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SPORTS ■ Page 11

Mark Materise and his baseball teammates fell in the AA semifinal.

Turning 10 — Farmers Market celebrates anniversary

by **ANDREA KIMBRIEL**
Editor

It's been a decade since the Clarence Hollow Farmers Market became a reality.

The 10-year anniversary is being marked by a celebration and mural unveiling on Saturday, June 16, at 10717 Main St.

A ribbon-cutting is planned for 11 a.m., as well as the unveiling of "The Market's Menagerie" mural. The farm animal mural was the dream of market manager Cheryl Anthony and was made a reality by artist Jeff Perdziak, with the guidance of artist Donna Ioviero, according to information from the market.

The Clarence Hollow Association voted to create the market in September 2002, and it opened for its first season in June 2003 at Victoria Park at the corner of Main Street and Shisler Road.

It was established after an article in a local newspaper revealed that there was no market near

the Clarence, Akron, Amherst area, according to a Clarence Hollow Association newsletter from 2003. A November 2002 survey indicated that 90 percent of area responders expected to patronize a local market.

"Establishing one here, board members felt, not only would fill a need, but would help draw customers to the Hollow's traditional business district and would complement efforts to preserve the Hollow's unique character," according to information from the newsletter.

"With at least seven or eight vendors expected the first week, we're off to a good start," market committee chair Sean O'Mahony was quoted as saying in a newsletter announcing the market's opening. Now there are more than 20.

Some have participated since the inception of the market, such as Watt Farms from Albion and Schwab Farms from Gasport; others are new this year, such as Alpacka Outbacka of Clarence, and

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the Clarence Center Coffee Company & Cafe, which will be operating the Snack Shack.

In 2005, the market moved to its current location at 10717 Main St., where it is open from 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. from June through October. May Flower Days are also offered on Saturdays during that month.

The market features vendors selling vegetables, fruit, eggs, cheese, candy, coffee, designer art, cards, flower arrangements, alpaca wear, handmade soap, balloon art and a number of other items.

In 2005, the market was commended by the Farmers Market Federation of New York, after an assessment was conducted by federation director Diane Eggert.

"It was inspiring watching the way customers visited with one another and with the market committee in true community spirit," she said.

The market has had a number of milestones during the past 10 years. Wine tastings from local wineries were added in 2004, with "Vivan's Wine Haus," donated by Vivian Krietner, becoming the first structure that is part of the market. The Country Store, made possible by a gift from Emmett C. and Carol Murphy, was opened in 2005. The Kornerstone Coffee Hut was added in 2006.

A large pavilion was created at the market site in 2009, and its first Chalk Art Festival was held in August of that year.

The Snack Shack opened in 2010, and the Lil Sprouts program was initiated to provide a learning experience for children in attendance.

This year, a Chef Cook-Off will feature local restaurants educating guests about how to take

advantage of the nutritional value and freshness of products from the market.

Special events such as Fire Safety Day, the Chalk Art Festival, Farm and Tractor Day, and the Scarecrow Contest are also held throughout the year, and live music is offered each week.

The Farmers Market became independent of the Clarence Hollow Association this year. The market is working on incorporating and hopes to gain 501(c)(3) status as an educational group, said Anthony, who has held the position of market manager since 2009. She was "second in command" when Nancy McIver acted as marketing manager in the previous years, according to information from the market.

"The Clarence Hollow Farmers' Market, a volunteer committee, has been blessed over the years with great folks who have shown and given dedicated service to the development and growth," the information from the market stated.

Market organizers use various catch phrases to highlight aspects of its appeal. They note that it's the state's only Rails-to-Trails market, spotlighting the market's proximity to the Clarence bicycle path, once a railroad line.

People are also encouraged to "Buy Fresh ... Buy Local ... It Matters!"

The market is celebrating 10 years of "dedication and determination to create a nucleus that supports our local farmers ... specialty vendors and the economic stability of our community," according to information from the market.

More information about the market is available at clarencfarmersmarket.com and Facebook.com/clarencehollowfm.