

OCTOBER 30, 2024

# The President and First Lady Welcome Trick-or-Treaters to the White House for “Hallo-READ!”

*The First Lady’s theme, “Hallo-READ!,” highlights the spooktacular thrill of reading*

On Wednesday, October 30th, the President and First Lady are hosting a Halloween event that will welcome local students and military-connected children to the White House for trick-or-treating. A teacher for 40 years, including years spent as a reading specialist, First Lady Jill Biden created this year’s theme, “Hallo-READ!,” with the White House’s festive décor featuring famous literary tales and spooky story time. Dr. Biden’s theme encourages families and children to once again grab a flashlight, pick out their favorite Halloween book, and relish in the spooktacular thrill of reading together.

Children will trick-or-treat along the South Lawn of the White House up to the South Portico to receive both candy and books from the President and First Lady, as well as other White House friends and neighbors, including representatives from: Department of Agriculture, Department of Education, Department of Energy, Department of Homeland Security, Department of Housing and Urban Development, Department of the Interior, Department of State, Department of the Treasury, Department of Veterans Affairs, National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA), National Endowment for the Humanities, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts, Library of Congress, National Archives, Smithsonian, Executive Office of the President, the White House Medical Unit, and the White House Military Office.

Approximately 8,000 guests will participate in this year’s Halloween event at the White House, with each family receiving candy treats provided by the National Confectioners Association and its member companies. Instacart is providing overall support for the Halloween celebration, in addition to

supplying Halloween tote bags and treats to each child. The company will also distribute bookmarks with healthy eating tips in coordination with DC Central Kitchen.

In a nod to this year's "Hallo-READ!" theme, each family will also receive donated books from Scholastic to read and enjoy. Costumed characters will stroll the South Lawn for the Halloween festivities, including Corduroy, Peter Rabbit, Madeline, Barney, Disney friends Stitch and Angel, Darth Vader and his Stormtroopers, and others.

The White House will be decorated with autumnal foliage, with pumpkins and mums provided by the International Fresh Produce Association (IFPA), jack-o-lanterns, stacks of books, and multi-dimensional displays of literary tales. The IFPA will be providing apples and baby carrots to trick-or-treaters as well. Lawn games and a spooky story time corner will be a part of the Halloween festivities again this year, featuring special guests reading their favorite books of the season to children and families, as well as live pumpkin carving demonstrations by Pumpkin Sculptor Deane Arnold. Readers will include First Lady Jill Biden, the Librarian of Congress Dr. Carla Hayden, Hocus Pocus actress Kathy Najimy, White House Press Secretary Karine Jean Pierre, plus authors and illustrators Jane O'Connor, Robin Preiss Glasser, Pete Oswald, Katie Messner, Dan Santat, Tracey Baptiste, Ana Aranda, Hanh Bui, and others!

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