

# Malls cancel trick-or-treating

■ Officials say the e-mails have nothing to do with their decision

By Erin Cooney  
for the Emerald

For the first time in many years, Eugene area shopping centers aren't inviting kids to trick-or-treat within their walls this Halloween.

Mall officials made this decision out of concern that celebrating the holiday would be inappropriate in light of the Sept. 11 attacks, and that promoting trick-or-treating in their establishments this year is not the best choice.

Some mall employees, however, believe that a recent rash of threatening e-mails may have contributed to the decision.

The e-mails in question, copies of which can be found on the Urban Legends Research Centre Web site ([www.ulrc.com.au](http://www.ulrc.com.au)), have appeared all over the country in several different variations, but the gist of all of them is the same. The e-mails contain information suggesting that just days before the Sept. 11 attacks, someone's boyfriend (or girlfriend, in some cases) told their partner not to fly commercially on Sept. 11 and not to go to the mall on Oct. 31, causing rumors that malls would be unsafe today.

The Web site states that it was "inevitable" that someone would circulate such information in order to exploit the widespread concern about further terrorist attacks. The site also notes that the e-mails don't contain any substantial or factual information and therefore should not be considered reliable sources.

The FBI has said that the e-mail predictions are unfounded. FBI spokeswoman Beth Anne Steele said the FBI does not consider the chain e-mails "a credible threat."

Jan Power, spokeswoman for the Eugene Police Department,

An example of a hoax e-mail sent:

Hi All -

I think you all know that I don't send out hoaxes and don't do the reactionary thing and send out anything that crosses my path. This one, however, is a friend of a friend.

My friend's friend was dating a guy from Afghanistan up until a month ago. She had a date with him around 9/6 and was stood up. She was understandably upset and went to his home to find it completely empty.

On 9/10, she received a letter from her boyfriend explaining that he wished he

could tell her why he had left and that he was sorry it had to be like that. The part worth mentioning is that he BEGGED her not to get on any commercial airlines on 9/11 and to not to go to any malls on Halloween. As soon as everything happened on the 11th, she called the FBI and has since turned over the letter.

This is not an email that I've received and decided to pass on. This came from a phone conversation with a long-time friend of mine last night. I may be wrong, and I hope I am. However, with one of his warnings being correct and devastating, I'm not willing to take the chance on the second.

Source: [www.ulrc.com.au](http://www.ulrc.com.au)

Photo by Kim Samitore for the Emerald

shared that sentiment.

"Eugene seems to be very low on the threat threshold," she said.

Power also stated that as far as the police department knows, the e-mails are a hoax and should not be taken seriously. Police will be on heightened alert tonight, as they are every Halloween, but they will not be implementing any special security measures at Gateway Mall or Valley River Center, she said.

Several mall employees, both at Gateway and VRC, think that the e-mails prompted mall officials to decide to cancel trick-or-treating.

Vantah Keo, the store manager at Express Ltd. at VRC, said she received a letter from mall officials stating that the reason for calling off the Halloween tradition was the "inappropriate nature" of the festivities in light of the events that took place on Sept. 11.

But Keo said she believes the letter is not entirely honest, and mall management may have felt pressure to stop the event after hearing the rumors about the chain e-mails.

Ryan Cook, a sales associate at AT&T Wireless at VRC feels similarly.

"I think that it might be a little unsafe," Cook said. "They (mall

representatives) don't want to put all those young people at risk."

Though neither Gateway or VRC will sponsor Halloween events, both have made it the individual stores' prerogatives to hand out candy.


Paul Daniel, the store manager at Gateway's America The Beautiful Dreamer furniture store said that despite the mall's official stance, his store will still give out treats. He said he is unconcerned about safety issues on Halloween night, and his employees have not expressed worry either.

Dana Vugteveen, general manager at Gateway, said the decision to cancel today's events had been discussed since the Sept. 11 attacks but became official a few weeks ago.

He said because Halloween is a day that could involve "mischievous pranks," mall officials thought children being with their families in their own neighborhoods and getting to know their neighbors was a safer bet this year.

Mall officials say the safety of shoppers and employees is their top concern for the holiday.

Erin Cooney is a freelance reporter for the Oregon Daily Emerald.



**USE WISELY**  
Every Watt Counts!

**SHUT OFF**  
**Classroom Lights**

Sponsored by the UO Campus Environmental Issues Committee

Help Conserve UO




**iMac 500MHz**  
with CD-RW  
**Special Discount**  
**\$799**  
(marked down from \$949)

128MB SDRAM • 20GB Ultra ATA HD • VGA output • 56K Modem  
10/100 base-T Ethernet • FireWire M8582LL/A Indigo

Currently enrolled or admitted University of Oregon students as well as staff and faculty are eligible.

Available at the UO Bookstore Digital Duck® while supplies last.  
Corner 13th & Kincaid Streets [uobookstore.com/electronics](http://uobookstore.com/electronics)



**UNIVERSITY OF OREGON**  
**PRESIDENT DAVE FROHNMAYER**  
INVITES YOU TO CELEBRATE THE  
UNIVERSITY'S 125TH ANNIVERSARY AT

**CONVOCATION 2001**

FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 2, 2001  
ERB MEMORIAL UNION

2:30 P.M. CEREMONY  
3:30 P.M. RECEPTION  
4:00 P.M. 1876 LECTURES

James Mohr, Department of History  
Toby Edson, College of Education  
Don Peting, Department of Architecture  
Marian Smith, School of Music

5:15 P.M. Documentary Premiere  
*A History of the University of Oregon: The Founding*

*Convocation serves as the ceremonial beginning to the academic year. It provides an opportunity for faculty and staff members, students, alumni, and friends to assemble together. On this occasion we focus on the university's rich academic heritage and celebrate our collective accomplishments.*

**125<sup>th</sup>**  
anniversary 1876-2001  
pride · passion · promise  
**UNIVERSITY OF OREGON**

*great people. great fun. great experience.*

Don't miss out.  
Work for your college paper.

For more information on how to freelance for the Oregon Daily Emerald, call 346-5511.

North Campus  
579 E. Broadway  
**686-1166**



South Campus  
2870 E. Willamette  
**686-1600**

## STUDENT ID SPECIALS

• Show Your Student ID • Order by Number

- |          |  |               |
|----------|--|---------------|
| <b>1</b> | <b>X-LARGE 1-TOPPING</b><br>The Big New Yorker                   | <b>\$899</b>  |
| <b>2</b> | <b>MEDIUM 3-TOPPING</b><br>Pan, Thin 'N Crispy or Hand Tossed    | <b>\$899</b>  |
| <b>3</b> | <b>STICKS 'N WINGS</b><br>10 Breadsticks, 10 Wings               | <b>\$899</b>  |
| <b>4</b> | <b>X-LARGE 3-TOPPING</b><br>The Big New Yorker                   | <b>\$1099</b> |
| <b>5</b> | <b>2 MEDIUM 1-TOPPINGS</b><br>Pan, Thin 'N Crispy or Hand Tossed | <b>\$1099</b> |
| <b>6</b> | <b>STICKS 'N WINGS</b><br>10 Breadsticks, 20 Wings               | <b>\$1099</b> |

**2 FREE Cans of Soda with Any Above Order!**  
Delivery charges may apply