

Damariscotta Pumpkinfest Kicks Off for 2009 By Weighing Maine's Largest Pumpkin

Events Continue Through Columbus Day, October 12

Despite the clouds and mist Sunday morning, Damariscotta Pumpkinfest got off to a sunny start by weighing in Maine's new state giant pumpkin record holder.

Elroy Morgan of Bradford, Maine grew this 1,210 pound winner. An experienced grower, Morgan has spent the past 8 years trying to raise the biggest pumpkin in Maine state history. This year he succeeded by beating the previous Maine record - set in 2006 - by 80 pounds. A new world record was recently set in Ohio by Christy Hart who grew a 1,725 pound pumpkin.

Also participating in Sunday's weigh-off were 26 volunteer growers of various ages. Their pumpkins ranged in size from a pretty orange pumpkin weighing 7 pounds, to a giant gourd hitting the scales at 362 pounds. The latter pumpkin was grown by Togus the Cat (morning mascot of the WCSH Channel 6 Storm Center) and his human "dad" WCSH Channel 6 news reporter Don Carrigan.

Three other real heavy weights were grown locally by Bill Clark, founder of Maine Pumpkin Growers Organization and co-founder of Damariscotta Pumpkinfest with Buzz Pinkham. Bill's Atlantic Giant Pumpkins weighed 607, 648, and 863 pounds.

Pumpkinfest will continue through Columbus Day, Monday, October 12.

Highlights on Saturday, October 10 include the YMCA Fun Run (8 am), Pumpkin Distance Chunkin' (9 am - noon), Giant Pumpkin Parade (2 pm), Pumpkin Dessert Contest (3 pm), and Underwater Pumpkin Carving (3:30 pm).

Sunday, October 11 events feature a Pancake Breakfast by the American Legion Auxiliary (7 - 11 am), Pumpkin Catapult and Chunkin' (9 am), Pumpkin Paddle Boat Races (2 pm), Motorized Pumpkin Regatta (3:30 pm), and a concert by The Horseshoe Crabs at Schooner Landing (5 pm).

Children's games and activities will be held on Saturday and Sunday from 10 am to 2 pm.

On Monday, October 12, the 150-Foot Pumpkin Drop is set for 10 am.

All events are free except for the Pancake Breakfast which costs \$6 for adults and \$3 for children.

Shuttle service from satellite parking to downtown Damariscotta events will be provided on Saturday and Sunday, October 10 and 11. Signs to parking will be placed where on Business Route 1 and Route 1 connect, at the northern and southern ends of Damariscotta.

Please check Pumpkinfest's website www.damariscottapumpkinfest.com and blog www.damariscottapumpkinfest.blogspot.com for the full schedule, and details on locations and parking.



Mr. Morgan and his wife Missy are pictured below with the winning pumpkin.

