Crowd doubles to 4,400 at ‘perfect’ Fall Fest

By William V Foley

ELLWOOD CITY – Caroline Golmic stands on a second-story balcony overlooking Lawrence Avenue, where the autumn sun has broken through low, gray clouds and is illuminating the smiles on up to 4,400 faces on Ellwood City’s main thoroughfare.

Below her, at street level, the murmur of the crowd massing along seven blocks mixes with the roar of car-cruise vehicles young and old racing their engines, which blends with live music from the Community Plaza, the clip-clop of horses pulling passenger-filled carriages, a live-radio broadcast barker and the laughter of children.

These are the sounds of the second annual Ellwood City Fall Fest, the sounds of success.

“This gives people hope for what Ellwood City can turn back into,” says Golmic, a member of the Ellwood City Area Chamber of Commerce committee that organized Fall Fest. “We’re never going to be a steel town again. There’s never going to be a lot of mills here again. But we can rebrand ourselves and become something different. This gives a lot of people hope and excitement that there are young people living here, that there are people who have businesses downtown and want to give back locally. It’s exciting.”

Just ask Chris Ringer, of Wampum, who stops by the Community Plaza with her granddaughters, Maddie and Olivia.

“This is perfect,” Ringer says. “I can entertain the girls for the day.”

Story continued on Page 2
Story continued from Page 1

Attendance doubled from the previous Fall Fest – and from the previous car cruise, which in 2016 attracted 450 vehicles.

“I think this is a record number of cars for this event so far,” says Bruce McClean, of Fombell, as he shows his 1973 red Chevy Vega. “They love what they see, hot rods and vintage cars. There is something here for everybody to like.”

It’s not often Joanne Stevens, of Ellwood City, has seen crowds like this in the borough.

“Like all towns in America, people are not doing things as a community,” Stevens says while other pedestrians, with kettle-popped popcorn, barbecue or Amish baked goods in hand, crisscross Lawrence Avenue toward any of 40 vendors. “It is nice to see everybody coming out and doing things in our community, not taking it to Pittsburgh or Cranberry. Just being here with our hometown people.”

Joining Golmic on the Fall Festival committee were David DeCaria, Tracey Hughes, Sam Ferrante, Dave Hunter and Raymond Santillo, who says he’s overwhelmed with the generosity of the Ellwood City area.

“Not only with money, but with time and volunteer work,” Santillo says. “I would put the generosity of our volunteers up against any other area in Beaver, Butler or Lawrence counties. It brings me to my knees.”

Adds Golmic: “It’s emotional, almost, to see so many people out. I’ve heard it so many times today, that this is awesome. To see seven blocks of the downtown filled. People want to have a place to come to have fun and be together with their families and build memories. And that is what this is going to be for people down the road.”
HOLIDAY EVENTS

December - Christmas in the Park
Dec 2-3 - Let there by Light
Dec 3 - Christmas Parade
Dec 5 - Annual Meeting & Christmas Dinner

Call 724-758-5501 for more details!
New Members for 2016

DoubleTree Pittsburgh Cranberry
James Wright Cement
Six Packs Bar & Grill
Boost Mobile
NA Laszlo Heating & AC
Vance's Landscaping Supply, Inc
Amerikohl Aggregates, Inc
Dimeo Olson Law Group, LLC
Katera's Kove
Frank B Taylor Engineering
Turn 4 Toilets
Awireless/Verizon Wireless Premium Retailer
Romar Textile Co, Inc
The Salvation Army - Camp Allegheny
Doctor Dead Bug
Hair Expressions
Pappy Rick’s Kettle Corn
DuBois Electric Storage Battery Co
Hutch & Home
Next Level Photography
Larry & Bud - Friends of the Chamber
Richards Wood Products, LLC
Ellwood City Art Club

Mary Kay Cosmetics - Nancy Fenton
Congressman Keith Rothfus
Auntie Mame’s Aprons
Rebecca’s Hidden Gem Photography
Chris’ Wolverine
Pelissier Project Consulting, LLC
The Enchanted Olive
Ziegler Auto Body
TMK-IPSCO
Lori L’s Hair Studio
Bernstine Farms
Mary Ann DiBiagio, DO PC

Grand Opening at Rebecca’s Hidden Gem Photography Studio