

Town of Clarence blessed with an abundance of Parks

While the Town of Clarence is blessed with an abundance of parks, far and away the most popular park is the bike path. Within six months of its opening there were more people using the bike path than any other park in the Town of Clarence. According to Peter Wolfe, who is currently Chairman of the Town of Clarence Recreation Advisory Committee (RAC) four men were the drivers behind what we currently know as the bike path. Town of Clarence Highway Superintendent Ron Witnauer, Conservation Committee member Todd Norris, Rotary members Peter Wolfe and Carmine Tiso all worked together to save the railroad bridge that currently spans the small stream between Goodrich and Heise Rd. Once the bridge was renovated, the path was useable for hiking in the summer and cross country skiing in the winter. It was several years later that the path was actually paved by Guy Berberich of American Paving and their many friends in memory of his brother Dirk. According to Chairman Wolfe, the Clarence/ Newstead / Akron section of the path should be connected to the Amherst bike path. Both the supervisors in Clarence and Amherst had grant money to work with. Both faced fierce opposition from citizens who did not want the path built -literally- in their backyard. Only the Clarence Supervisor Kathy Hallock had the strength of character and the fortitude to push the project through to completion. The citizens of Clarence should be eternally grateful that they elected a leader with an absolute iron will at this critical juncture in the development of the bike path.

“When I see an adult on a bicycle, I do not despair for the future of the human race.” ~H.G. Wells

The newest park in Clarence is Beeman Creek, located at the intersection of Lapp and Salt Roads. Erie County acquired Beeman Creek Park in 1963 and sold it to the Town of Clarence for one dollar (\$1) in 2011. The park is currently comprised of a large, open field and several hundred acres of woodlands. The goal of the Town of Clarence is to keep the park in its natural state. You will be able to go to Beeman Creek and walk the nature trails, look at the butterfly garden, and to walk your dog, but there will not be any ball fields or basketball courts. Teams of workers will be cutting back overgrown nature/hiking trails and cleaning up the park throughout the month of June, and parks employees will be laying gravel (not paving) a small parking lot later in the month.. If all goes as planned, there will be a ribbon cutting on the 4th of July.

Take the time to explore the various parks in the Town of Clarence this summer. Whether you want to fish with the kids, hike, bike, or walk the dog, the vast and varied park system of the Town of Clarence is at your disposal!

Should you have any questions, feel free to email dave@clarence.ny.us or stop by Town Hall and see me. My door is always open!