



Pumpkins of all sizes were available at Rogue Farms' Pumpkin Patch Party on Saturday. Families chose and decorated their pumpkins to get in the Halloween spirit. LUKAS EGGEN/Itemizer-Observer



Not a masterpiece, but still festive, reporter Jolene Guzman's tribute to her favorite team was a lesson in learning to plan better before putting a pumpkin under the knife. JOLENE GUZMAN/Itemizer-Observer

CARVING PROVES TRICKY

Reporter shares tips learned while carving her lantern

By Jolene Guzman
The Itemizer-Observer

I should be better at carving pumpkins.

As a big fan of Halloween (and the Oregon Ducks, obviously), you would think carving a creative pumpkin design should be something I could do in my sleep.

Well, not so much. I had ambitious visions, starting with picking a green pumpkin to go with the team theme. From there, I had hopes of carving the Duck logo the team wore on its helmets versus the Washington Huskies on Saturday, or the fighting duck, or a helmet with the "O" logo.

I soon realized those would stretch my carving abilities, so I went with the outline of a webbed foot with "DUCKS" in yellow paint below it.

But even that didn't quite go as planned. The template I found was too small for my large green

pumpkin and I picked the wrong sized paint brush (I don't often paint, so I had to buy one). Nor did I realize that painting a design on a pumpkin is not as easy as it looks.

I had to improvise, or more truthfully, my more artistically talented friend had to come in like Vernon Adams Jr. and help rescue my team tribute from complete disaster (she's a fan, too).

So, to help you avoid those difficulties, I've found a few pumpkin carving tips. Have fun!

— Think about your design before selecting your pumpkin and pick one that fits with what you have in mind. (I didn't do this.)

— Use a template. Unless you are good at free-lancing, transferring your design beforehand is a good idea.

— Use the correct tools:
• Ice cream scoop for cleaning pumpkin innards. Clean out as much as you can to avoid rot.

• Cookie cutters can be used to cut a hole in the bottom of the pumpkin for the candle or for carving designs.

• Push pins for transferring the template to the pumpkin.

• Knives — your best bet is a carving kit. The knives are safer and designed for the task.

— To avoid fire hazard, use a battery operated tea light or candle to illuminate your pumpkin lantern. Some even flicker like a real candle.

— Finally, to prevent your creation from rotting away, keep it out of the elements as much as possible or use a pumpkin preserver. Bleach works well, for example.

P.S. Before you ask — I'm talking to you Beaver fans because this seems to matter to you — yes, I'm a UO graduate. Class of 2006. Go Ducks!

Source: www.mysciencproject.org/pumpkin.html and www.funtober.com.



Amelia and Isaac Williams work on decorating their pumpkins at Rogue Farms' Pumpkin Patch Party on Saturday morning. LUKAS EGGEN/Itemizer-Observer



Rogue Farms' Pumpkin Patch Party provided an opportunity for families to find pumpkins both large and small on Saturday. LUKAS EGGEN/Itemizer-Observer



Left to right: Tatum, Tara, Konnor, Ethan, Cody, Rhylynn and Ella show off their Halloween costumes and outfits at Rogue Farms on Saturday morning. LUKAS EGGEN/Itemizer-Observer



Chase Arguien, 2, examines a pumpkin during Rogue Farms' Pumpkin Patch Party on Saturday. Arguien later worked to decorate his pumpkin. LUKAS EGGEN/Itemizer-Observer