



CORNWALL CHRONICLE

VOLUME 12 : NUMBER 3 APRIL 2002



Suits vs. Jeans

Business suits met blue jeans for three and a half hours at the Town Hall on March 14. The state's Department of Public Utilities Control (DPUC) held a formal hearing on Case #02-01-17: the impact of the tree-cutting and installing of taller and more conspicuous poles along Great Hollow and Great Hill Roads. These measures by Connecticut Light & Power, currently halted, were part of tripling its service to a single customer, C&D Farms on Clark Road. Besides representatives of the DPUC, both the president and chief engineer of CL&P were present, with two attorneys. C&D sent its attorney. Cornwall was represented by First Selectman Gordon Ridgway and 19 other residents.

Statute #16-234 forbids any power company to trim or remove trees, or erect new poles, without the consent of the adjacent landowners. It also allows the DPUC to authorize these measures if "public convenience or necessity require." Homeowner Rinker Buck called the operation a large construction project in a major scenic area. No Cornwall landowners had been approached, and he, among others, intended to withhold consent. CL&P argued that it was not required by law to obtain such permission for "routine upgrades of existing facilities," and claimed that its project was not new con-

struction. Gordon Ridgway proposed alternative ways to bring in three-phase power to C&D, one being to route it from an existing source on Mohawk Mountain down an old roadbed to the farm site.

At the hearing's close, the DPUC had some questions for CL&P, among them: What was its interpretation of Statute #16-234? Why was the common practice of talking with town officials, and providing a comprehensive description of the entire project, not followed in this case? Had CL&P gone back to get the permission of all 26 adjoining landowners for its work? Who did it believe would pay for the cost of this project? Answers are due by April 5.

C&D's attorney asked the DPUC to expedite and "focus on the needs of the customer...some of these are extraneous issues." Buck called that request "thoroughly inappropriate...the department's role is not to serve the customer. Its role is to serve the public interest." He asked that the process be slowed down so that all data can be examined closely to determine what is best for the

community. The DPUC promised to make a thorough investigation.

Stay tuned. —Ann Schillinger

Selectmen's Challenges

Clearly the most important issue facing the selectmen is to determine how much the town is willing and able to afford in providing the kind of school that Cornwall needs, and wants. The choice of building a new school or improving facilities at the old school was decided at the March 23 referendum. The creation of a Building Committee and the allocation of funds will be determined in May or June.

Meanwhile, the selectmen continue to face the many varied matters that need attention. The issue of contamination on the Route 7 Burkhardt property (formerly Neoweld) has been addressed. The owner has agreed to provide an environmental assessment and to remove the old building and polluted earth. Still outstanding are overdue taxes of more than \$100,000. The town has the option of foreclosure at any point in the proceedings.

Responding to concerns about motorists speeding into and through West Cornwall, First Selectman Gordon Ridgway reports that increased monitoring by state police is taking place. Several arrests have been made, one of a motorist clocked at 67 m.p.h. in the

(continued on page 2)

APRIL 2002

Referendum Results

The tally for the March 23 referendum:

- 322 for expanding existing school;
- 164 for building entirely new school.

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	1 Park and Rec. 7 P.M. CCS Bd. of Selectmen 7:30 P.M. Town Hall	2 Kindergarten Registration (p.4) Blue Mt. Satsang Every Tuesday 6:30-8 P.M. UCC Day Room Inland Wetlands 8 P.M. Town Hall	3 Kindergarten Registration (p.4) Play Group 10-11:30 A.M. St. Peter's Church Park and Rec. Public Forum 7 P.M. Town Hall (p.4)	4 Kindergarten Registration (p.4) Meditation for Mothers Every Thursday 1:15-2:15 P.M. UCC Day Room	5 Preschool-K Story Hour 10 A.M. Library CCS Science Fair Noon-2:30 P.M.	6 Rotary Meeting: Organic Gardening 8:15 A.M. Cornwall Inn Cornwall Association 9:30 A.M. UCC Day Room Potluck 6:30 P.M.; Celtic Band Concert 7:30 P.M. Town Hall (p.4)
7 DAYLIGHT SAVING TIME BEGINS Corndance Film Festival 5-7 P.M. Town Hall	8 Blood Pressure Screening 3-4 P.M. UCC Day Room P&Z 8 P.M. TOWN HALL	9 Housatonic River Comm. 7:30 P.M. CCS Library	10 Play Group 10-11:30 A.M. St. Peter's Church Park and Rec. Uniform Distribution 6:30-8 P.M. Town Hall (p.4) Film: <i>Big Broadcast of 1938</i> , 8 P.M. Library (p.4)	11	12 Preschool-K Story Hour 10 A.M. Library	13 Rotary Meeting: James Glassman 8:15 A.M. Cornwall Inn Park and Rec. Uniform Distribution 10 A.M.-Noon Town Hall (p.4) Jubilee School Benefit 3 P.M. UCC (see insert)
14	15 SCHOOL VACATION BEGINS Deadline: May Chronicle Copy Democratic Town Comm. 7:30 P.M. Town Hall	16	17	18 Bd. of Selectmen 9 A.M. Town Hall Bd. of Finance 7:30 P.M. CCS Library VFW Post 9856 8 P.M. W. C. Firehouse	19	20 Rotary Meeting: John Scott 8:15 A.M. Cornwall Inn Art at the Dump 10 A.M.-4:30 P.M. (p.4)
21	22 SCHOOL REOPENS Region One Bd. of Ed. 7 P.M. HVRHS ZBA 8 P.M. Town Hall*	23	24 Play Group 10-11:30 A.M. St. Peter's Church CCS Early Dismissal 1 P.M. Green Party 7:30 P.M. Town Hall Cornwall Fire Dept. 7:30 P.M. W. C. Firehouse	25 CCS Early Dismissal 1 P.M. Bd. of Education 5 P.M. CCS Library	26 Preschool-K Story Hour 10 A.M. Library	27 Rotary Meeting: Yoko 8:15 A.M. Cornwall Inn Birdwalk 7 A.M. (p.4)
28 Child Center Auction 1:30 P.M. Mohawk Ski Lodge (p.2)	29	30				

*Check with Zoning Office—672-4957

(continued from page 1)
middle of town.

The recent revaluations of property should result in a fairer balance in sharing the expenses of running the town. However, the Board of Assessment Appeals and the assessor are working hard to resolve all appeals from Cornwall landowners.

As to the impact of the ENRON collapse and its relationship to the Connecticut Resources Recovery Authority, which is now raising its rates for trash collection in the state, Ridgway indicates that the town's improved ways of handling trash will limit the effect of such rate increases. He is working with other towns to limit the increase first proposed at 30 percent (\$15,000 for Cornwall)—with no thanks to ENRON.

Recently elected Selectman K. C. Baird, also on the Board of Finance, brings accounting know-how to his meetings, along with, says Ridgway, his dedication and sense of humor. Baird's goals are to help meet children's school and recreational needs and to strengthen businesses in town. He says he has an open mind on all issues. Moreover, listening to talk in his store gives him a feel for how things are going in the town, but he reminds us all that he can't always interrupt his work to discuss town matters at length. Fair enough.

—Ken Keskinen

Alert Status in Cornwall

After the 9/11 attacks, the entire nation has been placed on alert. Governments at all levels have developed plans and procedures to deal with emergencies that might arise.

So, too, with Cornwall. In Selectman Gordon Ridgway's office is a manual, *Preparing for Terrorism: Municipal Chief Executive's Guide to Domestic Preparedness*. The manual covers such matters as Risk Assessment, Preparedness Strategy, Operations, and Recovery. As much as \$226 million or more will be necessary to prepare the state for any terrorist attacks. The money will be used to outfit and train police, firefighters, and emergency medical workers to carry out their tasks on a local basis, coordinated with regional, state, and federal support.

The state thus far has received only \$2.6 million in federal funds, with only half of that available to localities. However, towns

have appointed their own agents to organize and oversee the appropriate responses to all emergencies, from power outages, fires, floods, tornadoes, and other natural catastrophes to the consequences of terrorist attacks, such as in influx of people from metropolitan areas.



Hunt Williams is the chairman of Emergency Preparedness for Cornwall. His responsibilities include coordinating the town's efforts with those of the region, and making sure that the resources of the town can adequately meet the community's needs in any emergency in terms of supplies, communication, and personnel.

Ridgway reminds us that such preparedness will be an ongoing concern. "We are," he says, "facing new threats and new realities, and must plan accordingly."

—Ken Keskinen

Very Little Guild Gets Bigger

"Careful of the planks!" calls Jim Lussier, manager of the Little Guild, as I walk across the just-cured concrete floor in the new construction area. We enter a small office where three glossy cats in roomy cages scrutinize us. These cats have FIV—Feline Immunodeficiency Virus—and have to be isolated. Down a short corridor is the official 12-cage cat room. The whole place smells clean—and is silent until we walk into the kennel area where a rubber-gloved worker is scrubbing down all the cages.

"We wash everything," Jim says. "Walls, cages, bedding, towels. We've never had a serious outbreak of disease. The two biggest causes of illness are poor air turnover and dense populations. Better air in the new space will lower the stress level." All the dogs are outside in their runs, except Phoenix, a friendly German shepherd that has six new puppies tumbling beside her.

Space is limited for humans too. In the plans are a medical room, a refrigerator for vaccines, and a quiet place to talk to potential adopters.

"Now," says Jim, "we have to discuss long-term commitments in the midst of chaos. Our new real-life dog room will have sofas, radio, television, and rugs. Cats will have a bigger, quieter room with multiple levels of places to hide out in."

The addition will not change the Guild's annual goal to take 400 abandoned cats and dogs, get them healthy and sociable, and find them homes. At any given time, 15 dogs and 30 cats, all of which are neutered or spayed, can be in residence. No animal is euthanized.

"We have no secretaries; everyone is hands on," Jim says. "Volunteers help walk and socialize the dogs and spend time with the cats. Good matches with dedicated owners are essential. If a dog or cat doesn't bond, he'll end up on the street again. There's so much good happening here that I can't talk about it in a practical sense. I come from a business background, but we can't run the Little Guild that way. The bottom line here is

that the animals need this new addition for their welfare. People may even come to look at shelter animals as a kind of breed. They'll see one and say, 'Ah! A Shelter Dog! A Shelter Cat! Best in Show!'"

—Ella Clark

Good-Bye to Friends

Deborah Covington

Elizabeth Hubbard Lansing

Emma Georgianna Manganaro

Carlin J. Zerbo

Congratulations

Leon G. Bouteiller to Patrice E. Croghan

Land Transfers

Stephen M. Drezon, Franklin Moss, and Melvyn L. Toomey to CVA Everest LLC, Lot #3, 8.43 acres on Great Hollow Road for \$55,000.

Building Exchange Company to Ira B. Shapiro and Jacqueline Dedell, 40 Cobble Hill Road for \$3,000,000.

CCS Mastery Tests Up

The 2001 Connecticut Mastery Test scores are in, and the news is both good and bad. On the bright side, Cornwall's scores are over seven points higher than last year's and above the state average. But CCS (67.5) lags every other school in Region One except North Canaan (66.8) and trails the leaders, Falls Village (96.0) and Salisbury (85.3) by wide margins.

Numbers can be deceiving, so it's important to understand just what these scores mean. The figures released by the state show the percentage of regular education pupils in each of three grades (4, 6, and 8) who achieve what the Department of Education considers the minimum acceptable score on three tests: math, reading, and writing.

Thus the numbers given here are the averages of the nine tests in each school (three tests in the three grades). They do not stand for pupil averages on the usual kind of school test with a top mark of 100.

Another quirk of statistics should be kept in mind as well. In a small school the scores will jump around more from year to year than they will in a large school district. It's inevitable that certain small class groupings will be stronger than others, a difference that cancels itself out in larger samples. Two years ago Cornwall led all 169 towns and cities in the state. This year CCS is bouncing back after a plummeting decline, while Falls Village is accomplishing the miraculous. The cycle is the only consistency.

—Bob Potter

Child Center Auction

The Child Center Auction returns to Mohawk Ski Lodge on Sunday, April 28, thanks to the generosity of Mohawk's management.



Letters to the Chronicle

LEST WE FORGET

I would like to inform you of an error that was made in February's Chronicle. You wrote that Mohawk's only fatality in its 55-year history was in December, 2001. I am extremely sorry to say that one of my schoolmates, Michael Septon, died at Mohawk in 1980. Michael was a boarding student at Rumsey Hall School when he struck a tree while participating in the recreational ski program at Mohawk. I was there when it happened and it is a day that I will not forget, nor will my other schoolmates or the faculty and staff involved. Michael deserves to be remembered and his death not overlooked.

—Nell Nicholas

FATHER JOHN

Father John has left St. Bridget's after three and a half years. I knew him just enough to regret not knowing him better. He is the kind of man who talks softly and carries a small kitten.

The one sermon I heard was a children's lesson. He had his kitten, named Bridget, which, Father John said, he would have named Bernard if the kitten were a boy, because Father John also served at St. Bernard's in Sharon. The lesson was about love and responsibility. What I remember is that if I were a kitten, I would like to have been Father John's. The lesson was in his tone of voice, and when the kitten scratched him that became, with a calm pause, part of the lesson. The parents and grandparents were not only listening as carefully as the children, but also feeling the kind of deep contentment parents and grandparents feel when they see children with a teacher who combines modesty, authority, and kindness.

—Pat Hare

WHAT CHOICE?

Ezra Pound wrote: "There is no God—and Mary is his mother." For Cornwall taxpayers voting on the school issue, there was no choice, and, on March 23, we were forced to vote for it.

Believing that it is fiscally irresponsible and nearly impossible to build a new school, one had no choice but to vote for an addition to the old school. At the town meeting on March 9, Gordon Ridgway said there would be no opportunity to vote either for or against both of the proposals because "that kind of vote magni-

fies the NO vote." What if the vote magnifies and misrepresents the YES vote? Given no alternative, voters may have selected the "addition" option. Will we now be told that "the town voted for a \$4-million dollar addition," when, in fact, no such vote took place?

Was this any way to run an election?

Yes—if you wanted a predetermined result.

A genuine choice is needed. There is ample precedent showing that a detached gym can be built for under \$2 million. Existing gym space could then be converted to eight classrooms and offices as needed. This plan has been given no attention except to dismiss it. Why? Voters would eagerly rally around a reasonable and imaginative plan for CCS.

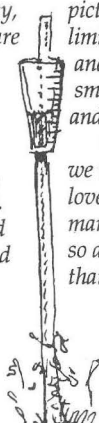
—Biffie Dahl Estabrook

JAUNT TO JUBILEE

On March 7, Nita Colgate, Hannah Colbert, Maisie Dolan, Helen and Kale Prentice, and I arrived by train in Philadelphia for a three-day visit with the inner-city Jubilee School. The school operates in the original rooms of an old Victorian house with a wild, tangly garden in front and a playscape and picnic table in back. That evening we were treated to a videotape of the Jubilee students, followed by a delicious chicken dinner. The next day, the children attended classes as Nita and I floated from room to room observing, taking pictures, and talking with the staff. Despite their limited material resources (small library, no gym, and few computers), the students excelled in their small classes, with the help of the committed staff and parents.

On our way back to Cornwall the next day, we realized that we had learned a lesson about love and respect in the open and welcoming manner in which we were treated. As one parent so aptly put it, "Jubilee is like a family," and that is how they made us feel—like family.

—Jane Prentice



POWER FOR THE PEOPLE

At the recent meeting regarding the pro-



posed installation of three-phase power to C&D Farms on Clark Road, I was informed that the facility would require approximately 328 KVA for the residence and associated buildings, and 866 KVA for the barn and arena, a total of 1,194 KVA. Dusting off my calculator, I discovered that the electrical usage for the residence alone may be approximately 30 times this area's average household usage, and well over 100 times my cabin's average usage.

It distresses me that C&D Farms will meet all of the energy efficiency requirements as stipulated by our building codes, while my cabin, with its single-pane glass and mouse-enhanced R4 walls, does not conform to today's standards of energy-efficient building despite its extremely low energy usage. It surely would be beneficial to our community if building codes addressed not only energy efficiency but also total energy consumption.

—Jim LaPorta

PLAYGROUND PLUSES

There are many considerations that surround the "play area" that was given to the town: safety regulations, town location, viability, etc. All of those are necessary, but not at the veritable heart of the matter. The beating heart of the play area or playground is the joy, laughter, and developmental benefits that each child will experience with every visit. Play encourages creativity, spontaneity, and invention—play, a quintessential human need, can never be outgrown. A play area offers the entire town a place to enjoy the sights and sounds of children laughing, swinging, and climbing, activities that will resonate for young and old alike. I believe the play area will pleasantly touch the entire community.

—Karolene Carlson

BOOKS EN ROUTE TO GHANA

After many months of collecting for the Ghana Fund book drive, the boxes have been packed and are awaiting shipment in New Jersey. Thanks to your generosity, we were able to fill three huge boxes to be shipped to Ghana. The books will ultimately be used in the Christ Faith Foster Home library, which we hope to have refurbished within a year. Again, many thanks for your continued support.

—Heather Dinneen

The silent auction will be from 1:30 to 3 P.M., after which Dave Cadwell will start the bidding promptly at 3 P.M. for the live auction. In addition to the usual array of such offerings as plants, crafts, foods, toys, tickets, massages, and firewood, the silent auction will have a new table devoted solely to Cornwall authors past and present. Up for bidding will be books written by Catherine Noren, Anne Zinsser, Marc Simont, City Lansing, April Stevens, Spencer Klaw, Michael Pollan, Juliette Hubbard, Monty Hare, and Carla Bigelow, just to mention a few.

For many, the highlight of the day begins

with the live auction and the chance to bid on vacation houses in Block Island; County Cork, Ireland; Provence, France; London; and apartments in Tribeca, Greenwich Village and the Long Boat Tennis Club in Florida. For others, the chance to take over the Wandering Moose for a big dinner party or buy a vintage sombrero from the 1920s is the drawing card. Whatever it is, Co-Chairs Jean Vitalis and Emilie Pryor promise an afternoon of fun as Cornwall residents and visitors alike generously give the items up for bid and then just as generously buy them! Closer to the auction date, visit

cornwallct.org for the complete listings for both the silent and live auctions. All of the money raised will help pay for the programs and staffing at the Center, which has been in operation since 1974.

—Norma Lake

New Town Committees

Cornwall's registered voters attended party caucuses in January and elected new town committees. On March 18, both groups held organizing meetings to elect new officers. Stephen Senzer will lead the Democrats again, along with Vice-Chair Ann Schillinger,

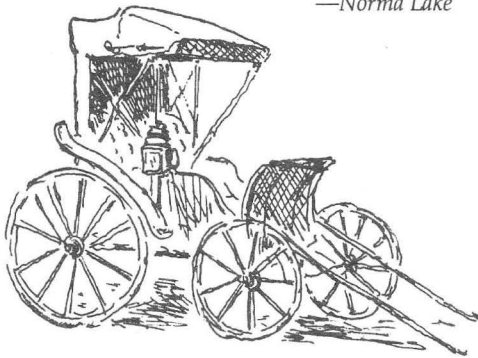
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Secretary Hanna Grossman, and Treasurer Isabelle Osborne. Other members are Anne Baren, Paul Baren, Earl Brecher, Anne Chamberlain, Alec Frost, Nan Frost, David Grossman, Becky Hurlburt, Barbara Klaw, Spencer Klaw, Neal Kosciusko, Dominique Lasseur, John Miller, Charles Osborne, Ann Peterson, Marie Prentice, Gordon Ridgway, Julia Scott, Celia Senzer, Lisa Lansing Simont, Sara Simont, Catherine Tatge, and Phyllis Wojan.

The Republicans could not find anyone to be chair or vice-chair. They did elect Ann Treimann as secretary and K. C. Baird as treasurer. Other members of the town committee are Vera Dinneen, Audrey Ferman, Adam Fischer, Donald Hedden, Brian Kavanagh, Anne Kosciusko, Norma Lake, Jack Preston, Joseph Pryor, Joanne Scully, John Scully, Donald Treimann, and Huntington Williams.

—Norma Lake



Events & Announcements

Park and Rec.: On April 3 at 7 P.M. at the Town Hall—a public forum on the proposed playground. View the site plan and have your questions and concerns addressed.

On April 6 at 6:30 P.M. at the Town Hall—a potluck dinner, followed by a Celtic Band concert (free) at 7:30 P.M.

On April 10, 6:30 to 8 P.M., and April 13, 10 A.M. to noon at the Town Hall—uniform distribution. All Little League and softball players *must* come.

Art in Cornwall: At the Cornwall Library, *The Last Picture Show*, a lively exhibit of works by 35 Cornwall artists, will continue until the middle of April. During April, the National Iron Bank will feature works by students at the Housatonic Valley Regional High School.

Rainy Days

We're not talking about the weather but figuratively, as in "rainy day fund," which is the height of fiscal responsibility. We don't really have one at the *Chronicle*, and we'd feel more, well, responsible if we did. See coupon below.

The Scenic Highway Designation of Route 7 was recently completed and officially declared on January 3. The stretch now runs from the south end of Kent to Falls Village's border with Canaan.

Tax Credits/Exemptions: Cornwall homeowners who were 60 or older by December 31, 2001, or who are receiving Social Security disability payments, may be eligible for credit on their property tax. The property must be their principal residence and the total income including Social Security must be less than \$25,400 single or \$31,100 if married. Applications may be filed in the Assessor's Office until May 15. If approved, credits will apply to the July billing. Once on the program, reapplication is every two years. Forms have been mailed to homeowners who must reapply this year.

Persons currently receiving a veteran's exemption may be eligible for an additional exemption if they meet the above income requirements. There is no age requirement for the additional exemption. Application period is from February 1 to October 1 for application to the October 1, 2002, Grand List.

Application forms are available from the Assessor's Office, which is open Tuesdays and Thursdays, 9 A.M. to noon, and Wednesdays, 1 to 4 P.M.

Lifeguards Wanted: Hammond Beach is now accepting applications for lifeguards for the 2002 summer season. Competitive pay plus paid rain days. Red Cross Lifeguard, First Aid, and CPR certification required. Call Jane Prentice at 672-6101.

Calling All Artists: The third annual "Art at the Dump" will take place at the Transfer Station on Saturday, April 20, 10 A.M. to 4:30 P.M. The show features artwork fashioned from recycled items. All artists, aspiring artists, and non-artists are encouraged to participate. Items are to be dropped off and hung the morning of the show between 8 and 10 A.M. Prizes will be awarded. All artwork, unless otherwise indicated, will be for sale; the profits will be used to buy art materials for CCS. Questions may be directed to Gail Jacobson, 672-6639.

Driveway Bond Graveyard: The town is holding in escrow 25 driveway-performance bonds for residents who applied to attach their driveways to a town road. Each bond is worth \$500 to those who have completed their driveways. The oldest bond dates back to 1990; there are seven older than 1998. If you would like to get your money back (after proving to the selectmen that your driveway is okay), please call the Selectmen's Office (672-4959) or Finance Office (672-2707).

Kindergarten Registration for the 2002-2003 school year will be held on April 2, 3, and 4. Any child turning five on or before December 31, 2002, is eligible. Parents should call the school office, 672-6617, to schedule a time for their child to visit the kindergarten room and meet Mrs. Wadhams, the teacher. Bring the child's official immunization record and birth certificate.

Scholarship Application Forms for the Woman's Society Education Fund are available to any Cornwall senior graduating from public or private high school. Forms may be picked up at the HVRHS Guidance Office or from Thalia Scoville, 672-6288. Deadline for return is May 1.

Movie Night: On Wednesday, April 10, at 8 P.M. at the Town Hall, *The Big Broadcast of 1938* will be shown. The story takes place on an ocean voyage and has W. C. Fields in dual roles and Bob Hope singing "Thanks for the Memory." Also on board are Martha Raye, Dorothy Lamour, and opera star Kirsten Flagstad. Note change in time (from 7:30 P.M.) now that spring is here!

The Fourth Annual Spring Bird Walk, sponsored by Park and Rec., will be on Saturday morning, April 27, 7 to 9:30 A.M., and will be led by Art Gingert, our expert resident naturalist/photographer. Bring binoculars and wear waterproof boots. Beginning birders are welcome. No rain date. For details and to reserve a place, call Carla Bigelow, 672-0283.

New Library Building Dedication: June 15, at midday. Mark your calendars now!



CORNWALL CHRONICLE

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

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