

Child Caring



GLOBE PHOTO/CHRISTOPHER FITZGERALD

Students at the Charlotte Dunning Elementary School in Framingham show off their costumes for Halloween, a time when scary can be fun.

Facing Halloween fears is the trick to having fun

By Barbara F. Meltz
GLOBE STAFF

The first time 6-year-old Molly Coughlin puts her monster mask on, it's just for a second; she's pretty sure this will be fun. By the third time, she's less tentative. The transformation of a delicate little girl into an ugly creature is complete: She's hamming it up, clawing the air, and speaking in a gruff, monster-ish voice.

Molly is a first grader, one of 12 students at the Charlotte Dunning Elementary School in Framingham who have gathered on the floor in the school library to talk to a reporter about Halloween. For first and second graders, candy is the best part. Third, fourth, and fifth graders have a hard time being so definitive.

The candy's great, they say, but

it's also fun to make your own costumes and it's awesome to go out at night with friends. They like spooky decorations, but they don't like having someone jump out at you from behind a tree when you aren't expecting it; Razi Akhtar, a fourth grader, says a bloody skeleton hanging from a tree put a damper on Halloween for him for a season or two. None of them like what fifth grader Travis Hugh calls the bad things of Halloween, like having tombstones stolen off your front lawn, or waking up to find your trees full of toilet paper or your garage covered with eggs.

What's clear from this mixed-age discussion is that children of all ages invest a lot of energy into Halloween, anticipating some of it with pleasure and excitement but also steeling themselves for coming face to face with their fears.

CHILD CARING, Page F5

Gardener's Notebook

Berry bushes provide birds with a winter perch

By Carol Stocker
GLOBE STAFF

The mockingbird is singing again. Birds mostly sing in the spring to establish nesting territories, but mockingbirds sing in the fall, too. The territory this one is claiming is the Japanese holly that grows outside my kitchen window. In terms of entertainment value, it's the best shrub I've ever planted.

As the mockingbird gorges on black holly berries, it chases away any other bird that shows an interest. Gray with white stripes on its tail, it is loaded with attitude, flashing its spotted wings like a fan dancer. And it samples snatches of other birds' songs with a versatility any cover band would envy.

Many gardeners have caught on to the idea of using plantings to attract birds. While hungry mammals such as deer, voles, raccoons, rabbits, and woodchucks are bad news in gardens, birds are a good deal. Some filch blueberries and raspberries, but they add song and choreography as they swoop around the yard.



PHOTOS/LELLIAN STOKES

They also eat insect pests.

It's probably in the colder months that I most enjoy having a window on this form of wildlife. Back-yard bird feeders keep seed eaters such as finches, chickadees, titmice, and cardinals around for

cheer on dreary days. Suet draws woodpeckers and nuthatches. All birds flock to fresh water in a birdbath.

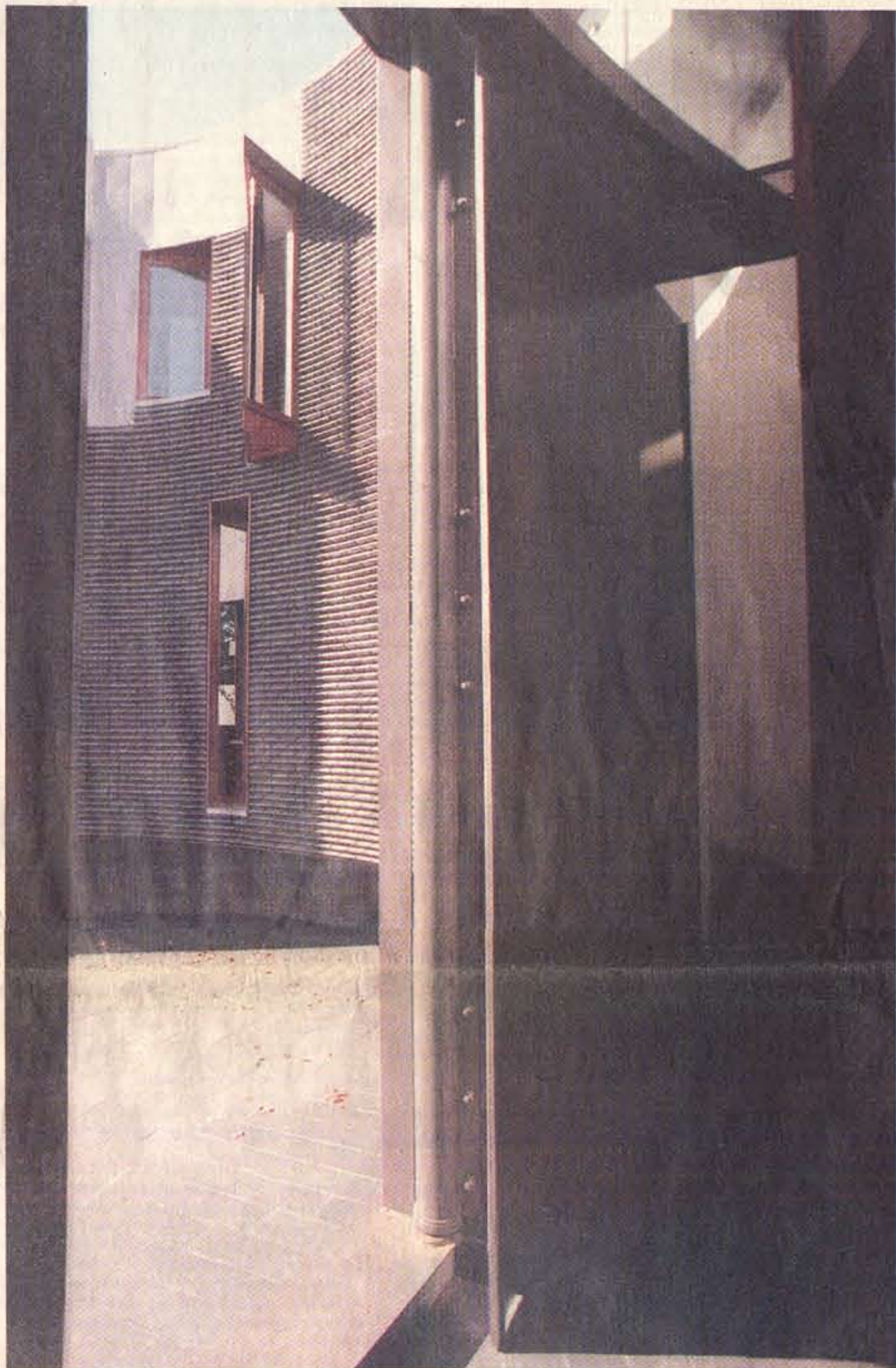
But well-chosen berry bushes provide needed food for fruit eaters that are not drawn to feeders stocked with seeds. These include the robins that spend the winter in increasing numbers, cedar waxwings and, increasingly, Eastern bluebirds.

Gardeners with berry-laden bushes in warmer areas such as Plymouth County and Cape Cod also find themselves hosting catbirds and hermit thrushes.

And berries have their own rounded shiny beauty. Like evergreens, they make our longest season seem less barren. Deciduous leaves and flowers are gone, seeds seem dry and desiccated, rustling ornamental grasses are ghostly, but berries punctuate the

NOTEBOOK, Page F4

Plantings of berry bushes like the rugosa rose above can be used to attract fruit-eating birds like the Eastern bluebird (top) to back yards in winter.



GLOBE STAFF PHOTOS/BILL GREENE

Modernity's new wave

By Robert Campbell
GLOBE CORRESPONDENT

It begins, like any normal house, with the front door. But that's where any resemblance to a conventional house ends.

The front door is a pivoting wall, maybe 12 feet high and 6 feet wide, finished in dark steel on the outside, soft leather on the inside.

Architecture

Since the owners don't want their names used, we'll call them Ike and Mamie. Ike's a plastic surgeon. "I'm a mom, of which I'm very proud," says Mamie. Their kids, two boys and a girl, are 4, 5, and 6. This fall, the family moved into their new house, which is in a hilly, wooded section of Brookline. "Visitors can't tell the door is the door," admits Mamie. This writer can confirm that statement. I arrived at the house and climbed a short stoop that looked as if it must lead to the entrance. I actually touched the door, without realizing it was a door, before I turned back, in bafflement, to arrive eventually at a back door that looked more like a door.

Some houses are wonderful because they evoke our ARCHITECTURE, Page F3

Brookline house challenges classic notions of home and hearth



The front entrance (top) is a pivoting wall. Plain plaster walls in the master bedroom (above) are played off against elegant details.



Outdoors, the horizontal stripes of the iron-spot brick unify the house's loose shapes.



Modern art complements contemporary furniture in the light and airy living room.

Rethinking notions of home and hearth

■ ARCHITECTURE
Continued from Page F1

deepest memories of home and hearth. Others are wonderful because they challenge those memories and invent something different. This house is the second kind. When you're in it, you're intensely aware of your surroundings because everything is a little strange.

A house of contrasts

A long, thin atrium splits the house down the middle like a bolt of lightning. It rises to a skylight that floods the interior with sunshine. The atrium organizes everything; the rooms line it on two floors. Kitchen, dining, family, and living rooms are downstairs. Bedrooms, and offices for Ike and Mamie, are upstairs. All the walls are plain unpainted plaster. The main stair looks like something you'd find in a factory. It's framed in crudely formed black concrete, and the steps and railings are raw steel with exposed welds. Like the unpainted plaster, the stair has a feeling of in-your-face authenticity and materiality — especially when contrasted with other details, such as the mahogany windows, which are elegantly finished.

What were Ike and Mamie seeking?

"We knew we wanted to build a very contemporary house," says Mamie, "not a traditional New England kind of house. I like modern art. We'd been living in Cape Cod where there are a lot of rules about colors and materials. I wanted this to be light and airy, not dark and closed. More than a box. I tend to like things that are unusual, the more unusual the better. This house doesn't have anything off the shelf. But we weren't trying to wow the neighbors or make a statement."

Outdoors, the house looks like a loose pile of shapes, maybe blocks left by a giant child after play. Walls are a collage: white stucco, redwood, lead-coated copper, dark-gray brick. The brick is an iron-spot type from Minnesota, shaped to create horizontal stripes that resemble industrial

air-intake grilles; another wake-up-and-notice kind of material.

It's always fun to learn how people find their architects. In this case, the husband of the daughter of a family friend was a student at Harvard and suggested Mac Scogin, who for five years chaired the department of architecture there. Ike and Mamie interviewed others but soon settled on Mac. "He listened, he heard," Mamie says. "He showed us houses he'd done, one in Georgia, one in Maine. We were worried that his being in Atlanta might be a problem. But while the house was being designed, he flew up every few weeks with a model of it, maybe 3 feet by 4 feet, stuffed it into the airplane somehow. The model kept evolving until we were all satisfied." Scogin works with his wife, Merrill Elam, in the Atlanta firm of Scogin Elam and Bray, but this house was primarily Scogin's work.

Like any good architect, Scogin worked in close collaboration with the owners. "The house is all about the domestic politics of that particular family unit," Scogin says. "This is his second family, her first. They've obviously made a conscious decision to have these children and to have three children. They're totally and completely dedicated to these kids. It's unusual for kids to have rooms like that, each with their own bathrooms and their own special furniture. We're now making models for bronze castings for doorpulls for the huge door. They start down low and go up high to accommodate the kids as they grow. The bottom line of family politics is about creating this kind of equivalent democratic deci-

sion-making. The kids were involved in choosing colors and all that kind of stuff. It's a long-range project, about how the house will work for them for, like, forever. They may leave but then again they may come back, and then again they may not leave. There was very open discussion about that."

Scogin talks about the physical form of the house. "The construction, like the interior, is a combination of formal and informal, familiar and unfamiliar, played off against each other. Every cabdriver, and there have been by now a hundred of them, the first thing they say is, 'Is that a house?' I say, 'Well, of course it's a house.' 'But there are no windows.' I've actually taken some of them in the house. They can't believe it's absolutely filled with light, more windows than they've ever seen

there's a perfectly framed view. In the master bedroom, it's like being in a treehouse." Van Valkenburgh created a gentle landscape of Japanese larches and evergreens (pine and cryptomeria), plus three ginkgo trees in a row, one for each of the children. There are umbrella pines brought from the former house on Cape Cod, perhaps in unconscious imitation of the custom, now forgotten, of dedicating a new house by bringing hot coals from the old, to start the first fire.

High-tech systems

Here and there, maintenance may be a problem. How do you keep walls clean when they're white all the way to the floor, without baseboards? You can't do it by repainting them, because they're not painted in the first place. In other ways, though, this is a low-maintenance house. Heating is radiant, with the coils buried in the concrete floors. Outdoor walks and driveway are heated, too, with a sensor that turns them on when the thermometer drops below 40. There's a lot of other high-tech stuff, including an enormous water filtration system. Materials are simple but good: mahogany windows and woodwork, cherry floors. The well-organized kitchen ("I love to cook," says Mamie) boasts countertops of a rare granite, with purple splashes that seem to glow. All the furniture is brand new, much of it crafted by B & B Italia and purchased through Montage in the Boston Design Center.

If there's a downside to Ike and Mamie's wonderful house, it's perhaps that it feels just a little too self-sufficient. Every human need seems to be taken care of inside its walls and gardens, as if its ambition were to be a one-house Utopian community. Nothing about it reaches out to interact with its neighbors; indeed, it withdraws from the street behind its brick walls. And there's a huge TV screen in practically every room.

But in a world where most of us are too scared to want anything except what hucksters tell us we're supposed to want, it's satisfying to discover a house with this kind of rugged individualism.

'The construction, like the interior, is a combination of formal and informal, familiar and unfamiliar, played off against each other.'

MAC SCOGIN, architect

before."

Like other architects, Scogin isn't above recycling old ideas. "We actually designed that brick 10 or 12 years ago for a radio station that was never built. We've always been looking for a place to use it. We observed up there in Boston people did a lot of crazy things with brick, the greatest brick details I've ever seen, from knobby things to pattern brick to all colors. It's just a brick city, and it seemed to be in the tradition of the place to do brick. Our brick changes all the time; one moment it looks heavy and dark, then when the sun hits, it's silver and bright."

Ike and Mamie were worried that on less than an acre in Brookline, they'd feel closed in. They credit both Mac and the landscape architect, Michael Van Valkenburgh, with solving that problem.

"My husband used to ask, 'Where's the view?'" recalls Mamie. "Now, from almost every room,

Open Every Day

Visit our New Location in NORWOOD
674 Washington Street "The old Klines Dept. Store"
(781) 278-9923

- Bookcases • Entertainment Centers • Dressers • Cabinets
- Desks • Dining Tables • Coffee Tables • Chairs • Armoires
- Hutches • CD, Audio & Videotape Racks

Woodstuff
Made to order unfinished and finished, shelving, cupboards or whatever

349 Moody Street, Waltham (781) 647-3688
121-126 Concord Street (Rte. 126) Downtown Framingham (formerly Woolworth's) (508) 875-4191
woodstuff.com

HARMONY KINGDOM EVENT

Discover the secret of Harmony Kingdom
Saturday, Oct. 31st from 11-3pm

Exclusive event piece
"Pumpkin Fest"
available to purchase

Door Prize

WARD'S GIFTS
10 Wall St., Burlington, MA. 01803
(781) 229-0068

Snip-its
Hair cuts for Kids

Follow Snips to the newest, coolest, greatest place for haircuts!

Visit our NEW location in Peabody!

Our stylists LOVE kids! • Special parent chairs! • Interactive computer games!
Trade your hair in for a prize at the Magic Box! • Complete line of hair care products! • Haircuts - \$11.95
Framingham 508-370-0006. One Worcester Road, Shoppers World • Burlington 781-221-9938, 101 Middlesex Turnpike
Peabody 978-532-1400, Peabody Place, Rte. 114
<http://www.snipits.com>

NOW OPEN.

**Announcing
The Grand Opening Of
New England's Most Unique
Lighting Showroom.**

Join the grand opening celebration at the incredible new Wolfers Lighting in Allston, now through November 5th. Experiment with interactive lighting environments. Talk to experienced Lighting Consultants. Enter the spectacular prize drawing. Wolfers Lighting. Come in and hatch a few ideas of your own.

Win

Wolfers Lighting Gift Certificates Valued at:

- 1st Prize: \$2,000
- 2nd Prize: \$1,500
- 3rd Prize: \$500

Purchase any single item over \$500 and receive a \$50 Legal Sea Foods Gift Certificate!

WOLFERS LIGHTING
The Finer Things In Light

Offers and prize drawing entry forms available at both Wolfers locations:
Allston • 103 North Beacon Street • 617-254-0700
Waltham • 1339 Main Street - Off Route 128 • 781-672-4200
Hours: M,T,F: 8am-6pm • W,Th: 8am-8:30pm • Sat: 9am-5pm • Sun: Noon-5pm

*While supplies last. One certificate per family. Prize drawing will be held 11/9/98. Prizes have no cash value. See store for more details.

A STANDARD ELECTRIC COMPANY

Home For The Holidays

Welcome home the sofa of your dreams this holiday, custom-made the way you want it.

Choose from 4,000 fabrics and leathers. And 500 designs.

Delivered in time for the holidays.

Orders must be made by Monday, November 23rd for holiday delivery.

Circle Furniture
MADE FOR REAL LIFE
Choice Seating

1001 Mass. Ave, Cambridge 617.492.2646
425 Great Rd (Rte 2A), Acton 978.263.7268
2100 Washington St, Hanover 781.878.0686
337 Boston Post Rd, Sudbury 978.443.5709
199 Alewife Brook Parkway, Cambridge 617.876.3988

Screen scene

The Boston Globe
SUNDAY'S MOVIE SECTION

For home delivery, call toll-free
1-888-MY-GLOBE