

CORNWALL CHRONICLE

VOLUME 10 : NUMBER 11 DECEMBER 2000



On To Referendum

A special Town Meeting on November 18 voted to send the CCS renovation plan to a referendum scheduled for December 2 (see calendar for details). The ballot question will be whether to authorize \$4.7 million in bonds (\$3.9 million after expected state reimbursement).

The meeting also approved a resolution to reappoint the School Building Committee. The panel will supervise design and construction of the project—if the bond resolution is approved on December 2.

—Charles Osborne

Five Historical Districts?

The Connecticut Historical Commission has recommended that five Cornwall areas, including parts of Cornwall Village, Cornwall Bridge, Cream Hill, North Cornwall, and West Cornwall, be placed on the National Register of Historic Districts.

This recommendation is only a first step. In order to get a district listed on the National Register, some local group has to commission a study that could cost several thousand dollars and then go through an application procedure that takes many months. Several Cornwall buildings are listed in the National Register but no districts.

If a district is listed in the Register, buildings owned by the town or a nonprofit orga-

nization may be eligible to apply for matching funds for preservation work, and federal and state projects must take the listing into account in their planning.

In addition, under state law, concerned people can file a suit in court to prevent the proposed demolition of a listed building if it would be "unreasonable." Cases are rare and generally the courts are sympathetic to owners' plans, although there was one decision back in the 1980s that blocked the demolition of a sound building when nothing was going to be put up in its place.

Listing in the National Register is mainly a way of reminding people of the town's heritage. It also gives the owners (who are allowed to put up an official marker) the right to brag about how special they are. But as we know, everyone in Cornwall, and every part of Cornwall, is special.

—Hendon Chubb

Life After Art?

Art Brean is retiring on July 1, 2001, and the selectmen are considering how to handle the affairs of the Town Dump (the Cornwall Recycling Station in bureaucratese) after his departure. "So be nice to him for a change," says First Selectman Gordon Ridgway. "We'll miss him when he's gone."

—Hendon Chubb

Soups and Votes

It's a good thing we weren't voting for best soup on Election Day because there were six homemade soups made by four Cornwall women and one man, available at the UCC Parish House. It was a revival of an old town tradition: vote, eat soup, and schmooze. I'll get to the soups, but first the vote.

Cornwall had 979 registered voters on Election Day and 855 voted. That comes to 87 percent, which is pretty good, but the town of Norfolk beat us by two percentage points. In addition, there were 18 people who voted for president under a new state law that allows persons to show up, register, and vote on Election Day, but only for the offices of president and vice president. The Gore-Lieberman ticket, Senator Lieberman, and Representative Nancy Johnson all won handily in Cornwall, but the biggest winners were Andy Roraback (R), switching from the State Assembly to the State Senate, with a 591-to-183 defeat of Kevin Creed (D), and Roberta Willis (D), running to fill Roraback's old spot in the 64th District, defeating John Morris (R) 493 to 264. Green Party candidate Ralph Nader had 12 percent of the vote in Cornwall, far better than he did nationally. One of those votes was mine, a trade-off with my daughter Emily, who said she'd vote for

(continued on page 2)

DECEMBER 2000

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
					1	2 School Bldg. Referendum 6 A.M.—8 P.M. Town Hall Park and Rec. Trip to NYC (See Nov. Chronicle) Xmas Fair 10 A.M.—3 P.M. UCC
3	4 Bd. of Selectmen 7:30 P.M. Town Hall	5 Park and Rec. 7:30 P.M. W. C. Firehouse Inland Wetlands 7:30 P.M. Town Office*	6 Play Group, 10–11:30 A.M. St. Peter's Church Soup Lunch 11:30 A.M. UCC Day Room Agr. Comm. 7:30 P.M. Town Hall	7 School Building Comm. 7:30 P.M. CCS	8	9
10 Tree Lighting and Caroling 5:30 P.M. Front of Town Hall (p.4)	11 Blood Pressure Screening 3–4 P.M. UCC Parish House P&Z 7:30 P.M. Town Hall	12 Housatonic River Comm. 7:30 P.M. CCS Library	13 Play Group, 10–11:30 A.M. St. Peter's Church Soup Lunch 11:30 A.M. UCC Day Room	14 Cornwall Housing Corp. 4:30 P.M. Kugeman Village	15 Deadline: January Chronicle Copy	16
17 Ski Wee Level Upgrades 2 P.M. Mohawk	18 Region One Bd. of Ed. 7 P.M. HVRHS Library Republican Town Comm. 7:30 P.M. CCS Library	19 Bd. of Selectmen 9 A.M. Town Hall School Building Comm. 7:30 P.M. CCS Library	20 Play Group, 10–11:30 A.M. St. Peter's Church Soup Lunch 11:30 A.M. UCC Day Room Film: <i>High Sierra</i> 7:30 P.M. Cornwall Library	21 FIRST DAY OF WINTER Bd. of Ed. 5 P.M. CCS Library Bd. of Finance 7:30 P.M. CCS Library	22 FIRST DAY OF HANUKKAH CCS Early Dismissal 1 P.M.	23
24 Service of Lessons and Carols 5 & 8 P.M. N. Cornwall Meetinghouse	25 CHRISTMAS DAY	26 Candlelight Reading by Tom Walker 4 P.M. North Cornwall Meetinghouse (p.4) ZBA 7:30 P.M. Town Hall	27 Soup Lunch 11:30 A.M. UCC Day Room Green Party 7:30 P.M. Town Hall Cornwall Vol. Fire Dept. 8 P.M. W. C. Firehouse	28	29	30
31 Note: January 1 Pancake Breakfast 9 A.M.—1 P.M. UCC Parish House (p.4)						

*Check with Zoning Office—672-4957

(continued from page 1)

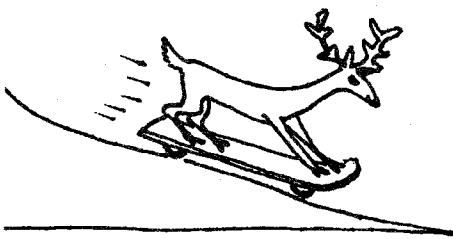
Gore in Pennsylvania if I'd vote for Nader in Connecticut. (Audrey Cole, running for Congress on the Green Party line, actually got more votes than Nader, 117 to 101.)

Now to the soups: a corn chowder by Pat Blakey; sausage vegetable from the kitchen of Marie Prentice; broccoli mushroom by Jean Vitalis; pea with ham from Anne Zinsser; and two by Eddie Bigelow—butter-nut squash and bean, pasta and Swiss chard. (What a guy!) As I got on line, Tim Prentice quietly suggested I go for the broccoli-mushroom. I say "quietly" maybe because Marie had made a different soup.

I sat at a table with Charlie and Barb Gold, Jill Bryant, Anne Baren, and Dot Sandmeyer, who left early to go to exercise class. But I did work the room for a few minutes to get some comments on the soups. George Kittle called the butternut squash "delicious" and Judge Maggie Cooley heaped praise on the sausage/veggie or was it the pea/ham? Finally, Peter Hammond arrived for the second sitting and, with a little urging, called the corn chowder "heavenly."

Well, Peter ought to know!

—John Miller



President Freddy

Freddy Scoville of Town Street, a senior at HVRHS, has been travelling lately in his capacity as president of the Region One Future Farmers of America. In July he went to an FFA leadership conference in Washington, D.C., and in October he went with Megan Pollard of Falls Village to the FFA's National Convention in Louisville, Kentucky. In Louisville they accepted the Three Star Award to Region One as one of the nation's top rated FFA chapters and went on to make a presentation that got the chapter named second in the entire country for community service activities.

—Hendon Chubb

A Coope's Tour of CCS

A dozen or so Cornwallians recently got a first-hand look at the CCS space squeeze through the eyes of the school's new principal, Peter Coope. Last month Coope conducted tours of the facility for interested voters, who will decide December 2 whether to support the Building Committee's proposal to expand the school. A handful of the tour-takers were CCS alums who hadn't ventured into the school's nether reaches in years. Coope wanted them to understand why the school's needs have changed in ways that have the current building bursting at the seams.

"Education has changed since the 1970s," Coope explained, as he escorted the group down a first-floor corridor now devoted

mainly to special education. Because we could not all fit into it, we peered into the converted closet where the school psychologist and speech specialist work.

On the morning of our visit this corridor was abuzz with activity. There were eight students in Buffie Clarke's special education room, some working in clusters with the two teachers, others at computer terminals. Next door, reading specialist Susan DelGrego worked at a table with a pair of students, while four others read to themselves in a corner. "The trend is toward more and more small-group learning," Coope explained, "rather than educating to the masses in one big classroom. When you break away small groups for individualized learning, you simply need more places for them to go."

Though Coope himself came late to the planning process, he feels "the Building Committee has come up with a great plan." Among other things, it provides for a bigger, safer gym (large enough to accommodate all-school assemblies); puts some badly needed acoustic distance between the music room and the academic areas (music classes are cancelled during mastery tests so kids can concentrate); allows for a full-time art room; and creates the school's first fully equipped science lab. The plan will also remedy a classroom shortage in the upper school that we saw for ourselves: a homeless social studies class was sardined into a conference room far from the rest of the upper school.

Coope, who is completing his third month at CCS, concluded the tour by offering, "I've never been in a school so positive, so pro-active, and so pleasant to be in." The fact that voters willing, CCS may soon have a building better matched to its needs is clearly a prospect he relishes.

—Michael Pollan

Whopping Gift for the CVFD

An angel has blessed the men and women of the Cornwall Volunteer Fire Department with an anonymous gift of \$50,000 to the Gary Hepprich Memorial Scholarship Fund. Assets of the fund, the earnings of which go to the scholarships for members of the CVFD and their dependents, are now \$163,000. The Fund's first grant was recently awarded to Mandy Allen, daughter of Fire Chief Earle Tyler, who is majoring in accounting at West-ern New England College.

Although the Fire Department gets funding from the town, it also relies on gifts from the community. Donations for the general use of the Fire Department or earmarked for the Gary Hepprich Memorial Scholarship Fund can be sent to the CVFD at P.O. Box 180, West Cornwall, CT 06796.

—Steve Hedden, President, CVFD

Good-bye to Friends

Vincent J. Flynn

Inga Gronquist-Hasselberg

Welcome

Nicole Marie to Michele and Peter Gorat, Jr.
Samuel George Wood to Mary Teresa Kling
and Gary Wood.

Congratulations

Anna Utrata to Jason Wynn

Land Transfers

James Taylor to Charles R. Hummel and Joseph P. Marchetti, 5 acres on Route 7 and Swift's Bridge Road for \$40,000.

Charles R. Hummel to Joseph P. Marchetti, land at Swift's Bridge Road for \$20,000.

Joseph P. Marchetti to Charles R. and Anne S. Hummel, land at Swift's Bridge Road for \$5,000.

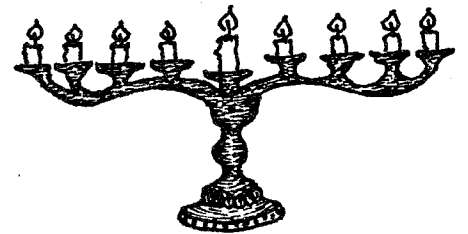
Anthony Ficalora to Housatonic River Outfitters Inc., 24 Kent Road for \$180,000.

Mary E. Donahue to John C. L. and Sarah V. C. Van Doren, 399 Cornwall Hollow Road for \$150,350.

Frederick J. and Elizabeth Laser to Kochman Holdings Group LLC, 9 Railroad Street for \$145,000.

David H. and Linda T. Sculnick to John C. and Kendra S. Shaw, 66 Kent Road for \$230,000.

Eric R. Stones to Richard S. Campbell, 15 Pine Street for \$260,000.



Volunteers Against Violence

Four times a year for the last two and a half years Ken Keskinen has spent the weekend at the MacDougal prison in Suffield, Connecticut, leading workshops for the Alternatives to Violence Project (AVP). There are 16 inmates in the sessions, and four facilitators and outside trainers. The purpose is to help people lead non-violent lives by becoming aware of their feelings and actions in a given situation, and learning to take control of them. Ken does this by creating an atmosphere of trust—not an easy task in a prison—and offering a structured program of activities: sharing feelings, cooperative games, and role-plays. He describes the process as mind-blowing, and says that you learn a lot about yourself.

AVP was started in the 1970s to counteract the violence in American society, by introducing people to ways of resolving conflict that cut down on violent solutions. Wardens report that it works; there is a reduction in violence and increased use of educational offerings among inmates who take the workshops. It's also being used in schools; there have been workshops for fifth graders in Newington for the last five years.

There are 40 or so other volunteers in Connecticut, many of them women, but many more are needed. If you are interested in finding out how to volunteer, call Ken at 672-6486.

—Phyllis Nauts

Community Profile Reunion

Almost 60 members of the Cornwall community gathered at the UCC Parish House, one of the stand-ins for a community center, on Saturday evening, November 11, for the reunion of the Community Profile weekend event that took place a year ago. Two tables were quickly covered with potluck treasures, choices for all tastes, including a dessert by Phill West that celebrated the covered bridge.

Following the meal, Lori Welles, president of the Cornwall Association, and Will Calhoun, Profile activist, opened the program. Brief reports from the five committees that emerged from the Profile brought everyone up to date on the activities of the Website, Community Center, Farm Forest Open Space, Volunteer Council, and Economic Development groups. Displayed around the walls were the names of the more than 22 volunteer groups in town, and members of some of these groups were on hand to answer questions. The evening closed with a showing of the short film made by Dominique Lasseur and Catherine Tatge about the shortage of space at CCS. —Anne Baren



Quilt Finds Permanent Home

After the 1989 tornado a group of quilters from Newtown, who wanted to show their sympathy for what Cornwall had suffered, made a quilt of the Cathedral Pines as they once had been. Jean and Bill Vitalis bought the quilt at a fund-raising auction and gave it to the Town in its original wood frame, which was made by Gary Guilman.

Last month Steve and Brad Hedden hung it in the Town Hall. In order to fix it securely to the wall, they had to craft a 175-pound outer frame. If you didn't see the quilt on election day, go take a look. —Hendon Chubb

Where Are the Birds?

Many Cornwallians have been asking, "Where have the birds gone?" Not having the answer myself, I consulted several authorities. The Cornell Ornithological Lab isn't sure but thinks that since the cool, wet summer provided plenty of food in the woods and hedgerows, it has not been necessary for the birds to forage at the feeders. Professor Noble Proctor of Southern Connecticut State University says the weather has been so nice that although our summer birds have left for more southern parts, the winter birds from the north are only just arriving. Art Gingert thinks that there is a regional avian conspiracy and the birds are just hiding. I agree with this. So fill the feeders and they will come. —Celia Senzer

East-West Fusion in Cornwall

The East-West Fusion Theatre, formed 25 years ago by Teviot Fairservis with students from the Eugene O'Neill Center's National

Letters to the Chronicle



AND IF THE SCHOOL PROJECT PASSES?

The Board of Finance has estimated what our taxes are likely to be over the next five years if the proposed addition to the Cornwall Consolidated School is passed.

Based on recent trends, we estimate that Cornwall's taxes will go up by approximately 1.5 mills (about 8 percent) over the next five years even without the proposed school addition. The school project, with a cost of \$3.9 million after expected state reimbursement, would add another 2 mills (or 10.4 percent). So we estimate that Cornwall's property tax will rise by 3.5 mills (or 18.4 percent) during the next five years if the school project is approved.

What does this mean in dollar terms? Half the residential properties in Cornwall are assessed for more than \$140,000, half for less. Taxes for the owner of a \$140,000 house would rise from \$2,660 to \$3,152, an increase of \$492. Of this increase, \$277 would be due to the school addition.

These figures could change if the bids for the school project or the state aid turned out to be higher or lower than expected, and of course we are only projecting from trends how the budget might go up without the school project. But they are our best estimates.

—Ralph Gold, Chairman, Board of Finance

A QUIETER HALLOWEEN

We in Dark Entry Forest are happy to say that this year on Halloween there were far fewer people carousing in our woods than a year ago. Last year about 150 carloads of visitors came hoping to camp, drink, light fires, and hunt ghosts in the forest, while this year there were only a dozen or so.

The fact that in 1999 Halloween fell on a weekend of beautiful weather, while this year it was on a relatively dull Tuesday, may in part

explain the difference. Two other factors may have played a role. Partly as a result of our efforts, there were fewer newspaper articles or radio broadcasts enticing thrill-seekers to our forest. Ever since last year we have been making efforts to demystify Dudleytown, to explain why the settlement was established there, how the people lived, and why they left. Also this year we had the active assistance of the State Police and the Department of Environmental Protection.

We have developed a system whereby our Cornwall neighbors may come and enjoy, and hike in the woods by day, as in the past. There still remains the problem of the Internet, where, if you search for "Dudleytown," you will find over 250 websites, nearly all of which contain a great deal of misinformation. There is little that can be done about this, but we are still trying. —John Leich

GOOD-BYE, CAFÉ LALLY

So Café Lally is closed. There are other good restaurants in Cornwall, but Lally was unique. We recently took some food-loving French people there just to show them what American cooking could be. They were impressed.

We understand why Carol felt she needed to take a rest, but we are going to miss Café Lally and we're going to miss her.

—Hendon Chubb and Phyllis Nauts

PRIME SUCCESS

Everyone connected with the October 7 house tour to benefit Prime Time House is to be loudly applauded. The homes were well chosen and each was indeed special in its own way—most of them with gracious owners to greet and inform us. Top notch organization was evident at every turn—right down to making sure the weatherman cooperated 100 percent. A great day in Cornwall! —Judy and Fred Bronner

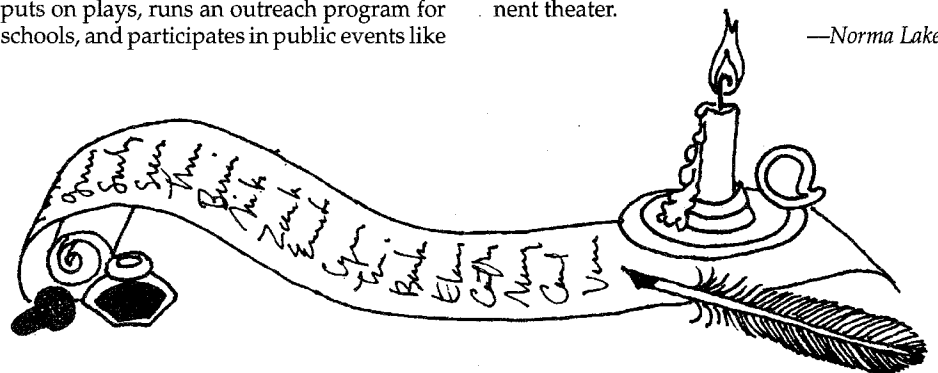
Theater Institute, has now moved its headquarters from Sharon to Cornwall Bridge across from the Housatonic Valley Association on Route 7.

The group is dedicated to bringing together Asian and Western performing arts. It puts on plays, runs an outreach program for schools, and participates in public events like

last August's Amenia World Peace Fest.

When you look in the driveway, you can see "Bessie," a rainbow-striped mobile home, which the group uses to transport masks, costumes, and art work for the plays it puts on. They are still looking for a permanent theater.

—Norma Lake



Twenty-Five Years Of Child Care

On Sunday, November 5, the Cornwall Child Center had a party to celebrate its 25th anniversary.

On hand were former Board President Teddy Bury, former Director Sewell Harrison Pruchnik, and present Director Pamela Brehm. Current President Jean Vitalis read a reminiscence from Joyce Daley, who served as director when the Center inhabited its old digs at the UCC Parish House. Ginny Potter received an award ("no ordinary pot for no ordinary Potter") for her nearly 20 years of service on the board, while former teachers Peg Keskinen and Laura Foley intermingled with present teachers Mary Beth Lord, Jennifer Van Wyck, and Sandy Dolinsky.

In the middle of it all, current Center children and recent "graduates" played with blocks on the floor, played UNO, did puzzles, and ate cookies. Anyone who missed the party is invited to come in for a visit, look at the historical photos on the walls, and see today's children at play.

—Sandy Neubauer

"It's Felt Great"

That's what Cooper Oznowicz said when asked about his toy drive. He started it in October after he won a scooter at the Little Brick House Pizza in Sharon. Since he already had a scooter, he decided to give it away, and encouraged other kids to donate something, too. By now all the schools in Region One are involved, and over a hundred toys have been collected. They will go to foster kids in Torrington, through the Torrington Area Youth Service Bureau. Anyone wanting to contribute can do so in drop boxes at Baird's, West Cornwall Video, Sharon Pharmacy, and Cornwall Consolidated School. You can reach Coop, a seventh grader at CCS, at 672-0618 if you'd like to help him wrap the collected presents after December 15.

—Phyllis Nauts



Deficit Alert!

Our treasurer, Moneybags, has just deposited a Grinch-like memo on our desk, informing us that this year's expenses have exceeded donations by a significant if not yet alarming amount. So please remember to add the *Chronicle* to your Christmas list, and have a very happy holiday season.

Events & Announcements

Start the Year Right: Everyone is invited for breakfast at the UCC Parish House on New Year's Day, from 9 A.M. to 1 P.M. Buttermilk pancakes with Cornwall maple syrup, sausages, cereal, juice and coffee will be served, and donations will benefit the La Casa Project.

Last year 37 volunteers went to Mexico and built three homes, at a cost of \$12,000, \$8,000 of which was raised by the breakfast and other fund-raising. Volunteers pay for their own transportation, housing, and food. If you can't come to the breakfast, send a check to UCC, 8 Bolton Hill Road, Cornwall, CT 06753, earmarked for the La Casa Project.



Christmas is Coming: Tree lighting and caroling with the Hot Chocolate Society will take place on Sunday, December 10, at 5:30 P.M. in front of the Town Hall. A special guest (ho! ho! ho!) has been invited. Refreshments will be served by Park and Rec. Dress warmly.



Candlelight Reading: Tom Walker will read from Clarence Day's *Life with Father* and Kenneth Grahame's *The Wind in the Willows* at the North Cornwall Meetinghouse at 4 P.M. on Tuesday, December 26. This traditional free post-Christmas event is sponsored by Friends of the Cornwall Library.



Town Clerk's Holiday Schedule: The Town Clerk's Office will be closed Monday and Tuesday, December 25 and 26, and Monday, January 1. It will also close at 1 P.M. on Wednesday and Thursday, December 27 and 28.

Manhattan Block by Block, a new book of maps produced by John Tauranac, will be on sale at the Library from now until Christmas. This book, about the size of Zagat, has detailed maps from the Battery to Inwood, "offering all the critical information that a site-seeker might need—and then some," according to *The New York Times*. It costs \$14.95 and half of the proceeds will benefit the Library.

Storm Watch: If you would like to be checked up on during winter storms, call the Selectmen's Office at 672-4959.



Art in Cornwall: At the National Iron Bank, the artists for the month will be Scott and Jaime Zuckerman. Scott will exhibit his watercolors of wildlife, while his daughter Jaime will show pencil drawings depicting the "little nuances of life that another person might overlook." At the Wish House in West Cornwall, there will be an opening on December 9 from 5 to 7 P.M. of an exhibit of Christmas cards by Marc Simont. Meanwhile, across town at the Cornwall Library, Marc Simont's show of drawings continues through December 16. Opening December 18 will be an exhibit of paintings by Lynn Fowler. At the new Cornwall Arts Collection gallery, 7 Railroad Street in West Cornwall, works by 35 local artists will be on exhibit through January 1, 2001. The gallery is open from 10 A.M. to 5 P.M. on Fridays, Saturdays, and Sundays.



Don't Block the Snow Plows: The selectmen are reminding us that parking on the sides of town roads is prohibited from December 1 to March 30.



Ruth Gannett Note Cards will be available at the UCC Christmas Fair on December 2, at the Cornwall Bridge Package Store, at the Wish House in West Cornwall, and at the Library. Orders may also be placed with Juliet Hubbard, 672-1007. Proceeds to benefit the Cornwall Library.



CORNWALL CHRONICLE

ILLUSTRATIONS *Jane Duber*

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