

# CORNWALL CHRONICLE

VOLUME 10 : NUMBER 6 JULY 2000



## Census 2000

Cornwall residents rightfully pride themselves on the level of civic participation in their town. Thus many wonder how we did on the census.

How many of us sent in the initial mail forms? According to Phillip Kaufman, director of the New Britain office of the Census Bureau, which covers our area, the initial mail response was 55 percent, less than had been hoped for but much the same as the rest of northern Litchfield County.

Follow-up visits found residents generally cooperative, and over 90 percent of Cornwall's households had been counted by early June. Enumerators are required to try up to six times to find someone at home. They are encouraged to make these visits at varied times of the day and week. Follow-up visits were required to be completed by June 30, but Kaufman felt sure Cornwall would be completed before that date.

The only problems he reported his enumerators as having were in clusters of houses used seasonally ("weekenders" in local parlance). Sometimes, it was difficult to find anyone who knew whether a house had been occupied on April 1.

Asked whether seasonal or weekend residents who got census forms both in Cornwall and at their other home could be confused and in danger of being double

counted, he felt that people would have no difficulty determining where they were on April 1. Further discussion, however, revealed that April 1 was not mentioned on the forms, only on the introductory postcard. So if anyone was confused, it's understandable.

A total of 120 enumerators were at work in northern Litchfield County. It was hard for Kaufman to say how many of them were needed for Cornwall. One team of somewhere between ten and 20 people covered central Cornwall, while portions at the edges of town were assigned to teams in neighboring towns.

Some of us may have gotten telephone calls checking on the accuracy of enumerators' work.

—Hanna K. Grossman

## Teachers Leaving HVRHS

Two Cornwallians—Pamela Wilson and Norma Lake—who between them have taught hundreds of Cornwall students at HVRHS will not be back in their classrooms when school reopens in August.

Wilson, a history teacher at HVRHS for 22 years, was a mainstay of the humanities program, which she headed for three years. While she is leaving Region One under an arrangement called early incentive retirement, she has accepted a position at the Shepaug Valley High School in Washington,

Connecticut, as director of humanities at the high school and middle school, where she will also be chair of the English and history departments.

Wilson, whose three sons all graduated from HVRHS, says she is leaving the school "with a heavy heart. It's a wonderful community, wonderful parents, and wonderful kids." But there were issues raised in the school's ten-year evaluation by the New England Association of Secondary Schools and Colleges in 1996 "which are still unresolved, and I'm leaving because I need new educational opportunities."

Norma Lake came to HVRHS as a history teacher in 1982. Like Wilson, she directed the humanities program for three years. She also spent seven years as chair of the history department. She is retiring partly "because I can." She explained that she is eligible for full retirement at this point although she said, "I probably would have taught one more year, but the high school right now is not the happiest place." She plans to spend more time on community affairs in Cornwall, and more time visiting her daughter in New Orleans.

Allen Cockerline of Falls Village, chair of the Region One Board of Education, said that three other teachers were also leaving the HVRHS faculty, two of them from the humanities program. "It leaves quite a

(continued on page 2)

## JULY 2000

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
						1 July Fest 10 A.M.—1 P.M. Cornwall Village Green (see June Chronicle)
2 Stretch Exercise Every Sunday 10 A.M. Town Hall	3 Bd. of Selectmen 7:30 P.M. Town Hall	4 INDEPENDENCE DAY	5 Junior Story Hour 7 P.M. Library Inland Wetlands 8 P.M. Town Hall*	6 School Building Comm. 7:30 P.M. CCS	7 Preschool-K Story Hour 10 A.M. Library Undersea Safari 7 P.M. Library (p.4)	8
9 	10 Blood Pressure Screening 3-4 P.M. UCC Parish House P&Z 8 P.M. Town Hall	11 Housatonic River Comm. 7:30 P.M. CCS Library School Building Comm. 7:30 P.M. CCS	12 Junior Story Hour 7 P.M. Library	13	14 Preschool-K Story Hour 10 A.M. Library Kids' Nite Out Film 7 P.M. Library (p.4) Annual Summer Dance 9 P.M.—Midnight, Cream Hill Lake (p.4)	15 <b>Deadline: August Chronicle Copy</b>  Cornwall Association 10 A.M. Town Hall
16 	17 	18 Choices Day at Lake Compounce (p.4) Bd. of Selectmen 9 A.M. Town Hall Republican Assembly District Convention 8 P.M. W. C. Firehouse	19 Marine Animal Touch Tanks 7 P.M. Library (p.4)	20 Bd. of Finance 7:30 P.M. CCS Library	21 Preschool-K Story Hour 10 A.M. Library	22 Rummage Sale 8:30 A.M.—3 P.M. UCC Parish House and Mohawk Ski Lodge (p.4)
23 	24 Rummage Bag Sale 9 A.M.—Noon (p.4) ZBA 8 P.M. Town Hall*	25 Republican Town Comm. Meeting and Caucus 8 P.M. Town Hall (p.4)	26 Junior Story Hour 7 P.M. Library Green Party 7:30 P.M. Town Hall Cornwall Vol. Fire Dept. 8 P.M. W. C. Firehouse	27	28 Preschool-K Story Hour 10 A.M. Library Leslie Elias and Mermaid Magic Kids' Nite Out Film 7 P.M. Library (p.4)	29
30 	31					

\*Check with Zoning Office—672-4957

(continued from page 1)

vacuum," he said. He is concerned that there has been "a polarization of the staff." And he wonders, "How many more people will leave before the end of the summer?" There is, he said, "a morale problem that has not been resolved."

Jason Lynn, a Cornwall member of this year's graduating class, said that "it was a pleasure" to be in both Wilson's and Lake's classes, and he is sorry that his younger brother won't have that chance.

—Spencer and Barbara Klaw



### Now It's Official

Cornwall's website has a new, simple URL (that's an internet address to you non-hackers). Virginia Brecher recently signed over the snappy new name "www.cornwallct.org" to the Cornwall Website Group. Webmaster Lazlo Gyorsok promptly shifted over the growing site to the new location, complete with a Cornwall calendar, local business listings, a slide show of typical Cornwall scenes, and other goodies. Give it a look, either on your own browser or at the Cornwall Library.

Also, at a meeting on June 17, the Cornwall Association agreed to accept the Website Group as an official subcommittee of the Association. Since the website grew out of the Community Profile organized by the Cornwall Association last fall, both organizations felt that formal affiliation was appropriate.

—David A. Grossman

### Inherited Garden

We live in a house someone else built, among gardens and planting we never planned. We've tried to carve out our own space, but the place asserts its own self. Indoors, the 60-year-old wooden-stemmed pump growls and lunges, the heating pipes groan, but the personality of the place is most apparent in its early summer landscape.

Mary and Sedgwick Cook built our house 60 years ago. Childless, they doted on one another. She had been a chorus dancer in New York, swept off her feet by Major Cook, U.S. Army. Their Pierce Lane house and the land was a dream place. He drew up the plans, enumerating the number of steel nails to be driven per foot, and they planted the garden together. We are blessed by their thoroughness and sometimes astonished by their choices.

Take the rhododendron leaning against the front of the house. It is ten feet tall, perfectly round, and a really awful red-purple color. It covers itself with bloom. If Ethel Merman were to come back to life as a rhododendron, she would be living in our front yard.

Then there's the Torrington orange azalea which grows beside another raucous purple rhododendron and the beauty bush which

erupts and showers itself over them both. And the brown and purple irises, mercifully away from the house. And the pointless hedge, vast and uncontrollable.

In this hedge I found a yellow azalea the spring after we moved in. The horticultural ID tag was still attached to one leg. It said: "My Mary." Every year on Memorial Day, I cut its branches and take them to the North Cornwall Cemetery to the two Cooks, lying up at the top of the hill. They left no family and we have their house. Even if I wish Mary had not been so fond of purple, she gets her yellow blooms every year with our thanks.

—Lisa Lansing Simont

### The Cars of Cornwall

Back in the 1930s, people used to ask: "What time is it when one Ford passes another?" The answer: "Tin past tin!" Well, it's still ten minutes past ten in Cornwall, if you measure time by which brand of car is most popular. Fords lead all the rest. There are 226 Ford vehicles registered (and taxed) in our town, as per the 1999 Grand List. Fords account for nearly 18 percent of all of Cornwall's motor vehicles, including SUVs, station wagons, and pickup trucks. And even this total excludes a few antique Fords—like the Model A's and T's that gave rise to the old joke.

Second place goes to a rising newcomer, Subaru, which accounts for 141 cars, SUVs and wagons here. Sometimes, though, in the Town Hall parking lot, it seems as if almost everyone in Cornwall is driving one of these four-wheel-drive vehicles. However, Assessor Barbara Johnson's lists show only 11 percent of Cornwall's cars displaying the little badge of the Pleiades constellation ("Subaru" in Japanese).

Toyota, another Japanese brand, ranks third, with 130 vehicles, just over 10 percent of the total. Fourth is Chevrolet, with 124 vehicles, just under 10 percent of the total, and Dodge is fifth with 95 vehicles. After that, the next ten makes in order are: Honda (90), Jeep (70), Volvo (68), Volkswagen (48), GMC (38), Nissan (36), Audi (32), Buick (19), Mercury (15), and Saturn (13). No other brand accounts for more than 12 vehicles or one percent of the town-wide total, although these "other" brands add up to 133 cars all told.

At the tail end of the Grand List, the records show five brands with one Cornwall representative each: Alfa-Romeo, Citroen, MG, Peugeot, and Jaguar.

These figures exclude some 28 farm vehicles shown on the Grand List (mostly trucks or tractors), 33 antique cars (guaranteed to be over 25 years old), and some 40 motorcycles. In addition, the assessor's records list modest numbers of vehicles of other types, including a few described only as "homemade."

—David A. Grossman

### Welcome

Eliana Ruth Calhoun to Alexa Venturini and Will Calhoun

Willa McBride to April Stevens Neubauer and Sandy Neubauer

### Good-bye to Friends

Ernestine M. Blakey

Dorothy Heininger

Charles M. Oliver

### Congratulations

Chandra Casteel to Luis Lopez

Bethany Berry to Patrick Folds

Vanessa Matthews to Kai Gray

### Land Transfers

Esther M. Kenny to Henry G. Labalme and Jeanne McMullin, 43.3 acres on Cream Hill Road for \$275,000.

Victor G. Reiling to Mary Wood Lee, house and .28 acres at 5 Railroad Street for \$139,500.

Danielle Martin to Robert A. Freidman, 4.3 acres on Great Hollow Road for \$85,000.



### Hail Columbia!

The ninth annual Bridge Dance on May 28 was a festive curtain raiser for the Memorial Day celebrations to follow. Beautiful weather enabled a repeat of last year's success: the same band (Timeriders), the same number of dancers (hundreds), and the same gross intake for the Cornwall Volunteer Fire Department (\$8K).

The day itself dawned cool and overcast (but with "bright intervals" as the British say), and the usual crowds gathered to decorate the graves of veterans at the North Cornwall Cemetery and to witness the Seaman's Memorial Service at the Covered Bridge.

Then, promptly at 11 A.M., the marchers in their accustomed ranks left Hubbard Field and stepped smartly down Pine Street past the Town Hall, interspersed with gleaming Fire Department vehicles that included a brand-new pumper and a surplus brush truck recently acquired from the state. The annual V.F.W. Citizenship Award was presented to long-time Cornwall residents Ralph and Thalia Scoville (each of whom had been told that only the other was to be so honored): he a farmer, former selectman, and road crew foreman who has benefited his neighbors in countless ways; she a retired nurse, former chair of the Board of Finance, and a moving spirit of the annual Rummage Sale.

A new note in the customary Memorial Day address was struck by historian and peace activist Jeremy Brecher, who eschewed patriotic themes for a commentary on the way homecoming American veterans too often have been neglected by the society that sent them off to fight in the first place. This was especially true, he noted, for veterans returning from World War I and from the conflict in Vietnam; in both cases they faced long

periods of unemployment and a lack of shelter that continues to this day, when there are still an estimated 275,000 homeless veterans.

As the ceremonies drew to a close, children and parents headed for the UCC grounds, where more than 60 volunteers had prepared a dazzling array of Memorial Day food, games and contests. Hudson (Woody) Oznowicz won a box filled with crockery at the Dime Toss; Emma Morrow, age two, took the last Cakewalk cake (with a little help from Jane and Nick, her parents), and Daniel Hammond, to his confusion, won first prize in the Men's Best Legs Contest.

In the day's grand finale, the Frog-Jumping Contest, a muscular champion straight from Jean and Bill Vitalis's pond won first place with a leap of 57 inches, to the acclaim of the crowd and the delight of his handler, Max Eingham. After the last frog had jumped, the tired crowd started for home, all except for a long line of hopefuls patiently waiting by Marc Simont's easel to have their portraits sketched. —Jean and John Leich

### DEP for "Run Of The River"

In a major step on the way to federal action to re-license the CL&P dams on the Housatonic River, the state Department of Environment Protection has announced that it has made a preliminary decision to require "run of the river" flows at the Falls Village and Bulls Bridge dams. This would end the "store and release" practice which attracts many canoers, kayakers and rafters. DEP says it is acting to protect water quality and endangered plants, insects, and mollusks. Under federal law, DEP has the sole right to set this standard. Federal action to re-license the dams is not likely to be complete before the end of this year. —Hanna K. Grossman



### Million Mom March

Late on the night of May 13, Jayne Ridgway, Lib Terrall, Deirdre Fischer, Vera Dinneen, Ben Hammond, Dave Cadwell, and I left on a bus full of people from the area for the Million Mom March in Washington, D.C. We drove all night long and arrived in Washington early in the morning on Mother's Day.

Before the speakers began, there was an interfaith service and an opportunity to view a wall listing the names of children who have been killed by guns since the Columbine High School shooting. There was also a bell with a clapper made of melted guns, which was later rung twelve times to remember the twelve children who are killed each day by guns. The speakers included celebrities but the most interesting and moving speeches by far were given by parents who had lost chil-

## Letters to the Chronicle

### BATTING THE ENTIRE BENCH

*This spring, 24 girls (third through sixth grade) signed up for the Cornwall Park and Rec. softball team. Many of them had no previous experience, and those who did were mighty rusty. April's crummy weather didn't stop us from beginning our practices. By the time our games started, we had devised a method to get every girl in for at least two innings a game. Our league "bats the entire bench," so in our lineup the girl on deck when the game ends bats first in the next game. It was quite a rotation, but the girls didn't complain. The highlight of the season was our last game in which we beat the previously undefeated Goshen team, 4 to 2 in extra innings. We had 22 girls at the end. They had worked hard and were infinitely improved. There may be softball teams with better records but none with bigger hearts.*

—Iricia Collins and Joanne Pastre

### NEWS FROM HUGHES

*With sadness and regret we note the deaths of Peg Becker and her son Alan. Both were long-time active supporters of the Hughes Memorial Library and their many contributions to it over the years have been instrumental in keeping it going.*

*During the past year we have replaced the book stacks in the South Room, considerably increasing the capacity and accessibility of the collection, and the room has been painted. This renovation was made possible by donations made in memory of the Beckers together with other gifts. Not to be forgotten are the many hours of volunteer help we received. There is still a lot to be done and we hope you will continue to support our efforts and read the many new books we have added to the library this past year.*

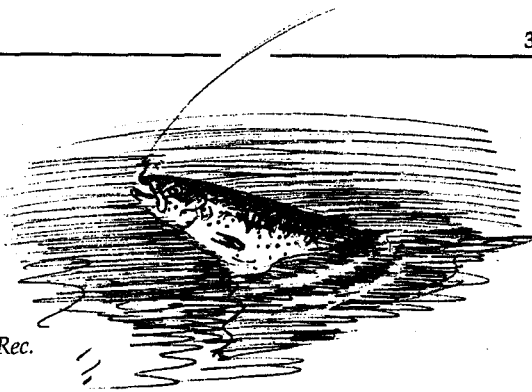
—Estelle I. Stetson

### GRIM REMINDER

*I am sure most readers of the Chronicle know about the horrific crime committed in Laramie, Wyoming, last year when two men beat another one senseless and then, before leaving the scene, tied him to a fence where he froze to death. Anyone who drives from Cornwall Bridge up Route 4 to Cornwall Village can see on the left-hand side of the road just after leaving Cornwall Bridge, a dummy tied to a fence. It may have been amusing on Halloween, but now it is a grim reminder of that Wyoming murder. I hope the person or persons who put the dummy*

*dren as a result of gunfire. In the crowd of 750,000 men, women, and children, there were thousands of signs with pictures of children who have been killed.*

*When the day was over, we made our way back to the bus and headed home. Despite the long trip and our 2:30 A.M. arrival in Salisbury, we were all glad we had gone to the March.*



*up will take it down.*

*Cornwall is a tolerant, progressive town and not a place where local residents or people passing through should be reminded of such a barbaric, degrading event.*

—John Zinsser

### A PLACE FOR SKATEBOARDING

*As many of you have most likely noticed, people look at skateboarders as a problem in this town. We have been told not to come back to just about every paved parking lot in Cornwall.*

*After my friends and I got together and talked about how dreadful summer will be when we can't meet somewhere and skate every day, we decided that we could use a skateboard park. We realize it will be a struggle to get this done since money is an issue. We are willing to fund-raise, and build our own ramps. All we need is the land. We thought about the land behind the Firehouse—skateboard park in the summer, an ice skating rink in the winter.*

*Next, someone would think about the problem of liability. After taking trips to Woodbury Ski and Racquet Club we concluded that the liability problem can be solved by posting a sign about skating at your own risk.*

*I hope people consider this, seeing how many skateboarders there are in this town. Just remember, skateboarding is a sport for the individual. We might dress differently than any other person, and people usually stereotype us as "trouble" because our pants are bigger than everyone else's, but in reality we are just out to have fun.*

—Pat Dinneen

### CAJOLE, DON'T PROD

*Carla Bigelow's letter regarding snapping turtles has made me need to speak from my own experiences of stopping to assist turtles in danger.*

*Turtles don't like to be pushed via shoe or stick and should you be out on Route 4 or Route 7 in weekend traffic and you find yourself in need of a speedier solution, put the stick in front of his face—they are generally very happy to chase the stick across the road, snapping at it all the way. (It's a lot like dangling a carrot in front of a donkey.) It's safer, quicker, and much more animal-friendly.*

—Alicia Eaton

*There were many reasons to go to the Million Mom March besides just going to ask Congress to pass more sensible gun laws—more personal reasons. Dave Cadwell went in memory of his mom, as this was his first Mother's Day without her. Ben and I went because we never want a Columbine to happen at our school.*

—Heather Dinneen

## Events & Announcements

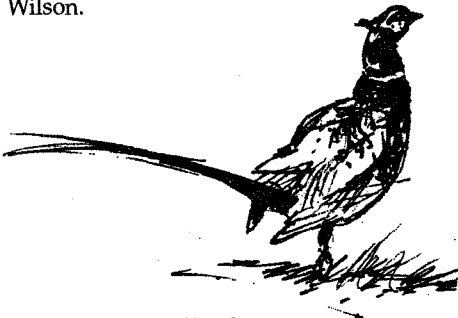
**The Woman's Society Rummage Sale** will take place on Saturday, July 22, in and near the UCC Parish House and at Mohawk Ski Lodge. At the Parish House will be the Tiffany Table, boutique, jewelry, art, dishes, toys, and furniture. Contributions to the sale may be made at the Parish House July 1 through 19, every day except Sunday, from 9 A.M. to noon. Please pack books in small boxes and cover items to protect them from rain. All items should be clean and in working condition. No TVs or mattresses can be accepted.

Mohawk Ski Lodge will have books and music, clothing, linens, sewing goods, children's furniture, and large toys. Contributions of these items can only be made when Mohawk is open, between 9 A.M. and noon; otherwise, please leave them at the Parish House.

For purchase on sale day, please bring bills of small denominations. Mohawk opens at 8:30 A.M. and the book department only has an entry fee of \$15.00 for the first half hour. The area outside the Parish House and the tents opens at 9 A.M. The boutique in the church basement and the Parish House open at 10 A.M. Line-up numbers for early birds will be given at both locations.

On Monday, July 24, from 9 A.M. to noon there will be a \$2.00 bag sale and reduced-price items. Any questions? Call Cilla Mauro, 672-6969, or Thalia Scoville, 672-6288.

The success of last year's sale enabled the Woman's Society Educational Fund to give awards totaling \$7,500 to five HVRHS students who graduated in June. They are: Heather Dinneen, Benjamin Hammond, Jason Lynn, Amanda Stevens, and Winfield Wilson.



### Palindromes

They're words or phrases that are the same frontwards or backwards, e.g., "Do geese see God?" A number palindrome would be \$6,556, which happens to be the *Chronicle's* annual budget, and if we don't get enough of your donations to cover it, we'll be heading south with the geese. So please send in a check if you haven't done so recently.

**Summer Choices:** On Tuesday, July 18, \$14 per person will provide a full day of unlimited rides and Water Park at Lake Compounce. Sponsored by PTA Choices.

Also, beginner rock climbing with John Russell, teacher and rock climbing instructor at Marvelwood, will be offered to a small group of fifth to eighth graders on July 5, 6, and 7 from 8 A.M. to noon at St. John's Ledges in Kent. Fee is \$55 for three days; parent may attend free. Reservations for both events: call David Samson, 672-0616.



**Art in Cornwall:** At the Cornwall Library, Ira Barkoff's show of landscape paintings will continue through July 3. Beginning July 5, Ilesha Helfman will exhibit collage explorations, incorporating laser-engraved miniature buttons, digitally layered images, and folded and pieced papers. The show will continue through August 5.

At the Cornwall Historical Society, there will be an opening on July 7, from 5 to 7 P.M., of a show of oil paintings and watercolors by William Ward Beecher. The show will continue through August 12.

At the National Iron Bank, historic photographs of Cornwall, on loan from the Historical Society, will be on view through the month of July.

At the Wish House, there will be an opening on July 29, from 5 to 7 P.M., of a show of photographs from around the world by Joan Hinchman. This exhibit will continue through mid-September.

**Annual Summer Dance** sponsored by Park and Rec. will be held at the Cream Hill Lake Association on July 14 from 9 P.M. to midnight, with music by Ram Miles and his popular band, Advanced Phunk. It's free.

**Republican Town Committee Meeting and Caucus** will be held on Tuesday, July 25, at 8 P.M. at the Town Hall to endorse candidates for Registrar of Voters and Justices of the Peace. All registered Republicans in Cornwall are urged to attend. The 64th Assembly District convention will take place at the West Cornwall Firehouse on July 18 at 8 P.M.

**Seniors!** Would you be interested in a weekly documentary film program and discussion at lunchtime (you bring a sandwich, we supply soup)? The Community Center Committee would offer it at the UCC Parish House. Please call Anne Zinsser, 672-6400.

**Summer at the Library:** *Dive Into Reading!* is the theme of the Cornwall Library's summer reading program for children, featuring stories of the sea. Two story hours will take place every week for six weeks, starting July 5. Wednesdays from 7 to 8 P.M. will be for ages six to ten and Fridays from 10 to 11 A.M. for ages three to five.

Several special programs about the sea will be presented, beginning with an *Undersea Safari* with artist/musician Chris Rowlands on July 7 at 7 P.M. On July 19 there will be a visit from a marine biologist with "touch tanks" of marine animals, and on July 28 at 10 A.M. Leslie Elias will involve children in *Mermaid Magic: Music, Masks & Movement*. Rounding out the summer program will be Kids' Nite Out movies about the sea, to be offered on Friday evenings, July 14 and 28 and August 11, at 7 P.M.

**Renters' Assistance:** Renters who were 65 or older by December 31, 1999, or who are receiving Social Security disability benefits may be eligible for a grant from the State of Connecticut. Some of the requirements are: the applicant must have resided in Connecticut for any one year period prior to filing; income, including Social Security, may not exceed \$23,900 single or \$29,300 married; 5 percent of qualifying income must not exceed 35 percent of total rent and utility payment. The application forms and additional information are available at the Assessor's Office on Tuesday and Thursday mornings from 9 to noon and Wednesdays from 1 to 4:30 P.M. Application must be made by September 15, 2000.



### CORNWALL CHRONICLE

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