

## **Park Projects Starting Soon**

After almost 40 years of service, our Town Parks Superintendent, Jim Burkard, has decided to retire. His dedication to ensuring we have the best parks in Erie County was appreciated by all. We wish Jim the best of luck in his retirement. The Town Board appointed long-time park employee Jason Holden to the Parks Superintendent position. With over 30 years of experience working for the Parks Department, Jason seamlessly moved into the top job without missing a beat.

This spring, the Town designed, bid, and awarded several contracts for many projects dedicated to parks and recreation improvements, the new Fogelsonger Pavilion will be one of the most noticeable and will be similar to the one at Town View. Construction will be starting in a few weeks. Like Town View, the much-needed pavilion will have a kitchen area, attached bathrooms, and storage for the Town Parks Department. Our Highway Department has already replaced and enlarged the existing parking lot. Additional parking is planned at the bottom of Glenwood, with a formal connection to the neighboring church. The Town has also awarded an extension of the Greiner Road sidewalk, which will now run from Transit Road past Fogelsonger Park to Anfield Road. The sidewalk extension will safely allow Ledge Lane, Clearview, Fox Trace, Harris Commons, and Loch Lea residents to walk to Transit Road and all its amenities.

As many have noticed, with the opening of the new Highway Department Service Building, the old wooden Highway buildings have been removed to make way for a new pocket park and recreation building near the bike trail. The pocket park will have an open-air pavilion with a much-needed water station and attached bathrooms, as often times our Peanut Line Bike Trail is busier than any of our parks. The new bathrooms will be available seven days a week, and the additional parking will make for a central location where our residents can begin their trail activity. The nearby former highway garage will be converted into our Town's first recreation building. Large enough for two full basketball courts, the building will be set up for multiple uses, including volleyball and indoor pickleball. I hope some of our larger Club House events, like our Spring Perennial Plant Sale, can be moved to the much larger recreation building where all the activity can take place under one roof, rain or shine. I hope the Labor Day Parade staging is also moved to the new larger Highway/Parks complex. Besides being much safer off public roads, everyone, especially the young ones, will appreciate the new public bathrooms.

The North Trail, which is unofficially open, will be landscaped this spring. Through a grant from Erie County, the Senior Center's parking lot will receive new drainage and an overlay. The garage allows the "Senior Going Places" van to be stored inside during the winter. Lastly, our historic Main Street Park will be getting walkway improvements thanks to Erie County Legislator Chris Greene who helped us secure a grant from Erie County. In an effort to go "Back to the Future," we also have funds from the grant to build a new patio area behind the Club House that is similar to the one that was there back in 1911.

I look forward to seeing you at the Clarence Town Park this Memorial Day. The American Legion will host another parade and ceremony honoring those who paid the ultimate sacrifice. Thank you to the American Legion Post 838 for continuing this important tradition in our town. Following the ceremony, the Clarence Rotary Club will host a small ceremony honoring 13 new Veterans added to the memorial Honor Walls.