



CORNWALL CHRONICLE



VOLUME 23 : NUMBER 3 APRIL 2013

Possible New Cornwall Trail

Cornwall, like any community, has its occasional issues. Remember the long battle several years ago over the school bond that eventually paid for the new gymnasium at CCS? It hung around for several years and was finally settled by a third town vote. Another Cornwall issue was what to do with our library: stay in town hall; purchase the old Marvelwood building or go for a brand new structure. The latter, happily, won the day. And then there was the verbal dueling over the Bonney Brook building for affordable senior apartments, currently under construction in downtown Cornwall Bridge. And let us not forget Sweet Peet: the smell, the trucks, the horror of it all!

We now have what appears to be another issue: no multi-million-dollar bond or a complicated zoning matter. This time it involves a possible 3-mile hiking/biking trail, an old town road, the railroad, and some private and state property.

A Board of Selectmen's meeting in early March seemed to take the possible issue of eminent domain out of the equation. The trail would connect West Cornwall and Cornwall Bridge, substantially following the old river road on the east side of the Housatonic and closely paralleling the railroad tracks. An existing trail already extends south from the Trinity property

through the state forest for one-and-a-half miles.

About 40 people attended the meeting, including John and Wallace Harding and their lawyer. The Hardings were there because the most direct and level southern end of the proposed trail would pass directly in front of their house. However, First Selectman Ridgway stated at the outset, and was backed by trail planner Pat Hare, that there would be no use of eminent domain or confiscation of private land. The project would face several structural problems due to streams and wetlands and narrow stretches that could require some chain-link fencing where the proposed trail and the railroad tracks would come fairly close to each other.

Some of the financing (80 percent) would come from a federal grant of which the deadline of March 29 was too close for the town to apply. So the Upper Housatonic Valley National Heritage Area agreed to be the applicant. Besides the hikers, runners, and bikers, the trail's staunchest supporters appear to be the business community that is convinced it would give a boost to Cornwall's sluggish economy and the Volunteer Fire Department that would have additional access to fight fires and make river rescues from the east bank of the Housatonic. There were also opponents in

the audience who thought the town had enough forest trails and wanted to know if there was a plan to operate and police the trail once it was in place. —John Miller

Bonney Brook on Target

Despite a snowy, frigid winter, it appears that the affordable housing project for independent seniors going up in Cornwall Bridge will get the checkered flag well before the October deadline.

I had a look around the skeletal interior of the structure in the company of construction manager Rich Banelli who told me there have been no unforeseen problems taming the rocky Cornwall site.

Still, the project seems far from the finish line. At present, with the exception of the elevator shaft, there are not even partitions dividing the forest of framing into separate spaces. Much remains to be done before the first senior can take up residence: Sheetrocking, utilities, insulation worthy of Energy Star certification, ductwork, landscaping, and more. Unfortunately, it appears it will not be done by our Cornwall subcontractors as the builder, Seymour-based Haynes Construction, has refrained from using any local talent.

While it is still premature for formal applications, it's not too early for interested

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APRIL 2013

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	1 ♦ Board of Selectmen 7:30 pm Town Hall ♦ Park & Rec 7:30 pm Town Hall	2 ♦ Senior Luncheon 11:30 am-1 pm Wandering Moose ♦ Republican Party Open Meeting 7 pm Library	3 ♦ Dance Film: <i>Appartement</i> 7 pm Library	4 4th Q	5	6 ♦ Artist's Reception Isabel Charlotte Lane 4-6 pm Library ♦ Cornwall Community Country Dance 7 pm Town Hall
7 ♦ Concert Lorraine & Bennett Hammond 2 pm Town Hall	8 ♦ Democratic Town Committee 7 pm Library	9 ♦ P&Z 7 pm Library	10 ♦ Board of Education 3:30 pm CCS Library	11 NEW	12	13 ♦ Cornwall Village Improvement Society 10 am Town Hall ♦ Breadmaking Workshop 10:30 am-1:30 pm Local Farm ♦ Big Little Kids Dance 4-5 pm Town Hall ♦ Film: <i>The Fallen Idol</i> 7:30 pm Library
14	15 ♦ Deadline: May <i>Chronicle</i> Copy	16 ♦ Mad Hatter Tea Party 2-5 pm Library ♦ Board of Selectmen 7:30 pm Town Hall	17 ♦ Pizza and Board Game Night 5-8 pm Library	18 1st Q	19	20
21 ♦ Artist's Reception Lisa Keskinen 11:30 am UCC Parish House	22	23	24	25 FULL	26 ♦ Board of Finance 7:30 pm CCS Library ♦ Town Budget Hearing 7:30 pm CCS	27 ♦ Art @ the Dump 10 am-4 pm Transfer Station ♦ Film: <i>The 400 Blows</i> 7:30 pm Library
28 ♦ Art @ the Dump 10 am-1 pm Transfer Station	29	30 ♦ Committee for Seniors 7-8 pm Library	Every Week This Month: Mondays: Yoga, 8:30-10 am Library; Yoga, 5:45-7 pm CCS Tuesdays: Adult Volleyball, 7:30 pm CCS gym Wednesdays: Tai Chi, 6-9 pm Town Hall; Karate, 6:30-7:30 pm CCS; Women's Basketball, 7:30 pm CCS gym Thursdays: Pilates, 8:30-9:30 am Library; Toddler Play Group, 10:30-11:30 am Library; Yoga, 5:30-6:30 pm Library Fridays: Yoga, 8:30-10 am Library Sundays: Yoga 9-10:30 am Library; Meditation, 1-2 pm, call Debra for location, 672-0229			

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parties to make inquiries to Elderly Health Management. This company, designated by the Cornwall Elderly Housing Corporation, will oversee all aspects of the application process, from screening to resident selection, and beyond. Contact the corporation by phone at 203-230-4809, ext. 1053, or email bonneybrook@ehmchm.org.
—Matt Collins

Pickles & Piety

As many as 25 jobs may become available in Cornwall if heretofore unpublicized negotiations succeed between the H.J. Heinz Company and Trinity Wall Street, owners of over 400 acres on the Housatonic River in West Cornwall.

Heinz, which was recently acquired by billionaire Warren Buffett for \$28.2 billion, is looking to expand its pickle operation located for over a century in Holland, Mich. Pickles are only one of Heinz's many products, the most famous being its ketchup, which is popular in millions of homes and restaurants the world over.

Anyone who has been to Holland, this writer included, has enjoyed the rather vinegary odor that wafts in all directions from the giant vat of pickling cucumbers that stands majestically on the outskirts of the town. If you love pickles you're bound to love the smell that some day may be wafting from our own West Cornwall pickle vat where Episcopalians once gathered quietly for conferences amid the splendid white pines and birches of the Trinity property.

Antonio Weiss, who weekends on Cherry Hill Road and brokered the deal between Buffett and Heinz, had no comment on the possibility of a Heinz pickle vat coming to West Cornwall.

First Selectman Gordon Ridgway learned about the negotiations from an aunt who summers in northern Michigan. He told the *Chronicle*, "The tax revenue would be a huge plus from our standpoint but we would need some assurance about the potential odor. Is it something that could reach as far as Cream and Dibble hills? How about the people dining at the outdoor tables at the Moose and RSVP in the summer?"

The *Chronicle* asked Moose proprietor Russ Sawicki about that issue and he thought the scent from a vat of pickles and vinegar might just give diners a positive boost to their appetites. "You can be sure," he said, "there would be a Heinz pickle to go with every luncheon sandwich platter on our menu." The Moose, for the record, is an exclusive user of Heinz ketchup. The response from Guy, the French chef at RSVP, was "Qu'est-ce que c'est, ketchup?" (Translation: What is ketchup?)

There is also a potential boon to local farmers who might be inclined to convert

their vegetable operations exclusively to cucumbers if they can make a special deal with Heinz to purchase their produce. Currently there are at least four such farms, but cucumbers are only one of many vegetables that are grown. This could change quickly if the negotiations between Heinz and Trinity succeed. —Peter Gherkin

About Lorraine Hammond

Cornwall native Lorraine Hammond, formerly Lorraine Choiniere, and her husband, Bennett, will give a concert and jam at town hall this month featuring songs that Lorraine learned growing up in Cornwall and others that she has written about her childhood here.

Lorraine grew up in Cornwall and Sharon. Her father, Joe, worked on the state highway department road crew; her mother, Eleanor, was famous in Cornwall for the cakes she baked for special parties and events. Lorraine grew up in a musical culture that was an important part of Cornwall life.

Today Lorraine and Bennett are internationally respected folk music performers who were described in the *Boston Globe* as a "Dazzling, witty, eclectic, delightful duo...gentle masters of folk melody." What follows is a brief interview with Lorraine:

Q: How would you describe the music of your childhood here?

A: My childhood was rich with people making their own music. There were square dances at Harts' barn, and families and friends gathered to sing and play. Twins Pat and Bidy Bierce played mandolin together. Their sister-in-law Sylvia Bierce played organ and directed the choir for the Second Congregational Church. I loved singing in that choir, loved the choir rehearsals at the Bierces' little house. Lots of playground singing games too.

Q: How have you been going about recovering that music?

A: Cornwall ballad singer Oscar Degreenia had some of his repertoire recorded by Vermont ballad collector Helen Flanders in the 1940s and 1950s. I remembered listening to him sing, and I discovered that his family was denied a copy of those recordings. My frustration at this injustice culminated in my enrollment in a master's program at Goddard College. There I studied folklore, ethnomusicology, and the politics of culture. My first agenda was the retrieval of those recordings. I succeeded, and brought a copy to Oscar and Etta's daughter Dolly Teer.

Q: What have you been doing to help pass it on here?

A: Cornwall cared deeply and well for both my parents, Joe and Eleanor Choiniere. After their

deaths in 2002 and 2003, I offered a homecoming concert at the town hall as a way to thank the town (and raise a little money for the library). My husband, Bennett, and I invited folks to bring along their instruments and jam with us later. That inspired Rachel Gall and some other players to create their own dance band and start up a whole new generation of Cornwall homemade music traditions. Soon after that I mentored Rachel in a National Endowment for the Arts apprentice program, and had the privilege of teaching her much of the music that I grew up with. We'll sit in with the dance band the night of April 6. —Jeremy Brecher

Goodbye to Friends

Scoville Soulé

Bill Nimkin

Jerome Mazurkewicz

Land Transfers

Andrew Groop to Garrick E. Dinneen and Elizabeth L. Saccardi, property with all buildings and improvements thereon at 38 Great Hollow Road, for \$150,000.

Salisbury Bank & Trust Company to Philip Taaffe and Gretchen Carlson, 11.165 acres on River Road, for \$135,000.

Cornwall Briefs

•**Pistol Packin' Mamas & Papas:** I'm not predicting Cornwall is about to become the scene of an Old West style shoot-em-up town like Tombstone, Ariz., but we are becoming a community with a whole new brace of pistol-packing citizens.

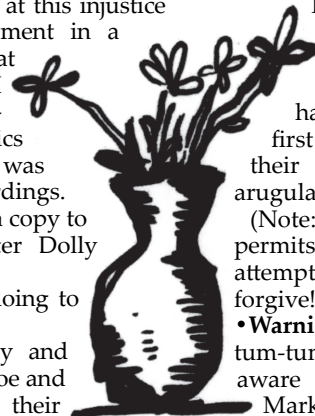
Go on, you say. Just listen to this, I say. First Selectman Wyatt Earp—I mean Gordon Ridgway—told me recently that there had been a huge jump in handgun permits in Cornwall. "We had four in '08, four in '09, five in '10, and just one in '11," he reported. But then, he continued, "17 last year with another eight applications pending so far in 2013."

I asked him if it was liberals or conservatives getting handgun permits but he didn't know. All right, I said, Democrats or Republicans? Still no answers.

I floated the thought that a cattle rancher like Sam Waterston or Bill Hurlburt might have it in for homesteaders like the first selectman or Butch Stevens and their fenced-in acres of corn and arugula. "Get out of my office," he said.

(Note: the first part of this about the permits is true. What followed was an attempt at early spring humor. Please forgive!)

•**Warning:** If you are carrying excess tum-tum or are a counter of calories, be aware that when the Cornwall Farm Market opens for business on



Letters to the Chronicle

EMINENT DOMAIN?

At the Cornwall selectmen's meeting of March 4, 2013, Gordon Ridgway and K.C. Baird stated that the town is not interested in any action to take our property by eminent domain for the HouBike Trail proposed by Pat Hare and Dan Bolognani from West Cornwall to Cornwall Bridge. The selectmen also stated the town would not be officially involved in the grant application or the 20 percent required grant matching fund.

Pat Hare, planner, and Dan Bolognani, executive director of the Upper Housatonic Valley National Heritage Area, did not answer the question when asked: Will you pursue taking of the Harding property by eminent domain for use as part of the HouBike Trail?

John and Wallace made their position clear: they will continue to fight for the right to keep their property which they have owned for 38 years. As Selectman K.C. Baird stated: The Hardings did not buy their property so that it could be taken for a bike trail. They bought it for their own private use.

Earl Brecher read his letter to the Cornwall selectmen opposing the bike trail.

The taking of private property by eminent domain is a very serious action. It is not just a Cornwall issue, but a state and national issue. You will, no doubt, remember the Supreme Court case of *Kelo v. New London, Conn.* and the nationwide backlash against eminent domain abuse.

Justice Sandra Day O'Connor wrote: "The specter of condemnation hangs over all property. Nothing is to prevent the state from replacing any Motel 6 with a Ritz-Carlton; any home with a shopping mall or any farm with a factory."

The taking of property by eminent domain for a bike trail? This specter of condemnation hangs over our property and your property. Protect your property rights by protecting our property rights. —John and Wallace Harding

DON'T NEED A BIKE TRAIL

The proposed riverside bike trail between West Cornwall and Cornwall Bridge is a bad idea. Bicyclists don't need it. The paved, 24-mile-long rail trail is already accessible at Amenias. The West Cornwall trailhead is on Trinity property. The Cornwall Bridge end risks the state taking private land. There is no parking at either end. The CVFD has fought one forest fire on Mine Mt., we don't need another. The 3-mile trail will skirt Cornwall's last virgin, inaccessible forest. Do we want motorcycles, quads, and snowmobiles up there? Let's not do this. Write Gordon. —Earl Brecher



TRAIL MISCONCEPTIONS

During the recent selectmen's meeting that addressed the proposed HouBike trail and in the days following, I have heard a lot of misinformation and oft-repeated red herrings. I'd like to address two: that those interested in advancing the trail are proposing a new cut across untouched land and that that cut would have a significant, negative environmental impact.

First, the proposed trail connecting West Cornwall and Cornwall Bridge would follow much of the old river road on the east side of the Housatonic that goes through the state forest and parallels the railroad tracks. When the railroad was built, there were still houses in that area that needed access to the two villages, the road continued end-to-end, and much of it can still be seen today. There is an existing parking lot just south of Trinity camp and a rather well-used stub

trail (following the old road) that continues about 1.5 miles south. The bulk of the trail initiative is to extend the existing trail the remaining 1.5 miles to Popple Swamp Road where it provides ready access to Cornwall Bridge village.

Second, several people have expressed concern that this trail crosses remote, unsullied, biologically diverse land. This ignores that there is already a railroad running through this land, that the trail would largely follow the path of an old road, and that the proposed trail never deviates more than 50 or 60 yards from the existing tracks. In addition to its recreational and commercial value, a trail through this corridor will also provide access for fire, rescue, and other emergency vehicles. —Johann Winsser

SUPPORTING THE HOUBIKE TRAIL

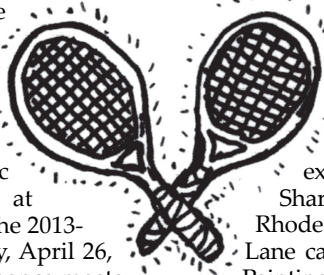
Last month, it was satisfying to have so many new supporters come to the selectmen's consideration of the HouBike Trail since we did nothing to get them there. The best way to picture the supporters' image of the proposed HouBike Trail between West Cornwall and Cornwall Bridge is to picture the rail trail between Amenias and Millerton. That trail, like our proposed trail, has no cars, no hills, is family friendly, and is great for local businesses. One difference will be that the HouBike Trail surface will be gravel or woodchips instead of asphalt. Also, instead of farm fields, the HouBike views will be of the Housatonic and of hardwood forests that have not been disturbed for 50 years, and probably more like 100 years.

The best way to think about John and Wallace Harding's "eminent domain" fear is to look at statements we have made that we have no intention of taking land by eminent domain. And, as Gordon Ridgway pointed out in the selectmen's meeting, to the best of his knowledge the town has never done so. Instead we are looking to negotiate a right-of-way or easement with the owner of a property uphill of the Hardings' that connects the state forest with Popple Swamp Road. We have discussed our plans with John from day one. —Pat Hare

Saturday, May 11, a new and dangerous element will be added to the goody mix: the delicious baked goods of my lovely Warren Hill neighbor Sue Saccardi. And on an added note, the Farm Market's housemother, Bianca Griggs, says that after an absence of several years, coffee will again be available with or without the Saccardi pastries. Life in Cornwall gets better and better (and much safer with all the pistols!).

•**Town Budget:** A public hearing is scheduled at Cornwall Consolidated on the 2013-2014 town budget on Friday, April 26, at 7:30 P.M. The Board of Finance meets on May 16 for final approval, followed the next evening, May 17, with a town meeting for an up or down vote on the budget.

—John Miller



Events & Announcements

Senior lunch: Don't be a stick in the mud. Come out to the senior luncheon on Tuesday, April 2, 11:30 A.M. to 1 P.M. for a fine lunch special and local gossip and compliments at the Wandering Moose Cafe. For more information call Jane Prentice at 672-6101.

Art in Cornwall

The library has an exhibition of paintings by Isabel Charlotte Lane. Inspired by the Rhode Island and Connecticut coast, Lane calls her exhibition *In Plein Air*; Paintings from the Shoreline. Her beautiful works capture panoramas of light and line. There is an artist's reception Saturday, April 6, from 4 to 6 P.M.

The Souterrain Gallery continues to

feature abstract works inspired by nature in oil on canvas by Shaun MacDavid and Polly Cook.

The Parish House will be displaying works by Lisa Keskinen. The exhibit's opening reception will be held on Sunday, April 21, at 11:30 A.M. at the UCC Parish House, 8 Bolton Hill Road.

Motherhouse Activities

On April 6, Cornwall Community Country Dance with teaching caller Fern Bradley, Still the Homegrown Band, and guest musicians Lorraine and Bennett Hammond, will be held at 7 P.M. at the town hall. Call Jane for info at 672-6101.

On April 13 an Old Style Life-Skills Series workshop *Serious Dough* will be held. Learn to make delicious homemade bread. Grind wheat into flour. Mix and knead dough. Form a loaf to bake at home. Sample

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a variety of breads as part of potluck lunch. 10:30 A.M. to 1:30 P.M. \$35/family. Register with Debra@Motherhouse.us or 672-0229.

Big Little Kids Dance will be held for very young children and their adults on April 13 from 4 to 5 P.M. at the town hall followed by a finger-food potluck. Suggested donation is \$10/family. Call Rachel for info at 860-824-8404.

Also there will be meditation on Sundays at 1 P.M. and yoga and chanting on Mondays. Call Debra for location at 672-0229.

Historical Society Concert with Lorraine and Bennett Hammond on April 7 at 2 P.M. at the Cornwall Town Hall. The concert will feature songs from and about Cornwall from the Hammonds' just-released recording, *The Opal Ring*, accompanied by guitar, banjos, Appalachian dulcimer, and mandolin.

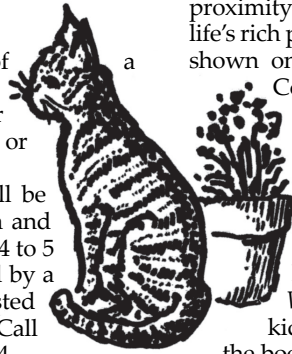
At the Cornwall Library

The final movies in the Winter Film Series have been scheduled. On Saturday, April 13, at 7:30 P.M. *The Fallen Idol* will be shown. Based on a Graham Greene story that the author adapted for the screen, this pitch-perfect, small-scaled thriller centers on a small boy who idolizes and tries to protect a household butler he mistakenly believes has murdered his wife. The director is the gifted Carol (*The Third Man*) Reed, who creates a series of unnervingly tense and sometimes quite terrifying moments. And on Saturday, April 27, at 7:30 P.M., *The 400 Blows*, Francois Truffaut's first film and unabashed masterpiece will be shown. The film is an unsentimental account of a delinquent adolescent estranged from his parents, miserable at school, and at odds with the world as a whole. The movie is both an aesthetic and emotional knock-out.

For lovers of dance, Alice Sarkissian-Wolf will continue her film series with a Mats Ek production called *Appartement* with dancers from Ballet de l'Opera National de Paris. The ballet is based on the place where we spend our lives "in close

Green

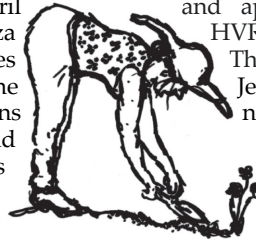
It's so good to see the trees blooming again, softening the hillsides and promising warm weather. Celebrate by sending us a nice check. Thanks!



proximity to ourselves and others, where life's rich pageant unfolds." The film will be shown on Wednesday, April 3, at 7 P.M. Coffee and desserts will be served.

And, finally, under the heading Spring Break Activities is Mad Hatter Tea Party and Movie Night. Those attending should wear their best hat and will enjoy a tea party with cakes and little sandwiches while *Alice in Wonderland* is read, followed by a kid-friendly animated version of the book. Seating is limited to 10, ages 5 to 8. The date is Tuesday, April 16, at 2 P.M.

And then on Wednesday, April 17, from 5 to 8 P.M. will be Pizza and Board Game Night for ages 10 and up. Bring a favorite game or use the library's junior versions of Monopoly, Scrabble, and many more. Pizza and drinks provided.



Chronicle Insert Policy

Chronicle inserts are handled on a first-come, first-served basis, so requests for space should be submitted as early as possible, even months ahead. Costs are \$95 for one side, \$150 for two (all for paper, printing, and insertion; the *Chronicle* makes nothing). Once space is approved, copy should be submitted to the *Chronicle* for review by the 15th of the preceding month. Address requests and inquiries to the *Chronicle's* new coordinator of inserts, Susan Gingert, 248-3002, susangingert@gmail.com.

Art at The Dump will be held on Saturday, April 27, from 10 A.M. to 4 P.M. and Sunday, April 28, 10 A.M. to 1 P.M. Deliver art work on Saturday between 8 and 10 A.M. Event will be held at the transfer station on Route 4. Those with questions may call Gail Jacobson at 672-6639.

Yankee Baseball Game: Interested in riding a coach bus to Yankee Stadium for an afternoon game? N.Y. Yankees play the Texas Rangers on Thursday, June 27, at 1:05 P.M. Please contact Becky Hurlburt at prcornwall@gmail.com for cost and details.

The Bradford Scholarship, a four-year stipend, is available to any Cornwall student planning to enter the University of Connecticut or any of its branches in the fall

of 2013. Those interested should send a letter of application and two letters of recommendation by May 15 to the Board of Education, Bradford Scholarship, 5 Cream Hill Road, West Cornwall, CT 06796. Applicants will be judged on grades, extra-curricular activities, community service, goals, and a personal interview. For more information call Becky Hurlburt at 672-6725.

Woman's Society Scholarship applications are now available for high school seniors from Cornwall who are attending public or private schools. The deadline is May 15 and applications are available at the HVRHS guidance office or through Thalia Scoville at 672-6288, or email Jen Markow at daisy1612@optimum.net.

Looking for Mahjong Players: Jean Vitalis and Brenda Underwood are looking for people interested in getting together once a week or more to play Mahjong. It is a game that is said to have originated with Confucius 500 years B.C. Ideally they would like players with some knowledge but could teach beginners. It is a game with rules, ritual, skill, strategy, and chance, and a lot of fun. Contact Brenda Underwood at 860-248-3089, if interested.

Cornwallchronicle.org

Thanks to a grant from the Cornwall Foundation, the *Cornwall Chronicle* now has a website of its own. On the site, you can read the current issue, check the calendar, or peruse the archived copies dating back to 1991. The archives are also searchable. Check it out!

CORNWALL CHRONICLE

THIS MONTH

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