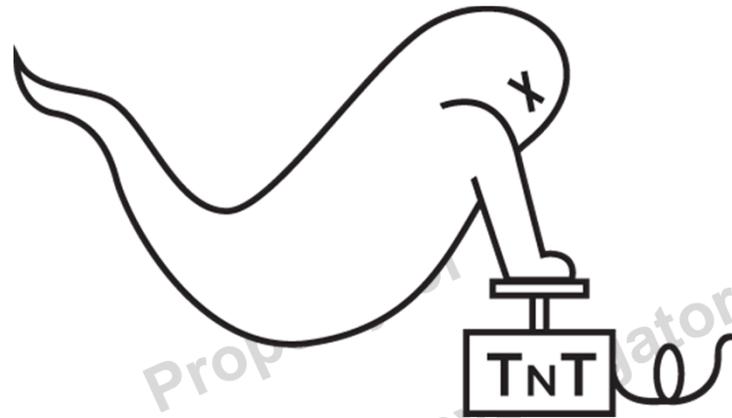


## Bumps in the Night!!!!

October 2013 Issue

### Meet Boomer

Hi everyone! We'd like to introduce you to our new team mascot, Boomer. You will start seeing him around more. Thank you to team members, Tracey Tanner for the original design, and Melissa Tanner for the concept. Additionally we'd like to thank, friend of the team, Melinda Messina for helping us create him in image format.



### Paranormal "U"

#### Day of the Dead

By Barb Smith, TnT Paranormal Investigators LLC

The Day of the Dead (in Spanish: *Día de los Muertos*) is a holiday celebrated in many parts of the world. It is a day to pay honor and reverence to one's ancestors. The holiday is typically celebrated on November 1st and 2nd in connection with the Catholic holiday of All Saints' Day which takes place on November 1st and All Souls' Day which occurs on November 2nd. The belief is that death is not the end, but the beginning of a new stage in life.

The holiday has its highest prominence in Mexico, where the celebration has ancient Aztec and Mesoamerican roots and is also a national holiday. The holiday focuses on the gathering of family and friends to pray for and remember their loved ones who have died. During this time families usually clean and decorate the graves with offerings. The offerings range from toys for children (*los angelitos*, or "the little angels") and tequila, mezcal, pulque, or jars of atole for adults. Families will offer trinkets or deceased's favorite candies on the grave. There are many traditions which include, building private altars or shrines at home honoring the deceased and decorating those alters with photos of their loved ones along with candles, sugar skulls, marigolds, and the favorite foods and beverages of the departed. Some people believe the spirits of the dead eat the "spiritual essence" of the offerings of food. Additionally, pillows and blankets are left out so that the deceased can rest after their long journey. In some parts of Mexico, people have picnics at graveside and spend the entire night beside the graves of their relatives.

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The most common symbol of the holiday is the skull (in Spanish: *calavera*), which celebrants represent in masks, called *calacas* (colloquial term for skeleton), and foods such as sugar or chocolate skulls, which are inscribed with the name of the recipient on the forehead. Sugar skull gifts can be given to both the living and the dead. Other holiday foods include *pan de muerto*, a sweet egg bread made in various shapes from plain rounds to skulls and rabbits, which are often decorated with white frosting to look like twisted bones.

In the early 1900's José Guadalupe Posada, a Mexican illustrator, created a famous print of a figure he called *La Calavera Catrina* ("The Elegant Skull"). The image, to see it go to: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Posada2.Catrina.jpeg>, is of a female skeleton dressed in only a large fancy 20<sup>th</sup> century hat. She has now become an icon of the Mexican *Día de los Muertos*, or Day of the Dead.

The origins of the Day of the Dead celebrations in Mexico can be traced back to the indigenous peoples such as the Aztec, Maya, P'urhépecha, Nahuatl, and Totonac. Rituals celebrating the lives of their ancestors have been observed by these civilizations for the last three thousand years. The festival that has now become the modern Day of the Dead was originally held in the ninth month of the Aztec calendar, about the beginning of August, and was celebrated for an entire month. The festivities were dedicated to the goddess Mictecacihuatl, known as the "Lady of the Dead". This was to celebrate the end of the harvest. Maize, kidney beans, chick-peas and pumpkins, comprised the offering to the Mictecacihuatl goddess. When the Spaniards brought Christianity to Mexico, these beliefs were adapted to the Christian calendar and they are now celebrated November 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup>.

In many countries with a Roman Catholic heritage, All Saints' Day and All Souls' Day have long been holidays where people spend the day remembering the deceased, by taking the day off work, going to cemeteries and placing candles and flowers on their loved ones grave. Similar holidays are celebrated in many parts of the world; for example, it's a public holiday (*Dia de Finados*) in Brazil, where many Brazilians celebrate by visiting cemeteries and churches. In Spain, there are festivals and parades, and the play *Don Juan Tenorio* is traditionally performed. Then at the end of the day, people gather at cemeteries and pray for their loved ones who have died. Similar observances occur throughout Asia, Africa, Europe and the Philippines.

At first glance, the Mexican custom of El Día de los Muertos --- the Day of the Dead --- may sound much like the U.S. Custom of Halloween. But the customs have different origins, and their attitudes towards death are different: In the typical, Halloween festivities, death is something to be feared. But in *el día de los muertos*, death --- or at least the memories of those who have died --- is something to be celebrated.

Additional information can be found at:

[http://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Day\\_of\\_the\\_Dead](http://www.newworldencyclopedia.org/entry/Day_of_the_Dead)

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Day\\_of\\_the\\_Dead](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Day_of_the_Dead)

<http://spanish.about.com/cs/culture/a/dayofdead.htm>

<http://www3.niu.edu/newsplace/nndia.html>

<http://www.celebrate-day-of-the-dead.com/day-of-the-dead-facts.html>

[http://wiki.answers.com/Q/10\\_facts\\_about\\_the\\_Day\\_of\\_the\\_Dead](http://wiki.answers.com/Q/10_facts_about_the_Day_of_the_Dead)

