

July 2013

## **The Town of Clarence Recreation Department Continues to Expand both Services and Programs.**

The Town of Clarence has always had activities for their youth, whether it was sports leagues, crafts in the park or a place to ice skate in the winter. The Recreation Department is one of the oldest active departments in the Town, and Recreation Director Howard Johnt served for over 40 years as the head of that department. The Recreation Department is currently headed by Chip Trapper, and Chip is in charge of managing existing recreation programs (archery, field hockey, street hockey, tennis) as well as bringing new programs as demand requires. Archery was popular many years ago, but interest had waned among Clarence youth. When "The Hunger Games" came out, demand for archery soared, and hundreds of kids signed up. One of the interesting byproducts of "The "Hunger Games" was the increase in young girls that wanted to learn to shoot a bow. The heroine of the film was a female archer, and although the sport had been dominated by boys in the past, this is no longer the case. One of the strongest and most popular offerings of the Recreation Department is the arts and crafts. The program offers kids a chance to create large crafts (birdhouses, birdfeeders, wooden trays and patriotic door hangers for the 4<sup>th</sup> of July) and the program is held in all of the different Town Parks so that kids who don't have a parent to drive them to the park can walk and partake. One of the most popular new programs this year is basic horsemanship. Champion Hill Open Barn Day, which will be held on August 11<sup>th</sup>, allows both parents and kids to tour the barn at Champion Hill, meet the horses that will be used for lessons and to see if the program is something that both the parents and kids would want to get involved in next season. I learned to ride many years ago, and have enjoyed riding horses all over the world with my wife and four kids. It is a great sport for all ages, and one of the few sports (along with tennis, swimming and skiing) that you can enjoy at age nine or ninety. The Recreation Department also oversees the Town Park Pool, and Chris Durr and his fine team of lifeguards both teach and lifeguard kids who come to swim at one of Clarence's most popular attractions. This year, a new twisty slide has been installed, and lines of happy kids reflect the popularity of this attraction. The pool offers Clarence residents an inexpensive way (under \$100 per family per year) to stay cool and to learn to swim. The Recreation Department maintains a dynamic state, changing to best meet the need of the residents of Clarence. Participation numbers have increased recently with the addition of highly popular programs such as the archery clinic, golf lessons, and Summer Stix, a field hockey camp. For seven straight weeks in the summer the department runs tennis lessons, a track program, street hockey, toddler time, big craft, swim lessons, and an afternoon playground program at three parks. For the adults there are multiple softball leagues, water aerobics at the pool, and co-ed volleyball through the winter. Coming soon! Look for kickball, dodgeball, and other leagues to join. Besides the programs the Recreation Department also organizes multiple special events. The April Fishing Derby held at the Main Park Pond has been well attended throughout the years. Halloween in the Park has grown from humble beginnings to a two day event featuring the Haunted Pavilion. The Holiday Tree Lighting has also grown in popularity. All programs and events can be found on the Town's website, the annual brochure which is available at Town Hall and inserts in various papers. Please take advantage of the opportunities the Town of Clarence has to offer. This article was prepared by Dave Hartzell and Chip Trapper. Should you have any positive suggestions, please feel free to call me at 741-8930, email [dhartzell@clarence.ny.us](mailto:dhartzell@clarence.ny.us) or stop by. My door is always open.