

Destination... Mechanicville!



Family Day is a laid back, enjoyable experience with many vendors and tents, plus food, music, ceremonies, fireworks and more. If your schedule allows it, plan to spend some time at this event, on Saturday, July 8, 2023.

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Boaters pass the City of Mechanicville, nestled on the western shore of the Hudson River just between Locks C-2 and C-3 of the Champlain Canal, without giving much thought to what might be located there. Or perhaps they have a little "local knowledge" and know that the restroom and shower facilities just steps away from the free canal terminal wall are, in the opinion of this writer, the best available on the entire Champlain Canal from Waterford to Whitehall. But the City itself remains largely unexplored by boaters, and that is



Park Avenue Confectionary, LLC & General Store is a must-see on any stop in Mechanicville. Interesting gifts and trinkets, plus gourmet food items and of course candy!

a shame because there is a lot to see and do and also some great culinary treats to enjoy if one sets aside enough time for a side trip during their canal voyage this summer.

Part of Mechanicville's problem is its image. Walking up from the city docks, Main Street looks largely abandoned and/or unmodernized, so people from downstate cities might feel a little nervous about their safety, even though the City Hall, Police Station and Fire Department are all located within 100 feet of the docks. Mechanicville is an extraordinarily safe and welcoming city, and I honestly have never heard of any incidents involving boaters in the 12 years I have been upstate and writing these articles. Instead, Mechanicville is a place filled with history, culture, American and ethnic heritage, and more. Oh, and food, if we haven't stressed that enough quite yet. This is the only city around where a visiting tour vessel has ever received a tray of homemade cannolis from the friendly citizenry!

So, if you've got the time, tie up at the dock, check out the nearby bulletin board that the Chamber of Southern Saratoga County maintains alongside the driveway, showing nearby places to eat and some local interest information in the covered info box. Take a walk up to Main Street, hang a left, and walk down to Park Avenue. Then turn right, and follow that street a couple of blocks to where the fun begins. On your left at the corner of Park Avenue and Routes 4/32 is The Sugar Fairy Bakes, LLC (205 Park Avenue, (518) 652-2950, thesugarfairybakes.com), which opened last year, serving breakfast and lunch plus a lot of very tasty baked goods made from scratch with all the finest ingredients. Hours are Thurs-Fri 6am-3pm, Sat and Sun

These sweet treats and more await visitors to The Sugar Fairy Bakes, LLC, one of the great small businesses along Park Avenue in downtown Mechanicville, about ¼ mile from the City docks



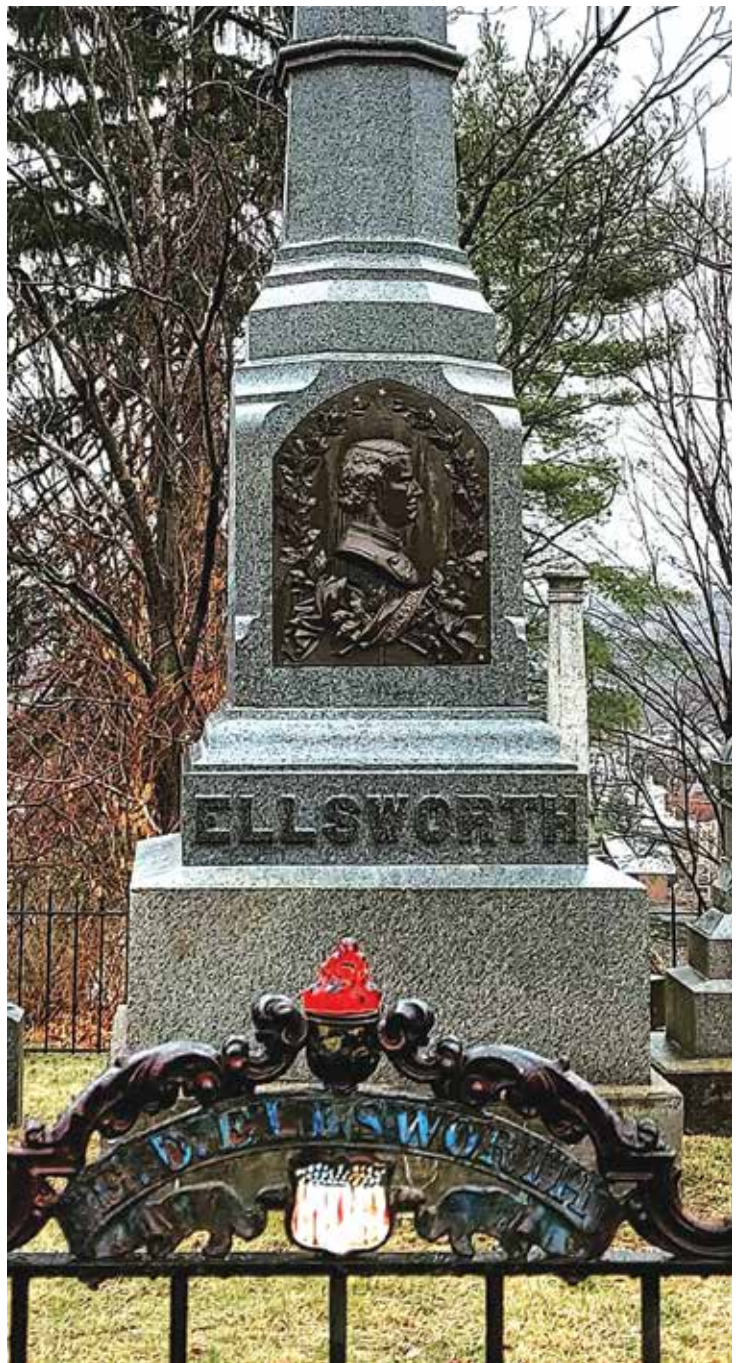
8am-3pm. Incidentally, those towing their boats upstate via I-87 will find The Sugar Fairy Bakes' second location in Malta at Exit 12.

A few doors further down Park Avenue is Park Avenue Confectionary, LLC & General Store (223 Park Avenue, (518) 664-3066, parkavenueconfectionary.co). This is a real, old fashioned candy store with a twist – gourmet foods and sauces, some really interesting gifts, party favors, decorations and seasonal items, the display of which changes throughout the year. One can satisfy their sweet tooth with some decadent chocolate, or time-honored candies of days gone by, while shopping the adjacent aisles and getting a laugh out of some of the fun items on display throughout the store. This is definitely one of those "don't miss" local shops that is well worth the visit!

Heading further into town, there are places to eat such as the End Zone (227 Park Ave, (518) 664-0063, theendzonesportspub.com) for lunch and dinner, the Ugly Rooster Café (312 N 3rd Ave, (518) 664-2769, theuglyrooster.com) for breakfast and lunch plus a gift shop called "The Coop", and attractions such as Tallmadge Park (head south from Park Ave to Spring Street, make right, follow to end), with its reflective Veterans Memorial and a large gazebo that was built by the community with assistance from the Chamber a few years ago. Down the street is the historic XO Tower, a two story structure resembling an airport control tower that once helped shepherd hundreds of freight cars into the former rail yards, 3rd largest in the USA at that time. The site is still the intersection of two major freight railroad lines (Norfolk Southern and Canadian Pacific).

Hudson View Cemetery (6 Pruyn Hill Rd) is the site of the Elmer Ellsworth memorial and grave. Col. Ellsworth was President Lincoln's law clerk and a soldier in the Union Army, who became the first Union officer killed in the Civil War on May 24, 1861 when he was shot while hauling down a Confederate flag across the Potomac from the US Capitol the day after Virginia seceded. His uniform, holed by a shotgun blast from a traitorous innkeeper, is in the custody of the Saratoga County Historical Society and was featured on the 10th anniversary season of the "Fireball Run" adventurously series in 2017. Other notable figures born in Mechanicville include Bob Eberly and Ray Eberle, of the Jimmy Dorsey and Glenn Miller orchestras, respectively.

Mechanicville celebrates Family Day 2023 in Tallmadge Park on Saturday, July 8, and if your itinerary allows, you may wish to allocate the day to enjoying the festivities. The day begins with breakfast, a flag raising



The grave of Union Col. Elmer Ellsworth is a poignant reminder of the struggles our nation has faced ever since its founding. He was born nearby in Malta, raised in Mechanicville, and buried here after being killed in 1861.

ceremony at the veterans' memorial followed by an ecumenical service, followed by music, food, vendors and more throughout the day and capped off with fireworks at night. This is a great way to experience all this unique, small, intimate and friendly city has to offer, and you will make some memories, and maybe a few new friends, during your visit.