



NEWS RELEASE

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

November 23, 2009

CURATORIAL PARDON

This Thanksgiving, Atlantis Marine World Pardons a Lobster - Yes, Lobster!

Atlantis Marine World pardons the life of a giant American lobster that was about to be served as a meal at a local restaurant after receiving a call from restaurant patrons.

Each year since 1947, the National Turkey Federation and the Poultry and Egg National Board have given a turkey to the President of the United States at a White House ceremony. Since then, presidents have been more likely to eat the turkey. It wasn't until 1989 and the first Thanksgiving of President George H.W. Bush that a turkey was given a reprieve and officially pardoned.

And, now, as we look toward our national Day of Thanksgiving, the Aquarium has decided to begin its own annual tradition similar to the important Presidential one. Today, Atlantis Marine World Aquarium has signed its own "Curatorial" Pardon, thus sparing the life of a lobster.

After receiving a call the first week of November from patrons of Northport's Feed and Grain restaurant, the Aquarium decided to make a permanent home for this rare crustacean.

"It's a rare opportunity for people to see a lobster this size," explains Aquarium Curator, Joseph Yaiullo. "Not only because they are rarely on display, but also because they are often, unfortunately, over fished."

By virtue of this pardon, the male lobster, which arrived last week, is now settling into its new home - a tank located in the Aquarium's research center, the Riverhead Foundation for Marine Research and Preservation.

While Aquarium officials estimate the lobster measures more than 3-feet-long and weighs more than 24 pounds, they are less inclined to name its age.

"Aging lobsters is still in its research phases and has not been absolutely proven to be definitive," says Yaiullo. In fact, according to Maine's Chief lobster scientist, Carl Wilson, lobsters should never be assigned an age as there is no one exact way to determine it.

The monster lobster will be on display at the Aquarium daily, including Thanksgiving Day, from 10:00am to 5:00pm. Visitors are encouraged to stop by before or after their turkey dinner!

- more -

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Fun Facts about the American (or Maine) Lobster:

- Lobsters are long-lived and can be huge. The record-holder, caught off New England in 1934, was a 44.4-pound beast.
- Lobsters come in just about every color but red. They can be blue, light yellow, greenish-brown, grey, dusty orange, calico and even have spots. However, they all turn red when, gulp, cooked.
- While lobsters today are considered a delicacy, in Colonial times they were served only to children, prisoners, and indentured servants. In one Massachusetts colony, servants rebelled and forced a contract stating they would not be fed lobster more than three times a week.
- Despite their unusual build, this crustacean has remained relatively unchanged for nearly 100 million years. Its brain is in its throat and its nervous system is in its belly. They listen with their legs and taste with their feet. Plus, their teeth are in their stomach and their kidneys are in their head.
- In the early 1800s, lobsters were so plentiful they were simply gathered from the shoreline by hand.

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About Atlantis Marine World Aquarium

Atlantis Marine World (AMW) opened in Riverhead, NY on June 15, 2000, as the first large-scale Aquarium to open in New York State in more than 35 years. Situated on 3.2 acres along the Peconic River, AMW is open from 10:00am to 5:00pm daily (closed December 25). General Admission Rates are \$18.50 (plus tax) for Children 3 - 17 and Seniors 62+; \$21.50 (plus tax) for Adults 18 - 61; Children 2 and under are always free at AMW. AMW is also the home of The Riverhead Foundation for Marine Research and Preservation, New York's only authorized marine mammal and sea turtle rescue and rehabilitation center. Atlantis Marine World was recently ranked by *Parents Magazine* as one of the "Top Aquariums for Kids." Additional information can be found at www.atlantismarineworld.com.

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