



CORNWALL CHRONICLE

VOLUME 5: NUMBER 1 FEBRUARY 1995



New Child Center Opens

I arrived at Cornwall's brand-new Child Center on opening day just as most of the kids were devouring their nutritionally correct lunches. No French fries or burgers here but fruit, yogurt, and whole-grain breads. There will be no hypertension when this generation reaches middle age.

The Child Center, with its nursery and after-school programs, opened for business early on the morning of January 18. After 20 years of using the Parish House of the United Church of Christ, the Child Center has its own building across from the Cornwall Consolidated School.

The three-mile move from Parish House to new building took place on Friday, January 13. An armada of Cornwall trucks took loads of teddy bears, dolls, blocks, crayons, and other treasures to their new home. On Monday and Tuesday, January 16 and 17, Child Center director Pam Brehm, teachers Eileen Black, Margaret Bardot, and Melanie Telman-Royer, and a cadre of volunteers put everything in place, and Board President Teddy Bury was heard to breathe a sigh of relief. The new building, designed by architect Connie Gordon, is a warm, friendly place with terrific lighting, lots of

room for activities, storage space, a mud-room, and two adorable, user-friendly mini-potties.

I had never seen a mini-pottie before, and you can see one too when the Child Center holds an open house on Sunday, February 26, from 2 to 4 p.m.

This opening marks the end of a truly inspiring community effort. Almost everyone in Cornwall did something — electric wiring, carpentry, contributing money, driving a truck, providing raw materials free or at cost, and so on. It would be impossible to make out a true list of contributors because there were so many. Open-hearted and generous, working together, the people of Cornwall did this wonderful thing. A rousing cheer for all.

— John Miller

TV or DTV?

At long last Cornwall is able to leave the ranks of the television-deprived. Technology has finally come our way. Cornwall residents have the option of receiving either direct satellite TV (DTV), which is now available, or cable television, which is on the horizon.

In early 1994, GM Hughes Electronics launched a new service called Direct TV.

This package offers over 50 channels of broadcast and cable programming which is receivable on an 18-inch satellite dish priced between \$699 and \$899 — much smaller and cheaper than the old three-meter dishes. Generally installation runs between \$100 and \$250 depending on your site and the number of sets you want to hook into the service. Direct TV's service carries a monthly charge of from \$15.95 to \$29.95 and includes most of the major cable services as well as pay-per-view movies, the four broadcast networks, and PBS. Direct TV produces CD sound quality and excellent video reception. A cautionary note: Direct TV requires a separate "black box" for each additional set at \$649 per set if different programs are watched simultaneously.

While cable television is not yet available in Cornwall, Laurel Cablevision (based in Litchfield) plans to wire Cornwall during 1995 and hopes to begin to service Cornwall customers in late summer. All homes will be passed by cable, but those with driveways longer than 200 feet may need to make arrangements with Laurel to ensure that access to the house is planned for. The service packages that will be offered will be similar to those now available in Goshen

(continued on page 2)

FEBRUARY 1995

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
<i>Note: Deadline for March Events & Announcements and Calendar Listings is February 15.</i>			1 W. Cornwall Merchants Association 10 a.m. Cadwell's Cynthia Kirk paintings (continued) Cornwall Library (p. 3)	2 GROUNDHOG DAY	3 Judy Gafney Children's Story Hour 10 a.m. Cornwall Library	4 Board of Tax Review 9:30 a.m. - 12:30 p.m. Town Clerk's Office (p. 2)
5	6 Bd. of Tax Review 9 a.m. - 12 noon Town Clerk's Office (p. 2) Board of Selectmen 7:30 p.m. Town Hall Park & Rec. 7:30 p.m. Town Office	7 Agri. Advis. Comm. 7:30 p.m. Firehouse Board of Tax Review 6 p.m. - 8 p.m. Town Clerk's Office (p. 2) Inland Wetlands* 7:30p.m. Town Hall	8 CCS PTA 7 p.m. CCS Library	9 Cornwall Housing Corp. 4:30 p.m. Kugeman Village Board of Tax Review 12:30 p.m. - 3:30 p.m. Town Clerk's Office (p. 2)	10 Judy Gafney Children's Story Hour 10 a.m. Cornwall Library	11
12 LINCOLN'S BIRTHDAY Poetry Reading 8 p.m. Cadwell's (p. 4) Benefit for Jubilee School 3 p.m. UCC	13 14 VALENTINE'S DAY Repub. Town Comm. 7:30 p.m. CCS Conf. Rm. Dem. Town Comm. 7:30 p.m. Town Hall Housatonic Riv. Comm. 7:30 p.m. CCS Lib. (p. 4) P & Z 7:30 p.m. Town Hall	14 VALENTINE'S DAY Repub. Town Comm. 7:30 p.m. CCS Conf. Rm. Dem. Town Comm. 7:30 p.m. Town Hall Housatonic Riv. Comm. 7:30 p.m. CCS Lib. (p. 4) P & Z 7:30 p.m. Town Hall	15 Special Olympics Comm. 7 p.m. Town Hall (p. 4)	16 Board of Education 6:30 p.m. CCS Library Board of Finance 7:30 p.m. CCS Library	17 Judy Gafney Children's Story Hour 10 a.m. Cornwall Library	18 Cornwall Association 4 p.m. Prentices' 129 Lake Road
19	20 PRESIDENTS' DAY	21 Board of Selectmen 7:30 p.m. Town Hall 	22 WASHINGTON'S BIRTHDAY HVRHS Board of Education 7 p.m. Falls Village School	23	24 Judy Gafney Children's Story Hour 10 a.m. Cornwall Library	25 David Rovics "Songs of Love and Revolution" 8:30 p.m. Cadwell's
26 Cornwall Child Center new building Open House 2 - 4 p.m. (above)	27 Conserv. Comm. 7:30 p.m. Town Office ZBA 7:30 p.m. Town Hall*	28				

7 15 23

* Check time and place at Town Office

(continued from page 1)

and Litchfield. Monthly fees could range from \$12.50 to over \$50.

Direct TV is available now; cable will be available soon. To learn if the specific program services offered are what you want, contact Laurel Cablevision and your Direct TV representative. — Natalie Hunter

On Thin Ice

After Charlie West and a visiting out-of-town Doberman pinscher fell through the ice on Cream Hill Lake over Christmas vacation (they both got out all right), the subject of ice thickness became a topic of interest.

Of course, "thin ice" is a relative term. A field mouse could safely skate on a frozen eighth-inch ice surface. But if you want to go skating on Cream Hill Lake, you should take a hatchet along. With that implement you can cut a hole in the ice to determine its thickness. If the ice is two inches thick, it will support only one person. However, three inches of ice will support a single file of walkers or an active scrape of hockey players.

Eight inches of ice will support your car. If you need the four-and-a-half-ton ambulance to come rescue you, make sure the ice is 12 inches thick. A school bus filled with senators (ten tons) would need 15 inches, the 17-ton fire truck about 18, and Denny Frost's loaded 25-ton dump truck would need more than 24 inches to keep from cracking through.

The town, says Selectman Gordon Ridgway, has no mandate to measure and post ice thickness, so townspeople can govern themselves when it comes to skating. By the way, when you're on river ice, add a 15 percent safety factor to the above figures.

All the safe-ice thicknesses cited were provided by the American Pulpwood Association. — Ken Keskinen



Geography Champs at CCS

Geography has been the focus of the upper grades lately as students honed their skills to compete in the National Geography Competition. The finalists were Russell Cheney and Winfield Wilson, and after a very impressive play-off, Winfield emerged victorious. For the second year in a row he is on his way to the state competition. Congratulations, Winfield. — William Oros

Have Tax Questions?

The Board of Tax Review will meet in the Town Office four times in early February (see *Chronicle* calendar) to hear questions and appeals on assessments of real property, personal property, and motor vehicles.

There are many possible reasons for

review and re-assessment. They might include, for example, demolition of a shed, depreciation of farm machinery, conversion of excess acreage to tree farming, addition of decks, baths, or living space to a home, changing a commercial building to a barn, sale of a motor vehicle, or questions about the 1992 re-evaluation. The board — John La Porta, Jean Pond, and Phyllis Wojan — may visit a property if an on-site viewing will aid in making a decision. Any changes in assessment made by the board have been incorporated in the October 1994 Grand List and will be reflected in tax bills received by residents in July.

Appointments may be made by calling Town Clerk Cheryl Evans (672-2709); "walk-ins" will be seen at the first available time. — Phyllis Wojan



Recycling Pays



Flash! Newsprint and corrugated cardboard now earn the town \$25 per ton. And the Marcal Paper Company, which had been paying \$25 a ton for glossy waste, now pays \$90. So the more you bring, the more we earn.

Flash #2: We can now recycle the plastic lids from recyclable plastic containers. They go in a box right next to the plastic recycling bin. — Eliz. Tobin Terrall

Goodbye to Yutzler's?

Word that Yutzler's Country Store, a Cornwall institution since 1915, was to close its doors on January 31 traveled through the town with the proverbial speed of bad news, causing shock and disbelief in its wake.

"I can't imagine there not being a grocery store in West Cornwall," said historian Michael Gannett. "It's very upsetting." Many others echoed his sentiment.

"We worked long, hard hours to make it work," said proprietor Paul Wiske, who, along with his wife Paula, bought the business three years ago, "but it just wasn't enough."

"I'm very anxious that Cornwall doesn't lose this beautiful and nostalgic tie to the past," Wiske continued. "I hope that after the low season someone will pick up the ball, because I believe that with proper capitalization a store in this location can work."

Phil Bishop, who with his late wife Jane owned and operated the store from 1977 until 1991, and who still owns the building, said he was "terribly disappointed the Wiskes couldn't make a go of it." He could not say what plans, if any, he had for the building, except that his getting back in the grocery business was out of the question.

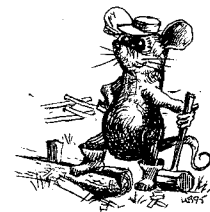
As for the Wiskes' plans, Paul said, "We undertook this venture because we wanted to make our home in Cornwall. That desire has not diminished one bit. Obviously we need jobs. But we all — Paula, our son John and our dog Jamee — love this community, and have every intention of staying here." Amen.

— George Kittle

Keeping the Lid on the Budget

On January 9, at a special Board of Finance meeting with the selectmen and representatives of the Board of Education, the Volunteer Fire Department, and Planning and Zoning, Ralph Gold said that the goal of the Board of Finance is to keep the mill rate at its current 17.25 for the coming fiscal year. He stressed the need for cooperation on everyone's part as the estimated growth of the October Grand List was only one percent.

At the regular January 19 meeting, Roberta Tyson appealed to the board not to raise the rate. In five years her real estate taxes have doubled, she said; they now take a third of her income and she will have to sell her place and leave Cornwall if they go up any further. — Hendon Chubb



Welcome

Nicholas and Alexander Aakjar to Peder and Kelly Aakjar

Thomas James Hatcher to Susan and Dwight Hatcher II

Kandra Denise-Lillian Hillard to Teresa Taylor and James Hillard

Samuel Marino to Mark and Joy Marino

Caroline Jane Resor to Catherine Scott and James Resor

Land Transfers

Hazel C. Turner to Joan C. McGuire, house and 21.9 acres on Great Hill Road for \$225,000.

Chester and Lillian S. Lyman to Ronald and Theresa Lipeika, barn and 22.9 acres on South Road, for \$100,000.

John M. Bell III to Frederick J. Laser, Railroad Street Annex Building, \$21,763.

Estate of Diane D. Stearns to Michael A. Trotta and Robert S. Topol, West Cornwall Post Office Building, \$90,500.

Lights! Camera! Action!

Video stores are places where one thing happens: people come in, browse around, select a video, pay for it and then leave. Right?

Wrong!

Wrong at least as far as the West Cornwall Video Store and Cornwall Bridge Video are concerned. These two stores are meeting places where kids waiting for parents or parents meeting school buses receive a cordial welcome from the Costellos in West Cornwall or the McGurrins in Cornwall Bridge. And the people waiting for Bonanza buses also come into the Cornwall Bridge store. In fact, these stores

are way stations for the whole town.

The Costellos have seen 90 percent of the movies in their inventory because they want to be able to recommend films to their customers. "There are some films that folks wouldn't ordinarily choose because they don't have big name actors," says Roland Costello. "Knowing them, we can tell our customers about them."

"Also," adds Susan Costello, "we avoid movies that we personally feel view death as an entertainment."

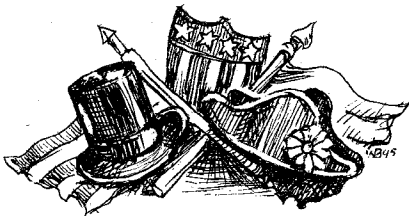
In Cornwall Bridge, the McGurrins offer not only movie rentals and Nintendos and Sega rentals but also UPS shipping, fax services, and VCR rentals and repairs. "We have tripled our inventory in five years," says Anne McGurrin, "and our membership is constantly growing." Patrick McGurrin complimented their customers: "People are great with the movies. We have lost only two in five years, and both were clearly unintentional."

Long hours and busy weekends have paid off for these two businesses. It's nice to know that they are there, ready to find good movies for us and to provide a place for us and our kids to meet one another.

— Anne Zinsser

Cynthia's World

Once I had to do a typesetting exercise in combining letters of different fonts and sizes. The final product yielded an unexpected R A N G H O G W I L D , and that experience and the word unexpected is what sprang to mind on seeing Cynthia Kirk's current exhibition at the Cornwall Library. Cindy seems able to leap into and out of any visual dimension, any mode she chooses. She gives us bird's-eye views and worm's-eye views, and views anchored in their own ambiguous space, collages which aren't what they seem, and Japanese woodcuts with profound titles like Enduring, Liberation, Adversity, and Danger, which aren't woodcuts at all. Want more? Look at the illustrations in last month's *Chronicle* for other surprises from Cindy's multifaceted world. — Brigitte Hanf



Sandwich Boards and QED

At a town meeting on January 20, attended by about 35 people, Cornwall updated its method of announcing town meetings. The existing ordinance dated from 1952, and required posting notices of upcoming meetings in stores that no longer exist, such as Bate's Meat Market. The new ordinance,

Letters to the Chronicle

IT'S HERE!

I had to make a trip to the new Child Center today, two days before its opening, a trip I looked forward to because I, like so many others, have awaited its completion for a very long time.

Walking up to the building I saw the playground on a plush carpet of wood chips, securely and nicely fenced in with its private entrance inside. Crossing the main threshold one enters the coat corner — walls of coat cupboards, clean white on the blue and white symmetrically laid floor, with the handcrafted "Sit Bench" in the center.

On the left and ahead are rooms and rooms, all exuding the warmth of comfort and love — all in white and soft blues. You can walk to any window and see woodland beauty. I was overwhelmed.

Love can truly be felt here — I know, I felt it. Everywhere I looked, everywhere I stood, was love in architectural form. God bless all who saw the dream. The Center is home now for all our children.

— Alicia Eaton

DUMP NEWS: A POSTSCRIPT

What you heard thrown into the dumpster the other day, Art, was not an empty catfood can; it was my mother's last silver fork.

— Natasha Eilenberg

MY LITTLE CHICKADEES

The delightful poem by "Larry Pooladee" in last month's issue re-awakened a nagging doubt I had put out of my mind after reading the New York Times article about how black-capped chickadees grow new brain cells in the fall to help them remember where they have hidden their seeds.

My concern had been triggered by learning that "... chickadees [that are] provided with all the seeds they can swallow display only half as much neural turnover as their free-foraging peers." I'd heard that once you start feeding birds you shouldn't stop, since having become dependent on the feeder they find it harder to forage, but never did I suppose that by feeding chickadees I was arresting brain growth.

Now that I've done it, I'm stuck with them. A winter vacation is out of the question. I'll have to stay here and take care of my little chickadees. Because, as someone who has reached the age where a certain percentage of each day is devoted to searching for misplaced items, I can empathize with these plucky creatures as they flit from place to place in a fruitless search for their caches, perhaps even forgetting, were it not for their gnawing hunger, what it was they were looking for.

passed unanimously, requires the town officers to post notices of town meetings at the three post offices and at Baird's, Yutzler's, the Cornwall Package Store, and Cadwell's. First Selectman Gordon Ridgway said that sandwich boards announcing meetings would also be displayed at the Town Hall and the dump.

The second item on the agenda was



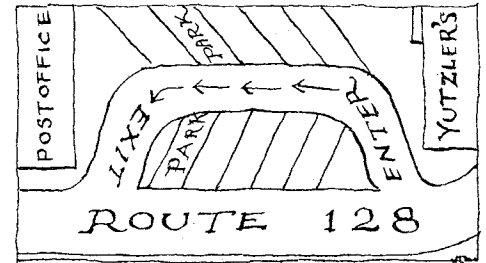
Next fall the dilemma will recur: whether to deny the wrens, finches, warblers, titmice, and juncos their October breakfasts just so the black-caps can grow new brains, or let them all gorge themselves, knowing that I will again be saddled with a flock of adlepeated chickadees.

— George Kittle

DANGER

Two recent happenings cause me to worry about the dangerous situation at the parking lot between Yutzler's and the Post Office. First, a friend was almost hit by a car that was racing down the hill as she emerged from the parking lot halfway between Yutzler's and the Post Office, and second, I saw an elderly driver leaving the parking lot right at Yutzler's, with absolutely no view of what might be coming down the hill. At present, leaving that parking lot is an accident waiting to happen.

I think three things should be done to forestall such an accident. First, one should be allowed to enter the parking lot only at Yutzler's and exit only at the Post Office. Second, diagonal parking should be instituted (see diagram). Parking at present is so haphazard that often one cannot emerge from the lot except at a dangerous point. And third, a mirror should be installed to give one a way of seeing what is coming down the hill.



I understand that there have been no accidents at this site, but there is a saying that you can't get a red light at a site until there is a fatal accident there. Let's not leave it till then.

— John Zinsser

GREAT WINGS FLAPPING

Recently a bobcat crossed Route 128 just ahead of us, and, soon afterwards, a barn owl flew at eye level right in front of our windshield, great wings flapping. In those few minutes Route 128 lost its status as a highway and became a woodland passage.

Couldn't the *Chronicle* have an UNUSUAL ANIMALS RECENTLY SEEN column? I miss reports of mountain lion sightings.

— Anne Zinsser

the Quality Education and Diversity (QED) Program, which had been passed by Cornwall in December, but defeated region-wide. But no member of the Board of Education attended the meeting and there appeared to be little interest in discussing the program again.

— Barbara Klaw



Service Seeks Clients

The Northwest Corner Chore Service (NCCS), helping elderly (60+) and handicapped people with daily home life in Cornwall and other Region One towns, is looking for more clients.

Local workers do housekeeping, yard work, shopping, small carpentry jobs, and, yes, bat removal. Federal funding makes all elderly people eligible, whether or not they can afford a contribution. Younger handicapped people use the service at whatever fee they feel they can afford.

Cornwall resident Hellen Gazagnaire, who has been using the Chore Service since it started in late 1993, says of her weekly worker, Marianne, "I am delighted with this pearl of a woman. She is agile, intelligent, a person of many talents. She even repairs chairs." For their part, the workers are enriched not only by such appreciative clients as Mrs. Gazagnaire, but also by \$9.25 an hour regardless of the client's contribution.

Harriet Clark, at 100 the oldest Chore Service client, says, "The coming of these workers has been a most happy experience on, I believe, both sides." And the full-time caretaker of an NCCS client is even more practical in her comments: "The NCCS workers give me a break, let me get out of here occasionally. If it weren't for them, I'd burn out. The service keeps people independent and at home. It saves money on all sides."

For more information call Ella Clark at 364-1003.

— Ella Clark

P.S. The bats were in Kent.



Cornwall's Fanzine

There are 'zines devoted to science fiction, rock music, and skateboarding; why not one devoted to a town? That's us! This month, why not send in a small check with your valentine, so we can continue to chronicle the goings on in the town you love.

Yes, I want the Chronicle to continue.
Here is my tax-deductible contribution of:

\$ _____

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY _____

STATE/ZIP _____

\$10.00 will get the Chronicle mailed out of town.

Track Watch

The public is invited to the Housatonic River Commission's regularly scheduled meeting February 14 at 7:30 at the CCS Library, at which the commission will air its concern for railroad safety and river corridor protection in an open discussion with Department of Transportation officials, railroad company representatives, and anyone else who feels strongly about this issue. Invitations have gone out to area selectmen, DOT officials, and political reps including Nancy Johnson and Del Eads.

The HRC seeks answers to these questions: How can derailments be avoided? What procedures are in place to deal with the environmental impact of toxic materials in the water? Who is responsible for clean-up and pay-up? *Legislators take note:* The public, whose tax money has supported this rail line, is tired of being a disgruntled passenger.

— Philip Hart

Toxic Waste

Most Cornwall residents are familiar with the decaying building of the Neoweld Corporation south of Kugeman Village and the Cornwall Inn on Route 7. The site has been abandoned since 1980.

Recently the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency collected samples of soil on the site, samples which revealed levels of chromium as high as 25,000 parts per million (ppm) and levels of lead as high as 32,000 ppm in the surface soil. (In California soils with levels of 1,000 ppm of lead are considered contaminated, and national standards soon to be released by the Centers for Disease Control will list a concentration of between 200 and 500 ppm as contaminated.) It was unknown whether these elevated levels of lead and chromium came as a result of leaking containers or from past operations, nor was it known how deep the contamination went.

The sampling results were evaluated by the Agency for Toxic Substances and Disease Registry (ATSDR), which concluded that conditions at the site pose a potential health threat. More collections for an extent-of-contamination survey took place November 14 through 18, and when those collections are analyzed and evaluated an appropriate removal plan will be instituted.

First Selectman Gordon Ridgway indicated that he was in touch with the EPA, and when the agency informs him of its removal plans he will let everyone know.

— John Zinsser

Events & Announcements

Looking for Affordable Housing? Don't forget that Kugeman Village, sponsored by the Cornwall Housing Corporation, has apartments available from time to time for eligible applicants. Vacancies do occur so call the office at 672-4439 for information and get on the waiting list.

International Special Olympics: Cornwall, Goshen, and Sharon are hosting athletes and coaches from Turkmenistan before the International Special Olympics in June. The local organizing committee is meeting on February 15 at the Town Hall at 7 p.m. Host families are still needed to participate in this exciting event.

Please call First Selectman Gordon Ridgway (672-4959) for details.

The Java Jive: Bring your own reusable mug, and coffee (or tea) will cost 25 cents less at Cadwell's. At Baird's, you'll be charged only for a small coffee.

Poetry Reading Thrives: The Poetry Reading was rescheduled to the second Sunday night of each month and last month's event was a great success. While dedicated primarily to poetry, either by the reader or any other poet, the evening often includes prose reading, such as short stories or works in progress, and singing — songs of one's own composition or by popular or classical composers. And of course you don't HAVE to participate. You can just listen. The Cadwells provide tea and coffee (for which the members of the group make small contributions), and often someone brings cake or cookies. All are welcome.

Correction: The Hughes Memorial Library is open Saturdays (not Sundays) from 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. It is also open Tuesdays from 2 p.m. to 4:30 p.m.

CORNWALL CHRONICLE

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