

Cuba Township
28000 W. Cuba Road
Barrington, IL 60010

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Road District phone: 847-381-7793
Road District fax: 847-381-7994

Supervisor, *DAVID F. NELSON*

There are many wonderful places to celebrate the arrival of spring. However, after the harsh, snowy winter we have endured, it gives me no greater pleasure than to watch the season unfold right here in Barrington. I hope you, too, can observe the spring season in some of the many beautiful open spaces that our community has to offer.

I am pleased to be a part of this Township that is home to fine, hardworking employees and dedicated elected officials. From ensuring the safety and integrity of our roads, the calculation of appropriate assessed property values, the administration of voter registration and early voting, and the determination of need for those coming to our food pantry, Cuba Township works hard every day to deliver efficient and appropriate services to our residents. Please look at your tax bill, which should arrive shortly, and you will see that the value delivered from the approximate 5% of your tax bill that goes to Cuba Township is quite significant!

Our food pantry needs continue to grow, as we also welcome increased donations. The resources of the Township's pantry are available to any Township resident indicating a need. An intake interview will be scheduled with our Community Liaisons to determine the best way to help the individual or family requesting assistance. Please contact the Township office at (847) 381-1924 if you or someone you know requires assistance from the pantry. All inquires are confidential.

As always, please feel free to contact me with your comments, questions or concern.

WWW.CUBATOWNSHIP.COM

Officials

David F. Nelson, Supervisor

Priscilla H. Rose, Clerk

Rebecca M. Tonigan, Assessor

Thomas W. Gooch, Hwy. Commissioner

Donald F. Griffith, Trustee

John J. Mumaw, Trustee

Arthur L. Rice III, Trustee

Roberta A. Svacha, Trustee

CUBA
TOWNSHIP

Township board meetings are held the second Thursday of each month at 7:00 pm at the Township office, 28000 W. Cuba Road, Barrington. All meetings are open to the public

Office hours-
Monday—Friday
9:00 am—4:00 pm

Cuba News

Spring 2010

A message from the Cuba Township Assessor
REBECCA M. TONIGAN

Fairness – it's what we all want. How often as your Assessor have I heard, "I don't mind paying my fair share..." and it's true! We understand that our local services cost money. We know that we have to pay for them. But we want the process to be fair.

This demand for "uniformity" is a recurring principle of our society and an integral part of the democratic dream. In 1818 Illinois was the first state to specifically require "uniform and equal taxation" of property in the State Constitution. By 1845, statutory law, including Illinois tax law, agreed with and expanded on the constitutional requirement of "uniformity" and since then, case law has repeatedly upheld it. Today the concept of "uniformity" or "equal treatment" takes precedence and is the central theme of our property tax system. Layers of protection are built into the property tax system to ensure "fairness", "equal treatment" and "uniformity".

So, it follows that the primary function of the assessment process is to fairly distribute the collective tax burden created by our local taxing bodies. Assessments perform a distribution function, not a taxing function. And the job of the Assessor is to value all property at one third of market value and to do so in a uniform and equitable manner. Yet, while assessments are determined by local assessors, they are subject to revision and review by the Chief County Assessment Officer, the Lake County Board of Review and ultimately the Illinois Department of Revenue.

The Illinois Property Tax Code requires that all taxable real property be assessed at 33.33% of "fair cash" value. To accomplish this Assessors use sales transactions from the three years prior to the assessment date (January 1st of each year) to determine property values for the entire township, a methodology mandated by state statute. Both the county and the state use the same methodology to monitor and adjust township and county assessments so that values throughout the county and state are uniform; a process called equalization. During equalization a uniform percentage increase or decrease is applied to all assessments in the target area - neighborhood, township or county - to bring assessment levels, on average, to a uniform level. At any point in the assessment process, if the overall level of assessment is not 33.33%, an equalization factor may be applied. The Township Assessor can equalize *within* the township, the Chief County Assessment Officer and Board of Review can equalize *between townships* and the Illinois Department of Revenue equalizes *between counties*. Any one of these authorities, by statute, can "equalize" assessments up or down and all are responsible for making sure that property assessments are uniform and at 33.33% of market value. Equalization ensures that the correct level of assessment is maintained and that, from neighborhood to neighborhood, township to township and county to county, everyone pays "their fair share" based upon the value of their property.

This year, after equalization by the Township Assessors and the Chief County Assessment Officer, Lake County's tentative state equalization factor was 1.0 – in other words, no factor. However, the assessment cycle was not complete. The Lake County Board of Review, the official government entity before which property owners may file an appeal contesting their assessed value, had not finished their work. Even though Assessors are required by law to use sales data from the three years prior to the assessment date to compute individual assessments, the Lake County Board of Review is able to consider current data, if applicable. According to the 2009 Board rules "it is preferable to select the best three comparables which have closed as close as possible to the lien date, January 1, 2009, as possible" in a market value argument. In the current declining market, this policy was generally beneficial to those property owners who took advantage of the appeal process. When changes at the Board of Review level were complete, the County's total assessed value achieved .0009 over 33.33% as mandated in the Property Tax Code. This figure is just under the allowable amount for the Department of Revenue to apply a State Multiplier.

For the first time since 1992, we almost had a "State Equalization" factor other than 1.0 on our property tax bills this May from the Illinois Department of Revenue. This would have resulted in an increase in all property assessments for Lake County. The Cuba Township Assessor's office is happy to report that because of due diligence on the part of our staff with regards to fair & equitable assessments and the appeal process we were able to keep our assessment level at 33.33%. We will again this year look to make changes in the level of assessments based on the 3 year sales data for 2007-2009.

Fairness – it's what we all want.

CUBA TOWNSHIP SERVICES

Handicapped parking placard applications are available at the Township office. Once approved by a physician, the Township can provide a temporary parking card for up to 90 days. If a permanent card is required, obtain a temporary from the Township, then mail the application to the Secretary of State's office for a permanent card.

R.T.A. applications for passes for the SMART card for senior citizens and the disabled are available at the Township office. This card provides free transportation for seniors and the disabled on Metra and CTA. Proof of age is required- a driver's license or state identification card is acceptable. Photos can be taken at the Township office for Township residents at no charge- non-Township residents, please provide \$5 per photo. We will then complete the application and the pass will be mailed to you in approximately 4 weeks by the R.T.A.

Half fare taxi program is available for Township residents who are 65 years of age or older. The Township will subsidize half of your taxi fare up to \$7.00. Please stop in the office to sign up for this program. Proof of age is required.

Notary public services are offered at no charge.

The Cuba Township food pantry is available to any Township resident indicating a need, after an intake interview. Distributions are available every 30 days. Please call the office for more information. Donations of non-perishable food items are always welcome.

The General Assistance and Emergency Assistance programs offer limited financial assistance to Township residents. Income guidelines determine eligibility. Additionally, limited financial assistance is available through the Salvation Army. Please contact the Township office for more information.

LIHEAP (low income home energy assistance program) and SHARING applications are available at the Township office. These programs offer limited financial assistance, based on income, for heating and electric bills. Funding for these programs begins in late October/early November and continues through the heating season. Please contact the Township office for more information.

Township vehicle stickers are available for residents living in unincorporated areas of the Township. There is no charge for the stickers and they are not required. They are offered as a courtesy.

Passport processing services are offered at the Township office by appointment only. Processing takes up to 8 weeks. Identification (usually a driver's license) and proof of citizenship (birth certificate or naturalization papers) are required. Please call the Township office for an appointment. More details on requirements, fees and documentation are available at www.travel.state.gov.

A drop-off box for used eyeglasses is in the Township office. Eyeglasses are collected by the Lions Club and given to health care professionals for distribution to the needy.

Warning sirens are located throughout the Township to warn residents of dangerous weather. The sirens are owned and maintained by the Township with cooperation from the local fire department. The sirens are designed to be heard *outside* to warn residents to seek shelter.

Mosquito abatement services are provided for the Township through a contract with Clarke Environmental Mosquito Management, Inc. Larviciding is done throughout the Township to prevent the hatching of mosquito eggs. Additional emergency spraying is performed if the West Nile virus is detected in the Township. Please call Clarke's hotline at 800-942-2555 for more information.

Voter registration is available at the Township office for any Illinois resident. To register, a person must be a U.S. citizen, 18 years of age by the date of the next election, and a resident of the address at which they are registering at least 30 days prior to the election. Two forms of identification are required- one must show your name and current address and one form of identification may be a piece of mail for a contractual service addressed to you at your residence. The Township office is open for voter registration Monday through Friday, 9 am to 3:30 pm.

Early and Absentee Voting is available at the Township office prior to every election. You must be a Cuba Township resident to vote at the Township office.

The Cuba Cares fund is a 501 © (3) charitable fund. Monies donated to this fund are used to assist residents in need who do not qualify for other resources. After determination of need, disbursements are made to a vendor to assist in maintaining self-sufficiency. Funds are available to Cuba Township individuals or families only every 12 months. All monies donated are tax deductible; the fund is administered at no expense to the Township and no taxpayer funds are used to maintain it. To make a donation or inquire about assistance, please contact the Township office. All information regarding disbursements or inquires is confidential.

Retired flags can be dropped off at the Township office. The local VFW post and American Legion will collect the flags and dispose of them at periodic sanctioned ceremonies.

Free firewood and mulch are available seasonally through the Cuba Township Road District. Please go to www.cubaroads.com for more information on services offered by the Road District.

Please click on "assessor" on the Township's home page (www.cubatownship.com) for services provided by the **Cuba Township Assessor**.

PACE Bus Program for the Barrington Area

The PACE Bus Program has been an important service for the residents in the "Barrington Area". It has provided a special benefit to the seniors in the area and to residents within the communities who have special needs and disabilities.

In December 2008 the Barrington Village Board determined the Village could no longer financially support the PACE Bus program and communicated with Barrington Township and Cuba Township about the possibility of the two Townships taking over the program.

The Village of Barrington agreement for funding the program extended to June 2009. In May of 2009 Barrington and Cuba Townships voted to fund the PACE Bus program for the remainder of 2009. A Committee was formed to extend the program through the Townships.

Committee Members were: Ron Szymanski and Mike Ryan from Barrington Township, Don Griffith and Art Rice from Cuba Township, and Joyce Palmquist, Executive Director of BACOA (the Barrington Area Council on Aging). The Committee had the support of Mary L. Donner from the PACE Suburban Bus operations.

The Committee, along with Sarah Hoban from BACOA, met with Shirley Gillespie, Palatine Township Transportation Service Director. Palatine Township offers an extensive program operating on a larger budget than the Barrington area program. The budget for the PACE Program by Barrington and Cuba Townships is \$40,000.

An early morning meeting with Robert J. Miller, Algonquin Township Highway Commissioner and Algonquin Township Senior Transportation program manager, provided us with excellent insight as to how his program is run (scheduling, ridership, dispatch, who/how/when, etc.). We had the occasion to visit with one of his drivers and received the driver's perspective of the program and how well it runs.

Several meetings followed to discuss options, types of services, special needs, and future goals. Joyce Palmquist was exceptional in helping us determine senior needs and programs and sharing her ideas on what might be included in the near future and how to handle the logistics of this program for our communities.

Jeff Lawler, Barrington Village Manager, provided assistance in having the Village of Barrington carry the PACE contract while Barrington Township and Cuba Township hammered out the financial support that is necessary.

Documents were signed by both Township Supervisors; the residents have a program that remains as it was through the Village of Barrington. The program is now funded by Barrington and Cuba Townships and serves our area residents in need of this fine and required service. The only changes to the program are those mandated by PACE and done so in attempt to improve services. Both Townships will continue to work with interested parties to determine how to best serve their residents.

Thanks to Joyce (BACOA), Mary (PACE), Ron and Mike from Barrington Township, Don and Art from Cuba Township, and to others for providing their input, sharing of ideas, and moving the PACE Bus Program forward.

census 2010

Every year the US government distributes more than \$400 billion to states and communities based on Census data. Within Lake County and the cities and villages, data collected in the Census aids in making decisions that guide economic development and help determine priorities for infrastructure, such as schools, roads and sewers.

In March every household in Lake County was mailed the 2010 Census form. This form has only 10 questions and will only take about 10 minutes to fill out. The household and individual information in the Census is completely confidential and protected by law – it cannot be given to any other government office, including law enforcement agencies.

Please complete your form and MAIL IT IN!

Go to the following link to learn more from the Census website.

<http://www.2010.census.gov>

Highway Commissioner, *THOMAS W. GOOCH*

WINTER IS OVER.

We have taken the plows off the trucks, the spreaders off the trucks, stored the salt and even stopped getting winter weather alerts. By the time you read this we will be heavy into the summer construction season. In fact, prior to the beginning of April we began installing storm drain on Old Barrington Road and will be moving throughout the villages and township roads during the summer.

We are confronted with yet another unfunded federal mandate which requires us by 2012 to inventory and maintain reflectivity records for every sign in the township. To that end, we are now the proud owners of a reflectometer and other necessary equipment to begin measuring existing signs and to begin the process of replacing them where necessary. It is my intent to be well ahead of the curve before the deadlines loom as the failure to meet the deadlines could affect our motor fuel tax revenue which we receive from the federal government on a monthly basis. We have elected, rather than to maintain typewritten lists and attempt to keep them current, to utilize a software program based on our Geographical Information System. This system will inventory not only all street signs both regulatory and informational, but also is capable of inventorying all of the storm drain we are putting in including manholes, inlets, culverts, catch basins and outfalls. Even pavement condition and tree inventory can be utilized. The program allows us to constantly update as to condition and to project useful life as scheduled replacement. This will allow for much better budgeting into the future and with decreasing tax revenues and increasing costs becomes even more of an asset to us. Much of the cost of this equipment and software was defrayed by a grant obtained through the efforts of State Representative Mark H. Beaubien.

Eventually, at some point in this year, the software will also offer a “web portal” which will enable a citizen to transmit a work order or a notice of a problem ranging from a pot hole, to a downed tree, to a branch to us via the internet and see the complaint posted on our geographical information system (GIS) and track the approval of the work request, its cost, how it was repaired and when as well as by who. This is a work in progress, but we hope to have it up and running this year.

Ms. Debra Broderick, a Lake Barrington and Cuba Township resident has joined our staff not only to manage our GIS efforts, with which she has previous experience, but also as our Intergovernmental Coordinator to work more closely with the villages and more particularly to Homeowner’s Associations throughout the township and the villages. If you are an officer of one of the many Homeowner’s Associations existing in our Township and Village partners, then we would like to hear from you to schedule a visit as one of our goals this year is to increase communication directly with Homeowner’s Associations to see how we can better serve your needs and be more active and proactive within your communities. Deb will be more than happy to attend your meetings, listen to your concerns and discuss ways we can improve your services. I, of course, am always happy to attend your meetings, enjoying hearing myself speak whenever possible. Please, do call us with your Homeowner’s Association meetings information and organizational information, as we are compiling our records now of these organizations and hope to serve you better through better communication skills. At your meetings, we are more than happy to discuss the GIS effort and show you the information that is available within your community from the system.

Someone asked me how the Road District began to serve the villages and when. The person was giving me credit for the Intergovernmental Agreements. I always believe in giving credit where credit is due and can take very little of the credit for this accomplishment. We live in an area, and probably the only area in the state, that has been able to put the true meaning of Intergovernmental Cooperation and Agreements to a practical use which has resulted in a winning situation for multiple units of local government and particularly for the tax payers. The real credit goes to my predecessor in office, Kermit D. Smiddy, State Representative Mark H. Beaubien who was the Supervisor of Cuba Township at the time the idea was originated and Becci Tonigan along with the mayor of the Village of Tower Lakes at the time Bill Fitzpatrick, and the mayor of Lake Barrington, Connie Schofield. This was way back when the Township was looking for a way to increase revenues and the Village of Tower Lakes was looking for a way to decrease the cost of using private contractors. The mayor of Tower Lakes, along with Mark Beaubien who was the Supervisor of Cuba Township approached Kermit Smiddy with the idea of the Road District taking over public works functions in the Village of Tower Lakes. Smiddy, in his typical can-do fashion, at the time seized on the idea and made it work. At that time, I was the township attorney and the only role I played was working with the Village attorney of Tower Lakes, Jim Bateman to create what we found to be a simple and basic agreement which has functioned as a blueprint for the agreements with all the other villages since that time. That was about 15 years ago. Shortly thereafter, the same group, Beaubien, Smiddy and Becci Tonigan went to the Village of Lake Barrington with the same idea. Jim Bateman and I modified the agreement somewhat because Lake Barrington was willing to purchase an additional truck that the Road District needed and Lake Barrington was added to the ever-growing group. Thereafter, North Barrington, Barrington Hills and then Deer Park joined us and it has continued to be a winning operation since. While I make it work, I take no credit for originating the idea.

We continue to strive to expand our duties and functions to our Village partners and are always interested in your input on how to make the system work better. Either contact your Village government or call me anytime with your ideas.

Mulch is back at the same delivered price of \$50.00 per truck load. Early in the year we limit deliveries to no more than 2 to the same address due to the high volume of requests. It can always be picked up at our yard by you personally Monday through Friday between 7 and 3. We do not allow, under any circumstances, commercial contractors to pick up the mulch on your behalf and this includes “helpers” with their own trucks, landscapers or any other vehicle not registered to you. These rules are a necessity in order to insure a supply which is facing increasing demand on a yearly basis. Please remember that the mulch operations are incidental to our primary functions here at the Road District. We try to do our very best to maintain a supply for you, but the priorities of maintaining the Right-Of-Ways come first in every instance. I’m sure you understand. Firewood give-aways will resume in the fall. Just think- it’s only less than 180 days to snowplow season (as of the writing of this article).

Over the coming months, we are re-doing our website at www.cubaroads.com. It will be more interactive when finished and we will have our own blog up and operating. Please keep looking for changes.

Have a nice summer.

In conjunction with Secretary of State, Jesse White, Cuba Township is pleased to offer 2 classes for Illinois drivers.

Both classes will be held at the Cuba Township office at 28000 W. Cuba Road, Barrington., IL

MOBILE DRIVER SERVICES DAY

Wednesday, May 12, 2010

10am to 2pm

Residents can obtain:

Duplicate driver’s license

Corrected driver’s license

Illinois State ID card

Driver’s license renewal

Please refer to www.cyberdriveillinois.com

For more information on fees

RULES OF THE ROAD

June 16, 2010

9:30am to 11:30 am

This class is designed for anyone needing to take the written portion of the driver’s examination.

The class is offered at no charge, however,

A reservation is required.

Please call the Township at (847) 381-1924 to make a reservation

Cuba Heritage

By Barbara Benson

Continuing a series that features some famous, or famous/infamous residents of Cuba Township, this issue features both a house and its various owners, who had many claims to fame. This is the property which is now known as Grassmere Farms, and its signature building, the white painted frame house that stands on the south side of Route 22 just east of the intersection with Route 59. While little is known about the earliest owners of the property, one well known occupant of the residence is believed to have been Irene Castle, of the famous Vernon and Irene Castle dance team. After Vernon Castle’s death in the First World War, Irene remarried 3 times, her third husband being Major Frederick McLaughlin of Chicago, who founded the Chicago Blackhawks in 1926. I was told by an older resident in the 1980s, that the McLaughlins lived in the house for a short while, but their main residence was in Lake Forest. In 1928, Irene leased, and then purchased 10 acres of land in Riverwoods, and founded Orphans of the Storm, which she supported until her death in 1969.

Dates are inexact, but in the mid-1930s, and according to plat maps, Gene Byfield, a horse enthusiast and polo player, bought the property that is now the Equine Center at Routes 22 and 59. Gene’s brother Ernest was the flamboyant owner of the Ambassador East Hotel which was part of the Hotel Sherman Company in Chicago, inherited from their father. Ernie created the Ambassador’s famous Pump Room. There, in Booth #1, movie, stage and musical celebrities, who in those years rode the train between California and New York, stopped to be interviewed for Chicago radio and newspapers, but also to boast that they had lunched with Ernie. Byfield was the first restaurateur to serve spiced tomato juice cocktail and his restaurant also became the first in America to serve so many flambeed dishes.

Ernest bought the property across the road from his brother, and with his architect Sander Davis, set about livening up what had been a simple, dormitory-like country home. Part of the improvements included a “mad house” named it is said, after the preferred retreat of English country gentlemen after quarrels with their wives. It had a dance floor, a brass fire pole leading one floor down to a bar decorated with firefighters’ hats and a small fire engine. As a boy, Byfield’s favorite toy at White City, the huge amusement park on Chicago’s south side, had been an auto on the back of which was painted “The Mayor of Firetown”. As a successful business man, the adult Byfield realized some of his childhood dreams in a whimsical way on this property.

To call his guests for four o’clock cocktails in the mad house, Byfield let out a blast on a fire siren built on the side of the house. This sounded all over the Barrington countryside. At the signal, guests who stayed in a “playhouse” that faced the mad house across the swimming pool, were expected to jump in, swim across the pool, and then slide down the fire pole to the bar where liquid refreshments awaited them! We don’t know specifically the names of his guests in Barrington, but his circle included the literary set, Charles MacArthur, Ben Hecht, and Robert Benchley among them. Humphrey Bogart and Lauren Bacall repeated their marriage vows in the Pump Room and bandleader Johnny Mercer was a friend of Byfield’s.

Charles MacArthur was married to the actress Helen Hayes, and his brother was John D. MacArthur, who purchased Banker’s Life and Casualty for \$2,500 and created one of the great fortunes of his time. When Ernest Byfield died in 1950, the property was sold to the MacArthur Trust, and its residents became Paul and Estina Doolin. Paul Doolin was John MacArthur’s right hand man; he and his wife were hospitable people, and continued to have a steady stream of visitors at the estate. Some interesting footnotes to the story include the coincidence that the architect Sander Davis’s son, was Editor of the *Barrington Courier-Review* for some years in the early 1980s, and one of the *Courier’s* reporters actually first began to piece together the Byfield/Barrington connection.

John MacArthur also purchased property around Baker’s Lake in Barrington, including the Spencer Otis Round Barn and Silo, which is now part of the Cook County Forest Preserve. In the early 1980s, the barn was being considered for a possible arts center, and when a thorough inspection of the building was made, the loft area was found to contain dozens of boxes of files from Banker’s Life and Casualty. Sadly the barn fell victim to vandalism, and finally had to be demolished.

This series is fun to write, every name takes one down a new path, and between Google and Wikipedia searches there is yet more to come!