

Summer is in full Swing in Clarence

It is often said "A picture is worth a thousand words!" Don Daly's photo on the front page of the Bee last week explained it all. Don was taking pictures all afternoon and caught the magic of the entire day with one of his last photos of the Fireworks. You can see thousands under the light from the exploding Fireworks enjoying the show. It has been several years since the last Day in the Park was run by the former Clarence Jaycee's.

I didn't realize until later in day that a whole new generation of young people were enjoying the late afternoon and evening in our park. Even though I have witnessed it several times before while Robert Stearns from Eagles' Wings Ministries was singing the National Anthem and the enormous Fireworks Flag was lit, I heard for the first time the audience gasp during that patriotic moment.

I was with our Master of Ceremony for the day Veronica Jenks over this past winter and told her we were "Getting the Band back together!" and I would need her help MCing. Knowing the great things Day in the Park brings to Clarence, she didn't hesitate to say yes.

The Clarence Rotary Club along with many other Town Organizations resurrected Day in the Park after a grant for Fire Works was awarded to the Club from Erie County. Thank you, Erie County Legislator Chris Greene and my daughter, Chrissy Casilio, for your efforts in winning the grant. There are too many names to mention of others that helped make the return of Day in the Park so successful but besides the Clarence Rotary Club I would like to thank Robert Altieri, George Emerling, Councilmen Peter DeCostanzo (also known as a former Jaycee) Dan Cummiskey, Marty Helowicz and Dawn Snyder for Co-Chairing the Event.

Thousands of people from all over Western New York got to spend the afternoon supporting our organizations and enjoying everything our Parks have to offer. Many remarked how beautiful and well maintained our parks are. Hats off to the Town Board back then who made the big decision in 1957 to buy the 50-acre Automobile Club property for around Ninety Thousand Dollars. Think of all the thousands of residents that have enjoyed the use of property and events held there over the past 65 years. Our half acre building lots cost twice that much now a days. Thank you, Parks Superintendent Jim Burkard, and our Parks Employees for your help with our summer events, and all of your work year-round.

A few weeks ago, the Clarence Rotary Club also hosted a major Pickleball Tournament at our Town View Park. Over 400 people were in attendance for the Tournament. It was nice seeing friends who I have spent my adult tenure with, now older, and still enjoying competitive athletics together. Even though some were sad to see the tennis courts go from Town View, having over 12 Pickleball Courts at one location makes our park the perfect setting to hold a tournament. Former tennis player, Dr. Carmine Tiso, headed up the event along with many other volunteers. Pickleball is taking over the nation and it is nice that Clarence is ahead of the trend with our new courts.

We still have a long way to go this summer, and many ways to continue enjoying our parks. Hopefully you can stop by and enjoy one of the free concerts in the park on a Sunday night in July, and I'm sure I'll see many of you at Hollowfest this coming weekend! With over 20 local restaurants participating, The Taste of Clarence and Car Show is Monday August 7th.

Lastly, The Town of Clarence has launched a new Twitter page (@TownofClarence). This will be a valuable communications tool for announcing routine town matters and it will play a critical role during emergency situations, such as a blizzard, allowing us to provide town residents with the information in real time. Please follow the Town of Clarence on Twitter and ask your family and friends to do so as well.