



The 2014 Milford Pumpkin Festival

The 2014 Milford Pumpkin Festival celebrated its 25th anniversary this year and was our best year ever! Despite some rainy hours during the festival on Saturday, approximately 35,000+ visitors attended the event over the three day Columbus Day weekend!

Each Fall, Milford's Pumpkin Festival draws tens of thousands of visitors to the town's downtown. During this event, visitors experience Milford at its finest. Participants engage in a wide range of fun activities designed for all ages, but they also witness the community spirit of local volunteers, the support from local businesses, and the important role the downtown area plays in our community. Special events like the Milford Pumpkin Festival also provide great visibility for the Town of Milford and help foster civic pride and a positive image of the community as a whole.

Friday night, October 10th, the Milford Pumpkin Festival hosted its largest crowd in 25 years. The fireworks by Atlas Pyrotechnics were spectacular. Throughout the Columbus Day weekend, families enjoyed live bands, carnival rides, bouncy houses, some of the best Food and Arts and Crafts vendors from all over New England, face painting, a scarecrow building tent and many more activities. As a very family oriented festival, people came and made a day of it. The bands throughout the Weekend were also fantastic. The crowds were definitely in the Fall spirit!

Some interesting statistics from the 2014 festival:

- Friday night attendance was well over 10,000.
- 1,439 people attended the Haunted Trail event
- The 8th Annual Talent Show on Saturday night showcased some fantastic acts ranging from singers and bands to jugglers and puppets
- 710 faces were painted at the Face Painting event
- Over 200 scarecrows were made by families at the Scarecrow making event
- 786 pumpkins were painted at the Pumpkin Painting event
- 1512 hours of volunteer time, valued at \$34,564.32 invested to the Festival and community.
- In 2014, The Milford Pumpkin Festival was voted Best Community Event by Hippo Readers for the 5th straight year, and was also voted the "Best Local Event" at the Souhegan Valley "Best of" Awards!

- New in 2014 was the addition of carnival rides and bouncy houses, with attendees enjoying themselves over 5000 times during the 3-day weekend!

The festival also featured its traditional venues with family activities on the Community House Lawn, live performances all weekend long on the Oval and Community House Lawn stages, events in Emerson Park, at the Library, on Middle Street, in the Town Hall and in and around the Souhegan Valley Boys and Girls Club.

The festival opened Friday night with the traditional ceremony: the Pumpkin Runner, who made his way around the Oval and over to the Town Hall where Milford's fire department waited to light the Town Hall. The Milford Citizen(s) of the Year Award was presented to Dick and Nancy D'Amato by David Palance of the Milford Historical Society. New in 2014 at the opening ceremony, was the award of two \$500 Milford Pumpkin Festival Youth Citizen Scholarship Contest winners, who were Amanda Alcox and Savannah Miles, both seniors at Milford High School. The scholarships were sponsored by March Chareth and Trent Blalock of Edward Jones.

The Milford Pumpkin Festival allows our town's community service organizations, non-profits, school teams and clubs, scouting troops, churches and other community based groups to participate in the festival with fundraising booths or awareness activities that will benefit Milford and surrounding communities in innumerable ways – including scouting troops, athletic teams, Milford High School clubs, the Souhegan Valley Boys & Girls Club, the Milford Community Athletic Association, the Rotary Club, the Milford Lions Club, local churches and more. For many of these groups and clubs, the Milford Pumpkin Festival serves as their organization's main fundraising opportunity each year. All funds raised by these organizations are reinvested back into the community in the form of scholarships, services to the needy, team uniforms, and much more.

The 8th Annual Talent Show was a huge success, as friends, families, and festival attendees crowded into the theater to see a wide array of talent. And what a lot of talent there is in the Souhegan Valley area—acts ranged from rock bands, to dancing to singing to juggling and the audience was delighted and amazed by the performances. Talent Show Winners: 1st Madeleine Doris, a 17 year old senior at Londonderry High school. 2nd place was an aspiring opera singer Laura Millar of Mont Vernon. 3rd Place was Chris Merra of Amherst... fantastic and artistic juggler! Audience favorite went to 2 best friends, 12 year old 7th graders Petra Shenk of Milford Middle School and Camryn Carlson of Amherst Middle School. They choreographed and danced (with some impressive gymnastics moves) to John Meyer's "Count on Me." Robin LaCroix handled the stage managing and we thank the Souhegan Valley Boys and Girls Club for allowing the use of the Amato Center.



It would not have been a pumpkin festival without the 25 years that Bob Kokko and family of Kokko Realty have been providing all the pumpkins and sponsoring the Giant Pumpkin Weigh– in Contest to this event! Giant Pumpkin Winner was grown by Peter

Crisp of Nashua and weighed in at a whopping 1,312.5 pounds. 2nd place went to John Girgus of Derry at 1,303 and in third, Barry LeBlanc of Merrimack with one at 923 pounds. Very popular this year was also the new the Crotched Mountain Raffle where the Milford Improvement Team raffled off a Family Season Pass !! Winner of the pass was Collette O'Connor of Milford.

Planning an event of this size on behalf of the town takes many, many months and even more volunteers! There could not be a festival without all of the hours these dedicated volunteers put in before, during and after an event of this magnitude! On behalf of the Milford Improvement Team, we would like to especially thank:

The Town of Milford Parks, Police, Fire, Ambulance, Planning and Building Departments. Words cannot describe how wonderful all these departments were to work with in putting on this spectacular town event!

The Milford Board of Selectmen and Town Administrator's Office.

Rick Blasé, of Blasé Electric for the many hours of giving the festival the power to run, and being available all weekend to keep the festival running smoothly.

Bob Kokko and family of Kokko Realty for bringing all the pumpkins and sponsoring the Giant Pumpkin Weigh– in Contest to this event!

Jennifer Spaziani for coordinating all the fantastic live music all weekend long!

The Milford Benevolent 7 Masonic Lodge for being the overnight security known as the Ghoul Guards, and for their assistance along with the DeMolay and Rainbow youth that planned, built, and ran the very popular Haunted Trail!

Sean Trombly and Trombly Farm for providing all the hay for our scarecrow building tent and corn stalks for the Oval decorations.

Chappell Tractor and Souhegan Valley Motorsports for providing the festival volunteers with motorized vehicles throughout the weekend.

The Milford Downtown Businesses for their support in the planning of and during the Pumpkin Festival event.

Ryan Hansen of Hansen Printing for assisting us throughout the festival.

The Livermore Association for the use of the beautiful Community House Lawn.

John Hancock and Monadnock Tent Rentals for running the 3 Bounce Houses that were enjoyed by hundreds of the festival's youngest attendees!

Jack Fanelli of Fanelli Amusements for all the new amazing Carnival Rides that were ridden by so many attendees!

The Souhegan Valley Boys and Girls Club for hosting our carnival rides and for the use of the Amato Center for our Talent Show.

Robin LaCroix for being the stage manager of our Talent Show.

To our Talent Show Judges: Irene Rasis Alton, Executive State Director - Mrs. NH & MA US Pageants, Mrs. US of America 2011; Jennifer Degraffenreid, Hurst Degraffenreid Wealth Management; Dr. Amanda Smith, Family Dental Care of Milford; Roberta Woolfson, Director—LightsUp Drama; Cecil Rowlette, President & Music Director—PB&J Music Studio; John Millhouse, Major, USAF (Retired) - Temple Dance Band.

Milford High School and Applied Technology Center, for bringing their artistic talents to the themed windows of the downtown businesses and for their talents in building our Corn Hole Toss game boards.

To the numerous citizens who volunteered their time: The Quinn Family for 25 years of coordinating the Town Hall Lighting, The Pumpkin Runner (whose identity shall remain a secret!), Carolina Lambalot and Nikki Fisher-Quittmeyer for their hours of help in putting together items ahead of time, and to Doris Miller for making the Face Painting Tent possible with her donation of supplies, and many more volunteers!

To the MHS Soccer JV and Varsity teams for all their hard work throughout the festival weekend and to Sandi Wheelock for coordinating all the volunteers and parents.

To Boy Scout Troop 407 for manning the MIT tent and Suzanne Schedin for coordinating all the parent and scout volunteers.

To members of the Crosswinds Church Congregation for manning the ticket booth at Fanelli Rides at the Souhegan Valley Boys and Girls Club and to Kim Paul for coordinating all the volunteers

To Boy Scout Troop 4 and the MHS Music Boosters for manning the Pumpkin Painting tent and to Anne Parker for coordinating all the volunteers with both groups.

To the youth Group of the United Methodist Church for manning the Face Painting Tent and Liane Wright for coordinating the volunteers.

To the NH Parrotheads and HPM Insurance for their taking turns being at the helm of at the Scarecrow Building Tent.

To HPM Insurance for also volunteering in the Beer & Wine Tent.

To the donors of product that made our Beer & Wine Tent a huge hit: Bellavance Beverage, Henniker Brewing, Kelsen Brewing Co., Milly's Tavern & Stark Brewing, Martha's Exchange Restaurant and Brewery, Smuttynose Brewing, Tuckerman Brewing, Vitone Family Wines, and Woodchuck Hard Cider.

We also wish to thank our sponsors, that support bringing this event to the Milford Community: Blasé Electric, Kokko Realty, Odd Fellows Custos Morum 42 , St. Joseph's Hospital, Centrix Bank, Atlas Pyrotechnics, The Cabinet Press, Public Service of New Hampshire, Hitchiner Manufacturing Inc, Crotched Mountain Ski Resort, Marc Chareth and Trent Blalock of Edward Jones, HPM Insurance, Alene Candles, Maplebrook Family Dentistry, JP Pest Services, Subaru of Milford, Lake Sunapee Bank, NH Orthopaedic Center, Apple Therapy, Family Dental Care of Milford, Hurst Degraffenreid Wealth Management, Toyota of Nashua, College Bound Movers/ MiBo, Gate City Collision Center, Milford Lumber Company, Contemporary Chrysler Dodge Jeep, Ciardelli Fuel Company, Dartmouth Hitchcock, Turnstone Corporation, Eaton Berube, Ledgewood Bay Assisted Living and Memory Care, Souhegan Valley Motorsports, Hometown Insurance Agency, Granite State Credit Union, St. Mary's Bank, Peniel Environmental, Mike Bonacorsi Financial Planning-Wealth Management, First Colebrook Bank, Shorty's Mexican Road House, Lindt Chocolate, Pasta Loft Restaurant, and Carole's Cakes.

Special thanks to the MIT Board of Directors who spent countless hours in the planning and running of the event: President: Alan Woolfson, Monarch Instruments; Ed Killiam, Lake Sunapee Bank; Treasurer: Kent Chappell, Chappell Tractor; Executive Board Members: Heather Leach, First Colebrook Bank; and Mark Constable, The Constable Agency. Board Members: Janet Spalding, CPA; Chuck Worcester, Hometown Insurance Agency; Trent Blalock Edward Jones; Karen Keating, First Colebrook Bank; David Sturm, David G. Sturm, Counselors at Law, PLLC; Kate Chamberlain, resident of Milford; Mike Brisbois, Hitchiner Manufacturing; Kathy Bauer, Milford Board of Selectmen; Rick Ganis, JM Princewell; and Robert Krey, PSNH.



Mark your calendars for Pumpkin Festival 2015, scheduled for Oct. 9, 10, and 11th!

Respectfully submitted,

Alan Woolfson, President Board of Directors and Wendy Hunt, Executive Director