

The Pumpkin Man

By Taylor Griffith

Madison Elementary School, Boone County

1st Place Winner (Grades3-4)

Autumn brings many changes to my small mountain town. The leaves on the trees begin to turn from shades of emerald green to bright magentas and gold. Our mountains look like they are wrapped up for winter in a warm toasty patchwork quilt. It is also the time when the Pumpkin Man arrives at Mr. Wilson's Pumpkin Patch! He arrives just as secretly as old Jack Frost himself.

The Pumpkin Man is quite a sight to see. He towers ten feet into the air. His torso and head are all made out of different size pumpkins and gourds. His mouth, which always wears a smile, is carved from a red pepper. His cauliflower eyes twinkle and seem to follow you wherever you move. His tousled hair is constructed out of cabbage leaves. Ears made out of potatoes are always ready to listen to any child that visits him. Green beans serve as fingers and feel oh so gentle when they brush against your face.

Children from all over my county excitedly await his visit each year. Their laughter when he finally makes his appearance is a very heartwarming sound. Generation after generation, people return each season to have their picture taken with the Pumpkin Man. Stories are told as the pictures are snapped about happy experiences with the Pumpkin Man. Children share their memories of conversations they have had with him. They tell us he whispers a language that only they can hear. He tells them how he runs and plays in the fields with the baby pumpkins when the farmer is asleep. You can hear the children giggle and carry on lengthy conversations with him, telling him all their recent news. It seems as if they are old friends, happy to see each other once again.

Sadly though, after just a few short weeks that warm patchwork quilt that covers our mountains is gone, taking our friend the Pumpkin Man with it. As the families of our mountain town prepare for a long cold winter, they keep warm memories of the Pumpkin Man in their hearts.