



Seated left to right are: Finance Officer John Chernesky, Robert Richards, John Scapita, Paul Kalasinski, Chaplain Tom Prince, Peggy Newak, Capt. Harry Newak, Adjutant Stephanie Collier. Back row left to right are; Francis Graytock, Fred Glavich, Earl Obelenus, Doughboy Andrew Trotter, Ray Benasutti, Bob Sweigel, Past Commander Col. (RET.) Jeff Sweigel, and Paul Ferraro.



The Susquehanna County Commissioners Alan Hall, Elizabeth Arnold and Maryann Warren presented a resolution from the County honoring the anniversary of the American Legion. Pictured front row left to right are Susq. Co. Commissioners Elizabeth Arnold and Alan Hall, Tom Prince, Col. (RET) Jeff Sweigel, Stephanie Collier, John Chernesky and Susq. Co. Comm. Maryann Warren. Back row Dave Homisak and Tammy O'Reilly.

100th Anniversary of FC Legion Post Is honored by FCA Historical Society

The 100th anniversary of the founding of Charles & Martin Skubic Post No. 524 American Legion of Forest City, was commemorated by the Forest City Area Historical Society, at the Society Museum, Saturday, Aug. 3 in conjunction with the 2nd Annual Trail Town Festival in Forest City. Historical Society members Tammy O'Reilly and David Homisak were in charge of the program.

The proceedings were opened with the traditional ceremony which opens every Legion meeting; Chaplain Tom Prince conducted the MIA Empty Chair ceremony; Adjutant Stephanie Collier read the American Legion Preamble; and Finance Officer John Chernesky lead the Pledge to the Flag.

Chairperson O'Reilly recited a dedication to Charles & Martin Skubic, the namesakes of the local Post. She prepared it with the help of information supplied by Frank Orasin, of Saratoga, California, who has done extensive research on all Forest City area service personnel who paid the supreme sacrifice. The dedication is printed in a separate article on this page.

A comprehensive history of the 100 years of the local Legion was delivered by co-chairman David Homisak. The Post was established on December 21, 1919, and was located at several temporary locations in town before locating in their newly constructed hall on Dundaff St. in 1962.

He noted that the Post sponsored many local community projects including the erection of the Doughboy Statue at William Penn Park; establishing senior and junior drum and bugle corps; sponsored boy scouts, ran clothing drives, and continues to present the annual Eighth Grade medal, as well as their sponsorship of the annual Memorial Day

program, and the placing of over 1,100 flags on area service personnel graves for Memorial Day. They also support an active Ladies Auxiliary.

Mr. Homisak also discussed the recent sale of the more than 50-year-old Legion Hall, on whose site a million dollar community health facility was built and dedicated this year. In conclusion, he stressed that this does not end the existence of the local Legion Post since it re-located into meeting rooms at the FC Emergency Services Building and will continue to serve veterans of the area for many years to come.

The principal speaker, former 15th District Commander Fred Baker, was not able to attend due to a scheduling conflict but his prepared remarks were given to the Legion Post and will be added to the historical record of the Forest City Area Historical Society.

The speaking program concluded with remarks by Post Commander Col. (RET) Jeff Sweigel who reiterated that the Post will continue with its veteran's service and remains anxious to reinvigorate the organization and to get area veterans to join, all of whom now fall under new rules placing no restrictions on only wartime service but now includes any veteran from WW I thru present day wars and conflicts.

He also invited any women who are related to a veteran, to join the Legion Auxiliary and grow the local women's contingent which is headed by President Gloria Edwards and secretary-treasurer Kerry Henderson.

Commander Sweigel thanked the Forest City News and former publisher John Kameen for heading the recent successful fund drive to repair the Doughboy Statue and also repair the neighboring Anthracite Miners Memorial. The

Tammy O'Reilly, co-chairperson of the 100th Anniversary program of the local American Legion Post related the following story of Charles & Martin Skubic, two Forest City Brothers who died in World War I, and who were honored by having the Post named after them. Ms. O'Reilly thanked Mr. Frank Orasin, Saratoga, California, for the information provided as a result of his extensive research on all Forest City area service personnel who paid the supreme sacrifice. Mr. Orasin has donated his files to the Forest City Area Historical Society.

Charles and Martin Skubic were brothers, born four years apart—Charles, in 1887 and Martin in 1891. Their parents had emigrated from Austria and settled in Forest City where the two brothers, along with their 8 siblings, would grow up.

As adults, Charles would remain in Forest City, working as an engineer for the Hillside Coal Company, but Martin would venture off on his own, eventually settling in Chicago where he worked as a boilermaker.

Charles and Martin's lives would take similar paths once America entered WWI. Both brothers were drafted on the same day, June 5, 1917, and both were deployed to France.

Martin was assigned to the 28th Infantry Regiment AEF of the 1st Infantry Division—The "Fighting First." He arrived in France during the summer of 1917.

Charles was assigned to the 314th Infantry Regiment AEF with the 79th Division, and arrived in France in July of 1918. But his stay would be short-lived.

In August of that same year—only one month after he arrived—influenza swept through the 79th Division, and Corporal Charles Skubic fell ill. At the time, America didn't have an established medical corps on the battlefield and as a result, on September 8, 1918 Charles Skubic died at the age of 31.

Martin, meanwhile, was completing his training, after which his unit commenced fighting in both the 1st and 2nd Meuse Argonne Offensives, a major part of the final Allied offensive that stretched along the entire Western Front and would finally bring an end to the war.

Had Charles lived, he may have seen his brother again. For Charles 314th Infantry—along with 1.2 million allies—also went on to fight in the Meuse Argonne Offensive. On October 9, 1918, the 28th Infantry was attacking German positions near Exermont, France when Martin found himself in a critical situation. Although details of what actually occurred are unknown, Martin Skubic—at age 27—died in combat that day.

The Meuse-Argonne Offensive was the largest in United States military history, and the deadliest battle in American history, resulting in over 350,000 casualties including 26,277 American lives. Many of those brave men—including Charles and Martin Skubic—are buried in the Meuse-Argonne American Cemetery in Lorraine, France.

It is said that losing a child is the worst thing a parent can suffer. I do not know if Charles and Martin's parents were still alive at the time of their deaths. But if they were, then in the span of only one month, they lost two sons, and eight siblings lost two brothers.

Charles and Martin Skubic are true patriots and heroes, who sacrificed their lives for us. That's a debt we can never repay. All we can do is honor them, and make sure that they—and all the others who sacrificed for us, our country and our future—are never forgotten.

God Bless Martin and Charles Skubic.

drive raised over \$20,000 in just over one month. He thanked the community, especially many former residents who donated to the drive.

He added some of his memories of the old Legion Hall and how it was a difficult decision made by the Legion to sell the hall.

He noted the recent effort of placing 1,139 American flags on the graves of area service people with the assistance of many area young people and the Red Dragon Karate School. He said the volunteers were able to accomplish this task in 1 1/2 hours.

He concluded by thanking the Forest City Area Historical Society for conducting the 100th anniversary celebration and pledging his efforts to re-invigorating the Post. He then asked for continued cooperation of Post officers and members and he thanked the entire community for all they have done for the Legion in the past and their support in future endeavors.

The Historical Society then presented a beautiful engraved wooden plaque to the Post to honor their anniversary. Susquehanna County Commissioners Alan Hall, Elizabeth Arnold and Maryann Warren presented a resolution from the County honoring the anniversary.

Benediction was offered by Pastor Barney Wilkins of Bethel Community Church, Welsh Hill. Pastor Wilkins then led the Tri-State Gospel Singers and Penn Dixie Band for a two hour patriotic songfest.

Following the program a luncheon prepared by Tammy O'Reilly and Dave Opeka, and Historical Society volunteers was served complete with beer, soda, hoagies, chips, cupcakes, vegetables and dip, and a huge 100th anniversary birthday cake donated by Jim and Roseann Sweigel in honor

of Jim's dad, Valentine Sweigel, who was a founding member of the Legion.

A float with members of the Legion riding on it, was in the Light Parade that evening. It was prepared by Dave, Matt and Joann Homisak, as well as Bob Wirts and John Kameen. The trailer and truck for the float was supplied by Brian Striefsky. Andrew Trotter in his Doughboy uniform, Paul Ferraro in colonial uniform and Scarlett Vannan in WW I era garb, marched with the float.

Clifford Historical Society Open House Sun., Aug. 18

The Clifford Twp. Historical society will hold an open house on Sun., Aug. 18 from 1 to 4 p.m.

Start the tour at the historic Clifford Baptist Church on Church St., which was built when Thomas Jefferson was still alive, then drive a mile to the Museum of Local History in the Community Center at 119 Cemetery St., where the exhibits include a Native American Canoe display, a mural by Michelle McLain, an audio presentation by Frank Little Bear, a blacksmith shop, general store, early farm house and barn and the fire tower map from Elk Mountain.

Afterwards, travel over to the renovated Hoover one room school at 2236 state route 2014.

Bring the children to enjoy the Clifford Children's Garden, adjacent to the Community Center, which is open everyday Dawn to Dusk.

For more information visit Clifford Township Historical Society.org, on our app, or contact Sandra Wilmot at 570-679-2723 or email swilmot@echoes.net.

More Scenes from Forest City Trail Town Festival



The Coal Cracker Race Committee from left were: Mikaela Jarrett, Tammy Korty, Jesse Korty, Sarah Korty and Joshua Korty.



Pickleball Tournament at Kennedy Park



Members of the Thompson Hose Co. set off the awesome fireworks display at Kennedy Park. NEP Telephone Co. graciously donated the funds for the display. Pictured left to right are: Nick Wilmont, KateYanchick, Tim Delaney and Kevin Callender



The Coal Cracker Races were held on Saturday, August 3 in conjunction with the 2nd Annual Trail Town Festival. Pictured above are the 1/4 Marathon Race Winners: Overall Male----Jeff Bachak Time-43:48.28 (right) and Overall Female--Carolann Schwartz Time-1:10.11 (left).

The 2 Mile Race Results were Male Overall Winner Kyle Franceski Time-12:27 and Female Winner Jennifer Pearson Time-18:57.



Kennedy Park volunteers prepared 300 chickens on Sunday, August 4 to conclude the Trail Town Festival.



Distinguished Citizen Joe Franceski Jr., Mayor Chris Ginton and Distinguished Citizen John Opeka