



HOT POTATO

Number 3, Volume 9

September 6, 2005

Rotary Club of Wayland, New York, D7120

Don Griffing, president

Thomas Quinlan, secretary

Potato Festival Poorly Attended, Cow Bingo Success

Since the last issue of the Hot Potato, we skipped the meeting immediately following the Festival to let all the worked out members rest.

Last meeting was a working bee. We put new flooring in the Festival trailer, removed the air conditioner and boarded up its windows. The roof needs a new coating, which we couldn't do because of rain.

After the work was finished, Carol Kimmel served us REAL potato Pancakes, made by grating potatoes, not using ready mix so to speak. There is a big difference in my opinion. They were GRRREAT. Sausages were also served and Chip Kimmel grilled hamburgers and hot dogs for those who could eat more. Because of the rain, he tried to locate the grill in the door opening of the garage, which caused the smoke detectors to go off, so we had musical entertainment too.

There are still some outstanding things, which prevent a complete report from the Potato Festival, but it was agreed that attendance had been poor, and that Sunday was generally a better day in terms of revenue for our food "tent."

Generally speaking, Pat Lysell thought that the Naples Memorial Day Parade, which features only the high school band and color guard for entertainment, had at least twice the attendance compared to our festival parade. Back at the food service, I could barely notice an increase in demand. I say barely to be conservative, but my truthful opinion is no increase at all.

Fortunately, we did not pay for the musical entertainment on Saturday night, but it didn't seem to bring more than four to five dozen faithful, at the most, who were willing to endure the horrible noise. The question is how many were driven away instead? Maybe this is the break we have to give to the other food vendors, lucky to be at a location with a non injurious sound level? Obviously, the rain may have played a roll, but I remember last year was the same. It would be interesting to know how these food vendors see it.

The fire works were impressive, and we really have to be grateful to Gunlocke for putting it on. I don't think it brings people to Victory Park, necessarily, since it can be viewed anywhere in Wayland.

What I'm leading up to is that we should try to assess what people come to Victory Park for, or why they come. It doesn't look like a dazzling parade does the trick, nor does too many appear to come to let their eardrums have a going over on Saturday night. Sitting in on the festival planning meetings, these items seem to cause the most discussion (you may even say agony) every year. They are, beyond comparison, much more expensive than the entertainment on Sunday, and they seem to do squat for our food service business.

I noticed that a lot of people had yard sales going during the festival days. So, could we make more money at the food tent if we invited these people to set up at the festival instead, at no charge? Obviously, we may have to lower the vendor fees, or eliminate them. This year, we didn't make too much on vendor fees anyway. Perhaps the increased food revenue would offset this loss?

I think a lot of people could care less about expensive noise makers and fancy parades. I could also be wrong, but lets have a good think about these things.

The Cow Chip Bingo was a success, and it may even draw some attendance. Let's be careful how we use it, however. If we "take it on the road" to other festivals, will it lose its

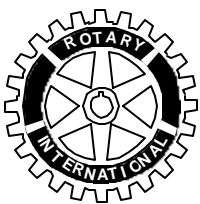
connection with the Potato Festival?

The entertainment on Sunday seemed at least as well appreciated as the stuff from Saturday night and was largely free or reasonably priced. Sunday morning mass was well attended and caused a welcome morning rush at our food service. The car show seemed to have the usual attendees and is a relaxing event. I infinitely prefer the rumbling of V8s over "Lucky Number."

This newsletter became more of an editorial in the absence of club news (I don't fill with RI reprints since we don't intend to enter the bulletin contest.) I will publish any letters to the editor that you may have regarding the festival, or any other subject. Other material is also welcome, like photos from Rotary events you attended, hard copy or electronic doesn't matter. We can handle it.

Next meeting will be at the Miller House but don't be surprised over another working meeting before the weather turns nasty again. I didn't distribute the last print edition of the newsletter, but most of you should have received an e-mail version. If you want a print copy, please tell me. I will bring a few copies of it.

Come to the next meeting to hear editor Bo get his head chewed off!



Wayland Rotary Club
c/o Bo Lysell, editor
4535 Rt 21
Atlanta, NY 14808