



Clam fest planner takes on 350th

**By Erica Thoits
Reporter**

SCARBOROUGH (Nov 25): Scarborough's big birthday bash in the summer of 2008 now has an official director to coordinate and plan the huge event.

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Judi Clancy, former director of the Yarmouth Clam Festival, will head the effort to celebrate Scarborough's 350th anniversary. Clancy, a Yarmouth resident, has been hired by the 350th Committee to organize and plan the celebration. Over the next year and a half, she will consult regularly with the committee on the event planning.

Though Clancy loves the clam festival, she said she is excited to work on something different. "It's building something new," said Clancy. "It will really be fun."

"The 350th Committee is really excited to have her on board," said Annalee Rosenblatt, chairwoman of the committee. "I think she'll be immensely helpful."

Created by the town, the committee receives financial support from it. Town Manager Ron Owens said the committee received \$15,000 from the town last year and he expected that amount to increase substantially next year. He said, however, the committee would continue to seek private donors.



Judi Clancy, middle, waves during last summer's Yarmouth Clam Festival. Clancy, who was recently hired to coordinate Scarborough's 350th celebration, co-directed the Clam Festival for three years and was the director for another two. She has been involved with the festival as a member of the steering committee and in other ways for about 20 years. (Image courtesy of Yarmouth Chamber of Commerce)

Rosenblatt cited Clancy's extensive history and experience with the clam festival as a major asset, as well as her creativity and ability to organize a large number of volunteers. Clancy worked for the festival for about 20 years, serving as co-director for three years and two years as director. Her experience and contacts from the festival, Rosenblatt said, will help her with the 350th celebration.

The Yarmouth Clam Festival has been a top summer weekend event for 41 years, attracting thousands of people. It features a parade, entertainment, contests, rides, games, races – and lots of food. Admission is free, but proceeds from the food booths and parking lots help support about 35 nonprofit groups in the town.

"Judi has made an outstanding contribution to our festival over the years," said Carolyn Schuster, the managing director of the Yarmouth Chamber of Commerce. "Through her dedication, vision and enthusiasm, the festival reached new levels."

Rosenblatt was also impressed when Clancy started interviewing everyone from Town Manager Ron Owens to Fire Chief Michael Thurlow and every member of the committee. She also sent out survey questions before accepting the job to get a feel for what everyone hoped to see in the 2008 celebration.

"I'm really impressed by her commitment," said Rosenblatt.

Another advantage, said Rosenblatt, is that while the committee is made up with volunteers with other obligations, Clancy will be able to focus on planning the event.

Sylvia Most, a member of the committee, said Clancy will help bring some focus to a large number of ideas.

"It's a committee organized around something that won't happen for a long time," said Most. "It's been a little tough to get everyone focused." Most was also happy Clancy comes with experience and contacts. "She seems really great," she added.

Owens agreed that Clancy can help the committee members narrow down their expectations and hopes for the celebration and get to work on a few good plans.

"She will bring some focus, discipline and order to the group," said Owens. "We're all kind of relieved in a way."

Clancy agreed that the first step is to help the committee decide what they want to work on for the final event.

"I will come up with several different scenarios and have the 350th Committee pick one, because we need something concrete to do," said Clancy.

One big thing on her list, said Clancy, is to figure out where a parade will be and how it will look. For now, she is busy breaking the 350th Committee into smaller groups and getting in touch with the Scarborough community. Though she has already met with many town officials and the committee members, she hopes to become even more involved with the town.

"It's fun," said Clancy of all the planning and coordinating that will go into the celebration. "I like making something bigger and better. When people would come up to me in Yarmouth and say thank you, it was worth it. This will be an adventure."

The 350th Committee is looking for volunteers to help with the work of planning the events for the town's 350th anniversary. Those interested should log on to the town's Web site, www.Scarborough.me.us, for more information.

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