¡Mes de la Herencia Hispana!

On Friday, September 25th, the staff and clients from MCRC celebrated Hispanic Heritage Month with an Hispanic Luncheon. We asked a couple clients who participated in the luncheon what their thoughts were about this celebration of their heritage and what it and MCRC means to them:

Why do you like celebrating Hispanic Heritage Month?

Evelyn Sepulveda: "Because we are far from our country and there we are close to a lot of Puerto Ricans and we can get together and talk the same language."

Pedro Torres: Because I was raised with my culture, good experience, tradition, good upbringing and customs and keep our culture alive. And when I grow older I have beautiful experiences and memories.

How has MCRC helped you?

ES: To make phone calls, schedule appointments & interpretations. The workers here are good people and provide good services.

PT: From here to the moon! This place has been a blessing for me. Right now everything is going well thanks to all of you that have helped me. I am very thankful and appreciative.

Why do you like coming to MCRC?

ES: I like to come here because the people speak the same language and help me fill my forms out. Like Elizabeth; she translates all the forms in Spanish for me.

PT: It is a nice place. A place that I can relate to. The case workers respect me and do not treat me different. They are willing to go the extra mile to help a person. They are very professional, nice, educated, non-judgmental and understanding.

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Coming Events
- October 2—World Smile Day
- October 5—Do Something Nice Day
- October 5—World Teacher’s Day
- October 12—Moment of Frustration Scream Day
- October 12—Columbus Day
- October 12—Canadian Thanksgiving Day
- October 16—Dictionary Day
- October 19—Evaluate your Life Day
- October 24—Make a Difference Day
- October 31—Halloween
Christian History of Halloween – The Origins

Halloween began to evolve as early as AD 270 from the Celt’s culture in Ireland who practiced a special costume party event the night before their annual feast of “Samhain,” which had a two-fold purpose. The feast was not only a memorial to commemorate their deceased relatives but also a thanksgiving to close the end of the summer season of light and to prepare diligently for entering into the darkness of the long winter season. Superstition has it that the ‘eve’ before the feast was then a time to ward off any evil spirits which they believed were cast out or released from the spirit world realm into their physical world and who would come to attack the feast celebration. Believing that demons, witches, and hobgoblins were real and existed, October 31 then became an annual costume event to try through disguised appearance fool the evil spirits into thinking they were not humans to be harmed. The Druids, who were the Celt’s ruling class, required of everyone to attempt tricking the evil spirits by dressing up to look like goblins, witches, and devils, and by carving ugly, monstrous faces on gourds lighted with candles, and by sweetly putting treats outside their door. The challenge, according to superstition, was to divert the evil spirits attention away from their feast the following day.

Christian History of Halloween – Missionary Involvement

The Lord had different plans for the Celt’s and during the second century He sent a few missionaries to England and Ireland to convert the people to Christianity. When the Christian missionaries journeyed from Europe and arrived in the land of the Celt’s, the Druids, after hearing the Gospel, became eager for all their people to become Christians and to denounce their pagan gods and practices such as superstitiously appeasing and cast off evil demon spirits. In time, they adapted and combined the tradition of their feast on November 1 and “all Hollows Eve” together with the Gospel. The Christian monks decided it would be an effective way to share the Gospel and to dispel and lay to rest the Celt’s superstition about ghosts and evil spirits. That Christ, their Creator and Savior, defeated Satan, death, and evil at the cross and through Him alone, evil demons were powerless and would flee. Halloween and the Samhain Feast also provided an opportunity to be reminded of or learn about Christian heroes and martyrs along with the Celt’s continuing to officially recognize and commemorate the souls of their blessed dead who had been declared saints. Many scholars agree that the commemoration of saints on November 1 first originated in Ireland, spread from there to England, and then to the continent of Europe with the rise of Christianity. By the ninth century, the Roman Catholic Church adopted the Celt’s Halloween tradition and Pope Gregory IV sent out an official letter of notification urging that Halloween be observed in harmony with All Saints Day throughout the Roman Empire. Halloween is derived from the term All Hollows Eve and “Hallomass,” meaning Holy evening.
MCRC’s 4th Annual Hitting the Cultural Links Golf Tournament

September 10th was another beautiful day for MCRC’s annual golf tournament at Lake Shore Country Club. This year we hosted over 100 golfers at the tournament. This would not have been possible without the help and support of the following sponsors:

On behalf of the Multicultural Community Resource Center and the many clients we provide our services to, we would like to say ‘THANK YOU!’ to everyone who generously donated to the agency during Erie Gives, which was held on Tuesday, August 11, 2015. This year’s contributions totaled over $4,800!

MCRC’s 2nd Annual ‘Who Wants to be a US Citizen’ Trivia Competition.
Saturday, April 16, 2016

Thank You and we hope to see everyone next year!
Save the Date: Thursday, September 15, 2016
While autumn has come to mean pumpkin spice lattes and red maple leaves to many around the world in the modern age, for much of history autumn was a time of plenty when you were finally able to, quite literally, reap the fruits of your labor. Many societies celebrated the harvest in some aspect, and the prime symbol of this time of year was aptly titled the ‘harvest moon.’ Its often striking red-orange color makes it difficult to ignore when it replaces the usual white orb in the night sky.

In China, Vietnam, and Taiwan, many people celebrate a “Mid-Autumn Festival” (中秋節). This festival is also strongly tied to the moon. The famous food associated with this holiday is even called the ‘mooncake.’ The circle of the moon is seen as a symbol of unity. As such, in some areas the mooncakes would be divided by the most senior person in the household and then shared among the members of the family, signifying that they are parts of a whole brought together to celebrate. There is a similar holiday in Korea called Chuseok (추석) that includes moon-shaped rice cakes and is a celebration of the harvest. Often called the “Korean Thanksgiving,” it has also been proposed as a day for both South and North Korea to allow a limited number of families separated by war to reunite.

Sharad Purnima is a Hindu harvest festival that is in part a celebration of the moon, and that the monsoon has ended. At night the goddess Lakshimi is worshipped, with some believing that she’ll bless those she finds awake. This leads to a night of festivities, dancing, and games in honor of the goddess. In other regions, the holiday is celebrated with card games with their family and friends. It is said that because of how close the moon and earth are on the day of the full moon, there are certain healing properties from the moonlight.

Here in the USA, in Indiana near West Lafayette there is a “Feast of the Hunters’ Moon.” The feast is celebrated as a reenactment of an annual dinner shared by the French settlers and Native Americans in the mid-18th century. Participants can be seen dressed in period costumes, while musicians playing traditional Native American and French melodies can be heard. Ely, MN and Kansas City, MO also have Harvest Moon Festivals celebrating Native American heritage and the year’s harvest.

Some readers may know that in Japan there is a tradition in the spring of going out to view cherry blossoms, or ‘hanami’ (花見). In the fall, there is a corresponding tradition called ‘tsukimi’ (月見), when people will spread blankets under a tree and drink sake together while viewing the moon. The biggest date of the year for tsukimi is the night of the harvest moon, called ‘tsukimi no kai,’ and it is a time to celebrate the harvest of the past year with your friends, family, and coworkers. Some shrines also hold moon festivals with performances, music, and rabbit-themed protection charms, as there is said to be a rabbit in the moon.

While most of the festivals and celebrations of this time are in name a celebration of a rich harvest and food, there is also a common theme of fellowship and community. A theme that could be seen this past Sunday as people around the world tweeted, updated their statuses, and stood outside to watch the Supermoon make its way across the autumn sky.

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**The Harvest and the Moon**

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Saturday August 22nd, a group of community members participating in the ServErie project helped to paint the steps and railings along the side and entrance to our MCRC Annex. We would like to thank these volunteers for all of their hard work making our campus more beautiful.
October is here!

Autumn is my favorite season. The vibrant colors of the leaves, the crispness of the air and the smell of pumpkin spice make memories for those of us who love this time of year. Over the centuries many poets and poetesses have written works using Autumn as their theme. One of my favorite poems was written by William Butler Yeats in 1919. I would like to share this with you now:

The Wild Swans at Coole

The trees are in their autumn beauty,
The woodland paths are dry,
Under the October twilight the water
Mirrors a still sky;
Upon the brimming water among the stones
Are nine-and-fifty swans.

The nineteenth autumn has come upon me
Since I first made my count;
I saw, before I had well finished,
All suddenly mount
And scatter wheeling in great broken rings
Upon their clamorous wings.

I have looked upon those brilliant creatures,
And now my heart is sore.
All’s changed since I, hearing at twilight,
The first time on this shore,
The bell-beat of their wings above my head,
Trod with a lighter tread.

Unwearied still, lover by lover,
They paddle in the cold
Companionable streams or climb the air;
Their hearts have not grown old;
Passion or conquest, wander where they will,
Attend upon them still.

But now they drift on the still water,
Mysterious, beautiful;
Among what rushes will they build,
By what lake’s edge or pool
Delight men’s eyes when I awake some day
To find they have flown away?

Enjoy the beauty of this glorious season!

Genuinely yours,
Joanna R. Cherpak
Executive Director

Proudly serving the needs of the Hispanic and refugee communities since 1975.