

BTSCA Newsletter

P.O. Box 486, Brunswick, ME 04011

www.brunswicktrinidad.org

June 2012



Dear Members & Friends,

This has been a busy year for BTSCA. As you can see from the following reports, we packed Cuba Week with many sights, sounds and smells of Cuba. In addition there have been other events and activities revealing the generosity of our community. Thank you all!

Cuba Week 2012

Salsa Dance with Primo Cubano: The annual salsa dance to kick off Cuba Week was a hit! Laurence Miller began the evening by warming feet up and banishing dance floor woes by teaching basic salsa moves. After the lesson, Primo Cubano kept the beats going late into the evening and the crowd more than gladly relished the opportunity to show off their newly perfected moves. A huge thanks to all the volunteers who helped make the event a resounding success! Don't forget to keep those dancing shoes polished for next year!

"Cuba Speaks: Readings at Gulf of Maine Books"

Gulf of Maine Books filled with music and story as local writers Jude Maloney and Howard Waxman along with pianist George Lopez transported attentive listeners to Cuba through personal narratives, beautifully crafted fiction, and a rendition of the song "Yo Te Quiero." Judy spoke of the powerful experience of hearing the song in Cuba and shared why, years later she holds that moment as significantly changing how she experiences music and thus deeply affecting her life. George Lopez treated attendees to a live performance as he played Yo Te Quiero from the sheet music Judy brought back from Cuba.

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Howard Waxman, reading from his latest book, “Venceremos” brought the punch of youth, idealism, and love in Cuban sugar cane fields of the 1960’s. Howard engaged listeners immediately, bringing us into the heat and hierarchy of young Americans cutting cane, working alongside Cuban workers. From the eyes of the main character he spoke of the unexpected ranging from demands of physical labor required for cutting cane and the drive to impress to win the girl. In keeping in theme with the event, one attendee brought a photo of her son in the sugar brigade nearly 43 years ago (she reported that he’s still dedicated to hard work and social justice).

Cuba’s Favorite National Pastimes: Baseball & Politics

Who knew the Cuban love of baseball was a factor in the Cuban missile crisis of 1962? Or that Fidel was not really a good baseball player? These were just a couple of the stories, sometimes hilarious, perhaps apocryphal, that Allen Wells entertained us with during his presentation, “Cuba’s Favorite National Pastimes: Baseball and Politics.” We gathered in the Morrell Room at Curtis Memorial Library, sipped limeade, and munched on stadium peanuts from a paper cone, just as if we were in the Estadio Latinoamericano in Havana. Allen Wells, wearing his Cuban baseball cap, showed us pictures from the archives at the Baseball Hall of Fame in Cooperstown where he has special access through his daughter who works there. Baseball aficionados and trivia experts emerged from the streets of Brunswick and we all had a good time together.

“Lost Son of Havana”

A film about the famed Red Sox Major League pitcher Luis Tiant (known as “El Tiante” in Fenway Park), was shown three times on Wednesday April 25 at Frontier. The film documented Tiant’s first return to Cuba after 46 years in exile. In 1961 the Castro government forced him to choose between life in Cuba or the US. The film included soul-stirring reunions with family members in Havana and vintage baseball footage. The appreciative audiences were treated to peanuts in the shell to help simulate a ballpark experience. Proceeds from donations have been dedicated to the Trinidad Library Fund.

Cuba Week Restaurant Participants

16 restaurants participated this year in Cuba Week ranging from tropical flavored gelatos, Cuban pork sandwiches, spicy shrimp and black beans and a few delectable beverages. Some restaurants reported running out of the Cuban specials, with many customers enjoying the variable tastes of Cuba.

Give & Go

The Give & Go sale took place in a new location this year, the old Times Record building. The Bowdoin employees and volunteer sale was June 7 and \$17,000 was taken in that day alone. The public sale was June 9. The total gross proceeds for the two days was reported at \$44,000. Thanks to the 12 volunteers who gave their time to work in the name of BTSCA. Any money we earned from your work will go towards the Trinidad Library renovation.

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Plants for Peace Sale

The 26th Annual PLANTS FOR PEACE sale was held the weekend of May 21. The sale benefits Peace Action Maine and Brunswick-Trinidad Sister City Association and new varieties are dug every year from Jane Donelon's garden. Many different kinds of perennials (both familiar and uncommon) for sun and shade were available for \$3 a pot! \$200 was contributed to us this year through Jane's generosity from this annual sale. Many spring bulbs and hellebores were already in bloom at the time of the sale. Our thanks go out to Jane.

Peace Fair

Volunteers are needed for the upcoming Peace Fair on August 4 from 10 a.m. -3 p.m.

Please call Genie at 725-4914 or email her at geniewheelwright@gmail.com.

Library Restoration Committee

Our fundraising efforts have accomplished close to \$2000 towards our \$5,000 goal of restoring the library, the primary focus of BTSCA at this time. Thanks to Gulf of Maine Books, many Spanish language books have been collected and stored there for the Trinidad Library. With each book donated, a colorful bookmark designed by Maine artist Paula Ragsdale Arsenault will be given. We are working towards a trip, hopefully in the near future to Trinidad, to assess the project, supplies and equipment needed and to bring down books. If you'd like to make a financial donation towards the library, visit our website, www.brunswicktrinidad.org for a secure PayPal donation. Continue to check our website for any updated information on the progress towards our goal! And thank you to all who have made a contribution.