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UP ON THE ROOF

WITH GGCI

p10



It's No Trick-Minding Those Halloween Manners! **p19**

No Party, Just The Mad Tea **p22**

You'll Love This Eggplant No Really! **p 26**

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about the cover



The cute little fellow pictured on the cover is “Measuring Max”, aka Max Thompson, son of Jim and Vicki Thompson, owners of GGCI and Gutterguys. See related story page 10. Cover photo by Rick Haithcox, www.rickhaithcox.com; cover graphic design by David James, www.rubicondesign.com

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KITCHEN, BATH, OR

UP ON THE ROOF CALL GGCI!

By David Hamrick

GA!: That's a mighty cute little fellow on the cover...



Jim: Thank you! That's Max, our son who is four. He's quite a ham, who loves to play with my tape measure. So, if you want to know how wide a box of cereal is; just ask Max. He loves to play sports and go fishing. He says when he gets bigger he wants to work with me and already has several sets of his own tools. My wife, Vicki is my best friend and we have been married for seven years this December. I am so thankful for her. I could have never been successful without her support. We are so blessed to have Max, who is our only child. We live in Belmont and love the warmth and sense of community you will find there.



GA!: So you are a local guy- did you go to school here?

Jim: Yes, I grew up in Kings Mountain and have lived most of my life in Gaston and Cleveland counties. I'm very proud of where I grew up. I was so fortunate to live in such a great town growing up as a child.

GA!: Jim, tell us a little about your business-actually you have two divisions, is that right? When did you start the business?

Jim: I started the business in 2003 with my best friend, Daniel Honeycutt, who I grew up with in Kings Mountain. We were both in the banking industry and decided to start our own gutter business. Daniel and his wife Susan were such a big part of what our company has grown to be today. Unfortunately, Daniel passed away unexpectedly last year and that has been extremely difficult to no longer have my business partner and best friend to talk to everyday. We miss him dearly.

Yes, we have two divisions. The company has moved in a new direction over the last several years. Bobby Horne joined the team and is our general contractor who heads up our construction jobs. He has been in the construction business for 22 years and manages all of our beautiful bathroom and kitchen renovations and new construction. Along with the construction, Bobby also oversees our siding and deck installations. On the gutter and roofing work side, we offer shingle roofing, flat roofing and metal roofing for residential and commercial. We are certified GAF and IKO shingle installers, as well as, Duro-Last installers that is a PVC flat roof application. We are a multi faceted company that can handle your needs from the ground up.

GA!: Jim, we've had quite a few storms in the last several months, has that kept you busy?

Jim: Whew, absolutely! We have been so busy, but, again thankful. It's been really nice that our customers chose us because we are local and offer good service at a fair price. We take pride in doing the job right. We are finding that once we complete a new roof on a home, we usually get the neighbor and the neighbor's neighbor. Nothing is better than a customer calling or sending you a letter telling you how very happy they are about the work and how good you are at cleaning up.

GA!: What does GGCI specialize in, is it kitchen and bath remodels, or?

Jim: Bobby is a stickler for details, so when he works with folks on their new kitchen or bathroom, he puts a lot of heart and soul in what we do. Bobby builds every job like it was his own. We understand that folks want an excellent job done in a timely manner. With that in mind, we give everyone an estimated completion time up front, and we use only the best products available. If budget is a consideration, we look for workable options that won't sacrifice quality.



GA!: What makes you guys different-why should folks call you instead of someone else?

Jim: When you choose us, it's one call. It's nice to know that if something goes wrong you have just one person to call. We offer turn-key services that most companies can't. We are also local and can use about any neighborhood in the area as our showroom. We have completed over 200 roofs in Gaston county this year alone.

Customers can always be assured that the material and quality workmanship is the best over other competitors.

GA!: What about products-is there a difference?

Jim: Yes, we take pride in using local companies when we can for our products. Some contractors will use the cheapest building materials possible and sell them for a premium price. We use local lumber yards for all of our specialty work, for example: solid doors, cedar posts and railing. You can't always find specialized items in the chain stores. I would tell consumers to ask detailed questions such as, "how thick is the siding you install", "is this product warranted if you go out of business". We have negotiated great pricing with our vendors and have buying power that allows us to pass on the savings to our customers. The products we offer are warranted and we are certified to install them.



GA!: Jim, I know you do some beautiful copper work... tell us about that.

Jim: When we got into the metal roofing business, it included copper. We do a lot of half-round copper guttering and also build custom cupolas, finials; we even built copper fireplaces and hoods for kitchens.

>>Article continued on page 12



910 W. 1st Street • Lowell, NC 28098
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GA! I'm thinking of having some work done, what are some important things to consider when hiring a contractor like yourself?

Jim: Things that are important to ask for when seeking professional workmanship is

1. Ask for references, always.
2. Ask to see some work they have completed recently.
3. Insist on a certificate of workman's compensation and general liability.
4. Ensure any competing estimates include the same quality materials and installation when price differences vary. Experience and quality are important to lasting results.

GA!: What do you do when you are not being a contractor?

Jim: I enjoy being a Dad more than anything, so soccer games and fishing are big. Max caught a huge bass this year and his face said it all. Before the storms I used to play golf. My wife and I like to ride motorcycles. We enjoy going to Key West and hanging out with our friends and family.

GA!: What is the funniest or most unusual thing that has happened to you in the roofing and remodeling business?

Jim: I don't think it was funny but definitely unusual. We installed a new roof, all new gutters and gutter guards on a home in Gastonia this year. The work was completed on a Wednesday, then Thursday night a storm came through and destroys all three. So, we did it again the following week. Very unusual situation and proves how mother nature is unpredictable.

GA!: I know you have a great team-tell us about them

Jim: We broke all the rules of business. I have surrounded myself with great friends. I have four sales team members, not including Bobby and myself. Tom Lilly, who I have known for 16 years. Bryan Leftwich and Wayne Jenkins for 25 years. Then, our latest addition Andy Leigh for 15 years. Our office staff consists of Maggie White and Lindsay Horne. We have over 40 guys in the field who have been part of our team over the last eight years. I have been so fortunate to have had solid people surrounding me. They truly make us all successful.



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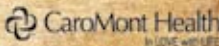
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Trick-or-Treating 101 Halloween Etiquette



JULIE ROBERTS

Knocking on a door and asking for candy seems pretty basic, but there is a code of behavior that should be followed while out and about on this freakishly fun night. Use these etiquette tips to help you be the good ghoul:

- ☞ No lights means no knock. If you see outside lights on and Halloween decorations displayed, chances are this house is participating in the night's festivities and would be okay to approach.
- ☞ Knock or ring the door bell up to two times. Give it 30 seconds in between so it gives the family time to answer the door. If no one comes to greet you after the second time, quietly leave that house and move on to the next house.
- ☞ Call it a night after 9pm. Families with small children or older people may be in bed by this time.
- ☞ You are getting free candy or party favors, so it is polite to greet the person that answers the door by saying "trick or treat" or "Happy Halloween" and remember to always say "thank you" after you have received your treat.
- ☞ Only take ONE treat or piece of candy if they offer a bowl of candy to you. They may encourage you to take more than one piece, if so, take just one more, not a handful.
- ☞ Stay on the sidewalk or pathway leading up to the house. Don't take shortcuts through the flowerbeds or front lawn as you could damage the landscaping or even hurt yourself.
- ☞ Halloween night is filled with tricks too, so if you must prank anyone, make sure your trick won't hurt people physically, cause permanent damage to property or put anyone in danger.
- ☞ Don't scare the little ones too badly. Make sure the children are old enough to enjoy a harmless scare like jumping out of the bushes, a really scary costume or any props used.
- ☞ Not everyone celebrates Halloween, so be respectful of the folks that choose not to participate.
- ☞ Keep your hands to yourself. Do not touch decorations or anything on the porch or in the yard. You could the décor or hurt yourself.
- ☞ Remember to thank the parent or person that is taking you out for a safe, fun night of trick-or-treating!

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MUSIC



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by Ben Dungan
bdungan@charter.net

The Mad Tea

The debate on the over-commercialization of Christmas seems to come each and every year. And yet, Christmas music is such an integral part of the season. It sets the mood.

After all, what is Christmas without Bing Crosby, Johnny Mathis, and Nat King Cole. Those guys (and many others) recorded iconic songs that are synonymous with the season.

But what about Halloween? Where are the iconic Halloween songs?

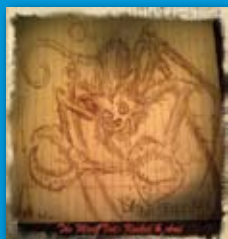
Perhaps we *feel* Christmas, whereas we *experience* Halloween. Halloween has a more visual component to it. This seems to be true with all of the scary movies on TV and in movie theaters during that time of the year.

But that doesn't stop the members of the Asheville based-band, The Mad Tea (formerly Mad Tea Party).

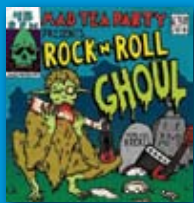
The Mad Tea consists of Ami Worthen (ukulele, vocals) and Jason Kreckel (guitar, drums, vocals). For over ten years, this garage-pop duo has been rocking' out audiences all over and is a frequent opener for another North Carolina-based band, Southern Culture on the Skids.

Now, first things first. This band is all about the music – not politics. In fact, that is why they have had to change their name to The Mad Tea. According to their website, they are trying to “get away from the darn political associations and get back to the business of rock ‘n roll”.

Unfortunately, the Google goes with what's popular – and in the last few years, the conservative Tea Party movement has continued to trend.



Even though they share a similar name, they are completely different. Especially the way the band treats their music. Their mission is to rock out and have fun.



You won't find political commentary on their website. You will find, however, their latest Halloween/spooky musical contribution, “Batratspidercrab”. And it's yours free to download.

This marks the third year in a row that Ami Worthen and Jason Kreckel have put together a Halloween-inspired project. In 2009, they released *Zombie Boogie* – a four-song EP featuring two originals and two obscure covers.

It was so well-received, they did it again the next year releasing another four songs entitled *Rock n' Roll Ghoul*.

They are back at it again, yet a bit scaled back releasing just one song this year. However, it for Halloween lovers everywhere to download for free.

At first glance you think it's a coincidence. However, now in their third year, I can safely say this is a trend. I think it's safe to say that The Mad Tea enjoy the Halloween holiday.

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Between both Worthen and Kreckel, they both share a love and passion for all things Halloween. It's fits within their mission as a band – to have fun.

Halloween is a time to loosen up the collar and let those creative juices flow. It's a time to fire up those imaginations and for one night only become larger than life.

That's what a show with The Mad Tea is all about. And at the end of the day, if they can provide some music to the Halloween soundtrack of your life, then they will have down their jobs.

**To learn more about The Mad Tea, and to download their latest
Halloween-inspired single, visit them online at www.themadteaparty.com.**

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COOKING



Stuffed Aubergines

Is it a Trick, or Treat? What's that you say; you don't like eggplant? Maybe you haven't tried it the right way yet, or maybe it's the way it looks when served or possibly the consistency. I say try it again, but this time let's make them more like twice baked potatoes. Mmmmm, you're thinking- I like twice baked potatoes, but the calories! Not to worry- these are healthy!

This interesting vegetable originates from India and is a part of the Nightshade family so it's related to tomato, potato and even tobacco. It actually contains the highest concentration of Nicotine of any plant, but don't worry! You would have to eat 20 pounds of eggplant to get the nicotine of one cigarette. In addition, the eggplant contains folic acid and potassium and helps to block the formation of free radicals. (Those pesky molecules associated with aging and a slew of diseases from Cancer to Cataracts)

Ingredients:

4 Eggplants – Recommend small ones that fit into your palm like a baking potato

½ cup red bell pepper – one whole bell pepper seeded and diced
½ cut Ricotta

¼ cup of Parmesan – Fresh grated is better

1 Tsp of garlic

1 egg

¼ cup of bread crumbs

Salt and Pepper

Preparation:

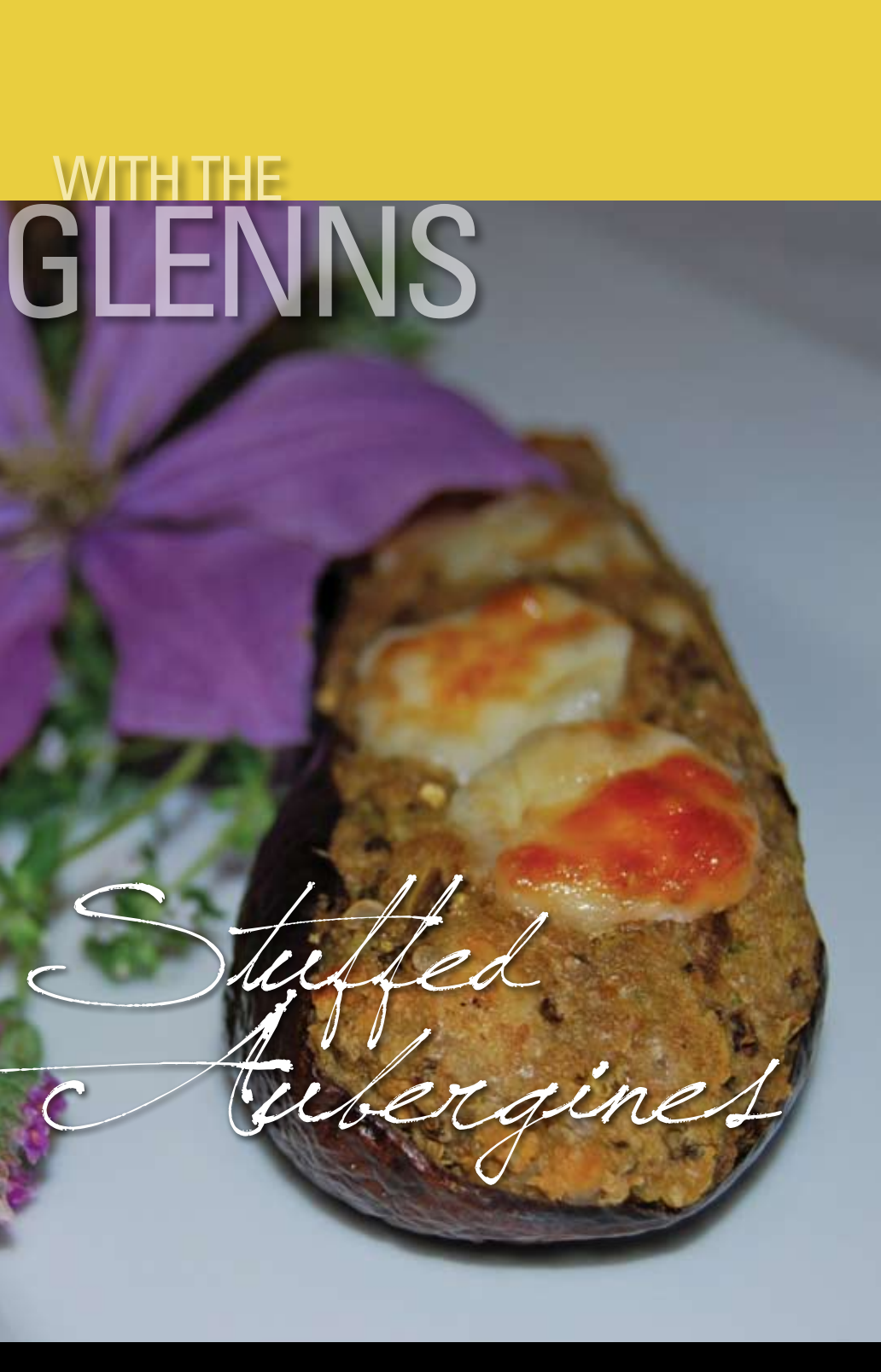
Pre heat your oven to 350 degrees. Lightly pierce the eggplant and place them on a baking sheet. (good safety tip, I actually had one explode while creating this recipe) Bake the eggplant for 40 min or until they start to shrivel. Let cool and slice in half, clean the eggplant flesh from the outer skin gently with a spoon.

This recipe only makes six so if you tear a couple of the skins you will still have enough. Place the baked eggplant flesh, red pepper, Ricotta, Parmesan, garlic and egg in a bowl and mix well, season with salt and pepper to taste. Carefully fill six skins with this mixture, sprinkle with bread crumbs and a bit more Parmesan. Place back in the oven and bake for 30 minutes more, serve hot. If desired a bit of butter can be served on top, but our taste testers found it was not needed. Serve this treat at your next dinner and you will find that it is a nice little trick on your tastebuds.

Ciao, Glenn and Glenn

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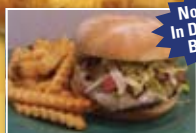
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