

Picnic Dubbed a Success!

You could add up the paid attendance; you could count the number of cars; you could calculate how much was made on food and drink; you could consider the amount of effort that went into the project. You could even consider the number of men who participated in the impromptu German sing-a-long around the bar during the band breaks near the end of the day and the high volume generated by their combined voices. No matter how you look at it, you have to admit the one-day Carpathia summer picnic was a success. Even the weather cooperated!

“I went to pick up my sister at the airport and it was raining like cats and dogs!” said Manfred Pfropper. “But, when I crossed 8-Mile road, the sun came out and it was a beautiful day!” In many ways, the day did seem to be blessed. The good weather, combined with the cozy setting of the Austrian Park was welcomed by nearly everyone who came out to the picnic.

With over 800 paid attendees, admission nearly covered the \$1500 park rental fee plus the two bands. That meant that, after expenses were paid, approximately \$8,500 taken in at the bar and food concessions was money in the club’s pocket.

There was another aspect to the expenditure: “This is the first time that we did not pay the government to have our festival,” said Carpathia and GACC board member Agnes Neumann. “All the money stayed within the German community.” Neumann was referring to the \$5100 previously paid to Macomb County for the use of their Freedom Hill facility. By contrast, this year’s rental fee went to the Austrian Society, which is a member of the GACC and who’s home is our own Carpathia Hall.

Still another point worth mentioning was summed up by Carpathia Manager Adam Medel, “This was a lot less work than the Volksfest,” said Medel, “A lot less work!” Overall, the number of volunteers needed to put on the one-day fest was significantly smaller than at Freedom Hill. Nevertheless, the old faithfuls who came together to make it all happen (see President’s report) were feeling their efforts in their bones by day’s end. When asked how he was doing late Sunday afternoon, Bar Manager Willi Grotloh replied simply, “I’m tired!” Having to troubleshoot the parks uncooperative beer taps early in the day did not help matters.

Despite these few minor glitches, the “Big Picknick”, which was really done on a trial basis, did remarkably well. Attendance was good despite advertising limited only to the Wochenpost and a few flyers. It was Carpathia’s first outdoor festival away from Freedom Hill since 1971,

when the club hosted the Donauschwaben Treffen at Green Acres Park on 26 Mile Road.

As promised by club President Annemarie Gerhardt, a follow-up meeting of the Picnic Committee was held to discuss the pros and cons of the event. The committee dubbed the picnic a success and agreed to a second annual event next year.

So, next year we will try to improve on this year’s picnic. Afterward, we will again measure its success or failure based on attendance, revenue or some other factors. Although these may be more important from a business standpoint, my favorite measure is still the number of voices in the impromptu sing-a-long around the bar and their collective volume. That’s a sure sign of a good time being had, and that may be the best measure of success after all.

Richard Gerhardt ❁

