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Cities' treaters outnumber tricksters

United Press International
CHICAGO — Fewer Halloween tricks and more treats were reported by police chiefs in 125 United States cities questioned in a recent survey.

The cities ranged in population from 6,500 to more than 2 million. Among them were Yarmouth, Mass.; Pierre, S.D.; Missoula, Mont.; Everett, Wash.; Texarkana, Texas; Tempe, Ariz.; Omaha, Seattle, and San Diego.

More than 90 percent of the chiefs said their cities had experienced far fewer incidents of tampered treats or no incidents at all in the past year or two.

The same percentage reported a decrease in or an absence of hoax calls to police about treats that had been tainted.

The survey was made by the National Confectioners Association, a trade organization representing candy and confectionery makers nationwide.

The study indicated most reports

of tainted treats in past years were either honest errors or attempts by children to gain attention by tampering with the treats themselves.

Widespread reporting of such incidents has a ripple effect, the chiefs said.

About 80 percent of the chiefs said the effect is being counteracted in their cities with the cooperation of newspapers, radio and television stations that now check with the police about reported incidents before printing or broadcasting news of them.

The study also showed a strong trend toward more organized treating hours and community events to

keep children in chaperoned groups and out of mischief long associated with Halloween. It was made in conjunction with the confectioners' Meet 'n' Treat program, launched in 1972 to promote a safe holiday.

Forty-six cities reported special events, some sponsored by community centers, clubs and other organizations or by the city governments. Twenty-two percent of the cities hold Halloween parades and 13 percent establish haunted houses.

In Newport, R.I., the police department said vandalism has decreased 80 percent since it began holding an annual Halloween party

Not all witches worship Satan on Halloween night

United Press International
COLORADO SPRINGS, Colo. — Chris Richards, a male witch, says at midnight on Halloween he and his wife will dress in deep purple hooded robes to celebrate one of their religion's major sabbath days.

Richards, 27, said Sunday he and his wife, Tammerlayne, 29, will be joined by "4 to 12" persons for the midnight "Samhain" ritual at the couple's home. He said the gathering will communicate with "those yet to be born and those who have

passed on."

Richards said he previously had been successful in communicating with a deceased "maternal relative who gave him some practical advice. "I have done it before," he said. "It's like the line in the motion picture Star Wars, 'trust your feelings,' which is one of the premises of witchcraft."

Richards said contrary to popular belief about witchcraft, he and his wife do not practice Satanism but rather are worshippers of nature.

What are the signs? Mild winter signaled

United Press International
MOUNT CARMEL, Ill. — If you want to know what's ahead in winter weather, don't toss away that Thanksgiving goose breastbone until you notice its color and length.

A white and short breastbone means a mild and short winter, but a long and dark one spells plenty of service for the longjohns.

The goose breastbone is only one in a long list of weather folklore collected and recollected by James Gillihan through most of his 43 years.

Most of this year's signs, he said, point to a less severe winter than the past two.

Gillihan, who left his job as director of South Dakota's Office of Cultural Preservation at Pierre last February because of poor health, has returned home as archivist at Wabash Valley College.

"As a boy, I remember what my grandfather told me about the folklore signs," Gillihan said, "and

my father still plants his garden and does his fishing according to the signs."

Gillihan, a Southern Illinois University-Carbondale graduate, has worked in several states where he came in close contact with folklorists.

From 1957-65 he was state salvage archaeologist stationed at SIU, scouting Southern Illinois for ancient cultures endangered by highway projects.

He also served as curator at the Evansville, Ind., Museum; director of arts and sciences at the Lakeview Center for Arts and Sciences at Peoria, Ill.; director of the Southeast Arkansas Arts and Sciences Center at Pine Bluff, and director of the William H. Over Museum at University of South Dakota.

Folklore about the caterpillar as a forecaster of winter weather abounds, Gillihan said.

"Caterpillars seen late in the autumn signify a very mild winter, but a large number of caterpillars in the autumn is the sign of a cold winter.

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