

HAPPY HALLOWEEN

Friday, October 31, 2003

The Behrend Beacon

DID YOU KNOW?

No words in the dictionary rhyme with orange.

41.1 million-The number of potential "trick-or-treaters," age 5-14, according to the Census 2000.

California has the largest amount of "trick-or-treaters," with 5.3 million children ages 5-14.

Irish tradition is believed to have started the tradition of trick-or-treating. In preparation for All Hallow's Eve, the Irish would visit neighbors and ask for food in preparation for a feast.

The only town in the United States to have the word "pumpkin" in its name is Pumpkin Center, N.C.

Other places include Transylvania County, N.C., and Pumpkin Bend Township, Ark.

894.9 million- The total pounds of U.S. pumpkin production in 2000. The total value of these pumpkins was \$101.6 million.

The fastest time to carve a face into a pumpkin is 54.72 seconds. Stephen Clarke of NJ holds the current record, beating his previous record of one minute 14 seconds.

The world record for most lit jack-o-lanterns is 23,727 set by Keene, N.H. at the Pumpkin Festival.

Source: Guinness Book of World Records and Census 2000

Count Dracula's Legend

Transylvania, Romania, is home to the legend of Count Dracula, made famous by Bram Stoker's fictional book "Dracula."

The idea behind the character stems from a real life ruler named Vlad Dracula. So the legend begins.

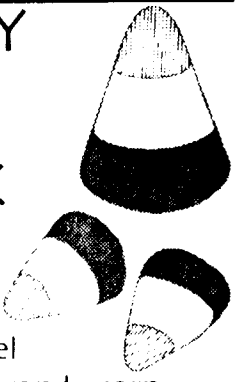
In 1431, Vlad Dracula, which means "devil," was born to the family that founded Wallachia, now present day Romania. When Dracula became the next ruler of Wallachia, he launched an assault on the neighboring Ottoman and Carpathian empires. His prisoners were executed by impaling them with wooden stakes. He then hung their bodies from the trees in Transylvania.

Dracula ruled his kingdom with the power of terror. Dracula's family revolted against him and forced him out of the capital city. Dracula escaped to his personal castle.

He was then assassinated around 1476 in the forests near Bucharest.

Source: www.fsus.fsu.edu

CANDY CORN QUICK FACTS



3.57 calories/kernel
75 percent of candy corn production is for Halloween.

****Other Varieties Include****

- Reindeer corn for Christmas (red, green, white)
- Indian corn for Autumn (chocolate and vanilla)
- Cupid corn for Valentine's (red, pink, white)
- Bunny corn for Easter (pastel-colored)

The first person to invent candy corn is unknown, but the Wunderle Candy Company of Philadelphia was the first to go into commercial production.

The National Confectioners Association estimates that in 2001 candy manufacturers sold more than 20 million pounds of candy corn. That's roughly 8.3 billion kernels.

Source: hauntedbay.com

Remember Elvira?



Source: www.elvira.com

*First nationally syndicated horror show host.

*First person to be broadcast in 3-D.

*First female to twirl tassels on national television.

*First female celebrity to do a national beer campaign.

*First celebrity to market own beer, Elvira Night Brew.

*Real name is Cassandra Peterson and is an animal rights activists.

Top 10 Scariest Flicks

10. "Eraserhead." (1977)
9. "The Exorcist." (1973)
8. "Halloween." (1978)
7. "Don't Look Now." (1973)
6. "The Texas Chainsaw Massacre." (1974)
5. "Nightmare on Elm Street." (1984)
4. "Suspiria." (1977)
3. "Night of the Living Dead." (1968)
2. "Repulsion." (1965)
1. "Psycho." (1960)

Source: MSN.com

The largest pumpkin on record weighs 1,131 pounds. It was grown from Atlantic Giant seed stock by Gary Checkon of Altoona, Pa.

Source: Guinness Book of World Records

HISTORY AND TRADITION

*The roots of Halloween can be traced all the way back to Ireland and the Druid tribes of the Celtic culture.

*The "Druid" religion listed Nov. 1 as New Year's on its calendar.

*The celebration began on Oct. 31 and continued into the new year.

*It was on Oct. 31 that evil spirits roamed the streets and villages. Then, the lord of Darkness, Lord Samhain, would catch the spirits and take them to the underworld.

*Halloween commonly was referred to as "All Hollows Eve."

*It originated from the pagan holiday that honored the dead.

*Today, Samhain, what the ancient Celts named their celebration, is mainly celebrated by Wiccans and Neo-Pagans.

*Halloween as we know it takes from this Druid holiday with its costumes of ghosts, spirits and superstitions.

*The Roman Catholic Church created two holidays to downplay the pagan holidays of evil. All Saints Day was created on Nov. 1 to honor Saints. All Souls Day was created to honor and pray for souls of the dead.

*The pagan holiday also marked the final harvest of the growing season.

*In the 1800s, Halloween parties officially began as part of the celebration.



Source: Religioustolerance.org

RANDOM FUN FACTS AND FIGURES

Snickers is the most popular candy to give away on Halloween.

Halloween remains second only to Christmas in home decorating.

Costume sales exceed over 10 billion dollars.

Magician Harry Houdini died on Oct. 31, 1926, from gangrene and peritonitis resulting from a ruptured appendix.

In 1996, Americans ate 20 million pounds of candy corn.

Over 2.5 billion dollars is spent during Halloween, making the holiday second behind Christmas.

Halloween lanterns were originally a means of lighting the dark nights and keeping travelers safe from wandering spirits and fairies.

There is such a thing as vampire bats. They require about one tablespoon of blood a day, mostly from dairy cattle and other wild and domestic animals.

Bat guano (manure) is considered by far the richest and best of manures.

Halloween is the eighth largest card-sending occasion. There are more than 28 million sent each year.

According to the U.S. Census:

The first recorded instance of a Halloween celebration was in 1921 in Anoka, Minn.

Americans consumed 24 pounds of candy per capita in 2002. Most of this consumption is believed to be by children on or immediately following Halloween.

2,715- The number of formal wear and costume rental establishments across the nation in 2001.

Born on this day

Dan Rather- CBS Anchor
Rapper Vanilla Ice
Comedian John Candy
Actor Michael Landon

Student Government
MCC Representative
George Morgan III

40.9 percent of all traffic fatalities on Halloween in 2001 were alcohol related.

In comparison, 42.1 percent of all traffic fatalities on New Year's Eve were alcohol related.

Top 10 Songs

10. "Monster Mash" Bobby Pickett
9. "Ghostbusters" theme song Ray Parker Jr.
8. "Purple People eater" Sheb Wooley
7. "Twilight Zone" Neil Norman
6. "The Addams Family" Vic Mizzy
5. "Werewolves of London" Warren Zevon
4. "Witch Doctor" Alvin & the Chipmunks
3. "Don't Fear the Reaper" Blue Oyster Cult
2. "I Put A Spell on You" Jay Hawkins
1. "Thriller" Michael Jackson