

Conversation with the Mayor - September 18, 2012
Vicky Daly

Canal Town Days and Then Some

I am a list maker and one of my ongoing lists is possible topics to be included in the next Conversation. For today's effort, there are three. At first glance, they appear totally dissimilar, when in fact, they are all inter-related, one to the other – a BBC travel writer, bridges, and Canal Town Days.

While the Main Street and marina Canal Town Days activities started to wind down this past Saturday, at 4:15 PM, Bonnie Hays, Executive Director of Historic Palmyra, and I awaited the arrival of Christine Worth, Director of Wayne County Tourism and her guests at the Historic Museum. Because of Canal Town Days and the partial closing of the Maple Avenue bridge and related traffic detours, Christine chose to meet BBC travel writer Julie Schwiertert, her husband Francisco Collazo, and daughter Marielle in Macedon and guide them in. Arriving in Rochester for a four day exploration of the Erie Canal in our region, they had already visited Fairport and, after a night in Newark, would continue east as far as Syracuse. The time we spent together was fascinating. While an interest in kayaking on the canal was their motivation, the questions they asked dealt with the history of the village – the who, what and where of Palmyra's past. The museums were a great setting for the conversation. They went away with lengthy notes, many handouts, and Marielle with a (temporary) pirate tattoo and an Erie Canalway rubber duckie.

Side note: The fact of their stop in Palmyra was not happenstance. It resulted from the proactive stance of Christine, Bonnie and the village in collaboration with CANAL NY, the Erie Canalway National Heritage Corridor, and M. Silver, the PR firm for I Love NY. That's how things get done.

That is exactly the same principal at work in the planning and happening of Canal Town Days. It is a wonderful, exciting and exhausting event for everyone involved to any degree and this year was no exception. Friday night, set up time, was miserable, but the weekend itself was perfect. I understand the wind took down one booth, but a new one replaced it and the owners went on with business as usual. We're tough.

The question of the closing of the Maple Avenue Bridge had an impact on planning for Canal Town Days. It is normally closed; however the Division Street Bridge has always been open. The solution agreed upon by the Palmyra Police Department and the Highway Department appeared to work well. The same traffic patterns may very well be in place next year. The Division Street Bridge, along with several other Wayne County canal bridges, is closed and will be for the foreseeable future. At this writing, I am not aware of any plans, firm or otherwise, regarding the repair. When we know more, we'll share. Until that time, watch for signage and use good sense. The weight limited and closed bridges have been downgraded to ensure your safety.

If I pushed it a little bit, the last items to share with you could probably be woven into travel writers, Canal Town Days and bridges, but sometimes enough is enough. So, if you are interested in a tutorial on Google Earth, you are in luck. On Thursday, October 11, 2012, there

will be a session at the Pal-Mac High School, 8:30 – 11:30. The session is sponsored by the New York Geographic Alliance in conjunction with the Palmyra-Macedon Central School District and the Village of Palmyra. Check for details and online registration at www.nygeographicalliance.org . It is free and the number of participants is limited, so move on this quickly if you are interested.

Finally, Corporal Nathan William Yost, Bob Yost's son, left San Diego, today, September 17, 2012, with the other marines and sailors of the 15th Marine Expeditionary Unit. Their destination is Kuwait and the Persian Gulf. We wish Nate and the marines and sailors of the 15th MEU well and pray for their safe return.