

# SCARING TOUGH GUYS

## and Other Pleasures of This Spooky Season

From my hiding spot in some shadowy, cobwebbed corner of an enormous old Victorian mansion, I heard a couple approaching. The grotesque rubber mask I was wearing trapped the heat of my breath against my face.

I heard a deep — but perceptibly wavering — voice echo down the hall. “Don’t worry, baby,” some uber-tough dude boomed, as manly as he could muster. “They’re just actors. It’ll be okay.”

Listening to their tentative footfalls, I waited patiently around the corner. It was almost pitch black throughout the building, a truly creepy, old, labyrinthine place that seemed like it had been around forever. It was so dark that I didn’t even need to really wear a costume. If anywhere on Earth was actually haunted, it was this place.

Just as they were passing through the threshold, I leapt out with a roar so rattling and guttural that it startled even *me* — but it still didn’t compare to this musclebound dude’s supersonic screech as he jumped into his girlfriend’s arms. Like Scooby holding Shaggy, this poor girl was left there, eyes wide as saucers, supporting the weight of a human twice her size.

At 20, it was one of the proudest moments of my life.

I’m not sure how I ended up working that Halloween at the haunted house in Columbus that year, but I’m glad I did. I relished startling the wits out of the innumerable meatheads that came through with their dates, and I have to say, I was pretty good at it. But the problem was when you had families coming through with their little 6-year-olds terrified out of their minds. With the little tykes, it didn’t really matter how much you tried to tone it down; you knew those kids weren’t going to be able to sleep that night.

Halloween’s always a fun time of year. Back in the day, we’d get our kids’ costumes about a month before, whether they wanted to be Batman, Spider-Man, or Garrett’s signature lion costume. But those kids didn’t limit the costume-wearing

to Halloween only. For the entire month of October, they’d wear them *everywhere*.

I’m talking in the house, the backyard, when we went to Kohl’s or Steak ‘n Shake — though we’d draw the line at school. A few years ago, Garrett, about the biggest fan of the Dark Knight around, received one of those high-end Batman costumes that cosplayers wear, and he drags it out whenever he gets the slightest opportunity. I guess old habits die hard.

We don’t get a ton of trick-or-treaters by our place anymore, but even as a full-blown adult, I still enjoy getting spooked every once in a while. I remember once, in one of my old places of employment, I came in one Halloween and headed into my office. The room was pitch black, and as I went in, thinking nothing of it, I failed to notice my co-worker, dressed up in this big old overcoat and a truly ghoulish mask, sitting motionless on my chair. As I turned on the light, she scared the bejesus out of me. I guess that’s one way to start your day.

- Jim Monast





# 5 FASCINATING FACTS ABOUT FALL

**Just because summer is over,** that doesn't signal an end to fun. How about those Halloween parties, sweater weather, and football season? The list goes on and on.

In fact, fall might be the most interesting season of them all. Here are five facts you probably didn't know about the season.

**1. It was originally called "harvest."** The reasons for that should be fairly obvious. In a world that was far more agricultural, the season was defined by the harvesting of crops. It's also a reference to the harvest moon, which was essential to farmers during the season. The name "fall" is used almost exclusively in America.

**2. Fall babies tend to be impressive.** Not only does the world's most common birthday, October 5, land in fall, but those babies have built an impressive resume. The British Department for Education found that they tend to do better in school and also tend to live longer.

**3. Weight gain is most common in the fall.** It's not only the Halloween candy or Thanksgiving turkey. Researchers believe it's primarily caused by lower levels of vitamin D. As the days shorten and temperatures drop, we tend to get less sun. It's another reason to be careful about diet and exercise this season.

**4. Autumn is good for the economy.** "Leaf peeping," which is a slang term for fall foliage tourism, is more than just a funny name. It's also a \$3 billion industry in New England alone. So, if you thought winter and summer were the only seasons that brought along seasonal tourism spikes, you thought wrong.

**5. People fall in love more in the fall.** Men and women's testosterone levels tend to spike in the autumn, which makes women even more attractive to men than in the summer months. A data study on Facebook also found that more people change their relationship status from "single" to "in a relationship" during the fall than any other season.

## Darrell S.

### IMPRESSIVE CASE RESULTS

Darrell S. is a member of a well-known construction family in Columbus. He suffered two industrial accidents in the same year, resulting in injuries to his ankle, knee, leg, head, and wrist. Following three knee surgeries, two back surgeries, three wrist surgeries, and an ankle fusion, it was clear Darrell was unable to return to construction work. We were successful in having Darrell declared permanently and totally disabled in his workers' compensation claims, and we recommended he file for Social Security disability. We utilized several of the medical reports from his workers' compensation claim files in pursuing social security disability benefits, including reports from industrial commission specialists who opined that Darrell was unable to work. We were able to obtain more than three years of back benefits for this hardworking laborer, along with a guarantee of future monthly benefits and Medicare coverage.





# HISTORY'S FAVORITE FADS

**Fidget spinners are the latest craze to sweep the globe.** These small, pinwheel-like toys claim to help people channel excess energy, and though their usefulness is questionable, over the past several months, every kid wanted one. But will fidget spinners soon go the way of the flash mob? From planking to Pogs to Pet Rocks, people often become enamored with odd hobbies. Here are a few strange fads that thrilled the world.

**FLAGPOLE SITTING** In ancient times, yogic practitioners and holy men would meditate atop tall columns. When the practice became popular in the 1920s, it was more “test of endurance meets publicity stunt.” Stuntman and former sailor Alvin “Shipwreck” Kelly started the fad when a friend dared him to sit on a flagpole. Old “Shipwreck” lasted over 13 hours, though other avid sitters lasted weeks. One gentleman from Iowa sat on a pole for 51 days and 20 hours. This fad fell out of favor when the nation fell into the Great Depression.

**“KILROY WAS HERE”** During World War II, an odd doodle of a bald man peeking over a wall, with the words “Kilroy was here,” appeared scribbled

on walls and equipment wherever American servicemen were stationed. Some say German soldiers found “Kilroy was here” on captured American equipment, leading Adolf Hitler to believe Kilroy was the codename of an Allied spy. The connection to GIs was so strong that you can find an engraving of Kilroy on the WWII Memorial in Washington, D.C.

**TELEPHONE BOOTH STUFFING** This strange fad truly swept across the globe. In 1959, 25 students from South Africa stuffed themselves into a telephone booth and announced they’d broken a world record. Eager to claim that record for themselves, students across the world began forcing their friends into phone booths. Universities challenged each other’s credibility, and some schools insisted each person’s whole body had to fit inside the booth, while others said someone had to make a phone call. The fad died out within the year, but soon after, people were trying to stuff themselves into Volkswagen cars.

It’s impossible to predict what’s going to be the next big fad, but when it comes, you’ll know. Everyone will be talking about it.

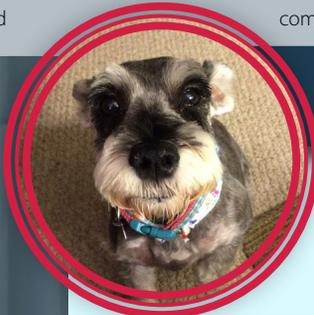
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ANSWERS



## ABBY'S APPETIZERS

### ORANGE-BALSAMIC LAMB CHOPS

Impress any dinner guest with this surprisingly quick and easy-to-make meal.

#### INGREDIENTS

- 4 teaspoons olive oil, divided
- 2 teaspoons grated orange rind
- 1 tablespoon fresh orange juice
- 8 (4-ounce) lamb rib chops, trimmed
- 1 teaspoon kosher salt
- ½ teaspoon freshly ground black pepper
- Cooking spray
- 3 tablespoons balsamic vinegar

#### DIRECTIONS

1. Combine 1 tablespoon olive oil, rind, and juice in a large zip-top plastic bag. Add lamb to bag; turn to coat well. Let stand at room temperature for 10 minutes. Remove lamb from bag and add salt and pepper.
2. Heat a large grill pan over medium-high heat. Coat pan with cooking spray. Add lamb and cook 2 minutes each side.
3. Place vinegar in a small skillet over medium-high heat; bring to a boil. Cook 3 minutes or until vinegar is syrupy. Drizzle vinegar and remaining teaspoon oil over lamb.

Recipe courtesy of CookingLight.com.



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# WHICH FEARS ARE INSTINCTUAL, and Which Are Learned?

### Where does fear come from?

As the jack-o'-lanterns show their grinning, glowing faces and skeletons, cobwebs, and gravestones adorn yards around the neighborhood, it's a question hanging in many of our minds. When you recoil from the giant mechanical spider suspended above your neighbor's garage, is that fear instinctual, or is it learned?

Many people, spurred on by evolutionary psychology, believe that the fear of creepy crawlies, particularly spiders and snakes, is innate. Certainly, spiders and snakes are among the most common phobias in the world. But research shows that, though humans and apes may be predisposed to easily develop a fear of these poisonous animals, the fears are just that — learned.

physiological responses when the videos were interrupted by a startling flash of light. Though babies were more interested in the snakes, they weren't more startled, indicating a lack of fear.

According to the Association for Psychological Science, there are only two fears we inherit at birth: the fear of falling and the fear of loud sounds.

A 1960 study, conducted by psychologists Gibson and Walk for Cornell University, sought to investigate depth perception in human and animal species. They suspended a sheet of transparent plexiglass about four feet off the ground and covered one half of it with a checkerboard-pattern cloth, creating a simulated cliff. Infants, both human and animal, were then encouraged by their caregivers, usually their mothers, to crawl off the "cliff" onto the clear half of the platform. Animals and humans alike avoided stepping over what they perceived as a sharp drop, and pre-crawling-age infants showed heightened cardiac distress on the "suspended" side.

Coupled with this innate fear of plummeting to the ground is something called the Moro reflex, one of several involuntary reflexes healthy newborn infants have at birth. Often called the "startle reflex," it occurs when a baby is startled by a loud sound or movement, especially a falling motion. The reflex usually triggers the newborn to lift and spread their arms as if grasping for support, followed by crying. Though the Moro reflex usually disappears at around 5 to 6 months of age, our instinctive aversion to sudden loud noises stays with us throughout our lives.

In a 2016 study, babies were presented with videos of snakes and other animals like elephants, paired with either a fearful or happy auditory track, measuring the babies'