

CORNWALL CHRONICLE

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CCS: Expansion Plans Take Form

At a Town Meeting on March 3, there will be a vote to enable the CCS Building Committee to file a reimbursement grant application with the state. The vote at the Town Meeting in October called for the formation of the Building Committee and allotted \$25,000 for development of the preliminary plans. After receiving the plans and cost estimates by the June 30 deadline, the state will assign a reimbursement rate for the project. The Town Meeting vote will not be a vote to approve the project or any aspect of the project. That vote will come later by referendum.

So far the committee has examined the current utilization of the building, surveyed the staff, visited other schools, and defined a preliminary scope for the project. The committee has retained the services of Quality Based Selection, an organization which, at no charge, helps building committees go through the process of selecting an architect. After advertising, 11 responses so far received from architects should result in a selection by March 15.

The committee members have agreed on the following to be included in the scope of the project: 1) a gymnasium/multipurpose room with stage and bleachers that can be closed off from the school for community use; 2) additional, flexible classroom space; 3) reclamation

of storage space currently used for classrooms; 4) improved parking space and traffic flow; 5) a larger kitchen; and 6) consideration of purchase of land by the town for future expansion and larger athletic fields.

Other ideas are under consideration. One is to create space under the gymnasium for a meeting room, a music room, bathrooms, kitchen, and storage. This would create enough flexible space to stave off any need for future building, cut down on sprawl, and provide an interesting complex for after-hours use by the community. The committee is also discussing space for a lunchroom.

At the March 3 Town Meeting (CCS, 7:30 P.M.), committee members will give an update on activities so far, and welcome feedback and suggestions regarding the project.

—Anne Kosciusko and Phil Hart, Co-Chairs, CCS Building Committee

A Two-Track Life

Maureen Berescik, interim principal at CCS, says that she leads a two-track life, balancing her work as a sculptor with her school administration job. She studied art at Pratt Institute in New York City and served an internship at the Wadsworth Atheneum in Hartford. While working as an art teacher and with gifted children, she was offered a chance to study school administration. Even-

tually she received a doctorate in administration from UConn.

She served as an administrator in Cheshire High School and school district for nine years. This is the first time she has administered an elementary school and she is happy to broaden her experience by working with younger students.

Ms. Berescik has a son at Kent School and a daughter at Drew University in New Jersey. Her home is in Simsbury, from which she commutes every day. She loves the beauty of Cornwall and the fine interaction between the school and the community. She wants to facilitate community involvement and hopes parents will feel free to drop in any time to meet her.

—Bee Simont

New Movers and Shakers

The Board of Selectmen has updated the list of town board and commission members and town officials. The enclosed insert reflects the results of the municipal elections last November and subsequent appointments and reorganizations.

Two chairpersons have been reelected: Katherine Gannett, Board of Education; and Ralph Gold, Board of Finance. Celia Senzer was elected vice chair of the Board of Finance.

Richard Lynn takes over as chair while Anne Kosciusko continues as vice chair of Plan-

(continued on page 2)

MARCH 2000

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
March Art in Cornwall: National Iron Bank Artist of the Month—Gary Barron Cornwall Library—Susan Gallo's Show Through March 11: CCS Students' Show Opens March 13 Wish House—M. I. Cake's Show Continues Through March (p.4)			1 Play Group 10–11:30 A.M. Every Wed. St. Peter's Ch. Cub Scout Parents Meeting 7 P.M. UCC Parish House	2 School Building Comm. 7:30 P.M. CCS	3 Preschool–K Story Hour 10 A.M. Library Farm Forest Open Space Group 5:30 P.M. CCS Library Town Meeting 7:30 P.M. CCS (p.3)	4 Cornwall Village Improvement Society 4 P.M. Town Hall (p.3)
5 Stretch Exercise Every Sunday 10 A.M. Town Hall	6 Last Day for Unaffiliated Voters to Register in Either Party—Until Noon, Town Office Bd. of Selectmen 7:30 P.M. Town Hall	7 Presidential Preference Primary 6 A.M.–8 P.M. Town Hall Inland Wetlands 7:30 P.M. Town Hall Park & Rec. 7:30 P.M. Town Office	8	9 Cornwall Housing Corp. 4:15 P.M. Kugeman Village Bd. of Ed. Presents Budget to Bd. of Finance 7:30 P.M. CCS Library	10 Preschool–K Story Hour 10 A.M. Library Park & Rec. Game Night 7–9 P.M. W. C. Firehouse	11 Cornwall Association 10 A.M. UCC Day Room
12 Puppet Theatre and Workshop 3 P.M. Library (p.4)	13 Blood Pressure Screening 3–4 P.M. UCC Parish House P&Z 7:30 P.M. Town Hall	14 Cornwall Senior Club Speaker: Patrick Hare 2 P.M. Town Hall (p.4) CCS PTA 7 P.M. CCS Democratic Town Comm. 7:30 P.M. Town Hall Housatonic River Comm. 7:30 P.M. CCS Library	15 Deadline: April Chronicle Copy Bd. of Assessment Appeals Hearings 9–11:30 A.M. Town Hall	16 Bd. of Assessment Appeals Hearings 5:30–8 P.M. Town Hall Bd. of Ed. 5 P.M. CCS Library Bd. of Finance 7:30 P.M. CCS Library	17 Preschool–K Story Hour 10 A.M. Library Bd. of Assessment Appeals Hearings 1–3:30 P.M. Town Hall	18 Bd. of Assessment Appeals Hearings 10 A.M.–1 P.M. Town Hall
19	20 Friends of Cornwall Library 4 P.M. UCC Day Room Region One Bd. of Ed. 7 P.M. HVRHS Library	21 Bd. of Selectmen 9 A.M. Town Hall School Building Comm. 7:30 P.M. CCS	22 Green Party 7:30 P.M. Town Hall	23 Library Trustees 4:30 P.M. Library Republican Caucus and Republican Town Comm. 7:30 P.M. Town Hall (p.4)	24	25 Wine Tasting to Benefit Extras for Kids 4–6 P.M. Cornwall Inn (p.4)
26	27 ZBA 7:30 P.M. Town Office	28	29 Cub Scouts Pack 15 Family Supper, Cafe by the Bridge Cornwall Vol. Fire Dept. 8 P.M. W. C. Firehouse	30 	31	

(continued from page 1)

ning and Zoning. Richard Bramley becomes chair of the Board of Assessment Appeals.

New appointments include Ian Elwell and Stephen Senzer as alternates on P&Z, and Celia Senzer as an alternate on Inland Wetlands. On Park and Recreation, Debra Morehouse is now serving as full member.

There are open positions for two alternates on Park and Rec. and one on Inland Wetlands. Anyone interested in serving on these boards is encouraged to contact the Board of Selectmen's office.

—Stephen Senzer



P&Z—Purpose and Zeal

Perhaps the most important official body in town during times of growth and change is the Planning and Zoning Commission. Required by statute to update town plans every decade, and challenged every month to deal with requests ranging from the routine (a garage to be built) to the contentious (where should businesses—or telecommunications towers—be permitted), serving on the commission demands patience and dedication (along with thick skins) from its members.

Cornwall can take pride in noting that the commission's work has been marked by cooperation among its members (no politics here), by their willingness to give time and energy to their duties, and by the responsible leadership of chairpersons—most recently Bill Lyon and his predecessor, Ginny Potter, and by Rick Lynn, the present chair, whose education, training, and environmental concerns strengthen the work of the commission.

A biology major in college, Rick earned a master's degree in environmental planning from Syracuse University. For eight years he worked for the Kingsmark Environmental Review Team in Warren and has served as senior planner with the Housatonic Valley Association. During the last 12 years he has been Regional Planner for the Litchfield Hills Council of Elected Officials.

Rick considers the basic goals of the recent Town Plan to be of continuing importance—namely, maintaining the rural character of the town while strengthening its economy. Commission members are now prioritizing the 25 recommendations regarding land use contained in the Town Plan. A major issue is the proliferation of cellular phone towers. While government regulations do not allow banning of towers, P&Z regulations can determine where they may reasonably be sited. The commission is reviewing its land use regulations to deal with such challenges.

—Steve Senzer and Ken Keskinen

Cornwall Association Wants You

When a building boom in the mid-80s threatened to spin out of control, a group of concerned citizens came together to see what could be done to deal with town growth. When formalized, their goal was "to preserve Cornwall's historic and rural character consistent with the...economic needs of the town and its people," and to "foster [the Cornwall] sense of community." From this simple framework the activist Cornwall Association evolved.

A few of the successful projects that the Cornwall Association initiated or was instrumental in bringing about have been the following:

- Formed the recently rejuvenated Cornwall Land Trust in the mid-80s.
- Shared, with the Republican and Democratic Town Committees, in the start-up costs of the *Cornwall Chronicle* in 1991.
- Hired an estimator to come up with realistic costs for each of the many plans proposed for the Library/Town Hall separation when the issue was becoming more divisive and cloudy by the minute in 1997.
- Conceived of, promoted, and brought off the two-day Cornwall Town Profile last fall which resulted in five proactive working groups.
- Financed the January *Chronicle* insert (put together by one of the profile committees) that listed 17 community service organizations, their purposes and needs.

Current officers of the Association are Lori Welles, President; Will Calhoun, Vice President; Paul Baren, Secretary; and Hector Prud'homme, Treasurer.

If you have a desire to give your love of Cornwall form and substance, the Cornwall Association is looking for you. Walk-ins at the bi-monthly meetings are more than welcome. (See *Chronicle* calendar for time and place.) Come in, sit back, see what's happening; or bring your ideas and pitch right in. A \$10 or greater response to the soon-to-appear-in-your-mailbox appeal makes you a voting member in good standing; your presence at meetings and activities makes you an active one.

—Scoville D. Soule



Welcome

Annika Jane to Ian and Mary Elwell

Good-Bye to Friends

Marguerite Becker

Camille Careme

Helen Nelson

Bertha Pelletier

Congratulations

Stanley J. Pochron to Margaret S. Rawson

Land Transfers

John J. O'Donnell to John D. and Anne G. Coffin, house and 15.6 acres on Cogswell Road for \$625,000.

Judith Seaton Gates to 2829 4th Ave LLC, house and land at 340 River Road for \$380,000.

Caryn Johnson to Kathleen Tracy O'Flinn, house and 12.8 acres at 344 Cream Hill Road for \$915,000.

Arthur Scott Kegelman and Debreh J. Gilbert to Andrew Stathopoulos and Phillippa Durrant, 14.06 acres on Whitcomb Hill Road for \$85,500.



Those Insomniac Bears

Although bears are expected to sleep in the winter, there have been sightings around Cornwall lately of bears that were definitely awake. The Thitcheners on Cream Hill had a large and imposing one in December right up against the sliding glass doors at the back of their house, and Bob Beers, also on Cream Hill, had a visiting bear on the small back porch outside his kitchen in sub-zero weather in February. Bob's even came back the next night and deposited scat on the porch.

According to Rick Stone, Cornwall's Animal Control Officer who said that there had been several other bear sightings this winter, "December was so warm, I think the bears got a little confused and hadn't gotten down to sleep really soundly even in January or early February."

Wildlife biologist Paul Rego of the state Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) explained that there is considerable variation among bears about when they den in the winter, and even after they do "they can be disturbed from their den sites by loud noises such as snowmobiles." "Usually they will find another den fairly quickly," Rego said, and resume their winter's sleep.

The DEP now asks that all bear sightings be reported to (860) 424-3333. —Barbara Klaw

Our Busy Historians

As usual, the Cornwall Historical Society has been closed for the winter since November. But in the hiatus between Thanksgiving and Memorial Day—when the Society's headquarters on Pine Street will open its first exhibit of the year—its members have been busy on two important projects.

One is a long-awaited inventory of the

Society's possessions, ranging from a collection of tools to a wardrobe of costumes and clothing from the past. Also to be catalogued, with backup from the Society's newly acquired computer, are numerous archives—papers, letters, memorabilia. Anyone interested in helping with the inventory or its computerized aspects should get in touch with the president, Jim Gold (672-6492).

One of the Society's most extensive collections is the focus for the other major project. A photographic archive consisting of some 2,000 images will furnish the contents of a 102-page book tentatively titled *Cornwall in Pictures: 1868-1941*. The time frame reflects the scarcity of photographic images before the 1860s and the great changes wrought during World War II and the postwar years. A second volume covering the period from the war to the present is a possibility. In the meantime, anyone who would like to contribute pictures from the earlier era should call Maureen Prentice (672-0135) or Alec Frost (672-1113).
—Charles Osborne



Events & Announcements

Special Town Meeting: On March 3, at 7:30 P.M. at the Cornwall Consolidated School, four items will be presented for approval by voters: 1) to grant private easement to owners of the Lawrence property on Ballyhack Road to use the old town road bed for access; 2) to enact an ordinance whereby the town's Building Official may withhold approval of a building application when taxes are delinquent for the property for which such application is made; 3) to allow the Superintendent of Schools to apply to the Commissioner of Education for a grant to reimburse the town for part of the costs of renovating CCS; and 4) to authorize the School Building Committee to prepare drawings and specifications, and to file notice of the project with the State Board of Education.

An informational update on the progress of the CCS Building Committee will also be presented.

The Search Committee for a new principal for CCS will consist of two parents (Joy Marino, Don Bardot), two community members (Bob Potter, Carla Bigelow), two school board members (Katie Gannett, Barbara Gold), three teachers (Cathy Binkowski, Darleene Wadhams, Jo Ann Loi), one staff member (Martha Bruehl), and ex-officio member, Dr. John O'Brien. The deadline for applications for the job of principal was February 25.

The Cornwall Village Improvement Society meeting on Saturday, March 4, at 4 P.M. at the Town Hall is open to everyone. On the agenda is discussion of the beautification of Cornwall Village: maintenance of trees, lawns, and upcoming projects for everyone to enjoy.

Letters to the Chronicle

TOWER POWER

I recently got a letter from my Cornwall Bridge neighbor Bill Nimkin who lives off Swift's Bridge Road and has a wonderful view of the Housatonic from his house. "Dear John," wrote Bill, "I received the enclosed letter last week. I don't intend to respond. Obviously, I am not interested in having an antenna tower on my property, but I may not be the only landowner in Cornwall who got one."

Well, darn it, I didn't get a letter! And just listen to this: if my friend Bill Nimkin (no spring chicken) was willing and could somehow manage through diet, prayer, and exercise to live another 50 years, he would receive—according to Joe Duva, site acquisition specialist for the American Tower Company—a total of \$913,667.32 in rental fees. As spelled out by Mr. Duva, Bill would get rental money of \$9,000 a year for the first five years, finally ending up for the years 46 through 50 with an annual rental totaling \$31,660.89.

WOW! WOW! WOW! Billy, go for it. With that kind of money, you'll soon learn to enjoy that big, ugly tower blocking your view of the Housy River, which, after all, is just a bunch of old rocks with some water trickling over them. And, anyway, General Electric's already screwed up the water. Now, I do have a pianist friend who thinks those towers likely cause cancer but I'll keep her away from you.

Through the incredible generosity of Mr. Duva and this patriotic-sounding American Tower Corp., citizen Bill Nimkin could well afford all the important things he will need in order to stay alive for another 50 years: round-the-clock nursing, oxygen tents, hourly injections of vitamin and mineral supplements, and he'll be so blind that his great-grandchildren will have to tell him about how his once-beloved view has been fouled just so people with cell phones can call home from Baird's to say the store is out of The New York Times and bananas and could they make do with The Hartford Courant and apples.

Bill actually had more to say in his letter: "I am concerned that some people might be willing to have a tower on their property. Should the Cornwall Association be alerted? The Selectmen? Is there anything we—those who don't want a tower in Cornwall—should be doing now?"

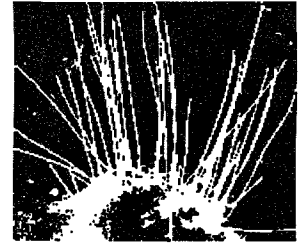
Bill, relax. I hear that the Zoning Board of Appeals is absolutely incorruptible.

—John Miller

PUT AWAY THE SUGAR BOWL

Although a man of few words by nature, I feel compelled to share some of my thoughts after reading the CCS students' predictions for the future of Cornwall in the February issue of the Chronicle. My reaction to the article was one of predictable disappointment and concern.

It seems all too clear to me that today's children continue to be funneled in the direction of the "bigger, faster, more is better" mentality



while mankind continues to overpopulate and kill the land. What has happened to living in "reality"—in balance with the natural rhythms of creation and in accordance with prudent limits? Perhaps it is time to put away the sugar bowl, return to the meat and vegetables, and stress the simple, timeless truths as written in the Bible.

Let's get our children back to the basics and stop perpetuating the "necessities" which create the need for unnatural "inventions."

—Brian M. Heaphy

MUCH ADO ABOUT SOMETHING

It is indeed a good thing that the Route 7 gravel mine has been finally restored and sold to the Appalachian Trail Trust. The vast majority of those opposed to the mine (both individuals and organizations) expressed reasoned concern because of facts that came to light during an examination of the mine proposal. Two of these facts need to be highlighted.

1. The Route 7 mine should have been closed and restored long before this controversy began. Rocky River, LLC, the previous owners of the mine, had managed to escape through bankruptcy court their responsibilities to restore the mine. This fact fueled a healthy and rational skepticism, and raised doubts that our town's special-permit process could not, in the end, sufficiently safeguard reasonable conditions on the mine's future operation and restoration in this environmentally sensitive area.

2. Our town is blessed with the second largest potable aquifer in the state; the largest is already contaminated. This resource, which presently stabilizes the health of the Housatonic River and provides safe drinking water to both residences and businesses in the area, was at genuine risk for contamination during the entire period the mine was open and being operated. Ultimately, the town wisely decided to eliminate the Industrial Residential Zone in this area, in large part to protect this natural valuable resource from potential and irreversible damage.
—Jed Struckus

FROM OUR CVFD

We were all extremely gratified by your response to our recent appeal for support of the Cornwall Volunteer Fire Department. In fact, donations are still coming in, even though the holiday decor is largely back in storage until next winter. This type of outpouring enables your neighbors—our volunteers—to continually upgrade the health and home protection services the Cornwall community has enjoyed for more than two-thirds of a century.

—Steve Hedden, President

—Ron Laigle, Sr., Chief

Editors' Note: donations to CVFD are welcome at any time, and can be sent to P.O. Box 180, West Cornwall, CT 06796.

(continued from page 3)

Exercise Clinics: Reservations should be made in March for the spring Bend & Stretch clinics for seniors to be offered by Visiting Nurse and Home Care Northwest. The program includes balance exercises, weight training, moving and stretching, and group discussion on personal experiences and fear of injury. The clinics will be conducted by Ruthellen Griffin, dance therapist, assisted by Joseph Gwazdauskas, registered physical therapist. The free clinics will be held at the UCC Parish House on six consecutive Tuesdays, 9:30 to 10:30 A.M., beginning on April 4. Space is limited; for reservations, call the VNA at 567-6000.

Cornwall Senior Club: At its meeting on Tuesday, March 14 the guest speaker will be Patrick Hare, author of *Creating an Accessory Apartment*. Pat was a planning consultant based in Washington, D.C., and is a nationally known authority on accessory apartments. This topic should interest homeowners who want to turn extra space into extra income. The meeting will begin at 2 P.M. in the Town Hall and is open to all.

Art in Cornwall: At the Cornwall Library, Susan Gallo's show of Spirit Sticks will continue through March 11. After that, the Library will host the annual show of work by CCS students, March 13 to April 9. At the National Iron Bank, the artist of the month will be Gary Barron. At the Wish House, M. I. Cake's show of Constructed Images will continue through March.

Wine Tasting: Cornwall Extras for Kids will hold its annual wine tasting on Saturday, March 25, from 4 to 6 P.M. at the Cornwall Inn. Sample great wines selected by Richard Bramley and feast on hors d'oeuvres at the newly renovated Inn. Extras for Kids is a non-profit organization whose mission is to provide equal access to enrichment opportunities for the children of Cornwall. Tickets are available at the door: \$15 per person, \$25 per couple.



To Out-of-Town Subscribers

If you receive the *Chronicle* at an address outside of Cornwall, please remember that we ask a \$10 per year contribution to help cover our mailing costs. We don't send renewal notices, but the date in front of your name on the mailing label indicates the expiration date of your subscription. Thanks for your help in keeping current.

Yes, I want the *Chronicle* to continue.

Here is my tax-deductible contribution of: \$ _____

Name _____

Address _____

City/St/Zip _____

Please mail the *Chronicle* to the out-of-town address above; a \$10 contribution will be appreciated.

Puppet Theatre at the Library: On Sunday, March 12 at 3 P.M., the Cornwall Library will present The Ivy Vine Players Puppet Theatre, a show of songs and stories for all ages. The Ivy Vine Players have performed on National Public Radio and appeared at arts festivals, schools, and libraries in Scotland, New Zealand, and along the East Coast. Following the performance, at 3:45 P.M., Grian MacGregor, puppeteer and artist, will lead an easy puppet-making workshop for children and their parent helpers. Please call (672-6874) or come to the Library to register for the workshop and pick up the short materials list. Free.

The Annual Child Center Benefit Auction will be held on Sunday afternoon, April 30, at the Mohawk Ski Lodge. Anyone with items, services, or ideas to contribute please contact Emilie Pryor (672-4226) before March 18 or Jean Vitalis (672-6880) after March 18. Deadline date for the catalogue is April 7.

Tax Exemptions: Cornwall homeowners 65 and older on December 31, 1999, 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 their total income, including Social Security, must be less than \$23,900 if single or \$29,300 if married.

Applications may be filed in the Assessor's Office until May 15. If approved, credits will apply to July billings. Once on the program, reapplication is every two years. Forms have been mailed to homeowners who must reapply this year.

Persons of all ages currently receiving a veteran's exemption may be eligible for an additional exemption if they meet the above income requirements. Application period for inclusion on the October 1, 2000, Grand List is from February 1 to October 1, 2000. Application forms are available from the Assessor's Office: open Tuesdays and Thursdays, 9 A.M. to noon and Wednesdays, 1 to 4 P.M.

Cornwall Inn Reopening: Cornwall Inn Inc. announces the purchase and renovation of the Inn, on Route 7 in Cornwall Bridge. The new owners are Tom McKenzie of Cornwall, Bill Capozzi of Roxbury, and Larry and Carol O'Toole of Washington Depot. The restaurant and tavern will reopen in early March. For more information or for reservations, call 672-6884.

An Early Spring Concert given by our local a capella choral group, Northwest Passage, will be held at Cornubia Hall on Saturday, April 8, 4:30 P.M. Tickets are \$5.00 each, \$10.00 family rate, and can be purchased at the door. Refreshments will follow the performance. Sponsored by Park and Rec.



Attention, Republicans: There will be a Republican Party Caucus on Thursday, March 23, at 7:30 P.M. at the Town Hall to endorse delegates to the Connecticut state and district conventions in July. Following the caucus, there will be a meeting of the Republican Town Committee to elect officers and appoint members to committees. The members of the Republican Town Committee are: Kenneth Baird, Vera Dinneen, Maureen Donahue, Adam Fischer, Barbara Gold, Charles Gold, William Gold, Tracy Gray, Donald Hedden, D. Stevenson Hedden, William Hurlburt, Brian Kavanagh, Anne Kosciusko, Norma Lake, James Levy, Debra Morehouse, J. W. Preston, Lynn Scoville, and Huntington Williams.

Sixty-Plus Wellness Screening: Cornwall residents age 60 and over may now make appointments for comprehensive health screening scheduled for Tuesday, April 18. A wide range of tests are offered, including hearing, vision, glaucoma, blood, and stool tests; urinalysis; electrocardiogram; blood pressure; pap/pelvic/prostate exams; diabetic and hypertension counseling; health history, and a review of medications. This is a special service for senior citizens regardless of income level. A \$20 donation is suggested. For more information and an appointment, call Municipal Agent on Aging, Jill Gibbons, at 672-2603.

CORNWALL CHRONICLE

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