

And The Storm Clouds Parted

by Lynne Belluscio

Friday night as I stood on the steps of the auditorium, and looked over the crowd, I watched the black clouds looming over the steeple of St. Mark's Church. Bruno DeFazio pulled me back into the school. "I just talked with the county, and a major storm is headed this way. It's going to hit LeRoy in half an hour." I glanced at my watch. It was 8 pm. Steve Barbeau was well into the town meeting. I pulled up the weather map on my phone. A bright green and yellow blob was growing and headed to LeRoy. I checked with the police. No doubt about it, the storm was coming. Evacuate the site? Move into the auditorium? The clouds were still building.

The Town Band agreed to move into the auditorium for their concert. I made an announcement to the crowd that we were expecting a storm and that they should be prepared to move into the auditorium and that under no circumstances should they stand under the tents or trees. But as many of you know who were there - - the storm never came. I watched in disbelief as the green and yellow blob just went away and the Town meeting went on as planned. The thirteen toasts were offered. The Marching Knights played the *National Anthem*. The militia gave a three-gun salute and when it was all said and done, LeRoy had had its Bicentennial.



A lot of people made it possible. First and foremost, to Town Supervisor Steve Barbeau who enthusiastically

supported the project. It would have been impossible without his involvement. He and his wife also need to be commended for arriving in appropriate 1812 attire! And to former Town Supervisor, and Genesee County Supervisor, Shelley Stein, who pitched in on numerous occasions to find solutions to perplexing problems. To the LeRoy Historical Society who pulled off a great ox roast. Their volunteers moved chairs, tables, tents and equipment - twice.

Everyone has to agree that the highlight of the evening was all the music -- the Knightengals, the GoodKnights, the LeRoy Marching Knights, the Ecumenical Chair, the Wolcott Street School students, Pat Fussell, the Presbyterian Chimers, the LeRoy Town Band and especially the students from Holy Family School.

All of this was coordinated by Denise Duthé, who left nothing to chance and put an enormous amount of effort into making sure everything went off on time. Denise would like to thank all the folks who pitched in and made the evening a musical tribute to this community.

On Thursday evening while we were putting up the big blue tent, I asked John Doemling to be the Town Crier. "All you have to do is come through the crowd, ringing a bell and yell -- Hear yeah Hear yeah - all citizens are to assemble on Trigon Park for the first town meeting." "Oh and by the way, could you wear a pioneer shirt and straw hat?" John didn't waiver and said he'd do it. And then on Friday night, when I forgot to put out the collection jars for the LeRoy Pantry, I called on John to "pass the hat."

"At the first town meeting, two hundred years ago, the first vote was taken to approve appropriations for the poor." So thank you to the generous citizens who assembled on Trigon Park. When I talked with Judy Ridley of the LeRoy Pantry, on Saturday morning, she had counted the hatful of money and was elated to add \$718.49 to her treasury!

I'd also like to thank the

LeRoy Central School which provided the auditorium in case of inclement weather. Knowing the auditorium doors were open if we needed it, was critical. I'd like to thank the Garden Club members who provided four beautiful containers of flowers to spruce up the park. I'd particularly like to thank Caroline Bolin in my office, who kept



all the various accounts straight and fielded a myriad of strange phone calls -- "Is it really an ox?" "No, actually its prime beef," "Do you have the words to "Hail Columbia?" "Call Denise." "Where's Lynne?" "Painting a barn quilt on the back porch."

All the folks who attended the Bicentennial Committee meeting since last fall, deserve a thank you -- from the Partons who helped with the barn quilt on Friday night and Lily Stein, who along with Shelia Furr, opened LeRoy House for the dignitaries. Candy Bower and Irene Walters who worked at the genealogy table; and Laura Brodie, the supervisor's secretary who made phone calls, mailed out invitations, and worked with Youngs Explosives for the fireworks.

And speaking of the fireworks ... we had to raise \$3,500 for the fireworks. And instead of asking all the usual sponsors who get asked for money all the time, we agreed we would try to find folks who would donate \$20 toward the fireworks. In return they would get a souvenir wooden dollar, which could be used on June 8 for a variety of special offers. We came very close to our goal, so if you enjoyed the fireworks -- and they were great -- thank the 164



people who made it possible. And to all of you who spent Friday night on Trigon Park -- thanks for showing up. And thanks for defying the storm.

