

## ***TOWN/VILLAGE OF CUBA ANNUAL HISTORIANS REPORT – 2012***

The New Year opened with extremely mild weather for January. Very little snowfall occurred in January, thus saving the highway and streets departments many dollars that did not have to be spent on salt and sand, and overtime plowing. On January 31, 2012 at 3 p.m. the outside temperature was 56 degrees.

The Cuba Rushford Central School Board of Education held a public forum on the Rushford Campus to present the financial picture to the district residents and explain why the board is considering the closing of the Rushford Elementary School. About 150 residents came to the two hour forum. By a vote of 5 to 2, the board voted in March to close the Rushford campus and move the students to the Cuba Elementary Campus on Elm Street.

John LaFever, son of Korean War Missing-in-Action veteran Jack C. Zuver, is a volunteer ambassador for the Department of Defense 60<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of the Korean War Commemoration Committee. John's goal is to honor all Korean War veterans in the area while raising awareness for the thousands of soldiers, sailors, aviators and marines who were killed, wounded or never found. He is trying to contact all veterans on behalf of the Dept of Defense to handout certificates of appreciation.

Cuba Fire Department members announced in February that they were seeking to create a Fire Protection District with a board of commissioners instead to relying upon funding from Village and Town tax dollars. Both Village and town boards approved formation of the district subject to permissive referendum which voters called for and a vote to be held on March 1<sup>st</sup>. The fire department held informational meetings on the matter at the fire hall. At the subsequent vote by Cuba Voters the resolution to establish a Joint Fire District was approved by the voters.

Weather continued to be a topic of conversation into the month of March. Extremely mild temperatures, and lack of snowfall this winter has been the norm. Mild weather continues – making this one of the most unusual winters of record. In mid March the temperatures were in the high 60's and low 70's. Unusual weather conditions continued in April but many days were very cold making residents wonder what happened to the high 70 degree temps that occurred during the month of March. With temperatures soaring most of the summer, the area experienced a severe drought with total seasonal rainfall reaching only a fraction of what would normally occur for the area. Many other sections of the country also face severe drought, and other weather phenomenon such as tornadoes, lightning storms. Many are blaming "Global Warming" as the culprit.

In March, the Cuba Rushford Central School Boys Basketball team won the Sectional Title.

Cuba Rushford Central School Superintendent Kevin Shanley announced he would resign his position effective June 30, 2012 to lead the Akron Central School District. Mr. Shanley had been at the helm of the district for three years and cited personal family issues for his decision to move to that area . He said his decision to accept the position was not connected in any way to the board's decision to close the Rushford Campus of the school.

In September, a murder-suicide at Cuba Lake shocked the community when a South Shore resident, Jeff Jerge, shot his neighbor, Susan Babcock in the head as she sat in her automobile. Investigation revealed that the neighbors had been feuding for a long time over the parking spaces and placing of garbage cans and vehicles along the roadside.

Cuba Garlic Festival enjoyed record crowds for the 8<sup>th</sup> annual event held at Empire City Farms (Block Barn) Grounds. A reported 8,000 people attended the event on September 15, and 16.

The Interstate 86 bridge over Route 305 now bears the name of fallen Cuba native Marine Sergeant Mark Bradley. Sgt. Bradley Died June 16, 2011 from injuries sustained eight days earlier from an improvised exploding device (IED) in Afghanistan. Mark was a 2003 graduate of Cuba Rushford Central School. A dedication ceremony was held at Cuba's VFW Post on October 5<sup>th</sup>, 2011 where the sign dedicating the bridge was unveiled.

President Barak Obama re-elected in the November elections.

A major storm, Hurricane Sandy, wrought havoc along the East Coast. Many communities in New York, and New Jersey suffered millions of dollars in damages to homes and businesses along the coast.

Of note for our community are some new Stores/commercial enterprises:

**1. South St. Mart** (former Uni-Mart building) opened by John Freeman who has operated Cuba Auto Repair (across South Street from the new business) for many years.

**2. Running Haven Tack Shop** – 32 West Main Street owned by Bonnie and James Cobado;

**3. Big John's Tavern;** 43 W Main Street; John Ringleberg and family.

**4. Cuba Chamber of Commerce** purchased the building at 5 West Main Street, formerly occupied by Cuts 4 Kids. Plans are to remodel the ground floor for Chamber offices and to continue to rent the apartments in the upper floors.

**5. One Door Opens**, an antique/gift shop, operated by Jennifer Burdsall and Colette Reardon opened on East Main Street in the Story Block Building which is now owned by Terry Moot. Mr Moot is in process of renovating the building to create some “up-scale” apartments on the second and third floor while retaining a commercial space on the ground floor.

In December, the Cuba Rushford Pop Group and Jazz Band presented a Holiday Christmas Concert in the newly restored Palmer Opera House. This is the first use of the Opera House space in nearly 100 years. Cuba Friends of Architecture are spear heading the restoration of the commercial units and second story opera house which is still in the restoration stages.

The Cuba Joint Fire District Commissioners held their first elections since the formation of the fire district, electing 5 commissioners to run the affairs of the district. Those elected included, Derek Clement, John LaFever, Michael Johnson, Marlene Doyle and Russell Heslin.

A section of the Genesee Valley Greenway in Cuba was formally opened in August. The Greenway Section starts at Bull Street and travels east approximately a mile and a half. to the Allegany County Line following the path of the Genesee Valley Canal which was ultimately succeeded by the Pennsylvania Railroad. The roof of the bandstand which had once stood in Genesee Park stands at the trailhead and there are benches for hikers to rest upon about half a mile into the trail.

At Cuba Lake, the state of New York completed work on a public boat launch area where Rawson Creek enters the lake. A large parking lot, concrete boat launch pad and kiosk describing Cuba Lake, its function, history and ecology is now open the anyone wishing to use the lake for recreational purposes.

Local and national media in December are carrying news of two tragedies to hit small U.S. Communities. At Newtown, Connecticut, a deranged gunman broke into an elementary school and killed 27 people including 20 6 and 7 year old children as well as several teachers. Then he took his own life. The next week, in Webster, NY, a convicted killer who had served 17 years in jail for beating his grandmother to death, and been released, set fire to his home and several neighbors homes and ambushed responding firefighters, killing two, before committing suicide himself. These events have caused a great controversy to come to the surface again, concerning government control of fire arms.

During 2012, the Historian's office continued to be busy answering many inquiries for items relating to genealogy, historic background etc. Thanks to the cooperation of the Cuba Historical Society, the Cuba Circulating Library and the Cuba Cemetery Association I am able to supply answers to most of the inquiries. The use of email has become even more prevalent in the past year with many inquiries coming to the historian's office via the internet.

In August I was interviewed by Buffalo Channel 2 Television personality Pete Gallivan who tapes program segments about little known facts about Western New York. The two segments were aired in November. One segment dealt with the history of the famed Seneca Oil Spring and the other was on the Ingalls family who resided in the North Cuba area in the latter part of the 1800's and were an inspiration for the LITTLE HOUSE ON THE PRAIRIE books written by Laura Ingalls Wilder. Her father was "Pa Ingalls" who told Laura many stories about his youth. The popular books were also once the theme for a popular television series.

I continue to monitor area newspapers and periodicals for items of historic interest to our community and remain grateful to the Town and Village for providing modest budgets for maintaining subscriptions and my memberships in several area historical groups and agencies in lieu of a salary.

2012 Town Officials:

Supervisor, Barbara Deming,  
Deputy Supervisor, Jerry Scott  
Clerk/Tax Collector/Registrar of Vital Statistics, Nancy Orcutt,  
Deputy Town Clerk, Jeff Orcutt  
Justices, James Keough, Paul Conklin  
Councilmen: Joseph Miller, Jeffrey DaHill, Lynnford Sweet, Robert Carney,  
Assessors: Merlin Briggs, David Crowley, Thomas Cuccharo.,  
Highway Superintendent: Steven Nease  
Chief of Police, Dustin Burch

Village Officials

Mayor, Thomas Taylor;  
Trustees, Judith Zayac, Patricia Petroni, Michael Doyle, Andrew Swift  
Deputy Mayor, Judith Zayac  
Village Attorney, John Cappellini Clerk/  
Treasurer, Diane Wilson  
Public Works Superintendent, Richard Hall  
Deputy Public Works Superintendent, Randy Snyder

Respectfully Submitted

David H. Crowley, Historian