

Letter to the Chronicle

KARATE “CHOPPED” BY BASKETBALL
Even after the expansion of the CCS gym, gym time is still at a premium! This fall, in an attempt to accommodate additional practice sessions for basketball enthusiasts, the Park and Rec. board voted to eliminate karate from its Wednesday evening time slot in favor of additional basketball practices. Unfortunately, this meant the karate program, available to Cornwall families through US Martial Arts for the past three years, was forced into limbo mid-session.

While the experience was frustrating, concerned karate students and parents were finally able to obtain a suitable compromise to continue practicing karate in the gym. We hope the commission will consider classifying the karate program an official Park and Rec. “activity” and, as a result, give it equal consideration with other activities in the gym. Karate encourages a powerful mind-body connection and is open to all Cornwall residents age 6 to 106. Contact Park and Rec. Director Bethany Thompson for more info.
—Alicia North

Events & Announcements

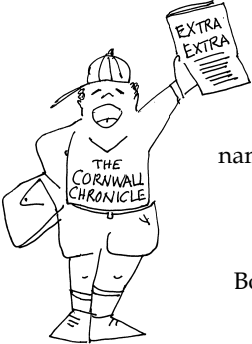
Benefit Concert to aid the Cornwall Food & Fuel Bank will be held at Cornwall Consolidated School on Saturday, February 27, at 7 P.M. \$5 at the door. The group Tapestry (musicians Maurice L. Oyanadel, Dylan Mosley, and Susan DeCarlo) will play world music with a beautiful blend of instrumentals and high-energy percussion. For more information contact Tracy at hewat@optonline.net. Can’t attend but want to donate? Checks can be made out to “Town of Cornwall Food & Fuel Bank” and sent to P.O. Box 205, Cornwall, CT 06753. Every dollar helps a neighbor.

Democrats Welcome Dan Malloy, former mayor of Stamford and Democratic candidate for governor, at the Democratic Town Committee meeting on Monday, February 1, at 7:30 P.M. at the Cornwall Library. Ned Lamont is invited for the March 1 meeting, same time and place. All interested Democrats are invited.

Ice Skating for Cornwall residents, sponsored by Park & Rec., takes place on Saturdays from 7 to 8 P.M. at the Schmidt Rink, Hotchkiss School.

Twenty Years Old

Early in the *Chronicle’s* history, the need for ready cash prompted First Publishers Tom and Margaret Bevans to set aside this corner of page 4 to appeal for funds. Editorial wits named Robert T. Beers, the paper’s treasurer, “Old Moneybags.” This corner is still in business. In honor of Bob (“OM”) Beers, please send a check today.



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

Name _____

Address _____

City / St / Zip _____

☐ Please mail the *Chronicle* to the out-of-town address above; a \$15 contribution will be appreciated.

organization, send a check to the Cornwall Consolidated School, made out to the Haitian Health Foundation, or visit their website at haitianhealthfoundation.org.

A Family Cow Forum sponsored by Motherhouse will take place on Saturday, February 27. For more information call Debra Tyler at 672-0229.

Art in Cornwall: At the Library, Gail Jacobson’s show *Can’t Stop Making Things* continues through February 20. Beginning February 23, the Library will be filled with art created by CCS students. A reception for the artists and community will be held Saturday, February 27, from 3 to 5 P.M.

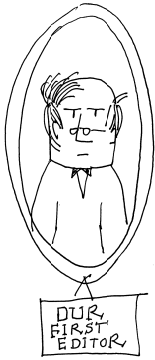
Artwork by Kathleen Love Mooney will be on display at the National Iron Bank this month.

Lady Audrey’s Gallery will continue its *Winter’s Waltz* show through February. A call for entries for the next juried show will be posted on ladyaudreysgallery.com.

At the Cornwall Library

- Hot Chocolate Hour starts Wednesday, February 3, and will run for six weeks, ending on March 10. Time is 3 to 4 P.M.
- Drop-in diabetes screening by the New Milford Hospital Foundation will take place from 1 to 2 P.M. on Thursday, February 4.
- Chess for Kids 8 years and older continues on two Saturdays, February 13 and 27, at 10:15 A.M.
- A “Romantic Evening” on Saturday, February 13, at 7:30 P.M., just before Valentine’s Day, will feature Jean Cocteau’s classic *The Beauty and the Beast* (*La Belle et la Bête*), in French with English subtitles. Movie critic (and neighbor) Joy Boyum will introduce the movie in English (no subtitles). A variety of homemade Cornwall desserts will sweeten the atmosphere.
- A family craft workshop in Japanese bookbinding will take place on Saturday, February 20, from 1 to 2:30 P.M. (ages 8 and up).
- A Readathon sleepover will take place Saturday to Sunday, February 27 to 28 (drop-off at 7:30 P.M., pick-up next day at 9 A.M.).

Drop Off Items for the Cornwall Food Pantry either at the UCC Church Office on Bolton Hill Road (Monday–Friday, 9 A.M. to 1 P.M.) or at A.F. Stone & Tile, next to the post office in Cornwall Bridge (Monday–Friday, 7 A.M. to 5 P.M., and Saturdays, 7 A.M. to 4 P.M.). The Food Pantry in the downstairs Day Room of the UCC Sanctuary is open for “take out” business every Tuesday and Thursday from 11 A.M. to noon.



CORNWALL CHRONICLE

VOLUME 20 : NUMBER 1 FEBRUARY 2010



Something More Than a Snow Squall

“Well, yes,” said Thalia Scoville, “I did notice something out there while I was setting things out for breakfast. Thought it was just a snow squall, so I went upstairs to get Ralph up.” But Sue Gingert, driving to work at 8 A.M., saw that it was indeed smoke coming out of the south end of the barn, worried that it might be serious, and went quickly to Lynn and Fred Scoville’s house down the hill. Lynn took one look and called up the stairs, “Boys, I think the barn’s on fire!” then called 911. Young Fred and Stevie came barreling down and took off up the hill. Lynn, terrified, watched them run inside to let out the animals. By now, smoke was pouring out from under the eaves. “Oh my God, my boys are in there!”

Will and Charlie Russ had just arrived. “It was smokier than hell in there,” said Stevie. The four young men punched out the windows to clear the smoke; within minutes, Cornwall Volunteer Fire Department personnel were on the scene, and Fire Chief Earle Tyler jumped in through a window with a fire hose (First Selectman Gordon Ridgway holding the other end). “Animals almost never want to go out,”

Earle told us, “but if we don’t get the animals out, we can’t get the people out.” They herded the chickens, geese, beefers, cows, calves, and pigs outside, though Ranger the donkey and one of the pigs needed to be prompted with a couple of “boots in the ass,” and a day-old calf had to be carried out.

At first, the firemen got water from the tanker, then, after young Fred chainsawed holes in the ice, from the farm pond and Cream Hill Lake.

Flames were now leaping out of the barn roof. “Barns are the most difficult fires to fight,” said Earle. “They are big open spaces. The fire doubles every 60 seconds.” And this barn held 10,000 bales of hay.

Meanwhile, up at the farmhouse, EMTs Dave Cadwell and Tommy Wolf helped carry Ralph downstairs, since power for the stair chair had been cut. “We didn’t want to leave,” said Thalia, “but we did what they told us and went down to Fred and Lynn’s house.”

“Yes,” added Ralph, “I wanted to stay and watch it. Had a good seat, too.” Some who decided not to stay were the rats. Fred, Jr. saw them leave the barn, singly at first and then in small waves of three or four. (Brutus the dog caught a couple. Two singed rats were later found in traps at the house.) It is surmised that one of this clan had started the fire by chewing a power

cord in the milking shed.

By now, neighboring towns were there to help: squads from Sharon, Goshen, and Falls Village, two ambulances (just in case), Sharon’s ladder truck. Warren was standing by. And then there was the food. It came from all over, throughout the day and into the evening, from individuals and businesses. (Ralph particularly enjoyed the lunchmeats and kielbasa from the Freunds, in Canaan.) “The farm community really pulls together,” said Lynn, “and we had all kinds of offers to house the animals.”

Dave Cadwell brought Ralph and Thalia back home in the afternoon to the smoldering wreckage. “Those poor devils kept at it till after dark,” said Ralph. “We were fortunate that the fire had started in daylight, that there was so little wind.” And as Earle said, “It’s not just the fire personnel but the whole community that turns out.” Weeks later, the barn still smoldered. Final casualty list for 256 Town Street, New Year’s Eve 2009:

- 4 rats
- 3 chickens
- 2 cats
- 1 barn

The Scovilles plan to rebuild.

—Ella Clark

FEBRUARY 2010

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 6:00 pm : Reg. One Bd of Ed - HVRHS 7:00 pm : Park & Rec 7:30 pm : Bd of Selectmen - Town Hall 7:30 pm : Ag. Com. - Town Hall 7:30 pm : Dem. Town Com. - Dan Malloy - Library †	2 7:30 pm : Inland Wetlands Town Hall	3 3:00 pm -4:00 pm Hot Chocolate Hour Library	4 1:00 pm -2:00 pm Diabetes Screening Library	5	6 6:00 pm Potluck Scoville Barn Benefit HVRHS † 7:00 pm -9:30 pm Family Contra Dance Town Hall †
7	8 12:00 pm -1:00 pm Blood Pressure Screening UCC	9 7:00 pm P & Z - Town Hall 7:30 pm Housatonic River Comm. CCS Library	10 3:00 pm -4:00 pm Hot Chocolate Hour Library	11	12 CCS - no school	13 10:15 am Chess for Kids-Library 4:00 pm -6:00 pm Book Signing - Wish House† 7:30 pm : Film: The Beauty & the Beast - Library†
14	15 Presidents’ Day CCS - no school	16 CCS - no school 7:30 pm Bd of Selectmen Town Hall	17 3:00 pm -4:00 pm Hot Chocolate Hour Library	18 5:00 pm : Bd of Ed CCS Library 7:30 pm : Bd of Finance CCS Library 8:00 pm : VFW Post 9856 W.C. Firehouse	19 5:00 pm -9:00 pm PTA Book Swap - CCS †	20 1:00 pm -2:30 pm Family Workshop Japanese Bookbinding Library† 7:00 pm -9:30 pm 6th-8th Grade Haiti Benefit Dance - CCS†
21	22	23 7:30 pm : ZBA - Town Hall *	24 3:00 pm -4:00 pm Hot Chocolate Hour - Library 8:00 pm Cornwall Volunteer Fire Dept. W.C. Firehouse	25	26	27 • Family Cow Forum† • 10:15 am : Chess for Kids - Library • 3-5pm: Art Reception - Library† • 7:00 pm : Benefit World Music Concert - CCS† 7:30 pm : Readathon Sleepover - Library†
28 9:00 am Readaton Pick-up Library†	Every Week This Month: Mondays: Jam Session , 7:30 p.m. Call 672-0229 for Location. Tuesdays: Adult Volleyball , 7:30 p.m. CCS Gym. Wednesdays: Stretch Class , 5 p.m. Town hall; Tai Chi , 6 p.m. CCS. Call 672-0064, Women’s Basketball 7:30 p.m. CCS					

* Check with Zoning Office—672-4957
† Details in Events and Announcements

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143 CREAM HILL ROAD, WEST CORNWALL, CT 06796
E-MAIL: elthill@aol.com
www.cornwallct.org

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CORNWALL RESIDENT

Green Light for Sweet Peet

At its December 28 meeting, the Zoning Board of Appeals rejected the appeals filed by several Cornwall residents and upheld—by unanimous vote—the permit allowing Cream Hill Farm to begin composting operations in partnership with Sweet Peet LLC of Connecticut. Zoning Enforcement Officer Karen Nelson published the decision in the *Waterbury Republican* on January 6. Opponents of the project had 15 days thereafter to commence any further legal proceedings. As of January 25, no such action had been taken.

—Paul De Angelis

Where Are They Now?

Sharing a 20th anniversary this year with the *Chronicle* are 16 boys and girls born in 1990 to parents living in Cornwall. Their names and months of birth were listed in the inaugural (February 1991) issue of this paper. Here’s what they’re up to now.

Five of the group are going to college in New England. These include Hannah Colbert (at Bennington College in Vermont, concentrating in literature and Spanish); Annelise Collins (who paints and attends the School of the Museum of Fine Arts in Boston, also attending some classes at Tufts); Eli Ingersoll (taking classes at Boston and Northeastern Universities while cultivating his biggest passion—playing music); Elizabeth Kavanagh (a transfer student in communications at Eastern Connecticut State University after a year at Whittier College in Los Angeles, which she thought too small); and Caroline Kosciusko (computer graphics and communications major at Springfield College, member of the varsity swim team, and all-American Honors NCAA National Championships swimmer).

The lives of some of the group are centered closer to home. Ian Bardot, for example, is studying animation and video art at Northwestern Connecticut Community College. Also still living in our neck of the woods are all four of the young men and women whose parents moved out of Cornwall several years ago. Sean Conboy, who left CCS in the mid-1990s, lives and works in the Canaan-Cornwall-Kent area troubleshooting computers. Kylie Gellatly, who graduated from Shepaug Valley High in 2008, is keeping up her artistic side as a photographer and painter while working her way through a local college. Seth Knox’s family moved from Cornwall to Torrington and later to Winsted, where he graduated from high school last year; he hopes to go into the restaurant business like his grandfather Lovetere. And Jacqueline Washburn is a college student living in Litchfield.

Three of the young Cornwallians are attending schools in New York. Sarah Brown studies sociology at St. John’s

University in New York City. Jonathan Coe, now a sophomore, is majoring in sport management at Syracuse University, which he “really enjoys.” And Tristan Woodruff, who spent a year at SUNY ESF (in Syracuse), has transferred to SUNY Cobleskill, in the Albany area, to study agricultural equipment technology. Here in Cornwall he also loves working on his uncle Sam Waterston’s farm.

Finally, three 20-year-olds are seeking educational and career paths in more distant regions of the country. Silvia La Porta just started her first year at Warren Wilson College in Asheville, North Carolina, and will be working this summer on a farm in Dozza, near Bologna, Italy. Emily

Thaler is a performing arts major at the University of Tampa in Florida but enjoys coming back to Cornwall and gazing out at her pond, even when it’s cold. Finally, Trevor Watts, who is in the U.S. Air Force, is leaving in March for training in San Antonio, Texas.

—Paul De Angelis

CCS Basketball

The girls’ basketball team at Cornwall Consolidated School, coached by Bonnie Burdick and Patricia Rovezzi, is in high spirits this season with an undefeated record of 6 and 0. During practices, their goal is to have fun while improving their skills. There is always room for improvement, but there is no need to put pressure on the team by expecting an undefeated season. “It is important to remember that they’re 13- and 14-year-old girls,” says Rovezzi, who feels that these girls have enough pressure as it is. “It’s the last time for these kids to be kids,” she says, and plans to help them make the most of it.

Coaching the boys’ team this year is Michael Pierce and Assistant Coach Damien Davis. While they are currently 1 and 4, their record does not reflect the team’s season. Two of these losses were against North Canaan, arguably the best team in the region. North Canaan’s success can be traced back to their five-days-a-week practice schedule and the return of four players who were in the championship last season. One disadvantage the improving home team has is limited practice time, says Pierce. Also, this year CCS has a very young team, with a mere four eighth graders and six or seven sixth graders. One of the eighth graders, Jeremy Stiewing, whom the coach calls a team leader, seems to stand out in particular this season.

Pierce says he sees a lot of young talent and is fairly optimistic about the rest of the season. “I’m fairly confident that by play-offs, we’ll be a pretty good team,” says Pierce.

—Camilla Busby

Good-bye to Friends

Leonard Erwin Alsop
Liane Dunn
Helena Petracek
Marie Antoinette (“Manie”) Van Doren

Congratulations

Kevin Thomas Wilson and Jack William Richmond

The Audubon Christmas Bird Count

“How do you know but every bird that cuts the airy way is an immense world of delight, closed by your senses five?”

—William Blake

Everyone knows that birders are a bit odd. I used to give them a wide berth when walking my dog in Central Park’s Ramble, them and their silly binoculars. That is, until I caught the fever from Cornwall birding guru Art Gingert five years ago.

Still, it did seem a little daft that in the snowy, blustery dawn of January 3, four Cornwall denizens ventured from warm beds to take part in the 110th Audubon Christmas Bird Count (CBC). Braving snow, heavy winds, and biting cold, Celia Senzer led the intrepid pack that included Jean Boutellier and Joe Ellis. Gingert accompanied another group north of Millerton.

They do it for the science. The longest running “citizen science” survey in the world, Audubon’s CBC, started in 1900 and now covers Alaska to Antarctica, with thousands of people counting birds this year between December 14, 2009, and January 5, 2010. Cornwall’s original December 20 date got cancelled for the storm-that-wasn’t, replaced by a day of honest-to-goodness blizzard. “We were very cold,” said Senzer, “driving around for five hours with the windows open, binoculars ready. After the first two hours, the snow plow appeared, then seemed to follow us on every road we went on, coming up behind us and tooting while we figured whether to pull off left or right. He must’ve thought we were crazy.”

Audubon’s website describes how scientists use the CBC’s 110-year trend data to understand the status of birds and their environment and what needs to be

CORNWALL CHRONICLE
FEBRUARY ISSUE
Adam Van Doren, Illustrations
Elisabeth Kaestner and Paul De Angelis, Editors

MARCH ISSUE
Ann Gold, Honora Horan and Jayne Ridgway, Editors
rcg16@yahoo.com or gridgway@snet.net

MANAGING EDITOR *Tom Bechtle*

CALENDAR EDITOR *Anne Baren*
pbaren@optonline.net

CIRCULATION *Nan and John Bevans,*
Lucy and Jack Kling

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Tom Bevans (1912-2003) **FOUNDER**

done to protect them. According to Audubon President John Flicker, the CBC statistics “allow birds to send us a wake-up call about the importance of addressing the warming of our climate and the loss of vital habitat.”

In a report last February, Audubon warned that “many of North America’s birds are on the move, shifting their winter ranges northward and inland.” Until recently, for example, no one saw cardinals during an Adirondack January. CBC data, reports Audubon, has helped “provide new and powerful confirmation that global warming is having a serious effect on natural systems...and enables conservationists to develop strategies to ensure the continued survival of bird species.”

So though January 5 was a fit day out for neither man nor beast, the avians—

unlike the observers—had no choice. Gingert described what he termed the birds’ “*will to live*.” We watched horned larks and snow buntings, their little faces turned up in the swirling ground blizzard, struggling and scratching for food.” The total of 31 species sighted in our area (20 fewer than the average year, attributed to weather by Gingert) included the usual suspects like black-capped chickadees, blue jays, tufted titmice, song sparrows, and a red-tailed hawk. Senzer expressed surprise at seeing red-winged blackbirds, normally farther south. In Falls Village, other birders spotted a bald eagle and, on Lakeville Lake, a pied-billed grebe.

This year, Cornwall’s group added two species to the total compiled at the supper given that night at Audubon Sharon: a Carolina wren, found munching at Carla and Eddie Bigelow’s feeder on Route 128, and a flock of turkeys. But the Cornwall birders concurred that the most exciting sighting passed ten feet away from where they stood on River Road in West Cornwall: a mature, full-coated coyote.

—Betty Spence

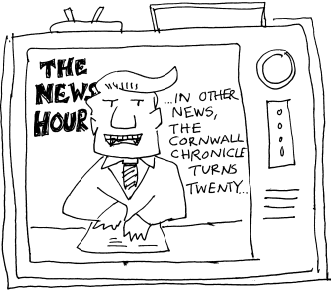
Recognizing Emerging Artists

For the past three years, Cornwall Consolidated School art teacher Diane Dupuis has been generating interest, enthusiasm, and appreciation for her students’ efforts to develop genuine talent in a wide variety of art forms. Students in all grades at CCS have been working fast and furiously to prepare for the upcoming show of their artwork at the Cornwall Library. The art room is filled with drawings, paintings, and sculptures, and many boys and girls continue to work on their projects at home. Grade four students are working on an interesting and visually compelling group project that emphasizes perspective and habitat in “The World Outside My Window.” Students in the advanced art program are preparing

individual displays reflecting their interests and abilities.

Yet, like the piano that is played brilliantly in an empty room, talent does not get recognized until an appreciative audience gathers. Here is where the community has a chance to play its part. The Library show will be hung on Monday, February 22, and will be available for viewing from Tuesday, February 23, through March 27. Many young artists look forward to sharing their creative endeavors and will undoubtedly attend the reception being held on Saturday, February 27, from 3 to 5 P.M. Attending the reception, taking a look during Library hours, and offering comments in the Library exhibition log, Cornwall residents can provide the all-important “appreciative audience” necessary to foster youthful artistic talent in our town.

—Sharon Dietzel



Memories of Rumsey

I know what you’re thinking: *not another Rumsey story, please!* But keep reading, because this is not about the decay of a once-magnificent Greek Revival structure built in the mid-19th century for \$5,000, or

its anticipated demolition, or the owner who bought it for a song and promised more than once to restore it. This piece is about memories, memories of a few of the “old guys” who went to Rumsey as boys way back in the late ’30s and early ’40s. In those days the school was strictly for boys; coeducation wasn’t introduced until the school moved to the town of Washington. The *Chronicle* found four of them living here or weekending in Cornwall.

Our source, as you might guess, was Tim Prentice, Tall Tim, who led the unsuccessful eight-year effort to save Rumsey before the town sold it for the aforementioned “song.” Tim, who lived there during the war years of 1943–44, remembered the “gang” toilets and shower stalls in the basement, the dancing classes and Saturday-night movies in the gymnasium building to the rear. “Every evening,” said Tim, “we would line up for inspection so the headmistress could see if we had washed our hands for dinner. Then my classmate Freddy Landon would sit down at the upright piano in the dining room and lead us in singing the Doxology. On good nights he would slip in a few jazz notes.” No classes were held in Rumsey Hall. The classrooms and study hall had been

moved next-door years before into what has become the present UCC Parish House.

Charlie Hodgman of the Valley Road Hodgmans was a day student in 1941 and then lived in the dorm the following two years. Charlie remembered being seen smoking in town during Christmas vacation by the headmaster and getting 100 demerits. His punishment was circling Rumsey on foot carrying an armload of bricks. The headmaster’s wife, on the other hand, was very popular with the boys, noted John Zabriskie. “The lady taught English and was a looker. Many of us had crushes on her.”

Another teacher was Rolly Algrant’s mother, Rose, who taught French. Zab said Rose would walk into the classroom and immediately start speaking French and only French. “It was unusual then,” he said, “but clearly the best way to learn.” Zabby was the tailback and Rolly the quarterback on the Rumsey football team. On the baseball team it was reversed: Zab the pitcher and Rolly the catcher. “We had very fancy uniforms that had Rumsey Hall stenciled on them. We used to play the Cornwall kids who had no uniforms but would beat the hell out of us.”

We caught up with George Labalme via email. “Rolly and I started Rumsey the same year, in September 1939. We were roommates and had a room facing south on the second floor. The building had no insulation and we froze at night. Rolly, having come from Switzerland, liked the window open and I wanted it closed. So many a night there was this move on each side to raise or lower the window.”

The school had been founded in 1900 by Lillias Rumsey Sanford in Seneca Falls, New York. She moved it to Cornwall in 1907 to the structure her father had built called Rumsey Hall. It had seven students its inaugural year. The school remained in Cornwall until 1948 when it moved to its present location in Washington, Connecticut, and today has an enrollment of over 300 boys and girls in classes K through 9.

One more historical tidbit, which we got from Tom Hubbard (who didn’t go to Rumsey, but was a friend of Rolly and Zab and the others). Tom said that when the state began replacing the old dirt roads in the years after World War I, it planned to run what is now Route 4 right through the village and in front of Rumsey Hall. Mrs. Sanford used her considerable influence, he said, to have the road skirt the town. “It would be dangerous. The boys might be run over,” she reportedly told the state. And so today Cornwall Village is quite possibly the only town in New England without a state road running through it.

—John Miller

