

Release: Damariscotta Pumpkinfest Giant Pumpkin Plantlet Give-Away set for May 22, 8 a.m. - 3 p.m.

Nightly frosts are almost gone, flowers are blooming, and it's again time to get your FREE Giant Atlantic Pumpkin plant at the Damariscotta Pumpkinfest & Regatta Plantlet Give-Away on Sunday, May 22, 2011, from 8 a.m. to 3 p.m. The Give-Away will be held at Pinkham's Plantation, which is located at 431 Biscay Road in Damariscotta, Maine 04543.

Togus the Cat, "Storm Center" mascot of the WCSH6 (Portland) and WLBZ2 (Bangor) Morning Report, will be appearing at the Give-Away from 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. Togus grew the largest pumpkin among the "volunteer growers" in 2009 with help from his human "dad" Don Carrigan.

Togus is Maine's favorite Coon Cat with close to 9,000 Facebook friends. He now has his own children's book: "TOGUS: A Coon Cat Finds A Home." The book is written by well-known TV journalist Don Carrigan and beautifully illustrated by local artist Thomas Block. Autographed and "paw-tographed" copies of the book will be available.

At the Give-Away, please plan to spend some time with Pumpkinfest's horticultural experts. These experienced and award winning giant pumpkin growers - Bill Clark, Curt Crosby, Tom Lishness, Edwin Pierpont, and Buzz Pinkham - will be available to answer questions and offer suggestions on how to grow the 2011 Maine State champion gourd.

Be sure to find out about participating in the "Pumpkin Sponsorship Program" when you register for your free plant on the day of the giveaway. Last year, close to \$3,000 was raised for local nonprofit organizations.

Be sure to bring a bucket to collect your free, 5 gallons of compost! In addition, Pinkham's Plantation will be selling its official \$5 "Pumpkin Plant Kit" which includes special organic fertilizers.

The official 2011 Damariscotta Pumpkinfest & Regatta T-shirt (\$15), Pumpkinfest ball caps (\$15), and die-cut 2010 Pumpkinfest pins (\$5) will also be available. All of the proceeds from official merchandise sales helps pay for Damariscotta Pumpkinfest & Regatta event costs.

The magazine sponsor for the 2011 Damariscotta Pumpkinfest & Regatta is Down East Magazine. The Lincoln County News is the official newspaper sponsor. For details on all things Pumpkinfest, visit the official website at <http://damariscottapumpkinfest.com>.