

## **Honoring Don George, Jay Arno and all our local fireman**

Last Wednesday the Town took reservations for this season's park pavilions. Councilman Peter DiCostanzo and I came in very early in the morning to let residents into the Town Hall, with some having waited since the day before to reserve a Pavilion. Verification of residency and payment needs to be done at the time of reserving, so this remains an in-person process. There had been consideration to do online reservations but the concern is how to control who is reserving, and how many reservations are being made at one time. We also limit one reservation per person the first day. Pavilion Rentals are limited to residents of Clarence only.

We handed out numbered cards to help keep order for our residents who had been waiting in line for hours for the Clerk's office to open. Town Clerk Karen Hawes, who opened her office early, had over 60 residents in Town Hall ready to make reservations. The Clerk's office had forms with instructions available online and in the lobby at Town Hall. Most pavilions were registered in minutes, so the line moved quickly. By the end of the day 98 reservations were made for pavilions. Reservations can still be made daily from 8:30 to 4:30 at Town Hall.

Other Town Clerk's offices have limited hours of business and have their residents make reservations for simple items done at the office. Because of that, our Clerk handles licenses of all types including marriage licenses for people who live in other Towns. Thank you, Karen Hawes and your staff for accommodating our residents on a very busy day. Thank you to the residents for your patience and understanding of this process as we try to make this fair for all.

Many of my closest friends have experienced the loss of a loved one over these past few weeks.

Sadly, Donald George, a corner stone business owner in Clarence, was one of those who passed away. In 1971 Don traded his Harley Davidson motorcycle for Walter C. Kohl's Lockport Yamaha motorcycle franchise. Don, who owned a trucking business and had no real knowledge of selling or servicing motorcycles, moved the franchise to Clarence. Before others, like famous liability attorney firms, caught on Don advertised heavily on radio, in newspapers, and the yellow pages. I'll never forget his "Big Boy Toy Store" and his ads always ending with "Buy George, By George". Very few could say no to Don's smiling personality and his always fair prices on motorcycles. Along with wife Judy, his Family, Head Mechanic Ken Glenn and many other loyal employees, Don built the dealership to become the number one Yamaha Dealer in the Country. No other similar franchise in the area has hit that number one goal since. Don came from a very special generation that seemed to boast hard workers living the American dream. Thank you, Don, for being an icon to the Town of Clarence and a role model for so many. You will be truly missed.

Our Highway Superintendent James Dussing and wife sadly lost their son last week. My deepest sympathy to Jamie, Tracey and their family.

Lastly, with the recent tragedy of losing Buffalo Fire Fighter, Jay Arno, it was a big reminder how fortunate we are to have our incredible volunteer fire companies in and near our town. We are extremely blessed to not have lost a fireman while on duty since the carpet store fire 30 years ago. I pray it stays that way. You never know if your next fire call will be your last fire call. To my fellow fireman brothers and sisters, thank you for putting your life on the line to keep us safe. We are eternally grateful. Rest in Peace Jason Arno.