

New Highway Department Building Opening This Week/ Harris Hill's John Moulin Saves Another Life.

I would like to begin by thanking the Clarence Chamber of Commerce for hosting the State of the Town Address. The entire state of the town address is available on the Town's website www4.erie.gov/clarence. In summary, we have been able to achieve many great things in our town and many more in the works without raising taxes. Many other towns across New York State can't say the same.

We're coming off another amazing week of unusually warm winter weather, with one day hitting 61 degrees. I rode one of my motorcycles to Winterfest last month because, weather-wise, I could. I wanted again to send pictures to my Florida friends of the winters we don't have anymore. The temperatures were in the 40s for Winterfest. Even without snow, we had a very successful event. There were hundreds in attendance. Many young families brought their children for the inside activities. Thank you to the Youth Department's Dawn Kinney, Chip Trapper, and everyone who helped with this year's very successful Winterfest.

Thinking it was just a short weather anomaly, who would guess we would have continued spring-like temperatures three weeks later with very little rain. Many have taken out their summer vehicles during this extremely mild weather. It will become impractical to attempt building any outdoor ice-skating rinks, even if the weather gets suddenly colder because we are at the end of the winter season. March temperatures usually don't support ice-making.

As my State of the Town mentioned, "A Day without snow is a day without snow." The lack of snow worked out well because the Highway Department has been working on the big move to their new Highway Garage and Offices. By the time you read this, they will have completed the move. Town Engineer Tim Lavocat has been working diligently for the past year, overseeing the construction of the new 65,000-square-foot highway building. COVID restrictions did stop Tim from making sure the building would be done on time and on budget. The entire Highway Campus has been improved with acres of paving and fencing. There is a new fuel farm and all heavy truck traffic has been directed to Goodrich Road.

The old wooden highway buildings will be decontaminated and torn down this month in preparation for Clarence Center's first Pocket Park. With the removal of the old buildings and the new park set back from Goodrich Road proper, the new vista will be forever changed to match the very special ambiance Clarence Center has. The New Park includes bathrooms for the new pavilion and bike trail users, and it will have a public parking lot. The Clarence Center Fire Company could have the entire Labor Day parade, participants, including Fire Trucks staged on the Highway Campus if they desired. Always in high demand, all the marchers will especially appreciate the much-needed public bathrooms.

Speaking of parks and pavilions - Pavilion reservations will be taken on March 1st at the Town Clerk's office. All reservations must be made in person on that day with verification of residency and payment. As in previous years, many have waited outside in the early morning hours to get their place in line for a reservation. Councilmen Peter DiCostanzo and I will be at Town Hall again very early to let residents into Town Hall. To keep order, numbered cards will be given out to the early arrivers. The Clerk's office will start taking reservations around 8:30 am. Due to new construction the Fogelsonger Pavilion will not be available this for use this season.

I had a surreal moment on Sunday, noticing the Harris Hill Fire Company was at a neighbor's house while I was going for a walk. The neighbor had total heart failure and collapsed to the floor. Earlier in the day, the neighbor was complaining of chest pains, and precious moments were saved by summoning the fire company who were already at the Fire Hall after a previous first aid call that morning. Assistant Chief John Moulin and fireman Daniel Cucinotta saved his life. Fire Fighters Ed Schmitt, Ryan Zimmerman and Ethan Moncher and others from the Fire Company also were involved with the lifesaving care as well. Thank you, Harris Hill Fire Company, for your fast response and live saving care you gave to someone in need. Your service and dedication to the community continues to be valuable and greatly appreciated.