

# The Year in Review: Part Two

*Continued from the Dec. 29 Edition*

## July

Relay for Life in Elma raised \$116,000, bringing its nine-year total past \$1 million in cancer research fundraising.

The Wales Town Board began questioning plans for a compressor station along Reiter Road, stating the proposal did not seem to fit within the town's master plan.

Residents along Woodcrest Drive complained about plans to fix the road through a standard oil and chipping process. They demanded the Aurora Town Board use more expensive materials for the dead end road, noting that the high value of their homes meant they paid more money in taxes. The board went with the standard option used on all roads.

Auditors from the State Comptroller's Office cited the Town of Aurora for allowing retirees in 2009 to use more sick days than covered by town policy or giving them the ability to use excess sick time as vacation time.

The East Aurora Cooperative Market, Inc., received a \$10,000 grant to continue growing its base and startup efforts.

Asbestos was found within the Marilla Town Hall during a planned reconstruction, prompting a weeklong shut down, and town offices were moved to the Community Center for several weeks.

New members of the Holland Central School Board quickly acted to overturn several motions by the previous board regarding the capital project. Some of the change orders are added in at a later date and with further analysis.

A proposal to build a new fire hall on Whaley Avenue in East Aurora ran up against a petition from residents of that neighborhood voicing concern for property values.

Invitational Tournament in Rochester.

## September

Former Marilla Councilman Fred Specht died on Sept. 21 at the age of 77. He served for 10 years as a councilman and 16 years as the town's building inspector.

A majority of Holland Central School Board members voted to create a two-percent tax levy increase, down from the 14 percent they threatened when crafting the budget while making staff and program cuts at the school. Surplus funds made the smaller tax hike possible.

Village of East Aurora officials looked at adopting a law that would give them greater power to enforce building rules within the area, following the fire at the former Thomas Drug store, which had sat vacant and decaying for several years.

Emery Park was the site of the first Dirty Girl Mud Run in the area. The run was for women and supported the National Breast Cancer Foundation.

The Bookworm in East Aurora celebrated its 25<sup>th</sup> year in business.

The East Aurora School Board voted to adopt a full-day kindergarten program for 2012-2013. The decision was contingent on receiving additional state aid for the program.

Several tri-town groups, such as EMW Boys & Girls Club and Tri-Town Aquatic Club, sought funding from the town governments after being told they have to pay user fees at Iroquois Central Schools. The fees were said to be necessary because the district's budget failed to pass and it had to adopt a contingency budget.

Elma leaders heard concerns about the move of Bryan Young's Seasonal Landscaping and Nursery business to Bullis Road.

A deer crashed through the glass window of Fourth Idea, a business at 718 Main St., and left through the front door, badly cut, when police arrived. The animal was not found.

## November

Two men were unharmed after their single-engine plane made an emergency landing in a Colden field on Nov. 4. The plane's engine had problems during the flight, which necessitated the emergency landing.

East Aurora Fire Department leaders proposed a new building plan on 33 Center St., the current home of a dentist's office.

A drug prevention and awareness gathering was held at the Elma Town Hall, with many parents and community groups in attendance to combat problems with young adults involved with drugs.

Holland Central's elementary school won \$10,000 and a visit from 15 Buffalo Bills football players through a program with the NFL. The school was one of 34 schools across the nation to receive the money.

Joseph Lorigo, the son of county Conservative Party Chairman Ralph Lorigo, won the election for the region's district legislator. He beat incumbent Christina Wleklinski Bove with about 12,600 votes, about 2,000 higher than her total.

In other election news, Councilwoman Barbara Spanitz had a resounding win in the Marilla Town Board race, topping the other three contestants. Councilman Warren Handley went on to win by seven votes, 911-904, barely beating Deborah Beats.

The East Aurora boys varsity soccer team captured its first Section A title. The team went on to play in Rochester for the state quarterfinal game, but lost the match.

## August

Two early morning fires broke out at the former Thomas Drug store on Main Street within the span of a week. No suspects have been identified since the fires, but arson was suspected.

The Town of Aurora went out to bond a reconstruction project on Luther Road, anticipating final costs around \$185,000. Heavy rain in May damaged a culvert and the roadway.

A Marilla volunteer firefighter allegedly verbally harassed and threatened a resident to move her vehicle away from the fire hall, after she had complied with a previous request. The fireman was suspended from the department for 30 days. No charges were filed in the incident.

Presidential candidate Ron Paul spoke to people at the East Aurora American Legion Post. Congressman Paul was in the area to visit family when he came through the village.

East Aurora police, working with the Wyoming County Sheriff's Department, arrested Ryan C. Westermeier, an Attica resident, in relation to his alleged attempt at robbing Citizens Bank on Main Street in early May. He entered the bank with a fake bandage covering half his face, video images show. Westermeier had several other felony charges in previous arrests.

District Court Justice William Skretny tackled the county redistricting problem and lawsuits, redrawing the district lines for 11 legislators. Erie County lawmakers could not agree on a structure, and so the plan was sent to the courts.

The Iroquois varsity field hockey team won the 11<sup>th</sup> annual Penfield Field Hockey Classic

Elma board members criticized the building inspector for not doing more to monitor topsoil removal. Nearby neighbors complained of noise and possible flooding problems with the excavation.

## October

New York State Commissioner of Parks Rose H. Harvey spoke at a meeting of the Friends of Knox Farm State Park, outlining future developments in the park system and the challenges that still must be overcome. The park has stayed open with mowing and plowing provided by the town and local park groups.

Artist Alixandra Martin provided her talents and teaching abilities in creating a mural outside the East Aurora Cooperative Market's building near the railroad overpass on Main Street. Along with painting, she helped show local art students the process and allowed them to work on the painting.

Martin also painted a mural at the Elma Public Library, with the small but dedicated friends of the library group paying for the work.

After playing one too many games, the Holland girls varsity soccer team was disqualified from the playoffs. The team was on top in the standings and expected to do well in the playoffs.

Trying to move past the years of conflicts and rescinded permits, the Wales Town Board agreed to a new business use permit for Auctions International, Inc., on Big Tree Road. The owner plans to open an open market retail action and flea market, but there are a slew of conditions he must follow or end up losing his permit.

The cross country teams had top spots again in the state championships, with the boys earning first place for Class B, and the girls earning fourth place in the same division.

Edmund "Bud" Bogucki, former Wales councilman, was honored on Veterans Day as the town named its park after him.

## December

Through much debate and public outcry, the Holland School Board voted to shift grade levels into different district buildings for next year. The seventh- and eighth-graders will be moved into the High School, while the second-through fourth-graders will move to the Middle School.

Moog's board of directors elected John Scannell to the chief executive officer position.

A summer study at Sinking Ponds yielded a variety of archeological artifacts, University at Buffalo researchers told the Village Board. The researchers stated the site might have been home to indigenous people much earlier than previously thought. Studies will continue for the next two summers.

Walt McLaughlin was named Coach of the Year for ECIC Section VI cross country. He has led the boys and girls teams to several state championships where they earned high finishes.

Following complaints, reviews and site visits, the Wales Town Board approved a compressor station on Reiter Road. National Fuel executives expect the building process to take about a year.

Former headmaster at The Gow School in South Wales, David W. Gow, died on Dec. 19 at the age of 87. His father was the school's founder.