



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.



Photos by William V Foley

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."

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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.”

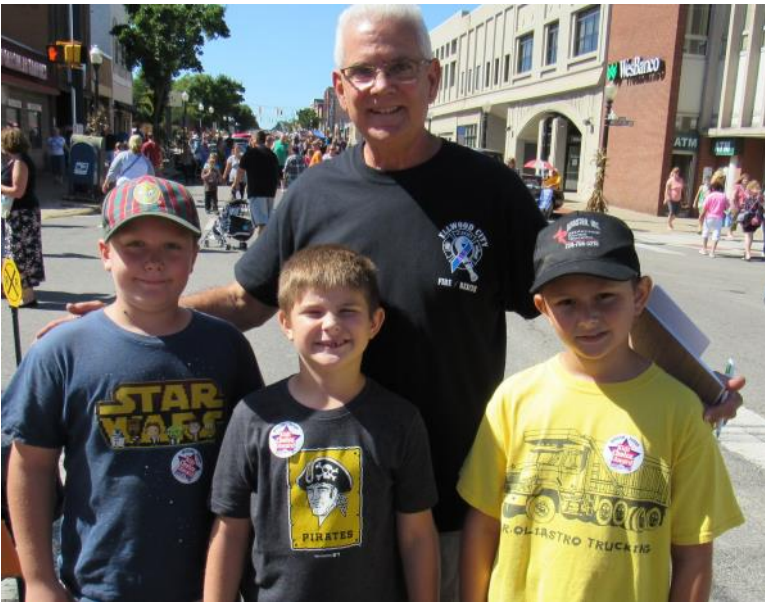
Joining Golmic on the Fall Festival committee were David DeCaria, Tracey Hughes, Sam Ferrante, Dave Hunter and Raymond Santillo, who says he’s overwhelmed with the generosity of the Ellwood City area.

“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.”



Photos by William V Foley



Fall Fest Judges

Live Music in the Community Plaza



Photos by William V Foley

HOLIDAY EVENTS

December - Christmas in the Park

Dec 2-3 - Let there be 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 Re-
tailer

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