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Knowlton Academy pumpkin smashing

By Steve Blake

Jennifer Ruggins Muir, the co-coordinator of the Knowlton Academy garden project, put out a notice to the community at the end of October that she would recycle Halloween pumpkins if they dropped them off at the school. Days later there was a pile of almost 1,500 pounds of pumpkins.

About 35 students spent an hour smashing pumpkins and jack-o-lanterns and putting them into the compost bins. More than 300 pounds of sweet pumpkins and squash from Reves et Jardins' fall pumpkin display in West Brome were saved for the school's bistro, breakfast, and cooking programs.

It was another fun learning experience for the students.

Ruggins Muir is impressed with the reaction of the community.

"For just putting something up on a whim one day it's pretty cool to see the response," she said Friday.

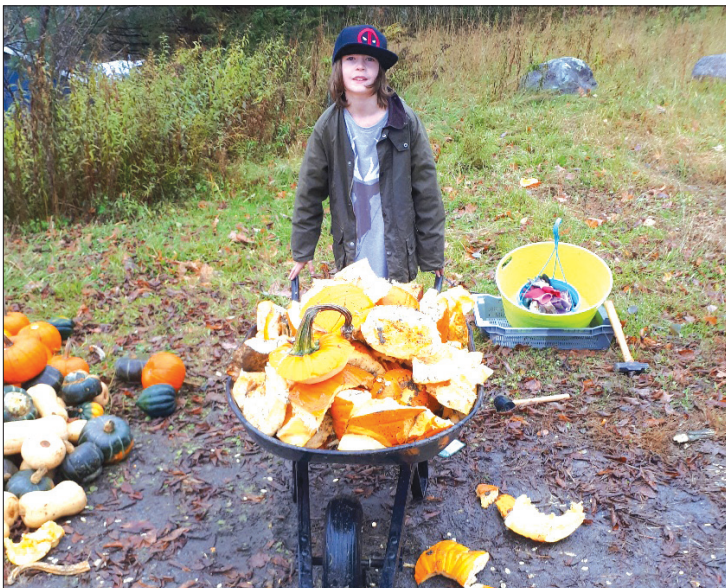
The good thing about pumpkins is that they don't have to be processed right away," she said. They can eventually be used to bake breads and muffins and to make soup.

Ruggins Muir regards the overall garden project a success. The garden produced 604 pounds of vegetables. Seedlings came from Plantation Brome and Reves et Jardins donated 700 vegetable plants. A local grocer gave the school 1,167 pounds of fresh produce while another 942 pounds of vegetables came from the community.

A total of 2,900 pounds of fresh fruits and vegetables were given to the school



Students used hammers and their feet to smash pumpkins to put them into the compost bins



in 10 months, she said. The school provided 118 pounds of garden produce and 200 pounds of grocery store vegetables to needy families over the summer.



Days after Knowlton Academy garden project co-coordinator Jennifer Ruggins Muir told the community she would compost Halloween pumpkins there was a pile of jack-o-lanterns and squash behind the school.

PHOTOS COURTESY OF JENNIFER RUGGINS MUIR

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