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TOGETHERNESS – MAGIC INGREDIENT

There's a magic ingredient in Glen Rock.

Unlike most commuting towns where the men spend their days in New York and don't bother much about what's going on in their hometown outside of their own front yard, Glen Rock has a far-reaching reputation for its "togetherness," or town spirit.

The trait first came to play with the big Firemen's Fair in 1910, when all the residents pitched in and put on a three-night fair-picnic at Central School and raised enough money for a fire engine. Today the trait is carried on by such groups as the Junior Football and Baseball Associations, the IDA, the parents working on the graduation ball and many others. The groups all have one thing in common – they work for the benefit of others.

The IDA (Independence Day Association) and parents of the graduating seniors both start working at a hard, steady pace in January. Purpose of the IDA is to provide the biggest, old-fashioned day possible for the entire town and purpose of the parents is to put on a spectacular evening for the new graduates – and keep them in town.

The IDA began in 1939 with Milton J. Romary as its first chairman and its basic concept is still followed each year – a parade in the morning, followed by an all-afternoon fair at Memorial Field plus the traditional Fourth of July games such as watermelon and pie-eating contests, sack races and penny hunts for the little kiddies. The Little League plays its championship game on the field, as does the girls' Twiggy League and the tennis finals are held on the municipal courts, in the same area.

The plan of the graduation ball began ten years ago when parents became alarmed at accidents that were occurring in nearby towns involving new graduates out for the night. Each year, the parents of the graduates transform the high school gym into something spectacular and completely professional. Themes have ranged from Camelot to New Orleans to a circus to this year's Gala Ronde.

Junior Football got started in 1962 with a small group of men who wanted little boys to learn the game correctly and safely (starting at nine) and progressed so rapidly that last year it won the Mayor's Trophy from Ridgewood. Along with the Baseball Association, an older group, the two organizations are now working on plans to build two new diamonds and a football field at Faber Field. The men spent much of last summer building a \$15,000 fieldhouse for their young players.

This town feeling of doing for others has carried through from the first organization to the last. The Guild for Christian Service, a group organized within the Community Church, was the first club formed in town and from its inception in 1897 it worked for the benefit of others.

The newest town group was formed last spring, the Glen Rock Tennis Association, and aside from having a good time, the tennis players have spent innumerable hours teaching youngsters in the town how to play and enjoy the sport free of charge.

All told, there are 67 groups in the borough, and most of them have some sort of service as their keynote; the Civic Association and the detailed newsletter it sends to all residents; the League of Women Voters and its voter information services; the Jaycees and their Easter egg hunts and pumpkin sales; the Junior and the work they've done in Braille.

It all adds up to a town of doers – people doing for others. And also a town where almost any newcomer is sure to find some group doing what he's interested in.