

## **Highlights**

- **New president takes office.**
- **Nuisance ordinance may spell trouble for Fort Edwards.**
- **Now's the time. Please renew your membership.**

# The Fort Edwards **Gazette**

*The Newsletter of  
The Fort Edwards  
Foundation  
Volume 16• Issue 1  
January 2012*

A Letter from President Clyde H. DeWitt, Jr.

## **Change of Command at the Fort**

I am Clyde DeWitt, newly elected President of The Fort Edwards Foundation. Before I offer much about myself, let me say I do not believe a new broom must always sweep clean. I've never seen fit to change things for the sake of change. I wish the Fort Edwards Foundation to continue with the momentum and progress we have enjoyed to date.

I bring to this job experience from a military career, and in business and education which I believe will serve us well. I want to thank and congratulate all of those who have preceded me in the position of President, and a very special thanks to Bob Flanagan for all the selfless devotion and wonderful work he has done in the past and I am sure will continue to do in the future. Also, many thanks to my wife, Judi, who, as Treasurer, has been and will be a major, critical asset to the operations of the Foundation.

Most of you know I was elected during the recent business meeting of November 2011. I am both honored and humbled to serve and only hope I do as well as my predecessors. I am a relative neophyte to the Colonial and French and Indian War period, but am anxious to study and learn, and be open and responsive to any and all suggestions from any member. In that regard, you may contact me by phone: 304-874-4291; e-mail, [chdewitt@hughes.net](mailto:chdewitt@hughes.net); or regular mail at PO Box 100 Yellow Spring, WV 26865.

I am looking forward to serving you for the next three years and hope we will enjoy the continued success we have seen in the past. I request your continued support and would like to see our organization increase our membership and contributions.

While in the U.S. Army, my assignments in positions of command, administration, or logistics, was a training ground for the job of this presidency. In that Army, I was always told that a defensive position is *never* completed. Well, I regard the Fort Edwards Foundation as a defensive position, in that the fort and the Foundation, the membership, our goals and aspirations and plans, are all part of our "position," and we will continue to labor on behalf of all these aspects. It will never be completed, but always continue to improve and show improvements. And that's okay; that's what we are here to ensure.

Again, I wish to thank everyone for your confidence in my ability to serve you and look forward to your continued support and encouragement.

[Read Clyde's short bio, 3Q Newsletter, September 2011./ *Editor* ],

## Board of Directors

The current Board Members of the Fort Edwards Foundation are tenured through November of the year given in parenthesis.

**Clyde Dewitt** (2014)

**Mark Tooley** (2013)

**Mark Jones** (2014)

**Judi DeWitt** (2014)

**Charles Hall** (2013)

**Jeanne Barb** (2013)

**Bob Flanagan** (2013)

**Julie Flanagan** (2013)

**Fred Berkeridge**

(Appointed, town of Capon Bridge)

**Jean Shoemaker**

(Appointed by Hampshire County Commission)

## Officers and Committees

(Officers for 2012 are as follows)

President: **Clyde DeWitt**

Vice President: **Mark Tooley**

Secretary: **Mark Jones**

Treasurer: **Judi DeWitt**

Standing Committees and Chairs:

Grants: Mark Tooley

Grounds: Fred Berkeridge

Hospitality: Mark Jones

Kitchen Garden: Julie Flanagan

Membership/Database: Judi DeWitt

Newsletter: Jo Ann Tooley

Research & Publications: Charles Hall

Visitors Center: Bob Flanagan

Webmaster: Charles Hall

-----

**Be sure to visit our  
website at  
[www.FortEdwards.org](http://www.FortEdwards.org)**

## Fort Edwards Happenings

For those who think you may have missed the December issue of *The Gazette*, the Foundation's quarterly newsletter, lay aside any concerns about being dropped from the loop. Because of timing issues, we did not publish a fourth-quarter newsletter in 2011. Looking ahead, we wanted to publish the second quarter issue in early April in order to provide readers with this year's calendar of events; and thus, we needed to push the first quarter edition up to early January.

At the annual membership meeting and election at the Visitor Center in November, the nominating committee presented a slate of two names of Board of Directors members—Mark Jones and Judi DeWitt—whose terms of office expired in 2011. Both were nominated for re-election and elected unanimously.

Following the regular business meeting, Bob Flanagan submitted his letter of resignation as President of the Foundation. The nominating committee then proposed a slate of officers as follows: Clyde DeWitt, President; Mark Tooley, Vice-President; Mark Jones, Secretary; and Judi DeWitt, Treasurer. The four were unanimously elected to those posts, effective immediately.

Other major events: In December, the Foundation learned that the Freas Foundation had approved a grant to help us acquire the software to catalogue and archive our collection of artifacts and historical relics recovered in the archeological "digs" in earlier years; and to upgrade our Visitor Center displays, including display cases and lighting. A committee is finalizing plans for the range of activities this will encompass.

Ed Shifflett, of Riverside Design, made a presentation at the December Board meeting. He is finalizing his report on future grounds use, including walking paths, displays, trees and shrubs plantings, and other "outside" factors. The report will be reviewed by the Board and voted on before implementation. Also, the trees proposed to be planted as a "screen" between our grounds and the housing development to our south were not planted in the fall, as originally proposed by Rickie Davy. Mr. Davy is the developer of the land adjacent to our site, to the south, who committed to planting a screen of vegetation several years ago. We have contracted Mr. Davy to provide landscaping advice, and have requested that he coordinate with Mr. Shifflett.

We will also be continuing with the stockade upgrades (addition of firing ports, firing platforms, and other

enhancements) to the basic wall but are awaiting coordination with other colonial archivists before moving ahead. That work should be completed in the spring of 2012.

Clyde DeWitt is overseeing these upgrades. He is also the “go-to” person for replacement of the small bridge on the walking trail at the edge of our grounds, en route to the stockade. Clyde designed a handicapped-friendly bridge and is working with Norm Collier, local craftsman and friend of Fort Edwards, to get the materials and build the bridge. That work should also be completed this year. .

Although the date is not firm, the likely date for the annual Colonial Feast is Saturday, April 14 and it’s expected to take place again at the American Legion Post in Capon Bridge. And June 30 will be the annual Hampshire Family Frontier Day, which is opening date for the Visitor Center.

## Nuisance Ordinance May Be a Problem for Fort Edwards.

In December, Board member Charles Hall appeared before the Capon Bridge Town Council to express our concern about the Town's recently adopted “Nuisance Ordinance.” Although the ordinance was aimed at allowing town authorities to regulate the collection of junk cars and other unsightly debris on improperly maintained properties, it may have unintended consequences that conflict with The Fort Edwards Foundation mission and permit nearby property owners to dictate how we maintain our grounds.

In trying to allow the Town great latitude, the ordinance restricts “junk vehicles, collection of rubbish, trash or debris or any other material whatsoever which creates an unsightly condition which is or may.... give offense to persons in the neighborhood.” For those of us who have seen the situations where folks in housing developments in rural areas suing farmers for cow manure on adjoining fields, this open-ended wording is of great concern. Laws are useable not only by the town's well-meaning officers, but also by any irascible citizen. Therefore one must seriously study the wording of a law, not simply the intent of the mayor and council.

Two provisions in Section 3 are problematic: 1. Lots shall be “free of vegetation, which affords a breeding place for insects, reptiles or rodents, and upon all premises not devoted to agricultural uses the grass thereon shall be kept trimmed to a height of not more than twelve inches.” 2. “Grass, weeds and vegetation, when cut down, shall be removed from the premises and disposed of in such manner as not to create a nuisance. All grass, weeds, vegetation, dirt, rubbish, debris, snow will [sic] prohibited on sidewalks, roadways, etc.”

This can cause problems for an organization such as ours which endeavors to maintain an area similar to what the early settlers found upon arriving in Hampshire County, We would like to maintain areas supportive to wildlife and exemplifying the kind of high vegetation of the colonial era. Any neighbor who does not like deer grazing in our field or groundhogs could cause problems for us. And our natural habitat could easily be considered offensive by city dwellers.

Another problem of regulations that encourage manicured lawns and prohibit mulching is that of stream bank erosion. We are in the Potomac headwaters of the Chesapeake Bay drainage, and the problem of stream bank runoff is quite serious. Instead of encouraging short mowed lawns requiring copious amount of fertilizers, the Town should be encouraging “no mow or low mow” policies. We hope to join with the local Cacapon Institute in educating the Town Council and all stream bank landowners of Hampshire County that we should consider the needs of our environment over someone's desire to create unhealthy cityscapes out of our rural county.

## Time to Renew

The purpose of the Fort Edwards Foundation is to make the history of the colonial era in Hampshire County come alive for both adults and children. We have so many exciting projects and programs that are designed to do just that—the rebuilding of the stockade fence and walking trails, for example, and events such as Family Day where artisans spend the day demonstrating colonial crafts. We had almost 100 children show up last year for our opening day activities. But to support these activities we need your continued help. Please re-new your membership, or join the Fort Edwards Foundation if you haven't already done so. Please fill out the renewal form and mail it to:

The Fort Edwards Foundation  
PO Box 623  
Capon Bridge, WV 26711

Fort Edwards Foundation  
PO Box 623  
Capon Bridge, WV 26711



## Membership Application/Renewal

---

Your Name

---

PO Box or Street

---

City, State, Zip Code

---

Telephone and e-mail

---

Names of spouses and children for Family memberships  
(Dues year: January 1-December 31)

----- Individual annual dues \$20

----- Family annual dues \$30

----- Lifetime membership \$500

Additional contribution: \_\_\_\_\_