



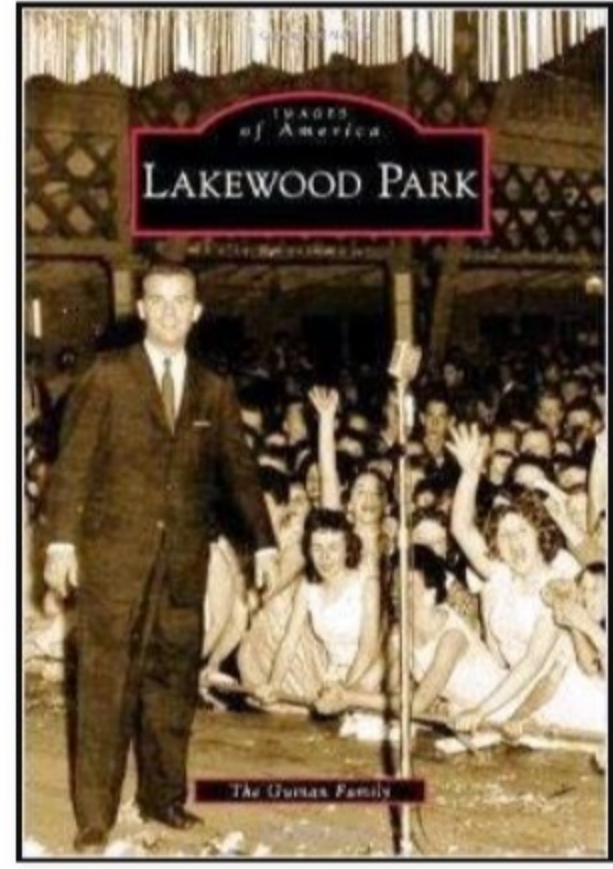
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Monday, August 4, 2014

Coal Region Connections: 30 Years Ago, Schuylkill County & The Entire Coal Region Lost a Treasured Landmark



30 YEARS AGO SCHUYLKILL COUNTY & THE ENTIRE COAL REGION LOST A TREASURED LANDMARK. Click LIKE if you still have fond memories of LAKEWOOD PARK in Barnesville.

By: Mark Marek, Coal Region Connections

Lakewood Park was once billed as a getaway for the "working class". The 88 acre park was launched by Richard & Daniel Guinan in 1916. The park had everything: a huge man-made lake & concrete pool, amusement rides, skating, & nice picnic area. For years, Lakewood Park competed with Lakeside Park a couple hundred yards away.

In 1925, the Lakewood Ballroom was erected. It hosted great dances & showcased famous big band, rock n roll, & polka bands. The ballroom was destroyed by fire in May, 1998. In 1949, the air conditioned Lakewood Playhouse opened & attracted stars from the stage & screen for 30 years with well-attended summer stock plays before closing in 1979.

Lakewood Park hosted ethnic celebrations including Lithuanian Day which was the longest running ethnic festival in Pa. from 1914 to 1984. Remember Russian Day, Ukrainian Day, & Grand Irish Jubilee (did we miss any festivals)? The popular Bavarian Festival enjoyed a 15 year run from 1969 through 1983 & attracted about 1/2 million people annually during its peak years in the late 70s.

The decade of the 80s was not kind to area amusement parks. Lakewood closed in 1984; Angela Park closed in 1988; Rocky Glen Park, Hanson's Amusement Park at Harveys Lake, & Bushkill's Magic Valley also ceased operations during the 1980s.

What do you remember most about Lakewood Park? Your school, church, or company picnics at the park, the ethnic festivals, boxing matches, bands & dances, summer stock plays, political banquets, bingo games, the roller coaster & carousel, swimming in the pool? Please COMMENT with your favorite Lakewood memories.

For more information & great pictures of Lakewood Park, we strongly recommend the book "Images of America--Lakewood Park" (pictured below) published by Arcadia Publishing in 2009.

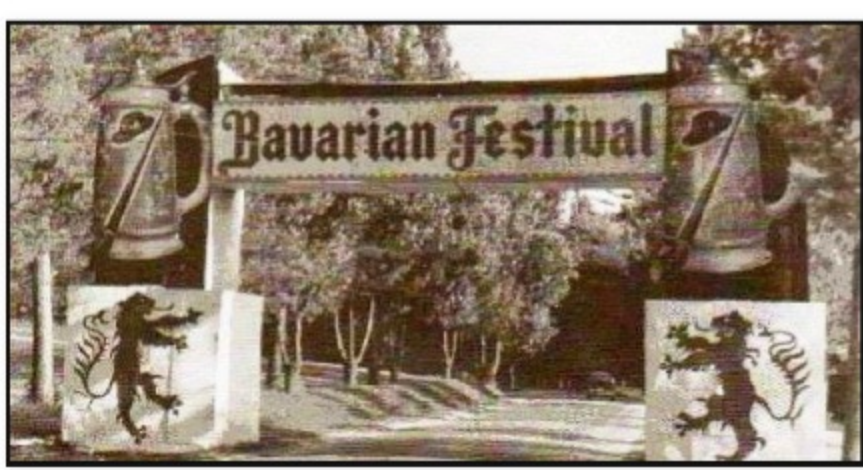
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