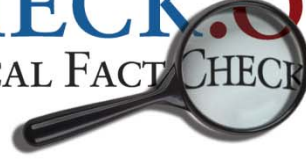




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ANNENBERG POLITICAL FACT CHECK



JUST THE FACTS!

TITLE: "LITTLE WIDGET, BIG WHALLOP"

EPISODE #: 46

HOST

Welcome back to Just the Facts! the weekly vid-cast from FactCheck.org. I'm Emi Kolawole and the Holiday shopping season is in full swing. But did you know that, according to [ShopperTrak](#), a retail monitoring firm, that sales are up by 3 percent from last year on Black Friday? And that, according to a preliminary count, Americans spent \$10.6 billion. And did you know also know that the economy is in a [recession](#) and has been since December...of 2007? Okay, but why tell you all of this? Because, we thought we'd spend a little time appreciating our smallest widget...

GRAPHIC: FACTCHECK WEBSITE

If you've been to our Web site you may have seen our Fact of the Day feature. Now, be honest. Do you check it every day? Maybe you do; maybe you don't. But if you do, you probably know that Canada observes Thanksgiving on the second Monday of October. And you also know that in 2007 Americans consumed 24.5 pounds of candy per capita.

But what else did you miss or learn?

GRAPHIC

Let's start with dogs. Puppies to be exact. There's been a lot of buzz about them lately, thanks to a not-so-private promise made by the president-elect:

VIDEO: OBAMA VICTORY SPEECH

OBAMA

Sasha and Malia, I love you both more than you can imagine, and you have earned the new puppy that's coming with us to the White House.

HOST

But there was a snag.

OBAMA

Malia is allergic, so it has to be hypoallergenic. ... On the other hand, our preference would be to get a shelter dog...whether we're going to be able to balance those two

things I think is a pressing issue on the Obama household.

HOST

A pressing issue indeed since it's believed that photos of Herbert Hoover with his police dog, King Tut, won over so many supporters that it helped him win his 1928 reelection. And, President Kennedy kept nine dogs even though he was allergic to them. And President Coolidge kept 12 dogs and - not to give Malia and Sasha any ideas - two raccoons.

GRAPHIC: NEWSEUM WEBSITE

But that's not all, you can read more about the first pets in a Nov. 14 report on the Newseum website – a great source for reading about the facts between and behind the headlines.

Next, we go from Labradoodles and cockapoos to Venice. The ancient Italian city recently experienced some of the worst flooding in 22 years. Not even the city's intricate canal system, which includes the Grand Canal that splits the city completely in two, could hold back the abnormally high floods.

GRAPHIC: FACT MONTAGE

Oh, and did you know that people who rapidly lose weight are at greater risk of developing gallstones; that Illinois produced 542 million pounds of pumpkin in 2007 – more than any other U.S. state, or that Washington, D.C. residents weren't allowed to vote in the presidential election until the 23rd amendment was adopted in 1961?

Okay, okay I'll stop. But the lesson here is that the big story of the day rarely stops at the headlines. There are plenty of facts out there that shed light on what you read about in the news and that can help you discover and cultivate sources so you can counteract misleads - all the more reason to keep an eye on the Fact of the Day.

And that's it for this episode of Just the Facts! I'm Emi Kolawole, thanks for watching and see you next week.