

One of my favorite holidays is fast approaching — Halloween. Mwahahahahahaha! Halloween to me is kids dressed in their most creative outfits begging for candy and tossing a hurried “thank you” over their shoulder as they rush to the next house and more goodies.

The biggest difference I have noticed over the years is how many porch lights are dark during trick or treat. When I was a little beggar, the whole pack of neighborhood kids ran up and down both sides of North Main and Canal streets, rarely skipping a house. We would lug our booty home and blissfully sort chocolate from other candies while munching on our favorites. (This was, of course, pre-urban legend about the razor blade in the apple.)

One house on North Canal was all decked out and the nice lady there handed out popcorn balls and let us tour her little house of horror. What fun.

You won't find much of that nowadays. Parents keep a tight rein on their little ones and many spend most of the time driving around to family and friends gathering “safe” offerings. Homemade sweets have gone by the wayside in favor of more friendly, prepackaged fare. Many churches and other organizations plan Halloween gatherings where children can go and enjoy fun, games and treats while under the watchful eye of adults. That sounds OK, too, and I'm sure parents are relieved that the candy brought home is in smaller amounts. I can remember throwing away Tupperware containers of treats in November from my son's Halloween foraging. Of course, I made sure the “good” stuff was eaten — by someone who shall remain nameless. Have a safe, fun one, however you celebrate.

Editor's note:

You may have noticed a new byline in The Herald the last several weeks. Stephanie Groves, or Steph as she has been known to me for more than 30 years, moved from Delphos after graduation and finally returned home in May to be closer to family and ground herself. Pittsburgh's loss is definitely our gain.

She is a 1982 Jefferson graduate; she was a year ahead of me in school. We shared an accounting class her senior year and one of my fondest memories of her is on Halloween when she dressed up as a jar of jelly beans. (Don't tell her I stole her idea several years ago.)

The oldest child of Tom Groves and Nancy Rosen, Steph has a wide range of talents and writing happens to be one of them. She is also a landscape designer, underground irrigation troubleshooter, amateur photographer, resells items on eBay (Her favorite sale so far is a set of barn door hinges), digitally mixes her own music, enjoys scrapbooking, is a Giants fan (She apparently fell in love with New York City while there and adopted their NFL team) and is a self-proclaimed computer geek.

Her furry children include two kittens, who are polydactyls. That means they have six toes on their front paws. They are so cute. They look like they are wearing mittens.

Steph fits in well into the Newsroom and is excited about meeting — or in some cases, reacquainting herself — with all of you.