

UU Congregation of Central Nassau Reaps Rewards from Pumpkins

The UU Congregation of Central Nassau (Garden City NY) found magic when they ordered pumpkins. Not only did they have a great fund raiser (netting more than \$5000) but they made connections with their neighbors, friends, and each other. They gave out hundreds of flyers for their upcoming events and they found new information about themselves: their history, their image (many thought the building was a school). Best of all was the community they experienced.

The Pumpkins are grown on a Navaho reservation in New Mexico and trucked directly to a congregation. The grower pays (in 2005)\$2.3 million to lease the land and give the Navajos the first opportunity to be hired for the harvesting of the pumpkins. There are always more jobs than applicants; afterwards others are hired. All are paid the same wages.

The pumpkins grown in New Mexico are grown in ideal dry conditions making them least prone to rot and therefore last longer. The pumpkins are a no-risk adventure. The grower works only with congregations/churches giving the pumpkins on consignment and using the honor system to report sales.

For information on your own pumpkin Patch, contact Patsy Kaplan at Ramabachi@aol.com.