

# Chequamegon Chirps



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BIRD WALK AT 6, MEET IN FRONT OF LIBRARY.

PROGRAM--BIRDING IN CUBA BY CLAIRE ROMANAK

We have a, "Don't want to miss it program" this month. Claire and three of her friends recently returned from a guided ten day bird trip in Cuba. Their bi-lingual guide is the son of Cuba's most noteworthy bird book author. Their total of more than 150 species included two exceptionally rare finds which, according to Claire, "Put their guide over the moon." The gems included a Buff-breasted Sandpiper which hadn't been recorded in Cuba for more than 100 years. Then to top that, they identified a Ruff, the first one ever documented in Cuba! Other highlights included seeing thousands of Flamingos in all their colorful glory.

Memorable moments weren't limited to birds. Red crab migration was in early stages as untold numbers of these large crustaceans headed for the sea to lay their eggs. The intrepid quartet traveled much of Cuba, staying in B&B's or hostels and enjoying great quality and quantities of local food. Visits included a small tobacco farm where they watched the famous Cuban cigars being made and even got to smoke them. (Wonder if that was the day they made their two most astounding bird discoveries?)

Claire, who saw 57 "lifers" -(first time birds) on this excursion declared it "A trip of a lifetime." It should be a delight for us to be included in the sharing of this experience.



Buff-breasted Sandpiper



Ruff



## The Colby Meteorites

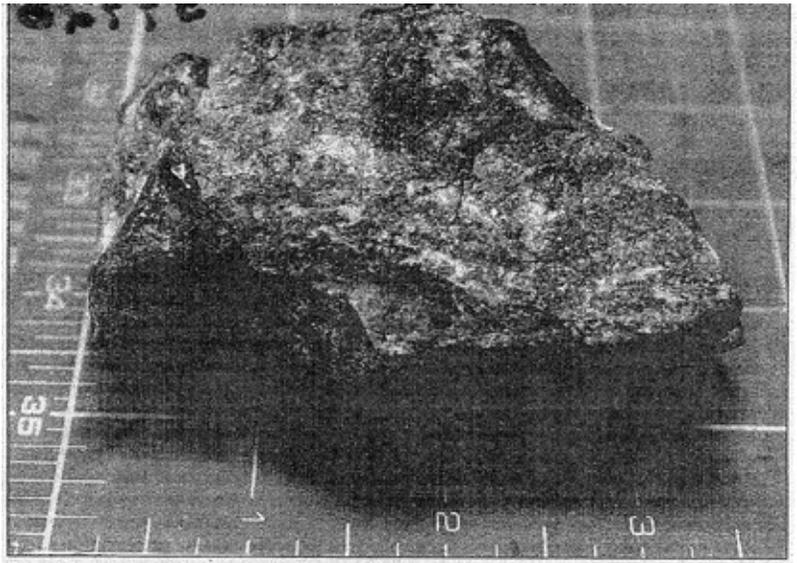
“As people gathered to celebrate the Fourth of July in Colby 100 years ago, a pair of extraterrestrial travelers delivered a spectacle that would likely surpass even the most expensive of today’s fireworks shows. Explosions heard and felt for miles around announced the arrival of two meteorites which first appeared as bright streaks of light. The two pieces of rock came hurtling out of the sky at about 6:30 p.m. on July 4, 1917. One of them landed just west of the Lutheran Church, while the other embedded itself in a farm field about a mile to the southwest. The larger stone which struck the farm weighed an estimated 150 pounds was believed to have broken into at least 27 pieces when it hit a granite rock at least two inches thick. A 22 pound chunk of it burrowed about five feet deep into the thick clay soil. The smaller meteorite estimated to weigh about 75 to 85 pounds landed whole near the church.

“Residents were startled by a heavy explosion followed by two others of less magnitude. Some heard a strange rumbling noise and a peculiar high-pitched whine like that of an artillery shell. A long trail of smoke in the sky revealed plainly the course of the meteor. The unearthed stone near the church was described as intensely cold. The man who extracted it from the earth said it was so cold that frost immediately formed on its surface when exposed to the air. It may seem counter-intuitive for something described as a fireball to be cold, but meteorites shed their fiery outer shells through a process known as ablation which essentially creates a heat shield that leaves the frigid interior intact.

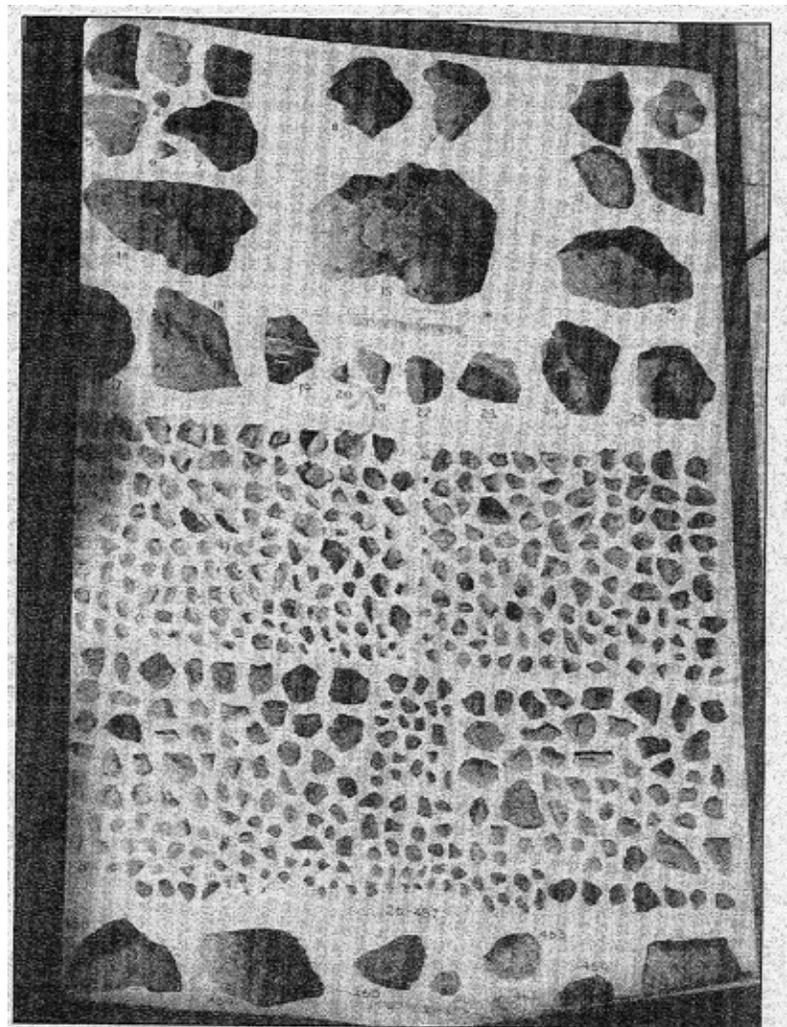
“Had the meteor fallen at night, all northern Wisconsin would have been brilliantly lighted up. As it was, it was visible as a bright fireball, even against the background of a clear, blue sky. An exhibit created in 1961-and on display at the Rural Arts Museum in Colby-says the fragments from one mass likely fell over a large area. Landings were reported nearby in Dorchester and as far away as Cornell. The evidence used for the exhibit suggests the main object came from the northwest, passing over a fisherman on Spruce Lake south of Perkinstown and just to the west of the town hall in Hammel, where a dance band was playing. Sightings were reported in a 30 to 40 mile radius, with witnesses in the Thorp area seeing a bright ball of fire and hearing an explosion sound as the meteorite fell.

“Just as the meteorites had traveled across the galaxy to reach this small town in North America, the fragments continued traveling far and wide after arriving on earth. Many of the pieces went to museums in Milwaukee and Chicago and to collections at Lawrence

College in Appleton, Oshkosh Public Museum and the University of Wisconsin. Others were taken to faraway places, such as the Meteorite Museum in Arizona, and even to museums in Paris and Calcutta, India. One of the only pieces known to have stayed in Colby belonged to the family of the late Pearl Vorland. Vorland's daughter, Mary Singstock, recently gave the 3.5 inch rock to Colby library director Vicky Calmes for possible display at the new library."



**PEARL'S PIECE** - This 3.5-inch meteorite fragment once belonged to Colby resident Pearl Vorland, whose daughter just donated it to the local library.



**SCATTERED** - A numbered diagram on display at the Rural Arts Museum in Colby shows where pieces of meteorite went.

All of this material was taken mostly verbatim from an article written Kevin O'Brien for the June 2017 Rural Living supplement to the Tribune-Phonograph.

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#### JULY-AUGUST OUTDOORS

Full moons 7-8 and 8-7

Get ready for the 8-21 eclipse  
of the sun—about 80% in this area.

Most nesting completed

Shore birds begin to head south.

Last month I referred to Chandler  
Robbins as Chad rather than Chan  
as he was known.

I apologize for the error.