

Press Release – “300 Giant Pumpkin Plants Find Growers with Local Community Organizations to Benefit”

On Sunday, May 17, 2009, the Maine Pumpkin Growers Organization (MePGO) gave away close to 300 Giant Atlantic Pumpkin plants to local growers. Each grower in the 2009 Pumpkin Plant GiveAway will have the chance to raise money for their favorite local non-profit organization and to make the Pumpkinfest better than ever by securing sponsorships for their pumpkin.

Among those picking up a Giant Atlantic Pumpkin plant on Sunday was Togus, a 26-pound Maine Coon Cat “owned” or at least housed by WCSH6 News Center reporter Don Carrigan and his wife Donna. When not eating, catching mice, eating, purring, eating, cat-napping, and eating, Togus is the morning mascot of the Channel 6 Storm Center. With the help of Don and support of Donna Carrigan, Togus will be growing a giant pumpkin and gathering pumpkin sponsorships. The other volunteer pumpkin growers were of the human variety. They came from as far away as Gorham and Rockland, and ranged in age from very young to not so young!

A total of 500 giant pumpkin plants will be given out. These seedlings will become the grand daddies of the pumpkin patch and will be featured at Pumpkinfest 2009’s events as pumpkin regatta entrants or painted and/or sculpted art objects that will grace Main Street in October. The ambitious goal is to collectively grow 500 pumpkins weighing 100 pounds each for a total of 50,000 pounds!

Volunteer-growers will obtain pledge-sponsors for their pumpkin from their friends and family throughout the growing season. Pledges may be based on either a specified amount per pound for the pumpkin (for example, “a penny a pound”) or a flat rate (\$5 per pumpkin). Half of the pledges will go to the local non-profit organization designated by the volunteer-grower; the other half will go to defray the cost of the Damariscotta Pumpkinfest 2009’s eight days of events from October 4 through 12, 2009.

If you missed Sunday’s give away, giant pumpkin plantlets are still available for free at Pinkham’s Plantation at 431 Biscay Road in Damariscotta. Pinkham’s is open 9 am to 5 p.m. every day except Memorial Day when the hours are to be 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Get there soon to get your pumpkin seedling while supplies last.



Togus, morning mascot of the WCSH Channel 6 Storm Center, selects his pumpkin plant with help from Maine Pumpkin Growers Organization's Bill Clark and Buzz Pinkham and his "mom," Donna Carrigan. (Photo by Phyllis Guss.)"



Despite the rain, a crowd came out to get their pumpkin plants and help raise funds for local nonprofits. Kathy Anderson registers volunteer growers.(Photo by Phyllis Guss.)



Getting ready for family fun, Rebecca Tilden fills out the paper work so her family can grow a giant pumpkin boat and a "pumpkin Picasso" while Deb Storch looks on. (Photo by Herb Watson.)"