mailto:es@amcham-madagascar.org) or at 020 26 410 34.**



#### THE AMCHAM POST

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