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INSIDE TODAY

ON A J.C. COM

**Jen kisses, People tells**

**What's the Buzz?**  
 Jennifer Aniston and Vince Vaughn smooch; Tab Hunter pays a visit.  
**Peach Buzz F2**



**Scare up some fun:**  
 From haunted houses to holiday parties, check out what's going on online.

# Superman . . .



Sophie Terraso, 3, was determined to dress as the Man of Steel for Halloween, instead of wearing a typical girl's costume.

By HELENA OLIVIERO  
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Three-year-old Sophie rushed toward a Party City costume poster teeming with dress-up possibilities — pink wigs and ruby slippers, Power Nijas and Barbie Princess.

But only one was perfect — Superman.

"What about a princess or Vampi-rietta?" asked her daddy, David Terraso.

Sophie didn't want a crown or lavender gown. She wanted to trick or treat in a red cape. How else could she pretend to fly from house to house?

It's Halloween season — and for a few girls, it's time to pretend they have X-ray vision and strength of steel. And for boys, it might be a rare opportunity to sport glitter, sequins and a wig. With more than 400 costume choices at your neighborhood Party City, kids can be just about anything or anyone — from a microphone-toting diva to a "Star Wars" Clone Trooper.

Or can they?

Halloween offers a peek into our society's sensitivity toward gender roles, with some parents preferring their child dress up as a monster or an ax murderer rather than tiptoe across gender lines — even if it's just cross-dressing one

# . . . is a girl

night to fill up a plastic pumpkin bucket with bite-size candy.

And psychologists report that parents are far more likely to be on edge about a son's exhibiting an affinity for anything feminine than a daughter's being a tomboy.

"Sometimes parents are alarmed by their young son playing with a Barbie, and it's just a normal exploration," said Dr. Barbara Rubin, an Atlanta psychologist who specializes in gender issues. "I would say, let that child explore and expand because [the concern] might reflect a parent's own hang-ups."

Jenny Morgan, manager of the back-head Party City, recalled one little boy, about 5 years old, shopping for a Halloween costume who fell in love with Dorothy's red shoes from "The Wizard of Oz."

"It was the sparkly shoes — and he

► Please see **COSTUMES, F3**

When your son wants to be a princess: Costume conflicts can spook parents

**TOP COSTUMES**

Many boys and girls want to dress up as classic TV and movie characters — Yoda, Minnie Mouse and Godzilla. Newcomers Dora the Explorer and Buzz Lightyear also make the list of favorite kids Halloween costumes. . . . And for some reason, disguising yourself as an octopus is popular this year.

**Boys**

- Yoda
- Sportacus
- Clone Trooper
- Harry Potter
- Buzz Lightyear

**Girls**

- Batgirl
- Dora
- Tinkerbell
- Minnie Mouse
- Princess Leia



**Gender neutral**

- Elmo
- Dinosaur
- Octopus
- Godzilla
- Garfield



Amy Grant's magic in Covington will be shown on "Three Wishes" tonight.

## A (TV) star just right for wishing

By JILL VEJNOSKA  
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**Covington** — Zachary Riley had big dreams. Go on a dinosaur dig. Maybe score a new truck for his hard-working dad.

But then the 9-year-old learned singer Amy Grant was among the "Three Wishes" crew sprinkling fairy dust here, and he decided he'd much rather meet her than Dino.

"I got my wish," said Zachary, who had his picture made with show host Grant and sported a colorful photo button to prove it.

It was a little over three weeks ago that "Three Wishes" (9 p.m. NBC) — the new reality show that wears its heart on its sleeve as proudly as Zachary wore his button — arrived to shoot tonight's episode. The Newton County seat, which has been the picturesque setting for numerous films and TV's "In the Heat of the Night," welcomed the show.

It began with a "wish tent" on Monday morning, where producers

► Please see **WISHES, F4**

**BOOK BUZZ**



## Back in Oz, captive years for freedom

By TERESA K. WEAVER  
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In 1903's "Wicked," Gregory Maguire transformed L. Frank Baum's merry old land of Oz into a darker, deeply politicized setting for a more grown-up fable. Maguire's retelling — a prequel of sorts to Baum's 1900 classic — told the story of a little green girl named Elphaba who grows up to be the Wicked Witch of the West, when she's really just a misunderstood feminist.

"Wicked" sold a million copies and inspired a Broadway blockbuster, and Maguire went on to write a couple of other revisionist tales — of Cinderella ("Confessions of an Ugly Stepsister") and Snow White ("Mirror, Mirror"). Neither came close to duplicating the commercial success of "Wicked."

► Please see **BOOK, F4**

# Costumes: Boys', girls' choices can surprise

Continued from F1

was completely enthralled," Morgan said. "He didn't want to be Dorothy. He just really wanted those shoes."

The parents bought the shoes but left the rest of the Dorothy costume behind, Morgan said.

Child magazine recently posed the following scenario to its readers: If your 4-year-old boy wants to dress up as Daphne from the "Scooby-Doo" gang, what do you do? About half the parents said they would give his costume choice the green light.

The other half was less comfortable. About 43 percent said they'd reply, "Silly! Daphne is a girl and you're a boy! What costume would you like? Maybe Shaggy or Scooby?" The remainder of the 500 respondents said they would allow the child to wear the Daphne outfit -- but only at home. They would insist their son wear a "boy costume" outside.

On the Web site, some parents who voted against letting their preschooler dress up as Daphne said that costume choice would send confusing messages.

So ask yourself, would you allow your 4-year-old son to cloak himself in a poofy gown, or steer him into a Power Ranger costume instead?

Or if your 3-year-old girl wants to be Spider-Man, do you head to the nearest costume shop or insist on Bat Girl instead?

How about even more subtle choices? Letting your boy be Blue, the yappy girl dog from Blue's Clues, or Lala, the yellow girl Teletubby.

How about a ladybug? Terriso quickly learned that his only child's choice of costume starts debate.

"I'm all right with it, but when people ask me what Sophie is going to be for Halloween and I tell them she's going to be Superman, they say, 'You mean Supergirl?'" and when I reply, "No, she wants to be Superman," some people are OK with it, but some say, 'Are you trying to make her a boy?'"

Experts say it is in the normal range of behavior for little boys to dress up in gowns, lace and glitter.

Just because your child wants to wear a crown at 3, doesn't mean he will want to wear a tiara at 30. A boy may want to be Dora because the TV character is an explorer who speaks Spanish and has a cool monkey friend named Boots.

Many psychologists say parents should not over-analyze a costume choice.

"If we are talking about a 3-year-old, I say get over it," said Dr. Paul Schenk, an Atlanta psychologist. "This is not a coming out party. This is a Halloween party."

Still, experts know not all parents will be comfortable leaving the house with their son dressed up as a girl character.

**A sparkly prince**

Ann Hazzard, a child psychologist and professor at Emory University School of Medicine, suggested those parents try to find alternatives.

For example, if your son wants to be Cinderella because he likes the crown and jewels, maybe he could be a prince with sparkly shoes, suggests Hazzard.

Or if your son wants to be a magical fairy, he could be a magician with a wand.

Bonnie Weiss of Atlanta feels strongly that boys and girls should have no gender restrictions on Halloween.

In fact, she thinks it's hilarious when boys dress up as girls, recalling once when her son dressed up as Marilyn Monroe in college.

"Halloween is a time for silliness, and the further away from who you actually are, the funnier it is," said Weiss, 62.

**Time for calm**

Once a child is in his or her tween years, however, crossing gender lines could invite teasing.

And if the child likes to dress up in women's garb and wear makeup all year long (and has an aversion to activities typically associated with boys), psychologist Rubin said this could signal the teen has homosexual tendencies. But it could also be the child wants to be a makeup artist or clothing designer or simply thinks it is funny to dress up as a woman.

No matter your child wants to be for Halloween, experts say parents should slip a

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**calming brew:**

"Halloween is an opportunity to loosen up," Schenk said.

"And I would like parents to create a safe space for kids to dress up and be silly and to not

**over-interpret it."**

Back in Decatur, Sophie slips into the child-size Super-

man costume. She sticks out her chest, puts her hands on her hips and pretends to fly

around the house.

Sometimes she also likes to wear a ballerina dress and a wedding veil. But these days, she likes pretending to be a superhero.

She wears the costume with white sandals.

But her mom and dad are thinking about getting her red tennis shoes. That would make the Superman costume just perfect.

it's all inside.

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