



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Joseph A. Griffo

Griffo Announces \$50,000 for Rome Parks

JOSEPH A. GRIFFO June 26, 2014

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ROME – Sen. Joseph A. Griffo today announced that he has secured \$50,000 in state funds for upgrades at two Rome parks.

The city will dedicate half of the funds - \$25,000 – to various repairs at Veterans Memorial Park on North James Street. These include re-pointing the concrete which has deteriorated around the monument to Rome’s war veterans and various landscaping improvements.

The other half will go toward improvements at the Pinti Field action sports park.

“I am pleased to support the city’s ongoing effort to beautify its parks and improve recreational opportunities for children,” said Griffo, R-Rome. “I am also impressed by the community’s support of the Veterans Park and am happy to do my part to aid in the rehabilitation of this important memorial.”

“On behalf of the City of Rome, thank you to Senator Joseph Griffo for securing funding that can be put towards the re-development of the Action Park at Pinti Field,” said Rome Mayor Joseph Fusco Jr.

In just the first four months of fundraising, veterans organization and individuals have donated more than \$20,000 for the erection of an archway and for other smaller improvements at Veterans Memorial Park. The archway was designed by Raulli’s Iron Works, a local fabricator.

The monument was built in 1961 to all Rome veterans who have served in the Armed Forces, including the estimated 3,000 city residents who fought during World War II. The city intends to use the money secured by Senator Griffo and make the repairs and improvements before Veterans Day.

“Veterans Memorial Park is a place to reflect on and remember the 236 city residents who have died in defense of our freedom,” said Michael Grogan, president of the Rome Veterans Council. “We owe it to these soldiers and their loved ones to have a place that is well maintained and reflects our appreciation of their sacrifice. The community has really stepped up for us – and we thank Senator Griffo for matching their enthusiasm with this funding.”

“We thank Senator Griffo for his efforts on behalf of our park and our veterans over the years,” said Tom Kenealy Sr., vice president of the Rome Veterans Council. “We also

appreciate the individuals and the veterans organizations who have helped to support our memorial. Our community is so generous, whether it's our cause or another. We thank them for that."

Mayor Fusco added: "The area known as the skate park has been in disarray for more than four years. In 2013, the city was forced to remove the broken, dilapidated equipment for liability purposes. Weather, vandalism and use had taken its toll on the equipment. The asphalt surface, formerly three tennis courts, is also in need of resurfacing.

"Last year, there was a small group who was interested in revamping the park. They met with city officials and were given the outline of how to get this project off the ground. The number one thing needed was user involvement and the need for them to drive the project forward. This included securing private funding from individuals, businesses and to seek other funding sources such as grants. Unfortunately their efforts have fallen short.

"There have been three and four different suggestions and cost projections for a park ranging from \$25,000 to \$300,000, with no clear direction or plan, I directed my staff to research the development of new action park for BMX bikes, skateboards, scooters, inline skates, etc. While there are several options out there, some are more feasible than others in the upstate climate. Wood and high density plastic (also known as Skatelite) is not feasible for the obvious reasons, leaving us concrete and steel. The most affordable option at this time seems to be steel. The preliminary cost figures for a very basic park are approximately \$70,000, and a more complete park is in the \$150,000 range. The existing three tennis courts will be reduced to two, and this area will be resurfaced with asphalt. This must be done first and foremost before any equipment is added; the cost for this is in the \$20,000 range.

"The \$25,000 from Senator Griffo's office can be a start. However, additional funding is needed in order to make this project a reality. Recently, my office has been contacted by two Romans who are involved in the action sports industry who are interested in helping to

garner additional support. The administration will be meeting with them in the next few days.”