

FROM YOUR STATE REPRESENTATIVE

Celebrating the End of WWI: Once Was Not Enough

By: State Representative,
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The end of the First World War brought great celebration to Medina in early November of 1918, with the announcement of an Armistice with Germany. The armistice was to end fighting on land, sea and air in World War I between the Allies and their opponent, Germany. For Medina Village, it apparently brought two celebrations.

The Medina Sentinel reported on November 8, 1918 headlines that read, "Heard War Was Over: Citizens Up-roarious." Further reporting, "Bedlam broke loose in Medina at 2 o'clock Thursday afternoon when word came from Cleveland that Germany had accepted unconditionally the terms for an armistice offered to her, and for two hours bells were rung, whistles blown, guns exploded and men, women and children yelled themselves hoarse in

jubilation. Local speakers addressed the crowd from the band stand. Flags were hoisted from the business houses..." Unavoidably, the so-called "bedlam" had to quickly cease when another bulletin was received shortly thereafter stating that the first one was in error. A rumor printed as fact by the Cleveland Press led many in Medina Village to prematurely celebrate. The Germans had only been handed the armistice terms, not actually signed it, yet.

Perhaps we can't blame the Medina people for being a little cautious before another "spontaneous" celebration would occur the following Monday at noon, November 11th. In what the Akron Beacon Journal headline for the day proclaimed, "Armistice Reduces Foe to Absolute Impotence," communities throughout the land held

peace parades, impromptu concerts by community bands, organized programs with speeches by politicians, clergymen, prominent businessmen all celebrating the conclusion of the war in Europe.

Medina again, in the words of the Medina Sentinel headline observed righteous celebration, "Pandemonium as Pageant in Medina Signalizes End of War." According to the front page report, Medina people "at the dawn of Monday began to evacuate all the pent-up anxiety of the past four years to make room for an eighteen hour feast of unadulterated fun."

So what did Pandemonium and unadulterated fun entail for the little village of Medina a whole century ago? Apparently, a peace parade organized by the Mayor, concerts

by Seville and Medina community bands, an exhibition by the Ingham martial band, organized programs with speeches by politicians, clergymen, and prominent businessmen all celebrating the conclusion of the war. The celebration reportedly brought thousands of young and old to the village from all over the county. However, the newspaper was good enough at the end of the story to take note that there was very little evidence of intoxication.

I would hope so, given that just the week before in the general election, 66% of the Medina Village voters had approved a statewide prohibition of all intoxicating beverages. This two to one victory in the battle against alcohol was well above the 51% that approved of it statewide! After all, sobriety in Medina Village was important even in the midst of Pandemonium and unadulterated fun.



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