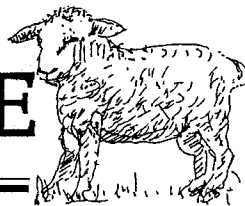




CORNWALL CHRONICLE



VOLUME 2: NUMBER 2 MARCH 1992

Budget Talks Begin

Early signs of spring: robin sightings, spring training, and Cornwall's budget season, which opened February 20 at a four-hour session in which the Board of Finance heard the Selectmen's preliminary budget.

It asked for general government expenditures of \$1,467,362, an increase of \$80,602, or 5.81%. Town wages have been frozen, and increases were mainly for insurance and revaluation.

The capital budget was \$547,963, including \$300,000 for road and bridge repair and salt shed construction. This item will likely be softened by a combination of cuts, state grants and use of funds from surplus.

The season continues through March and April, winding up with the annual budget town meeting on May 8.

— Ed Ferman

School Board Meeting

A School Board meeting was held Feb. 20, to discuss the preliminary budget to be presented to the Board of Finance. No member of the public or representative of the press was present.

There is an increase of \$156,000 in the budget to \$1,721,679. The Cornwall share

of the High School budget for the 42 Cornwall students is \$443,185. The Cornwall share of the Regional administrative costs is \$37,769 and for pupil services \$132,797. The CCS budget is \$1,107,928. However these figures are bound to increase when the Regional Board submits its budget.

— Lynn Cheney

The Budget and More

The Selectmen's budget to be submitted to the Board of Finance will show a 5% increase. Budget transfer requests regarding legal, pension, and election expenses will be made at the March 6 Town Meeting.

A letter from the Northwestern Conn. COG urged Selectmen to ask their state legislators to oppose binding arbitration, state-mandated but unfunded functions, local retirement pay funded by the town rather than the state, and any reduction of state aid for education and roads.

Selectmen were unanimous in their objection to a low-level radioactive waste dump in a state forest, Cornwall having so much forest. A motion to that effect was passed. On other matters, the First Selectman's office will be ready March 1, a purchase spec. for an oil contract will be written and bids solicited, and residents on

roads whose sides are being brush-cut will be advised beforehand about what is going on.

— Jack Forster

Sharp Cuts in State Grants

Formula grant aid to the town of Cornwall would decrease by 42% under the Governor's budget proposal for the fiscal year 1992-1993. During the current year the town will get \$225,891; next year, if there are no changes during the state budget process, the town will get an estimated \$131,003.

Our biggest loss will be in formula grants for education. Last year we got almost \$88,000. During the current year the figure is \$58,827. The estimate for next year is \$9,683. The other big loser is town aid for roads, down from \$98,156 to \$72,254. Fortunately, the state reimbursement for the school addition, estimated at \$128,141 for the coming year, is not a formula grant and will be unaffected.

Not all the news is bad. The grand list may be up about 2-1/2%, which would add close to \$60,000 to real estate tax revenues and the fire department has decided not to ask this year for the \$20,000 that is in the Five-Year Plan for a new ambulance. These go a considerable way to offset the aid reduction of \$94,888.

— Hendon Chubb

MARCH 1992

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1 Agricultural Advisory Comm. 7:30pm Firehouse <i>Classes on World Religions Introduction</i> 11:15 UCC (p.4)	2 Bd. of Selectmen 7pm Town Hall <i>Nuclear-free Zone Comm. St. Peter's</i> 7:30pm	3 Park & Rec. 7:30pm Town Off. <i>Inland Wetlands*</i> 7:30pm Town Hall	4 ASH WEDNESDAY	5	6 Town Meeting 8 pm Town Hall	7 Voter Enrollment 12-3 pm Town Hall (p.4)
8 Buddhism 11:15 UCC (p.4)	9 Plan. & Zoning 7:30pm Town Hall 7pm Town Hall. 5-7 pm Town Office (p.4)	10 <i>Howard Stone paintings, Corn. Lib.</i> Dem. Town Comm. 7:30pm Town Hall Hous. Riv. Comm. CCS Lib. 7:30pm Voter Enrollment 12-3pm Town Hall (p.4) Town Office 11-4pm	11	12 Cornwall Housing Corp. 7:30pm UCC <i>Film showing, 8pm CCS Lib. (p.4)</i>	13 Mun. Bldg. Comm. 7:30pm Town Hall <i>Deadline for Child Center Registration</i>	14 Bd. of Tax Review Town Off. 10-1 (p.4) <i>Poetry reading 8pm Cadwell's Corner</i>
15 Spiritual Compasses 11:15 UCC (p.4)	16 Bd. of Selectmen 7pm Town Office HVRHS Bd. of Ed. 7:30pm HS Lib.	17 ST. PATRICK'S DAY	18	19 Board of Ed. 4:30pm CCS Lib. Bd. of Finance 7:30pm Town Hall	20 SPRING BEGINS <i>Film Showing 8pm CCS Lib. (p.4)</i>	21
22 Auction for Child Ctr. 2-4:30pm Marvelwood (p.4) <i>Moses & Jesus</i> 11:15 UCC (p.4)	23 Bd. of Selectmen 7pm Town Hall Z.B. of Appeals* 7:30pm Town Hall	24 Presidential Primary 6am-8pm Town Hall	25 Rep. Town Comm. 7:30pm Town Hall	26	27 <i>Bye Bye Birdie</i> 7pm CCS gym	28 Children's film 1pm Town Hall (p.4) <i>Bye Bye Birdie</i> 7pm CCS gym
29 Divine Justice 11:15 UCC (p.4)	30	31	Corn. Agri. Comm. open house 11-4pm Ridgway sugarhouse, Town Street, Sats. 7th & 14th Adult volleyball 7:30-9:30pm CCS			4 12 18 26

The Board of Tax Review will meet on the 9th, 10th, & 14th at the Town Offices. See times with symbol . You can just go, or call 672-2709 for an appointment.

*Check time and place at Town Office.

Reminder to Taxpayers

Helen Migliacci, Cornwall's Tax Collector, urges those who did not meet the Jan. 31 deadline for property tax payment to send in what they owe or come to see her at the Town Offices. The later it gets the more work it takes to calculate interest charges, mail reminders and process all that paperwork.

Helen reports that 167 taxpayers missed the deadline, a number higher than normal.

— Lisa Lansing

Hear It Now

From The Cornwall Historical Society, now on audio tape, the voices of Cornwall past. No one living in town today can tell the story of the great snowstorm of 1888 exactly the way they remember it because, by golly, they actually lived through it! No one living now can tell us how the first fire tower got built on Mohawk — that was the tower that fell down — or how a broken leg was set in the old days, but voices from our past have told these stories and the stories live for us today.

Thanks to Harriet Clark, working with an old tape recorder some thirty years ago, hours of Cornwall stories, told in accents long vanished, were collected three decades ago from the likes of then 91-year-old Fred Scoville Sr., Fred Bate, Sr., George Crosby, Florence Benedict and others Harriet managed to persuade to speak into that most frightening of all things, the microphone.

These historic recordings of Cornwall's memories were made in the early 1960s. The original reel-to-reel tapes have just been transcribed by Edward Canby, and cassette copies will soon be available on loan from the Cornwall library.

— Earl Brecher

Agriculture Goes to School

The Agricultural Advisory Committee, which was formed last August, decided to use education as a way to help people appreciate farming. Chris Hopkins, Dody Clarke-Wolfe and Cilla Mauro, helped by Karen Stevens and Ralph Gold, created five lessons for students at the Cornwall School.

The lessons included a condensed version of the history of agriculture, a look at the human relationship to the cycles of nature and a talk on farm-related careers by a teacher from the HVRHS Vo-Ag Dept.

This brief course helped to show our need for farm and forest products, both for today and for future generations. It stressed that people must work to keep all other activities in harmony with productive

lands. They can do so by a willingness to serve on committees, study issues, speak up and vote.

Each week there was a hands-on activity which included assembling and running a milk separator, using an antique corn sheller, and grinding corn and wheat seeds on a 2000-year-old grinding stone. The course ended on a sweet but sticky note of cornbread and honey.

— Cilla Mauro



"A Way of Life That's Gone"

Fred Bate, Jr., a skilled woodsman, talked about a part of Cornwall life that has disappeared. Until World War II, fur trapping was still a part of New England's economy. In the '20s when farm wages were \$1 a day (plus use of a farm cottage) hunting, fishing and trapping made quite a difference to the family income. As Freddy said "You could get as much for one red fox fur as you did for two months wages."

His father, Fred Bate, Sr., besides being the owner of the meat market, was an agent for Hiram Beebe, the oldest fur trader in New England. Fred Bate, Sr. taught his son the intricate skills of hunting and setting traps, and then how to flesh, stretch and cure skins in order to get the best furs. Freddy hunted and trapped for over 50 years. "In those days," he said, "hunters were local people. We just got permission from our neighbors to hunt and trap on their land. Now you need official permits, and there are almost no local hunters."

Freddy talked about hunters like Sam Briquette of Goshen, Mr. Wadhams, Charlie Lundy, Sam Graham, Francis Hotchkiss, and the annual hunting party at the Robert's farm. "It's a way of life that's gone."

Freddy talked about the changes in the animal population, and discussions he's had with his friend Bill Sondrini, the retired state game biologist. Muskrat have suddenly disappeared, maybe wiped out by a virus; beaver have increased the wetlands and so now there are more otter. Possum were imported here in the thirties to give coon hunters added quarry. Deer, once scarce, are now plentiful; they thrive on the scrub growing in abandoned fields. Partridge seem to have a 7-year cycle — no one knows why. There are few pheasant and quail left because farmers no longer grow grain.

"People don't walk anymore — they drive. We walked everywhere. I would be out at 4:30 a.m. setting trap lines, walking along the river and through the woods before I started work."

Freddy, a veteran volunteer with the Fire Department and the Rescue Squad, now is an invaluable teacher's aide in the first grade at CCS

— Julia Scott

P & Z Approves

On February 10, Planning and Zoning held public hearings on applications by Charles Besozzi, Jr. for a permanent sawmill near the Marvelwood playing field off Route 4; by the Town of Cornwall to renew the permit for a municipally operated dwelling on Lake Road; and by Rocky River Associates to renew their permit for a gravel mining operation on Kent Road in Cornwall Bridge.

Following the hearing the Besozzi application was approved. The applicant was cautioned that the Appellate Court decision as to whether or not to hear an appeal to the Superior Court ruling upholding the sawmill regulation had not yet been announced. The renewal of the Town's housing permit was approved. The Rocky River renewal was approved with the condition that monthly reports detailing their activities be brought up to date.

— Bill Lyon



Welcome

Anaise Knox
to Lisa Ann and Charles Knox



Congratulations

Richard J. Adams and Carol J. Howland

Goodbye to a Friend

Ruth G. Kelley



Land Transfers

Ronald J. & Martha K. Bushey to James N. Ravlin, land on Grange Hall Rd.

Timothy McQuillan to William Hurlburt, house & land on Cornwall Hollow Rd.

Chester Mergian to Anne A. Hubbard, house on Kent Rd.

Anne A. Hubbard to Cornwall Housing Corporation, two houses on Kent Rd.

On Open Lands Protection

On January 17 the Agricultural Advisory Commission hosted a public forum with land-use specialist James Gibbons. At a well attended meeting of Cornwall friends and neighbors concerned with finding ways to maintain our area's rural character, Mr. Gibbons reviewed the history of attempts to protect open lands and made a number of suggestions about how best to deal with regulations and the State. A cassette tape of the meeting is available from the Commission.

— Cilla Mauro

How the HVRHS Board Works

Last month I made a rash promise to explain the workings of the HVRHS Board of Education in this column. Now it's time to make good that pledge!

The first thing to understand is that Region 1 is unlike any other regional school district in Connecticut. We were the first



regional district and operate under our own Special Act (#428 in 1937) with some later amendments. This accounts for our somewhat cumbersome system of seven school boards and at the same time allows for some latitude of action that other districts do not have.

Originally we were legally known as Regional High School District Number 1 of Litchfield County, but in 1959 this name was amended to Regional School District Number 1 of Litchfield County. That amendment also gives the Region 1 Board the right, with voter approval, to establish and operate schools to meet the general education needs of students in the Region beyond the sixth grade, as well as provide special education programs for all grade levels. Additionally, as you remember from last month, every District is required to have a Superintendent and a Director of Pupil Services. In practice, at this time, what all this boils down to is: 1) what is commonly referred to as "the high school" Board is actually the "Region 1" Board, and 2) that board is responsible for three areas of interest — HVRHS (grades 9-12), the Superintendent and staff (grades Pre-K-12), and the Director of Special Education and staff (grades Pre-K-12). Now that's a big job for a volunteer board of six people!

In order to facilitate the above work load, the Region 1 Board created an advisory committee, the Regional Services Committee (RSC), to oversee the operations of the Superintendent's office and the Pupil Services staff. This committee is made up of the Chairman of each of the seven school boards in the region and acts solely in an advisory capacity to the Region 1 Board. The RSC has no authority to do anything except pass its recommendations on to the Region 1 Board for action.

The Region 1 Board consists of one representative from each town in the Region. That representative is appointed by the local board (this procedure is consistent with its responsibility to provide education for all children in town). Voting power is weighed in accordance with each town's high school population — for example, at this time Cornwall has only nine votes out of the 100 total.

In a nutshell, that's how it works! Any questions? If so, feel free to call me at 672-6216. — *Becky Williams*



PTO Playground Committee Report

As *Chronicle* readers may already know, the Cornwall Consolidated School playground has been closed. Why? Here's what's been happening.

The wooden climber was declared off limits this fall after students incurred some



RESURGENCE OF THE WALKER

There has been a resurgence of the Walker — a native Cornwall species, considered by many to be a rare bird. Sightings now occur daily in various locations — River Road, Valley Road, Cream Hill, Town Street, Cherry Hill and Mohawk. There seem to be many kinds of Walkers: Crack-of-Dawn Walkers, Evening Walkers, Fairweather Walkers, Come-Hell-or-Highwater Walkers, Solitary Walkers, Group Walkers, Dog Walkers, Hikers and the odd Race Walker.

There are those who walk once or twice a week, or just on weekends, and those who walk daily. Some do the same route, others are explorers.

The prize for dedication goes to the Jackmans, Cherry Hill Walkers, who have rarely missed a day in 17 years. The most energetic Walker is surely Annie Van Doren, who carries one daughter in a back pack and pushes the other in a space-age stroller.

Walkers appreciate motorists who slow down and wave!

— Marie Prentice & Julia Scott
(two Cream Hill-Town Street Amblers)

ANOTHER SIGHTING

I, too, have seen "Gordon", not at the breakfast or town meeting table but in the Kenniston's field. On January 11, 1992 at approximately 8:45 a.m. travelling eastward on Route 4, I noticed a large animal in the field. The animal's color was a yellowish tan. Intrigued, I slowed the vehicle down and glared at a large feline. It was stalking crouched down toward the ground with one large paw raised. Thoroughly impressed with the size of the paw and ears, I stopped the car and continued to watch. As the cat moved forward, a terrific tail swung toward the sky. No doubt it WAS a MOUNTAIN LION.

— Jayne W. Ridgway

minor injuries. An insurance audit turned up serious faults in all three pieces of equipment. (Copies of the report are at the school and Town Offices.)

The PTO agreed to look at options for replacement or repair of the equipment and a committee was formed. After reviewing the insurance report, the equipment, and the playground site, the committee has recommended that new equipment be purchased. This will accomplish several things: one, it will bring the playground into compliance with the newest government guidelines for safety; two, it will incorporate handicapped-accessible components into the structure and safety surface which the current set-up does not do; three, it will enrich the physical education program by including equipment to encourage upper body strength. In addition, Jo Loi, the physical education teacher,

Letters to the Chronicle



THE ANIMALS COMMENT

The Cornwall Chronicle is truly unique! A forum for many viewpoints! Now that Mountain Lion has written, we wish to greet you too.

There was a time — hundreds of years ago — when the humans who lived here knew that they were part of the larger animal world and shared it with respect and care for us. Now humans in Cornwall are having trouble sharing the land even among themselves! We wonder if your Cornwall Housing Corporation and your Habitat for Humanity will be able to help you remedy that problem. We have had enormous habitat problems ourselves and people are starting to understand that. Perhaps people will begin to care more for each other, for all species, and for our beautiful planet.

We are watching you with love and hope.
— Brother Bear & Sister Moon

MY CONFESSION

We moved here in 1987. On October 4th that year there was a blizzard. Now, as transplanted Californians who had lived in Florida for five years before moving here, we thought that the leaves should be off the trees before it snowed, but what do we know? So I thought I would take advantage of this disaster, and I bought myself a pair of cross-country skis so I could enjoy the #1 form of cardiovascular exercise. As we all know, it has barely snowed enough since then to keep Mohawk open, let alone ski on the railroad tracks! So forget about the greenhouse effect — it's my fault. I bought those skis for my own selfish reasons and ended any chance of significant accumulation in the northwest hills. Sorry.

— Dave Cadwell

More letters, please. And if you don't want your letter edited without consultation, please say so.

has suggested a fitness course to encircle the playground. The Committee believes this can be put together by volunteers without purchasing additional equipment.

Playground equipment companies are being interviewed so that a budget proposal can be made to the town. We are very aware of budget concerns, and therefore the Committee is looking to the community for support in both volunteer labor to help prepare the sites and assemble the equipment when the time comes, and money donations. If you'd like to make a donation please send it to: CCS Playground Fund, c/o CCS PTO, 5 Cream Hill Road, West Cornwall, CT 06796.

Meanwhile, we're asking the school children to draw their favorite playground structure, and we plan to incorporate their ideas into the final design.

— Cheryl Evans, Chairman

Math in Our School

Department Chairman Keith Bond, reported on the mathematics curriculum at the High School. Bond noted that HVRHS offers qualified students, constituting about 20% of the student body, five years of advanced math. Other students take lower level vocational math courses. The State requires three years of math for graduation. Some board members suggested it would be a good idea if all students were required to take some algebra. Mr. Bond also commented that there is a real need for better coordination between elementary school and high school math programs.

The board was addressed briefly but vehemently by an area taxpayer who called for a major restructuring of secondary education in the district. — *Earl Brecher*

CHC Gives House, Land to Habitat

The Cornwall Housing Corporation at its February meeting voted to give to the Habitat for Humanity of Northwest Connecticut the former Mergian house on a two-acre parcel of land on Route 7. The parcel had been the gift of Anne and Tom Hubbard of Cornwall to the CHC.

The CHC board also discussed at some length the Ground Lease agreement being formulated by those wishing to lease parcels from the CHC. A subcommittee is incorporating suggested changes into the document, with further discussion to follow at the next board meeting. The 18-page document is based on models in successful use by other housing agencies.

The board will, at its March meeting, present a subdivision plan of the Town Street parcel for discussion. The plan will indicate septic system location and projected house placement. At that meeting the board will also decide whether to submit its application for a special permit to develop the parcel.

The board discussed its status as a private corporation and its obligation to have open meetings. In line with the policies of similar service organizations in the state, and in line with legal opinions from state agencies, the CHC board has the right to determine to what extent and when its meetings can be open to the public. It will continue its practice of sharing information with attendees at the beginning of



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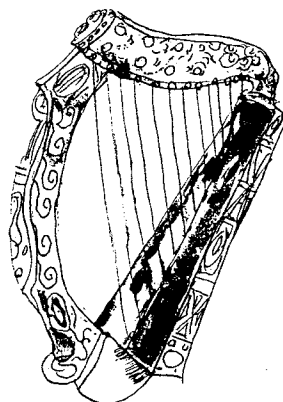
meetings, and will move into executive session when appropriate. Furthermore, it will continue to share periodically with the town in special meetings its policies and procedures with regard to housing opportunities.

Mary Sams was elected to the board to fill a vacancy created by the resignation of Jim Whiteside whose helpful service over the years was recognized. — *Ken Keskinen*

Property Tax Credit

Cornwall homeowners who were 65 or older by Dec. 31, 1991, or who are receiving Social Security disability payments may be eligible for credit on their property tax. The property must be their principal residence and the total income, including Social Security, must be less than \$19,400 single and \$23,800 married.

Applications may be filed in the assessor's office until May 15, and if eligible, will apply to the July billing. Once on the program, reapplication is every two years, and forms have been mailed to homeowners who must reapply this year. The applications are available from the assessor's office, open Tuesdays and Thursdays 9:30-12:30 and Wednesdays 1-4. — *Barbara Johnson*



Events & Announcements

Auction for Child Center: March 22, 2-4:30 p.m. at Marvelwood School. Actor Larry Gates and stand-up comic Dave Cadwell will auction items of delight including tickets to David Letterman show, brunch at Freshfields, etc. Proceeds will benefit the Cornwall Child Center, a haven for children for 15 years. Increasing enrollment of over 50% has created a need for a larger and permanent home.

If you have a vacation home, talent or service to donate for the auction, call Jean Vitalis at 672-6880 *immediately*. Admission, \$5, includes wine & appetizers. For free child care during the auction call Martha Bruehl, 672-6373, by March 13.

Town Meeting: March 6, 8 p.m. at the Town Hall to approve budget transfers to pay for the Presidential Primary and additional legal costs of the sawmill case. Other business may be added. If so, notice will be given.



Board of Tax Review at the Town Office on March 9, 5-7 p.m.; March 10, 11-4; and March 14, 10-1. You may call for an appointment.



Film Showings: Park & Rec announces the following schedule of award-winning films by Cornwall writers and producers:

March 12: 8 p.m. CCS Library. John Miller presents *Fred Astaire*.

March 20: 8 p.m. CCS Library; Al Waller presents *In the American Grain*, about American poet and physician, William Carlos Williams, and *The Century Next Door*.

After intermission and refreshments, Peter Hollander presents his ABC special on celebrating the Jewish sabbath.

March 28: 1 p.m. Town Hall. Al Waller presents *Santiago's Ark*, a one hour children's film which takes place in Spanish Harlem.



Classes on World Religions: March 1-April 26 Sundays at 11:15 at the United Church of Christ (UCC). Lectures on videotape by Dr. Robert Oden, Headmaster of Hotchkiss School and former Chair of the Dept. of Religion at Dartmouth College. On March 8 a "live" presentation on Buddhism by Dr. Taitetsu Unno, Professor of Religion at Smith College. Come to one class or to all. Call 672-6840 for information.



Attention Voters: Only enrolled members of the Democratic & Republican parties can vote in the Presidential Preference Primary on March 24. Two Enrollment sessions will be held at the Town Hall on March 7 and 10, from noon to 3 p.m. for the purpose of registration and/or enrollment. In case of questions, call Judy Gates or Maureen Prentice.



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