CORNWALL CHRONICLE

VOLUME 16: NUMBER 7 AUGUST 2006

Cornwall Plans Ahead

The Planning and Zoning Commission continues its work on the Town Plan update.

In fact, the commission now holds a second "planning" meeting each month. Under immediate discussion is a zoning amendment that would require a "conservation" subdivision plan as well as a conventional one. It would propose compact development with land set aside for conservation.

New maps have been created by the Housatonic Valley Association that outline areas that are undevelopable because of steep slopes, wetlands, floodplains, etc. In addition, the Cornwall Conservation Trust will circulate a survey in the fall asking residents to list their favorite/most-valued sites in Cornwall. This should aid in designating areas for protection.

The Nature Conservancy has agreed to finance a "build-out" study, which will show how the town will develop under existing zoning. The Conservancy has also agreed to fund an analysis of how different approaches to future growth might affect the town's fiscal base.

—Pat Hare, Ginny Potter

Don Reid Moves On

Don Reid, Cornwall's road foreman for the last 14 years, is retiring to assume a similar

position in Salisbury. "Don's been with us through floods, fires, and storms," says First Selectman Gordon Ridgway, "and somehow he's always been right in the middle of all of them. The town's going to miss him, and we wish him well."

—Bob Potter

Contrast and Change

Surely others beside myself have noted how the former Clark farm in East Cornwall epitomizes the change from our town's nostalgia-burdened past to an uncertain future. Contrasting extremes now meet on the same piece of land, before our astonished eyes and in our fondest memories.

Harriet Clark, the last of a line to occupy the old homestead, died ten years ago at the age of 102. She grew up in a time when children were born at home and walked dirt roads to one-room schools. She went to church by horse and buggy. She watched Civil War veterans march in parades. Summers she picked berries and churned butter. Long winter evenings were spent sewing black hooks and eyes on cards with red thread—piecework for a Waterbury company that was literally farmed out. "I think we received about eight cents for a dozen cards," Harriet wrote years later.

That was 100 years ago. Today the former Clark farm is for sale. The price: \$23.8 mil-

lion—nearly twice the highest property sale ever recorded in Litchfield County. Needless to say, there've been some changes made.

Long loops of four-rail horse fence swoop around stone-free, sculpted pastures. If you're lucky, a few of the 30 fine Friesian horses will be out munching the grass. I was unlucky. All I saw was a worker out picking up evidence that any animal had ever been there.

But the barn is the main attraction. (No, not "barn" but "Taj Mahal," and not "stall" but "spacious stateroom"—each with its own outside patio.) Said to be the largest modern post-and-beam building in the United States, the "barn" is a huge L-shaped structure, the two wings meeting in a fourstory rotunda that includes an apartment topped by a gallery of antique buggies. To stand at one end of the longer wing and look down the football-field-long stretch of "stalls" is an experience never to be forgotten. "Am I still in Cornwall?" Dormers high above softly illuminate the perfectly designed, polished mahogany and black steel "stalls" as they converge in the distance. Big brass plagues carry the name of each horse: Jezebel, Nicolo, Gizmo. Clearly, every horse is an individual, and honored as such.

I went to Pinnacle Farm expecting to be critical. (After all, what could all this money (continued on page 2)

SATURDAY SUNDAY MONDAY TUESDAY THURSDAY FRIDAY 5 Rose Algrant Art Show 10 A.M.-4 P.M. CCS Gym † 1 2 3 4 **Every Week This Month:** Mondays: Jam Session, 7:30 P.M. Village Meeting House; Family Program Alex Prud'homme & Julia Adult Basketball, 8 P.M. CCS Gym Inland Wetlands* Pet Show Rose Algrant Art Show Child 3 P.M. Library † Tuesdays: Adult Volleyball, 7-9 P.M. CCS Gym 6:30 P.M. Library † 5-8 p.m. CCS Gym † 8 P.M. Town Hall Chamber Music Concert 7:30 P.M. Cream Hill Lake Assoc. † Wednesdays: Stretch Class, 5 p.m. Town Hall (Listing Continued on August 32) Motherhouse Cow Workshop 10 A.M. Local Farm † 10 11 12 Michael Pollan Agricultural Comm. **Democratic Primary** Family Program Reading 2 P.M. N. Cornwall Church † Rose Algrant Art Show 7:30 P.M. Town Hall 6 A.M.-8 P.M. Town Hall † Wolf Conservation 10 а.м.-2 р.м. CCS Gym † Bd. of Selectmen P&Z 7:30 P.M. CCS Library 7:30 p.m. Town Hall Cornwall Association 6:30 P.M. Library † Agricultural Comm. Annual Meeting 7:30 P.M. Town Office 4-5:30 р.м. Library Deadline: September 14 17 19 13 18 16 Chronicle Copy Blood Pressure Family Program Bd. of Ed. 5 P.M. CCS Lib Art Reception Screening 3-4 P.M. Vegetarian Potluck Dinner Bd. of Fin. 7:30 P.M. CCS Lib. 5-7 P.M. Insiders/ UCC Parish House 6:30 P.M. Library † Outsiders Gallery † VFW Post 9856 8 P.M. W. C. Firehouse 20 21 23 Ŀ 24 22 PTA Day Trip to Lake Compounce † Bd. of Selectmen 7:30 p.m. Town Hall P&Z 7:30 P.M. Town Office 27 28 29 30 31 **Every Week This Month:** Thursdays: Meditation for Mothers, 1:15 P.M. UCC Day Room; Tai Chi for Beginners, 7:30 P.M. Call David Colbert Child Center Registration ZBA 8 P.M. Town Hall* Cornwall Vol. Fire Dept. 672-6726 for location 8 p.m. W. C. Firehouse 9 A.M.-noon † Sundays: Meditation Group, 1-2 P.M. Debra Tyler 672-0229

(continued from page 1)

do for your or my favorite cause?) But I came away bewitched by the realized dream of Carlos and Diane Dominguez. Farm manager Jackie Singer was cordial, the workers polite, and the attentive Friesiansblack, compact animals with long, long tails—positively friendly. Not every day of the week do I get nuzzled by a fiftythousand-dollar horse.

> Harriet Clark went on to teach school for 35 years and finally man-

aged to "retire to Cornwall and become a character." She served in the legislature and wrote a history of East Cornwall. Always she was busy and involved, concerned and

helpful. Would she approve of this new use of her old acreage?

Who knows.... But I really believe she would accept, as she accepted the first radio, refrigerator, and car in Cornwall. Certainly, she would accept the \$250,000 property tax bill. That's the little bit of Yankee she bequeathed to us all. —Bob Potter

Cornwall's Citizenship **Awards**

Every year VFW Post 9856 announces a Citizenship Award at the Memorial Day services. The award is a way of thanking and honoring the recipient and always a surprise. The year the award was initiated, 1959, Ed Whitcomb was recognized for his years of decorating the graves of veterans, and Eugene Charleton, Jr., was honored for heroism in saving young Ralph Gold from fire.

The recipients have ranged from veterans to ministers and librarians, an 11-year-old to someone two hours before death, selectmen to Post Office masters/mistresses, a single volunteer to the entire fleet of volunteers cleaning up after the tornado. The list was in danger of being lost, but thanks to The Lakeville Journal's reporting and local memories, it is almost

pieced together again.

There are at least three husband-wife teams: Bob and Jean Bailey, Ralph and Thalia Scoville, and Jerry and Pat Blakey. Four separate times Blake/ Hermann family members were recognized, and Fred Bate, Sr., Fred Bate, Jr., and Fred Bate III were each honored. Dr. W. Bradford Walker won in 1965 for 42 years of service and countless acts of caring, while Gordon Cavanaugh and Gary Hepprich were recognized for single acts of heroism when they risked their lives to save others.

These are but a few of those honored. The VFW seeks to recognize people who otherwise might never be thanked in public and whose quiet community spirit is not widely known. Cornwall would not be Cornwall without these people. I hope to display the entire list soon, at least by next Memorial Day. —Lynn H. Cheney

Through Lion's Mane

On Saturday, July 1, at 8:43 P.M., a moment after Larry Stevens's Bottom brayed, one of the Cheneys' donkeys answered from Jewell Street, and we knew Midsummer Night's Dream was a critical success.

Larry was one of 36 players, most of them from Cornwall, who presented a four-day run of the Shakespeare classic, trimmed to a modest two hours, outside the Town Hall under the maple tree. Hampered by rainstorms and mosquitoes, the multi-generational cast, led by director Fred Thaler, played to happy crowds between June 30 and July 3.

Backstage, the inside of the show was fascinating. The real pros, like G. Fred Shepard (Theseus) and Kimberly Hoffmann (Puck), were near perfect on lines from day one. The young lovers, Nina LaPorta and Trey Hatcher, Hannah Colbert and Dan Hare, were admirable, nimble, and full of fire. The Rude Mechanicals, who presented the Pyramus and Thisbe play at the end, were an odd bunch. Four of us were gray-haired ladies of a certain age whom Fred Thaler bundled together with Larry and Brien LaForge to become the players within the play. "What else was I going to do with you?" Fred said.

The Town Hall Players are well launched. The Board of Selectmen, the Cornwall Association, and the Cornwall Foundation gave key support right when it was needed. The old Town Hall, scene of many theater and cabaret evenings in years gone by, seemed to wake up and vibrate under the running feet of the youngest fairies. And Fred, with his lights, his theories, and ideas, was the genius behind it all. —Lisa Lansing Simont (Lion)

Trucknapper Update

Back in March, the Chronicle's lead story concerned the arrest and jailing of a man accused of hijacking a pickup owned by Cornwall Selectman Richard Bramley. Both the crime and the capture were fascinating indeed.

Now the story has an end. On July 7, Judge Charles Gill sentenced Shawn Lewonczyk, a 21-year-old Meriden man, to prison for two years and a day. The plea agreement stemmed from charges including first-degree larceny, reckless endangerment, possession of marijuana, and carrying a weapon in a motor vehicle.

The relatively short sentence—it could have been ten years or more—was perhaps a balance between justice and mercy. Lewonczyk had led a troubled life. As a young teenager, he had run away from a dysfunctional family and gone to Florida. When he returned, at 15, his life drifted into addiction and crime. Judge Gill reserved special censure for the youth's parents. They had realized the truck

was stolen, but their main concern was that Shawn did not keep it hidden. The judge regretted that he had no way of sentencing the parents to an adjoining cell.

Because of the admission of guilt and plea

bargain, Richard Bramley did not have to appear in court and could remain detached from the proceedings. He remains detached—and far from bitter. "I hope they put [Lewonczyk] in some kind of minimum security prison," he says. "That way, maybe he can finally get his life straightened out."

(The listings below include items inadvertently omitted from the July issue.)

Welcome

Cole Michael to Megan and Brian Mollica Percy Elizabeth to Kristy and Brian Bedell

Congratulations

Caitlyn Patrick to Thomas McKenzie Rebecca Savan to Pedro Solis Susu Erca to Adam Langlands Pearse Dennis R. Belancik to Carolyn Schmidt

Good-Bye to Friends

Marion K. Pallokat Anna R. Allen

Land Transfers

Oscar Shamamian and Llewellyn H. Sinkler to Jonathan M. Jadow, property at 369 Cream Hill Road for \$545,000.

Mary Alice Palmer to Nikolle M. Kuehnert and Ronnie P. Lizana, property at 128 Kent Road for \$250,000.

Leonard P. and Jill M. Ciccarelli, Jr., to Sam M. Wee and Elizabeth Krentz-Wee, property at 232 Kent Road for \$450,000.

Robin Garsen Oz to Bruce A. and Marjorie F. Whiteford, property at 416 Sharon-Goshen Turnpike for \$500,000.

Arthur Frederick Lorch to Town of Cornwall, 100.3979 acres on Kent Road for \$540,000.

Arthur Frederick and Ellen B. Lorch to Christopher Hopkins, 13.884 acres on Kent Road for \$70,000. Arthur Frederick Lorch to Christopher Hopkins, 5.95

acres and buildings on Kent Road for \$380,000. Frederick H. Jefts, Lonnie Jefts Parillo, Andrew Jefts, and Barbara Jefts to Keith C. and Giuseppina DiGiacomo Braun, property at 80 Lake Road for

\$300,000. Ryan K. Clark to Frank L. and Rose A. Giambrone, property at 197 Kent Road for \$370,000.

Darren Schneck to Mary Dzenutis, property at 10 River Road for \$95,000.

William Kuskin to Louise Brown, property at 29 Pond Road for \$60,000.

James C. Stemm to Jerome and Cynthia Cohen-Congress, 23 acres on River Road for \$35,000. Nancy Sayles Day Foundation, Inc., to Cornwall Conservation Trust, 180.795 acres on Route 128.

Annals of Cornwall

Hannah (Bradford) Sherwood Croner Baldwin (1748-ca. 1832) surely had one of the most eventful lives of Cornwall's early settlers. She came here in about 1770 as a young single adult, either with or to join a married sister. The two were born in Kingston, Massachusetts, as fifth-generation descendants of Governor William Bradford. In 1758 they were orphaned in Maine, where their parents were murdered and scalped by Indians. The children were then sent back to Massachusetts to live with an aunt not much older than themselves, who already had a large family.

In 1772, Hannah was married in Cornwall to a widower, Ebenezer Sherwood. He died in 1785, leaving her with seven children and a farm. Their home was on or near the site of the new Cornwall Free Library building. She was remarried in Cornwall to a German exsoldier who had deserted from the British army near the end of the American Revolution. She had a child by him, but she shortly divorced him for deserting her. She was probably our town's first divorcée.

For a time, Hannah boarded "town charges," i.e., indigents, including the last member of our Dudleytown Dudleys.

She shortly married her third husband, a widower from Brookfield, Connecticut, who died in 1815. Hannah was back in Cornwall by 1819 and was re-admitted to the First Congregational Church. But shortly afterward, she was dismissed from the church by letter. She then moved to Nelson, Ohio, where Cornwall church records show that 40 persons from perhaps 15 Cornwall families had resettled in the 1812–23 period. They included her son Joshua, who had moved to Nelson in 1812. Hannah, together with Joshua and his wife and her mother, was among the 50 members listed in the Nelson church's 1825 roster.

When and where Hannah died is not known. She was probably the woman between ages 80 and 90 who was recorded in Nelson by the 1830 census as a member of Joshua's household.

What a life!

—Michael Gannett

Go FISH!

"More people need rides now than did a few years ago," says Joan Edler, who heads FISH, the volunteer organization that provides transportation to people in Cornwall. She told me that on some weeks eight or more people need rides to go to doctors and dentists or to the hospital for chemotherapy or to the food bank. Joan makes calls and juggles schedules to match a client's appointment with a volunteer's available time. She relies on about a dozen drivers who make trips to New Milford, Canaan, Sharon, Torrington, and sometimes even Hartford. She covers a lot of trips herself; last year she drove 1,600 miles for FISH.

The needs are much greater now than when Polly Calhoun called this writer 15 years ago to announce that she wanted me to take over the running of FISH. I asked, "What's that?" She explained, and since it sounded like a worthy endeavor, and since no one would even think of saying nay to Polly Calhoun, I agreed to take responsibility for FISH and ran it for ten years before turning it over to Joan Edler in 2001.

We enlisted more volunteer drivers and took turns driving people. The volunteers use their own cars, and there are no fees involved (cost of miles driven for charity is tax deductible). It's a delightfully simple service that is covered by your auto insurance, because you're doing it for love, not money.

One gets to meet very interesting characters doing this work, and I heard many color-

Letters to the Chronicle

APOLOGIA

The Chronicle is produced monthly at the graceful pace mandated by ink, paper, and the printing press. But its preparation relies on the speedy modern linkage of computers with the Internet. The latter combination somehow let this editor dredge up out of electronic memory a year-old set of Welcomes, Congratulations, and Land Transfers, and, with a single fatal mouseclick, zip them on to the publisher.

Apologies to those whose announcements were thus delayed. They will appear this month (fate willing). —David A. Grossman

HABITAT TURNS 15

Habitat for Humanity of Northwest Connecticut is celebrating its 15th anniversary this year. Founded in 1991, it built its first house on Route 7 in Cornwall Bridge. Polly Calhoun, among others, worked on the house on many Saturdays.

At present Habitat is working on its eighth house, being built along with three others on Music Mountain Road in Falls Village. Habitat houses sell for an average of \$90,000 with a nointerest, 25-to-30-year mortgage, making them affordable to most working people in the six area towns of Region One.

Volunteers are needed and always welcome. Anyone over 16 can help. Land is also always needed—one acre is all that is required for affordable housing in Cornwall. If you want to volunteer, please call me at 672-6637.

—Paul Baren

MEA CULPA

In the July issue of the Chronicle, I wrote an article about an invasive weed called garlic mustard. I suggested that you tuck your alien plants

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in a plastic bag and take it to our Transfer Station. No! No! That is not what you should do! Manager Fred Bate reminded me that the Connecticut Department of Environmental Protection does not permit disposal of plant wastes at Transfer Stations.

After numerous phone calls to plant experts at DEP, the final word is "solarize." Put the invasive plants in a large black plastic bag and place it in the sun. Within a week, the plants will liquefy. I was reminded that some garlic mustard seeds may stay viable for five years, however. Controlled burning may be the ultimate solution.

—Carla Bigelow

WHO CARES?

In the spring of 2003, a half-dozen volunteers and I started a simple volunteer-based, after-school program for middle-school students, Cornwall CARES. The acronym CARES stands for Community, Arts, Responsibility, and Environment Series. Our goal has been to provide enjoyable community-oriented activities for youth that develop a sense of contribution to our town. We offered our first two series during the 2003–4 school year.

Starting with Saturdays in September, we will offer our Environmental Series-Hiking Club. In addition, we will send out a questionnaire this fall to identify people interested in sharing what they know and love with our kids. Our flexible format allows a person to commit to only one "guest appearance," to develop a program series, or to assist a series leader. Please look for our letter and offer your talents.

—Deirdre Fischer

ful opinions and stories over the years. People are full of gratitude for the service. New Englanders are traditionally reluctant to ask for help—Joan says they begin every call by saying: "I hate to bother you...." She says she feels very grateful to be able to fill a need when people require transport. More volunteers are urgently needed—call Joan at 672-6789 if you wish to help.

—Marie Prentice



Events & Announcements

From the Transfer Station: August is always a hot and busy month. Here are four tips to keep our tempers on the cooler side: (1) Remember that every vehicle entering the area must have a sticker. Cornwall is one of the few towns that does not charge for stickers, so proof of residency is required. (2) Dogs and children must remain in vehicles at all times. (3) Persons disposing of items for which a fee is required (such as tires, appliances, and mattresses) should bring enough cash or a personal check with them. A complete list of such items is available in the *Cornwall Report* or at the Transfer Station. (4) The recycling of cans and bottles is not just for the environmentally sensitive but also a matter of state law. Attendants are hearing too many cans and bottles being dumped into the trash compactor. Cooperation will avoid strict enforcement.

Planning Cornwall's Future is a new page on the website www.cornwallct.org, found under "What's New." The page will let Cornwall residents obtain information and views on how Cornwall's Town Plan can and should be revised. Interested persons can read or download posted documents. David Grossman has started the page with "Cornwall in the Zeroes Decade," an update of his "Cornwall in Context" written ten years ago. Information on posting and other regulations can be found on the website.

A Call to Artists: The Agricultural Commission extends a call to artists in all media for works related to agricultural themes and the preservation of open spaces. A special event will feature works with the Lorch Farm as subject. The exhibit will be hung in the Town Hall during the Ag. Fair, September 9. Call Cilla Mauro, 672-6969, for information.

Chamber Music Concert at Cream Hill Lake Association on Saturday, August 5, at 7:30 P.M. Performing will be Benjamin Wolff and musician friends from the Gewandhaus Orchestra of Leipzig. Please come on time and, if possible, bring a folding chair. Refreshments after the concert.

Cornwall Child Center: Fall registration on Thursday, August 31, from 9 A.M. to noon, or call Pam Brehm at 626-1289 to arrange another time. CCC opens for the school year on Tuesday, September 5, at 7:30 A.M.

Motherhouse Family Cow Workshop: Saturday, August 5, at Local Farm, 10 A.M. to 1 P.M. Learn about caring for a cow, and try your hand at milking. Make butter, cheese, and ice cream. Stay on for a tour of area farmsteads. \$35/person or \$50/family up to four. Questions? Call 672-0229.

Road Oiling: The following roads will be oiled during August: Whitcomb Hill, Mansonville, Flat Rocks, Pritchard, Day, Bald Mountain, Popple Swamp, River Road South, Brook, West, and Dark Entry. Residents are asked to be patient when roads are closed for brief periods.

Fleeting Thoughts

For many of us, August is the shortest month of the year. One day it's July, and the next morning it's Labor Day. August is just a few days of suntan oil that help July slide into September. So if you intend to use the coupon below, grab a pen and do so now. The school bus cometh. Thanks.

The 46th Rose Algrant Art Show opens at the CCS gym on Friday, August 4, from 5 to 8 P.M. The works of over 40 Cornwall artists will continue to be displayed Saturday, August 5, from 10 A.M. to 4 P.M., and Sunday, August 6, from 10 A.M. to 2 P.M. A percentage of sales will benefit the Cornwall Free Library.

A Democratic Primary will be held on August 8 for the offices of Governor, Lieutenant Governor, and U.S. Senator. Polls will be open at the Town Hall from 6 A.M. to 8 P.M. Absentee ballots are available at the Town Clerk's Office, which is open from 9 A.M. to noon and 1 to 4 P.M., Monday through Thursday.

Art in Cornwall: At the Library, the exhibits of Asher Pavel and Nev Dunn will continue through August 26. Beginning August 29, Nancy Daubenspeck and Robin Raderman will have a mixed-media show entitled *Contemplative Works*.

At the Insiders/Outsiders Gallery, *Art for the Wild*, works by Marjorie Strider and Scott Zuckerman, will continue through August 15. On August 19 there will be an opening reception from 5 to 7 P.M. for *Master Pastellists of Connecticut*, works by Frank Federico, Ranie Crawford, and Peter Seltzer.

The Wish House show of mixed-media works by Peter J. Ketchum will continue through August.

Art at the Bridge, a new gallery at the Pink House in West Cornwall, will continue its exhibit of Contemporary Antiquarians through August.

The Cornwall Historical Society's exhibit of works by Armin Landeck will continue through Labor Day.

Alex's Lemonade Stand, hosted on July 1 by Reilly Hedden's family and friends, received over \$400 in donations to benefit pediatric cancer research.

After-School Help Wanted: The Cornwall Extended Day Learning Program is planning to hire an assistant. The hours available are Monday to Friday from 2:45 to 5:30 P.M. Please call Director Bethany Thompson for more information at 248-3009.

Grant Applications: The Cornwall Foundation is accepting applications for grants from Cornwall groups through August 31 for review during its September board meeting. Applications can be obtained at www.cornwallfoundation.com or in the Cornwall Library. For further information call Paul Baren, 672-6637.

Cornwall Day at Lake Compounce: August 22, with a rain date of August 24, sponsored by the CCS PTA. A discounted price of \$18 per person buys a whole day of water slides and roller coasters. Also available is a tenpercent discount on food and souvenirs. Call Bethany Thompson at 248-3009 for more information or to make reservations.

Michael Pollan Will Read from his best-selling book *The Omnivore's Dilemma* on Saturday, August 12, at 2 P.M. at North Cornwall Church. This will be his only area reading. His recent books will be available for purchase and signing. Admission is free, and refreshments will be served. Call the Library (672-6874) for more information.

Late Fee for Late Dogs: There is a one-dollar fine for each month past June 30, when all of Cornwall's best friends were to acquire this year's license tag. Only 75 percent have done so. Town Clerk Vera Dinneen will ask for a current rabies vaccination certificate and \$19 (\$8 if the dog is spayed or neutered), plus late fee.

Library Family Programs, Wednesday evenings at 6:30 p.m. for ages five and up. August 2: Pet Show; judges will award ribbons in all categories for real and imagined animals. August 9: Wolf Conservation Center program with a live wolf. August 16: Vegetarian Potluck Dinner—no paws, claws, or scales!

Park and Rec.'s New Website: Visit www.cornwallparkandrecreation.org for up-to-date information on events, to download a registration form, etc.

Library Reading: Alex Prud'homme, co-author of *My Life in France* with his aunt, the French chef Julia Child, will read from the book at the Library on Saturday, August 5, at 3 P.M. Refreshments will be served. For more information call 672-6874.

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