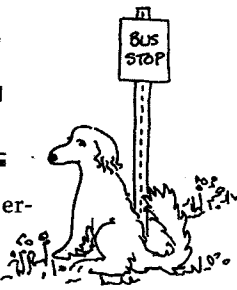




# CORNWALL CHRONICLE

VOLUME 9 : NUMBER 8 SEPTEMBER 1999



## Hearing on CCS Expansion

At a public hearing on August 4, an audience of about 50 Cornwall residents voiced general support for the CCS Study Committee's proposals to expand the school by adding five new classrooms and a new and significantly larger gym/auditorium. Applause for the proposals came after presentations by several committee members, including Principal William Oros, School Board member Barbara Gold, Brian Kavanagh and Annie Kosciusko. First Selectman Gordon Ridgway told of possible approaches to expanding the cramped school site by relocating part of Cream Hill Road or buying land adjacent to the existing playing fields.

Items of discussion at the meeting included questions as to why, given 10-year enrollment projections ranging from 177 to 217 pupils, the committee decided on a 250-pupil design target. Bill Oros said that the projections were based on "a small sample of items" and that therefore "a more reasonable estimate... would be in the range of 200 to 235 students." A graphic comparison of the size of Cornwall's school gym with those of the five other Region One towns seemed to satisfy most of those present at the hearing of the need to expand the facility. Some opposition was expressed to the idea of re-routing

Cream Hill Road.

Study Committee Chair Ralph Gold noted that there would be another public hearing on September 24 to allow more people to express their views, after which a Town Meeting could be scheduled to act on the committee's suggestion of appointing a building committee to develop definite plans.

—David A. Grossman

## Could Be Worse

Compared to farms throughout the Northeast that are plowing under drought-killed crops and selling off cattle they can't water or feed, Cornwall farms are doing pretty well. And considering the acres of seemingly unquenchable brush fires burning above and below the parched ground, our town seems to have "dodged that bullet" also—so far.

Not that we are home free by any means. Hay and fodder yields for winter livestock feeding are down; some crops are stressed and stunted; irrigation ponds and even some wells are drying up; and our volunteer fire department has been called out 20 times in the last two months—four of those calls for brush fires requiring 48 hours of continuing surveillance.

Blame the emergency conditions all around us on El Niño, the ozone layer or Mother Nature, but save some of your ire for

the short-sighted underfunding of the Department of Environmental Protection. Lack of unmanned observation towers, inadequate availability of spotter and water-dropping planes, and uncataloged DEP equipment scattered here and there around the state where fire chiefs can't access it. However, here too, things aren't altogether bleak. Cornwall Fire Chief Ron Laige is working directly with the DEP and reports excellent cooperation and concern. Also First Selectman Gordon Ridgway has contacted State Senator Dell Eads with specific suggestions as to how the State can help us head off or contain spreading fires, and some action is expected.

What can we Cornwall citizens do? We can refrain from torching off open burn piles or campfires. We can gratefully buy our CVFD's (cow chip) raffle tickets. And we can pray for rain. (No lightning, please.)

—Scoville D. Soule

## CVFD Scholarship Fund

Gary Heprich probably had little idea of how much respect he'd achieved in his community during his brief lifetime. Now, his fellow firefighters and ambulance squad members in the Cornwall Volunteer Fire Department have created a not-for-profit

(continued on page 2)

# SEPTEMBER 1999

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
5 LABOR DAY		Cornwall Library Art Show Children's Paintings through September 25	1 Stretch Exercise 5-6:15 P.M. Every Wednesday, Town Hall School Starts (p.2) and Child Center Opens (p.4)	2 Book Lists Due Library (p.3)	3	4 Travel the World with Books Awards & Refreshments 11 A.M. Library (p.3)
	6	7 Cub Scout Roundup, Noon, CCS Cub Scout Sign Up 7 P.M., CCS Bd. of Selectmen, 7:30 P.M. W. Cornwall Firehouse Park & Rec. 7:30 P.M. Town Office Inland Wetlands, 8 P.M. Town Hall	8 Play Group 10-11:30 A.M. Every Wednesday St. Peter's Church (p.4) PTA, 7 P.M., CCS Library Cub Scout Sign Up, 7 P.M., CCS Parents' Night CCS Lower Grades	9 Cornwall Housing Corp. 4:15 P.M. Kugeman Village Cornwall Library Assn. Annual Meeting, 4:30 P.M., Library Parents' Night CCS Lower Grades	10	11 ROSH HASHANAH  Cornwall CUP Softball Games, CCS Field 1-5 P.M. (p.4)
12 Friends of the Library Annual Meeting, Rinker Buck Reading, 4:30 P.M., Library (p.4)	13 Cub Scout Pack 15 Parents' Meeting 7 P.M., UCC Day Room P&Z, 8 P.M. Town Hall	14 Housatonic River Comm. 7:30 P.M. CCS Library Democratic Town Comm. 7:30 P.M. Town Hall Republican Town Comm. 7:30 P.M. CCS	15 Deadline: October Chronicle Copy  Bd. of Ed. 5 P.M. CCS	16 Bd. of Finance 7:30 P.M. CCS Library	17 Bd. of Assessment Motor Vehicle Appeals 5:30-8 P.M. Town Office (p.4)	18 Agricultural Fair 1 P.M. Cornwall Green (see insert) Cub Scout Car Wash (p.4) Cornwall Assn. 4 P.M. Town Hall Cornwall Players 7:30 P.M. Cornubia Hall (p.3)
19	20 YOM KIPPUR  Region One Bd. of Ed. 7 P.M. HVRHS Library	21 Bd. of Selectmen 9 A.M. Town Hall	22	23 Library Assn. Trustees 4:30 P.M. Library	24 Cub Scout Pack 15 Meeting After School, CCS School Info. Meeting 7:30 P.M. CCS (p.4)	25 Friends of the Library Moyers PBS Film 8 P.M. (p.4)
26	27 Red Cross Blood Drive UCC Parish House 1:45-7 P.M. (p.4) Cornwall Library Art Show Mike Redmond (p.4) ZBA 8 P.M. Town Hall	28 New Voter Registration Town Office 10 A.M.-2 P.M. (p.3)	29 Cornwall Vol. Fire Dept. 8 P.M. W. C. Firehouse	30	October 1 Preschooler Story Hour 10-11 A.M., Library	

(continued from page 1)

scholarship trust in the name of their late Chief, with generous support from the Hepprich family and others in the community.

The Gary Hepprich Memorial Scholarship Fund will provide incentive and benefit to other volunteers in the CVFD and educational support for members of their families. Department members who maintain their active status will be able to apply for financial support for dependents who are full-time students in good standing at any accredited college, university, or trade school. Aid will be provided from the annual earnings of the trust, which has been created by combining memorial contributions for Gary with Bridge Dance proceeds and other CVFD funds to provide about \$50,000 in seed money.

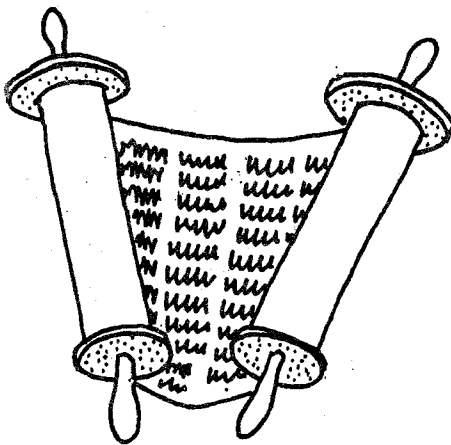
As with any charitable trust, the success of this endeavor will depend on continuing community support. Donations and inquiries may be addressed to the Gary Hepprich Memorial Scholarship Fund, CVFD, P.O. Box 180, West Cornwall, CT 06796.

—Steve Hedden

## CCS Opens September 1

Classes begin at CCS on Wednesday, September 1. Principal Bill Oros expects a student body of about 205, up a few from last year's 202. And there will be two temporary changes in the faculty: art teacher Mark Alexander fills in for Cynthia Jerram who is taking a leave, and then, in October, music teacher Jay Bradley takes over for Alicia Simonetti-Shpur, who goes on maternity leave. Meanwhile, over the summer, Mr. Oros and school custodian Pete Selino completed wiring the school for computers. All classrooms are now linked, and there is a new computer lab in the library. One other note: the annual open house for parents to meet with teachers takes place on Wednesday and Thursday, September 8 and 9.

—John Miller



## Covered Bridge Repairs Planned

Extensive repairs are planned for West Cornwall's 135-year old covered bridge early next year, engineers from the State Department of Transportation announced at a July 21 Town Hall hearing. The repairs won't affect the much-loved appearance of the

bridge, but should reduce greatly the continuing cost and inconvenience of maintenance. Virtually all surfaces will be replaced, including the deteriorating wall siding, roof shingles and roadway. All are in bad shape from wear and weather, including many installed just a decade ago.

The planned state contract will allow the contractor to close the bridge to traffic twice, once for three days and again for five, but never on weekends. Based on current schedules, the first closing may come next February and the second in late March.

The dozen citizens and town officials at the hearing asked about many aspects of the state plan. Open issues yet to be decided include whether the bridge's randomly-spaced windows should remain or be evened out and lowered so people can look out, and what kind of improved lighting would be most desirable.

—David A. Grossman

## Library Funding Moving Ahead

Progress on Cornwall's new library continues apace. On July 19, the State Bond Commission voted a formal "yes" to the grant of \$462,000 given to the Library by the State Library Board last November. Library President Lisa Lansing Simont said credit for Cornwall's approval came largely because of the good efforts of Senator Dell Eads and Representative Andrew Roraback.

At the request of the library trustees, First Selectman Gordon Ridgway recently instructed Town Attorney Perley Grimes to start the formal process of revising the Calhoun Trust under which the town and the library now share a building. Court approval is necessary before the town pays \$250,000 to the library for its trust rights.

—Hanna Grossman

## No-Cost Housing Leases

The Cornwall Housing Corporation will soon lease the two remaining parcels in its Parcel Program, bringing the total of occupied lots to ten. Five of these are in a subdivision on Pierce Lane, and the rest are scattered from the southern end of Cornwall Bridge to the furthest reaches of North Cornwall. Parcel owners get no-cost 99-year leases on the land from the Cornwall Housing Corporation and either build or buy the house on it. They pay real estate taxes on both the land and the house.

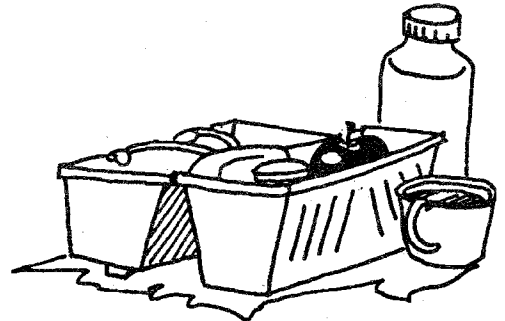
All occupants were Cornwall residents before entering the Parcel Program. Most lived in town for over seven years; two have lived here all their lives. Among them, ten families have 18 children, or about the average of 1.8 children per family throughout our region. Six children are preschoolers, and two (including a valedictorian) have graduated. Most of the adults work in Cornwall, the rest nearby.

People often wait until they are facing a housing crisis before applying for the Parcel Program, or for rental housing in Kugeman Village, which means they may have to move

out of town just as their names are rising on the waiting list.

CHC is interested in what people believe its focus should be in the coming years: More owner-occupied housing or more rental housing? Options for the elderly? Anyone with news of available land or buildings should call us at 672-6840.

—Peter Hammond



## Welcome

Ryan Preston to Kim Preston Dube and Normand Dube

Isabel Rose to Lynne and Joe Algrant

Jack Brendan to Maria Victoria and Richard Kling

## Good-bye to Friends

Hannelore Kearns

Maye Ronshaugen

Tilla Waterfield

## Congratulations

Joseph Cashman to Treasa Pattison

Daron Groop to Mary-Lee Clark

Robert Pequignot to Janice Pepper

## Land Transfers

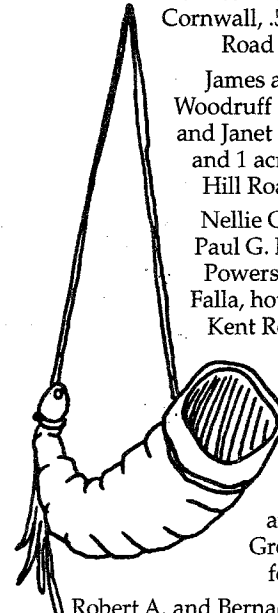
Bernice H. Merz to Town of Cornwall, .539 acres on Kent Road for \$12,000.

James and Geraldine Woodruff to David O. Scott and Janet B. Abischi, house and 1 acre at 231 Warren Hill Road for \$175,000.

Nellie G. Cavanaugh to Paul G. Murphy, Thomas Powers and Gustavo A. Falla, house and 5 acres on Kent Road for \$135,000.

Samuel A. and Lynn L. Waterston to James and Geraldine Woodruff, house

and 5.3 acres at 106 Great Hollow Road for \$220,000.

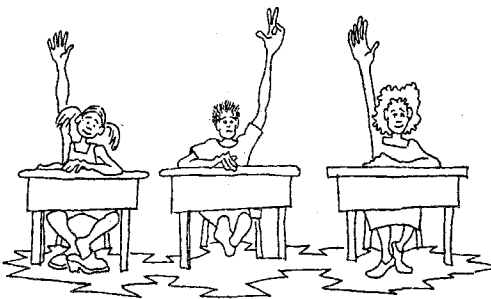


Robert A. and Bernadette Gandolfo to Eugene A. and Valene T. Cornelius, 5.727 acres at Kent and Whitcomb Hill Roads for \$100,000.

**Events & Announcements**

**Help Eradicate Land Mines!** On Saturday, September 18, at 7:30 P.M. in Cornubia Hall, the Cornwall Players, under the direction of Jean Leich and Ken Keskinen, will present a variety of dramatic readings, plus elegant musical selections by Anne Chamberlain at the Steinway, for the benefit of the "adopt-a-minefield" campaign of the Northwest Connecticut Chapter of the United Nations Association. Admission \$10; call 672-6193 for details.

**Calling All Kids—Book Lists Needed!** Bring or send your list of ALL the books you read this summer to the Cornwall Library by September 2 for the Summer Reading Program's final tally. Generous sponsors will donate \$1 toward the new library for each book. Prizes and certificates will be awarded at the library on Saturday, September 4, at 11 A.M. to all who participated in Travel The World With Books by keeping reading logs. Refreshments available!



**Assessment Exemptions:** Property owners whose land is used by farmers may be eligible for a reduction in assessment on the acreage used. Anyone currently receiving this classification need not reapply unless the acreage or the farmer changes.

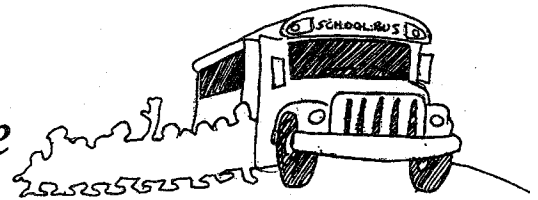
Veterans of military service during time of war may be eligible for an exemption of \$2,000 on their property.

Persons receiving total disability benefits from Social Security are entitled to a \$1,000 exemption.

Call the Assessor's Office at 672-2703 on Tuesday and Thursday between 9 A.M. and noon or on Wednesday between 1 and 4:30 P.M. for deadlines and more information.

**Register to Vote in the November Municipal Elections:** The Registrars of Voters will be available on September 28 and October 6 at the Town Office from 10 A.M. to 2 P.M. to register new voters. Absentee ballot applications for the November 2 elections are now available to electors who can't vote in person on Election Day. Get them at the Town Clerk's Office Monday to Thursday, 9 A.M. to 4 P.M. The Registrars will hold a lottery for name placement on the ballot for multiple opening offices in the November election on September 15 at 10 A.M. at the Town Clerk's Office. All are welcome.

**Letters to the Chronicle**



**THREE BIG QUESTIONS**

*One of the best ways to frustrate a committee is to vote against its recommendations without having given any indication you were going to do so, or why. I have too much respect for the people on the School Strategic Study Committee and for the good work they have done on the town's behalf to let this happen.*

*If I were to vote today I would vote against forming a building committee and hiring an architect until we, ourselves, have a better grasp on what we actually need and can afford. My reservations are threefold:*

1. I question the committee's pupil population projections. Historically, our CCS population has had both peaks and valleys (e.g., 210 in 1967 and 80 in 1984). Granted, projection figures can not be expected to be exact, but throwing out the state's projections arrived at by "statistical methodology" in favor of figures that more nearly support the recommendation makes me uneasy.

2. Further, I am concerned that adding much more classroom space would, in itself, encourage school population growth and/or expanded programs beyond what is reasonable for a town our size to support. We could well be in danger of creating a self-fulfilling prophesy with a life of its own.

3. If we were to go ahead with a sizable building project on our current facility, we would almost certainly preclude the formation of a regional middle school within the next 20 to 30 years. (The likelihood of a town our size participating in a third bond issue when two others are still unpaid would be nil.) A middle school, if we could plan ahead with two or three other area towns for one, would give us more flexibility in the future. (How many more times can we expand on site?) If we were to have only six grades in the present facility, CCS would be better able to maintain the advantages of being a small, intimate country school.

I hope this letter gets more citizen discussions going concerning the committee's recommendations. It is not fair to this committee or to a new building committee to have them carry the decision burdens alone in a vacuum of public opinion, and not wise of us to let them move ahead unquestioned. —Scoville D. Soule

**RUMMAGE RESULTS**

*The 1999 rummage sale is over! Despite the oppressive heat and never ending supply of donations, which we know would never find room to be shown, our more than faithful volunteers persevered. We passed our goal of \$15,000, but final figures are not yet available.*

*Unsold linens were given for Kosovo housing; clothes to Susan B. Anthony, Canaan Thrift Shop, The Bargain Box; baby clothes to the Navaho Indians, Waterbury Recycling, Salvation Army, St. Bridget's Church. Small items were*

*given to local libraries and books to the UConn book sale.*

*Many thanks to all who helped.*

*—Thalia Scoville*

**HIT THE BRAKES!**

*Someone will soon be killed on Great Hollow Road or on Town Street or on Lake Road or Great Hill Road.*

*Cars are speeding all over town and if sanity doesn't prevail, there will soon be a disaster. If this sounds a bit hysterical it's because I have had a number of near misses this summer. Our house is just south of the curve on Great Hollow near Essex Hill Road. The curve has had its share of victims, including a fatality a few years ago. The utility pole that edges on to the curve has had to be replaced a few times after cars have wrapped themselves around it. We constantly hear the sound of screeching brakes as drivers find themselves in trouble hitting the curve at unreasonable speeds. Likewise, driving south, they misjudge the severity of the curve and run up onto our driveway entrance.*

*PLEASE SLOW DOWN!!! —Dick Frank*

**ROADS SCHOLAR**

*Two amazing street signs have appeared at the intersection of Routes 4 and 125.*

*The sign on Route 4 reads "Cemetery [sic] Hill Rd." The sign facing Route 125 reads "Granger Hall Rd.," which, of course, should be Grange Hall Rd.*

*Certainly Cornwall, widely known as the home of writers, editors, educators, as well as the famous Cornwall Consolidated School, deserves better street signage.*

*—Ann Peterson*

**40<sup>TH</sup> ALGRANT ART SHOW**

*In 1959, Rose Algrant suggested to several of her artist friends, "Do a picture of me!" Rose was not the retiring type; she decided to put on a show and exhibit her portraits, as well as other pictures by artist friends. Through the years her show grew from the original nine to more than 50 artists. It never entered Rose's mind to have a juried criterion, an exhibitor simply had to be her friend, or a friend of a friend, and live some of the time in Cornwall.*

*There were years when Rose had to look long and hard for a place to hold the show; I'm sorry she didn't live to see how lovely it looks in the Mohawk Ski Lodge.*

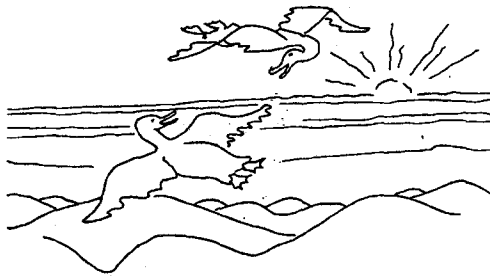
*This year's 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary show made \$8,400, of which the show keeps 15 percent. Along with the \$20 entry fees, we expect to pay expenses and donate \$2,000 to the Cornwall Library Capital fund.*

*—Bee Simont*

*Note to "A Cornwall Family": We'd like to print your letter but we have a policy against using unsigned letters. Please contact us.*

**"Cornwall Cup" Softball:** The annual softball games sponsored by the Drug & Alcohol Prevention Council will be held at the CCS field from 1 to 5 P.M. on Saturday, September 11. Players must be in the sixth grade or older. To sign up, call Bill Dinneen at 672-6740 (Cornwall Bridge), Dave Cadwell at 672-3283 (West Cornwall), or Craig Simons at 672-0111 (Cornwall Village). The first 20 to sign up will get free team T-shirts.

**Cornwall Play Group** will begin Wednesday, September 8, and will meet every Wednesday during the school year at 10 A.M. in the basement of St. Peter's Church. Children up to school age are welcome and should be accompanied by a parent or caregiver. A \$3 per month donation is requested to help cover costs. Call Deirdre Fischer at 672-1123.



**Second Hearing on CCS Expansion:** A second informational meeting on the proposed expansion of CCS classroom and gym space will be held at the school at 7:30 P.M. on September 24. Study Committee members will present summaries of their work. The PTA will provide free babysitting.

**A Red Cross Blood Drive** will be held on Monday, September 27, at the UCC Parish House on Bolton Hill Road from 1:45 to 7 P.M. For an appointment please call 672-6840, Monday to Friday, 9 A.M. to 1 P.M.

**CCS Class of 2000 Is Y2K Ready:** Eighth graders are selling a cotton royal blue T-shirt with "Cornwall 2000" written in gold letters across the pocket area for \$12. Proceeds go toward their class trip. Buy them at the Ag Fair, Town Office, school office, or call Cheryl Evans at 672-0094.

**The Friends of the Library Book Sale** will be held on Columbus Day weekend, October 9 and 10. Proceeds will go towards the annual operating expenses of the library. The Friends need donations of books, videos, tapes, and CDs and volunteers to sort on October 6, 7, and 8 and sell on the 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup>. Donations will be welcome at the library until October 1. Please call Celia Senzer at 672-6898.

**The Board of Assessment Appeals** will meet on Friday, September 17, at the Town Office from 5:30 to 8 P.M. to hear appeals about motor vehicle assessments. No appointment is necessary, but bring any relevant documentation.

**Delinquent Dogs:** There are still a number of dogs without 1999 licenses. A list of scofflaw owners and dogs is posted in the Town Clerk's Office. Liberate your dog. Buy a license. Fines are stiff for non-compliance and Rick Stone, Animal Control Officer, will be checking on your pooch.

**Art in Cornwall:** At the Cornwall Library, the exhibit of children's paintings continues through September 25. From September 27 to October 30 there will be a show of drawings of wildlife by Mike Redmond. At the Wish House, the show of Ella Crampton Knox's paintings will continue through October.

**Free Car Wash!** Cornwall's Cub Scouts will earn the cost of their visit to Boston's Science Museum by giving free car washes to all comers at the Ag Fair on September 18 from noon to 2 P.M. Also planned is a tug-of-war, a sponge fight, and a popcorn sale. You're welcome to watch the fun and get cleaned! Sponsors are needed to finance the car washes through donations. Please call Jim Levy at 672-6377 or Pat Hare at 672-2315.

**Fooling with Words with Bill Moyers,** a PBS poetry special directed by Catherine Tatge and produced by Dominique Lasseur, will have its premiere at a benefit for the Cornwall Library on Saturday, September 25, at 8 P.M. at the Library. Tatge and Lasseur will introduce the film. Tickets are \$10 at the door.

**Taconic Learning Center Fall Courses,** running from September 13 to December 17, feature three Cornwall professors. John Leich will teach *Beginning German* and *Great Decisions*. Ken Keskinen will co-teach *British Literary Lions* (with Doris Stoeker), and Scott Cady will coordinate a class on health care. Call 435-2922 for more information.

**Rinker Buck,** who in 1966, at the age of 15, flew coast-to-coast in a two-seat Piper Cub with his 17-year-old brother, will read from *Flight of Passage*, his critically acclaimed memoir, on Sunday, September 12, at 4:30 P.M. at the Cornwall Library. Admission is free and refreshments will be served. The author will sign copies of his book, which will be available for sale to benefit the Cornwall Library. The event is sponsored by the Friends of the Library and will be preceded by the Friends annual meeting, at which new board members will be elected.

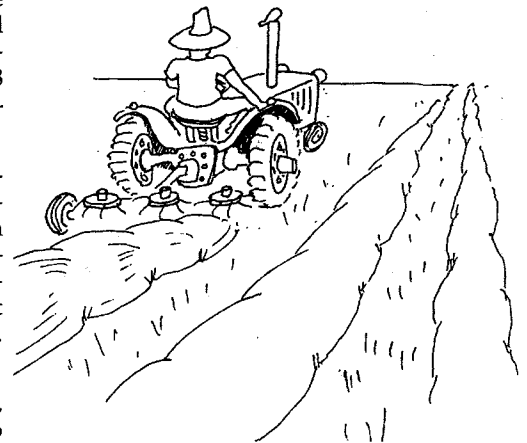
**Open Studio Tour I:** Seven steel totem poles created by David Colbert will be on display outside his studio on Bald Mountain Road (off Route 45) on Saturday, September 4, from 10 A.M. to 6 P.M.

**Open Studio Tour II:** Three 18-foot-high metal horse sculptures by Peter Busby can be viewed at his studio at 108 Pritchard Road (off Route 45) from 1 to 6 P.M. on Sunday, September 19.

**Cornwall's New Building Inspector** is Paul Prindle, who can be reached at 672-9711. He replaces William Jenks, who has resigned after 10 years.

**Medical Equipment:** The United Church of Christ in Cornwall, Congregational, has medical equipment to lend including electric hospital beds, bed tables, wheel chairs, walkers, shower seats, commodes, toilet seat extensions, and crutches. For more information, or to borrow equipment free of charge, please call the church office (672-6840) Monday through Friday, 9 A.M. to 1 P.M.

**The Northwest Corner Quilters** will have a display at the Ag Fair. They ask for loans of quilts for the show. Items can be brought to UCC September 18, from 10 A.M. to noon or call Corinne Levy, 672-6377, or Jill Gibbons, 672-0033, for pickup.



## CORNWALL CHRONICLE

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