

CORNWALL CHRONICLE

VOLUME 26 : NUMBER 1 FEBRUARY 2016



Customary, or a Recent Occurrence?

At its January 12 meeting the Planning and Zoning Commission took a preliminary step towards reaffirming Cornwall homeowners' right to rent out their homes largely as they see fit. The general import of possible zoning language favored by the P&Z majority would legitimize the status of most short-term rentals including those arranged through the Internet giant Airbnb.

Last fall Zoning Enforcement Officer Karen Nelson, interpreting Internet rentals as the extension of an historic and customary Cornwall practice, ruled against the petition of Cornwall Inn owners Stacey Marcin and Mark Hampson that they be subject to regulations similar to those governing the inn. They then brought their objections before the Zoning Board of Appeals. On November 5 a majority of the ZBA decided that "the dramatic increase of short-term or transient rentals was a recent occurrence," not a customary usage. Disagreement among ZBA members and some confusion over the wording and meaning of the November decision delayed finalization of the minutes. All

parties agreed, however, that current zoning regulations do not adequately address rentals and that authority to set zoning policy rests with the Planning and Zoning Commission.

At its December 8 meeting the commission requested town planning consultant Tom McGowan to research the question and suggest possible options. On January 12 commission members listened to a presentation by McGowan, then selected and discussed among themselves three preferred options: 1) adding language declaring short-term rentals a "customary accessory use of a single family residence in a residential zone"; 2) adopting the same language but making it subject to specific conditions; 3) requiring a special permit like that demanded of all bed and breakfast establishments.

A majority of the commission favored the first option as long as the language contained some qualification regarding "intensity" of rental usage (rate of turnover, number of rooms, etc.). If adopted, such a move would be a second blow within a few months for the owners of the Cornwall Inn. Next P&Z meeting: February 9.

—Paul De Angelis



A New Gadget for All Ages

On January 2, several Cornwall residents gathered to witness the newest addition to the Cornwall Library: a MakerBot Replicator. Donated to the library by Blanche Levine in honor of her daughter the late Peggy Tagliarino, this 3D printer is available for use by Cornwall residents (subject to staff supervision and a fee for materials).

Micah Danforth, a sophomore at the high school, demonstrated how it works. Using software called TinkerCad, Micah designed a teacup. He then converted his design into a file called an "STL," which he sent to the MakerBot to be printed. White plastic filament was fed into the 3D printer's printhead, then through a heated tube where it was liquefied, and deposited, solidifying as it cooled in ultrafine lines about 0.1 millimeters across. Layer by layer (each a precise cross section of the final object), the 3D printer built the teacup. The final product was small—dollhouse-size (larger objects would have taken longer to print)—but remarkable to see.

With this teacup the library joined the ranks of a worldwide 3D printing movement. For example, manufacturing companies such as GE and Boeing are using 3D

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SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	1 ♦ Region 1 Board of Ed 6:30 pm HVRHS Rm. 133	2 ♦ Inland Wetlands 7 pm Town Hall ♦ Board of Selectmen 7:30 pm Town Hall	3	4 ♦ Lori Welles Photographer Woman's Society 10 am Library	5 ♦ Deadline for Flower Show Sign-up Park & Rec. ♦ Cornwall Economic Summit 7-9 pm CCS	6 ♦ Cornwall Eco. Summit 10 am-Noon CCS ♦ Reading/Book Signing Carol Asher 3-5 pm Wish House ♦ Community Country Dance 7pm Town Hall ♦ Film Series: <i>Pygmalion</i> 7:30 pm Library
7	8 ♦ Free Blood Pressure Clinic Noon-1 pm UCC ♦ Park and Rec 7:30 pm Town Hall	9 ♦ Economic Development Comm. 9 am Town Hall ♦ Planning & Zoning 7 pm Library ♦ Cornwall Economic Summit 7-9 pm CCS ♦ Housatonic River Commission 7:30 pm CCS	10 ♦ Seniors' Valentine Lunch Noon UCC Parish House	11	12	13 ♦ Winter Swing 6-9 pm Library
14 ♦ Apres Ski Cocktail Classic 5-7:30 pm Library	15 PRESIDENTS' DAY NEW ♦ Deadline: March <i>Chronicle</i> Copy	16 ♦ Board of Selectmen 7:30 pm Town Hall	17 ♦ Board of Education 4:15 pm CCS Library ♦ Board of Finance 7:30 pm Town Hall	18	19	20 ♦ Senior Trip Hartford Flower Show
21	22 ♦ Zoning Bd of Appeals* 7 pm Library	23 ♦ Committee for Seniors 7 pm Library	24	25 ♦ Cornwall Conservation Comm. 7 pm Library	26	27 ♦ Film Series: <i>Evening with Kelly & Astaire</i> 7:30 pm Library
28	29	Every Week This Month: Mondays: Yoga, 8:30-10 am Library; Karate, 6:30-7:30 pm Town Hall ♦ Wednesdays: Tai Chi, 5-7 pm Town Hall call 672-0064 ♦ Thursdays: Pilates, 8:30-9:30 am Library; Toddler Play Group , 10:30-11:30 am Library; Meditation , 4-5 pm call Debra 672-0229; Mah Jongg , 7-9 pm Library call 672-6874; Adult Volleyball , 7:30 pm CCS gym ♦ Fridays: Yoga, 8:30-10 am Library ♦ Saturdays: Ice Skating , 7-8 pm Schmidt Rink ♦ Sundays: Yoga 9-10:30 am Library; Meditation , 1 pm call Debra 672-0229				

*Check with Zoning Office—672-4957

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printers to prototype their products. And doctors at the Louisville Kosair Children's Hospital recently saved the life of a 14-month-old boy born with heart defects with the help of a 3D-printed model of the boy's heart.

Cornwall residents have their own plans for the MakerBot Replicator. Marnell Stover sees the printer as being a useful tool "for making things that have been discontinued and that you can no longer buy." Doc Simont envisions it as a resource for area carpenters and designers—a "way to build a prototype out of plastic and use that to build wax molds and then do lost-wax castings."

Margaret Haske, the Cornwall librarian, would like to integrate the 3D printer into the library's technology programs for children, pointing out that "it teaches the basic concepts of design and engineering." We look forward to seeing the 3D printed inventions of Cornwall residents, young and old.

—Caroline Nastro

Return to Cornwall

As a playwright, I was recently commissioned by Arena Stage in Washington, D.C., to write a play about my great-great-great grandfather Major Ridge (Ka-Nun-Tla-Cla-Geh, He Who Walks Along the Ridge) and his son, John Ridge (Skah-tle-loh-skee, Yellow Bird). At first blush, it should be an easy story for me to write. I have spent my whole life thinking about their lives. I remember my grandmother, and the way her face glowed with pride as she pointed to the photos of the two men that decorated the wall of her living room.

When I sat down to write, I realized that as a direct descendant of the union between John Ridge and Sarah Bird Northrup in 1824 in Cornwall, I had to start the story where it began. I set out to visit Cornwall this past September, not sure what I would find. I just knew I had to go.

The story begins about 190 years ago in Cornwall with a betrayal. John Ridge was one of the highest performing students at the Cornwall Foreign Mission School, seemingly well respected for his mastery of language and upright character. Yet when he asked for Sarah's hand in marriage, he was ridiculed and rejected as an inferior "heathen." Threatened with violence and mockery, he and Sarah had to flee following their wedding ceremony in order to avoid the mob attack from Cornwall's citizens.

When I arrived last September, I was greeted with open arms, presented with gifts, honored, and fed. I was even offered an apology for the violence and hatred inflicted on my ancestor. My return to Cornwall was healing. I felt connected to John Ridge's dreams—when he, as a young schoolboy, learned to love

Shakespeare and looked forward to returning home to Cherokee Nation in present day Georgia, where he expected to live out the remainder of his life in public service to his people.

He, his father, Major Ridge, and his cousin Elias Boudinot (who had married Harriet Gold from Cornwall), fought to save an entire nation not with a gun in a battlefield, but with a petition in a court of law. Faced with the constant and unmitigated theft, murder, and pillage wrought by Georgia's citizens, my ancestors realized removal was the only way to preserve the Cherokee people as a sovereign nation. Recognizing that neither the federal government nor the state of Georgia would abide our constitutional and inherent right to exist in our homes, my ancestors agreed to relinquish our homeland in exchange for land in what is now Oklahoma. Following the signing of this treaty, President Andrew Jackson forcibly placed 16,000 Cherokee in concentration camps until they were "sent" to what is today Oklahoma. More than 1,000 died on the journey now known as the Trail of Tears.

My great-grandfathers knew they were signing their death warrants. They knew they would be killed. To this day, my ancestors are considered traitors by many of their own people. They sacrificed their lives so that the sovereign Cherokee Nation would continue to exist. And unlike many nations east of the Mississippi that were slaughtered out of existence, the Cherokee Nation today thrives as the second largest Indian nation in the United States.

My job in writing this play is not to silence those who question my ancestors' actions, but to give life to my great-grandfathers' voices who have been silenced for the last 180 years. I have finished the first draft—and it begins in Cornwall. My return to Cornwall showed me that healing is possible.

—Mary Kathryn Nagle

Unwanted Visitor at the Inn

The night after Christmas on a clear and cold evening around 11:45, the operator of an automobile travelling northbound on Route 7 lost control of his vehicle, which then hit a guide rail, crossed the road, hit another guide rail, and checked into the breakfast room of the Cornwall Inn. Car and driver went through the wall, smashing windows, radiators, and furniture into the breakfast bar on the far side of the room. The innkeepers, Stacey Marcin and Mark Hampson, were in their house on the property about to go to bed. They didn't hear the crash, but Mark's rescue squad pager went off with a message of an automobile accident. When they came downstairs, they saw the driver, a 20-year-old male, on his cell phone saying: "Dude, come get me." It appeared that the driver had backed the car out of the inn, but could travel no further,

dropping his front bumper as a calling card. When the innkeepers asked how he was, he answered: "Fine." Two guests in the inn were unhurt.

According to the police report, the driver told EMS, when they asked how he was, "he did not remember what happened." Thereupon, he was whisked to Sharon Hospital. Though two guest rooms are unusable as is the breakfast room, the inn is still up and running. Two events planned have been moved to another venue but are being catered by Stacey and Mark.

The inn has insurance, as does the owner of the automobile. An insurance adjuster suggested it could take three months for the necessary repairs. It is unknown whether the vehicle operator's lawyer will use an affluenza defense.

—Jim Fishman

Welcome

Jalendu Walter Wilson
to Veena Srinivasa and Winfield Wilson

Goodbye to Friends

Thomas J. Kearns, Jr.
Hendon Chubb
Einar Lindholm
John Foster Leich

Land Transfers

David A. Grossman and Hanna K. Grossman to
Joyce Keisman, land with buildings and
improvements thereon, at 221 Flat Rocks Road,
for \$325,000.

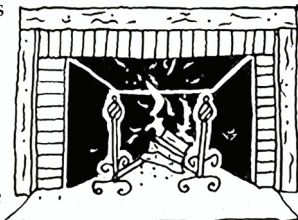
Fannie Mae A/K/A Federal National Mortgage
Association to Christopher Mansa and Vera
Carrea, land with improvements thereon, at 261
Kent Road, for \$105,000.

Matthew R. Collins, Trustee to Allen C.
Bachman, land with all buildings and
improvements thereon, at 4-6 Cornwall Hollow
Road, for \$170,00

Mohawk Expands

Walter Schoenknecht had a big problem. It was the winter of 1949, and two years earlier he had opened Mohawk Ski Mountain on 305 acres leased from the state of Connecticut, but now there was no snow. Walter refused to give up on the season. With the help of two friends, he developed a system using icehouses, cracked ice, and spray water droplets that became the basis for what is now widely known as snow-making. The modern counterpart of this invention explains why Mohawk is open and busy in a year when, at least as of mid-January, we have had no measurable snowfall. Today Mohawk has snowmaking capabilities on 95 percent of the mountain.

Walt wanted to ensure that local kids were able to ski there. His daughter Carol Lugar has continued that tradition: Cornwall Consolidated is the only elementary school in the state that has skiing instruction



as part of its curriculum. Outside of school, CCS students are provided free lift tickets on most days, and Region One students can ski at a substantial discount.

In peak season Mohawk employs more than 400 people, with most jobs beginning in November and going through March or April. Employees and local businesses have suffered from the delayed season, as warm weather prevented snowmaking until early January.

Recent improvements at Mohawk include a greatly expanded main lodge, a newly reconfigured dining area, a new lodge called The Perch, a new ski shop on the lower level, and additional outdoor seating areas, including a heated lower patio.

All of the capital improvements are paid for and owned by the Mohawk team for 20 years. Because Mohawk is a state park, after 20 years they become property of the state. Costs for maintenance of the property are paid to the state and contribute to its general fund.

One of Mohawk's goals is to make its facilities available to customers on a year-round basis. Accordingly, the summer of 2016 will see, among other activities, the introduction of a paddleboard program on Mohawk's two ponds. —Thomas Levine

A New Director for Social Services

In January Cornwall welcomed its new director of social services, Jane Muir Sellery, who took over the position filled by Jill Gibbons for the past 32 years. Tributes from grateful Cornwallians honored Jill at an emotional goodbye party on January 10, where Jane was also introduced.

Jane has an impressive background in counseling and community service. Since her family moved to the area some 18 months ago—her husband is the minister at St. John's Episcopal Church in Salisbury—she has applied her experience in various outreach projects.

On her third full day at work, Jane made time for me in her Cornwall office even though she had been busy all day dealing with applications for fuel assistance (approval takes about one month) and responding to clients calling her on the phone or knocking on her office door. Jane is a people person, open minded and warm, ready to adjust and respond to any challenge that comes her way. The job reminds her of working in an emergency room where you respond to the needs of whoever is in front of you. With a work schedule of 16 hours per week and a three-page job description, she has more than enough to keep her on the go.

Jane emphasized the help she had already received from Jill Gibbons in explaining the responsibilities awaiting her.

Since its inception in 1985, Cornwall social services has provided residents facing life crises of many sorts with "information, assistance, support, intervention, and referrals" for young, old, the disabled, those with low income, or anyone with special needs.

The town's new social services director rolled out an explicit invitation to anyone in the Cornwall community to stop by her office to introduce themselves—client or not. The more she learns about Cornwall, the more she can tailor her work to prevailing needs. Jane Muir Sellery's town hall office hours are Mondays and Thursdays. She can be reached at 672-2603 or at cornwallsocialservices@gmail.com.

—Elisabeth Kaestner



Oldest Dog Finally Talks

I'm over 18, but I can't vote. Why not? Because I'm a Jack Russell. My name is Buster Hedden, and I'm the oldest hound in Cornwall, having been born on September 25, 1996, to Erin and Brad. That makes me 19 plus years old. They say that's about 92 in human years. Tired, but still kicking.

What are the secrets to my longevity? Good friends, good food, and exercise... and these days, a lot of sleep. My friends have included former dog warden Rick Stone, who saved my mom from being a stray, and John Wells, who didn't really like animals, but threw me a stick from time to time. I've always been a pretty well-behaved dog, but once when I was about a year old my dad and I decided to explore a little. We snuck out of the yard, darted through the town of Cornwall, eventually finding a cozy spot in the woods to spend the night. We were happy to find no shortage of trees where we could answer nature's call. As a pup I remembered hearing stories of all the trees devastated in the 1989 tornado. What a relief it was to find so many had grown back!

Food has always been important in my life. For years I gorged on regular dog chow, spicing up my diet with an occasional squirrel or chipmunk. That was until I was diagnosed with congestive heart failure. These days I eat a grain-free potato and turkey mix. I hope Michael Pollan approves.

I used to race around the yard a lot, but now my exercise is pretty limited. My eyesight isn't so great, but I've always had a good sense of smell, and have no trouble finding my bowl at mealtime.

Being a pampered pooch is a real plus. Brad and his family make sure I'm stylish. This winter you'll see me out and about sporting a beige fleece jacket with cat patterns. I know, I could do without those cats! Speaking of which, I don't go out at night because I don't trust the mountain

Letters to the Chronicle

LITTLE GUILD FACT AND MYTH

John Miller's generous praise of the Little Guild in your last issue begs for me to correct a small factual error and address a longstanding myth. First the fact: yes, we adopted out more than 500 animals, as John wrote (515!), but we did so just in 2015, not the two years cited. And the myth: that we are well funded. Hah! Running a shelter right is an expensive proposition. To continue to save dogs and cats at our current level, we are in need of benevolent angels. But in Cornwall, magical things happen, so I am hopeful.

—John Guenther, Little Guild President

DEAR FRIENDS

I just want to thank you and send you love for changing my life around. At first I was in total despair when Rusty died. You stuck by us then.

Now that I am ill, my outlook on life has gone from one extreme to the other. Your support has never wavered. The community has brought me so much happiness and joy from all the love. I always feel it even if I can't express it.

Love love love,

—Lynn (Cheney), January 7, 2016

lions. Plus I don't really have many friends to go out with anymore: Daisy, Sparky, Scooter, and Buck have all passed. It's one of the downsides of living so long.

My advice to other dogs about aging: smell the roses, the trees, and the grass and don't forget the hydrants, wherever you can find them. —Sally Cook and Erin Hedden

Eighth-Graders' Explorations

In its fifth year at Cornwall Consolidated School, the Explorations program is a highly successful work in progress. Principal Michael Croft adapted the concept for eighth-grade students at CCS, modeling it after the Senior Project course at Shepaug Valley High School. Students in this independent study course are encouraged to pursue in depth a topic of personal interest or even a possible career path.

Students must meet a set of requirements over the yearlong project, earning a grade for each marking period. First, students draft a proposal in the form of a letter, which is critiqued by the two program coordinators, teachers Will Vincent and Stephanie Magyar. Next, the CCS Fund for Excellence committee reads and suggests revisions before approving the proposals, which may include modest requests for funds for books, supplies, travel, etc. Committee members then help connect each student with a mentor from the Cornwall community.

Currently all 19 eighth-graders at CCS

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are researching and executing their projects. Lucas Calhoun, interested in children's literature through photography, will be working with Anne Zinsser. Odin Beardsley, who is researching Air Force history, has been paired with Robert Parker. Luke Mollica wants to design and run a youth soccer clinic with the help of his mentor, Bill Gold. Haley Trapella will be making a music CD with the help of Don Polk. And Danielle Gorat will be working with Carey Ovitt on cat care and behavior.

Pairing is still underway for other topics, such as: organizing a 5K race for the Housatonic Valley Association, producing a radio talk show interviewing teens about politics, entertaining at senior centers, making short films with music and animation, designing a website using YouTube instructional channel, producing a play, making an instructional sports video, upcycling clothing, forestry, asteroids and stars, computer games, computer coding, and cancer awareness. Many projects will culminate in events or exhibits open to the public.

Mike Croft outlined the objectives of the program: "We want students to do the 'real world' work—to apply their passion, energy, and skill to areas that inspire them, to develop effective communication skills, including public speaking and writing formal letters, emails, and essays, building on their prior experience in public presentation from science or social studies class or school plays."

Students' letters to the Fund for Excellence committee were detailed and persuasive. The eighth-graders adapted a state-wide writing rubric to write essays about how they envisioned their individual projects, and are currently developing questions for their mentors. Workshops for mentors to establish guidelines and milestones, and the publication of a resource pamphlet are future directions Principal



Who Could Have Guessed?

That the *Chronicle* would still be at it after 25 years, news-ier and nose-ier than ever? Tom and Margaret are smiling, we hope. May your contributions keep us going for another 25!

Croft and his staff will pursue as they continue to refine and improve the Explorations program. —*Pamela Wilson*

Events & Announcements

Lori Blakey Welles will give an illustrated talk for the Cornwall Woman's Society and public on "Cornwall's Backyard: What's Out the Window, in Our Garden, and at Our Feet" on February 4 at 10 A.M. at the library.

Cornwall's Economic Development Summit will take place on February 5, 6, and 9 in the Gathering Room at CCS. Community members, business owners (including the self employed), and any member of a board or commission are encouraged to attend. Input session for Cornwall Bridge is on Friday from 7 to 9 P.M.; the one for West Cornwall is on Saturday from 10 A.M. to noon. A wrap-up session for all attendees is planned for Tuesday from 7 to 9 P.M.

Community Contra Dance on Saturday, February 6, at 7 P.M., town hall. Taught by Peter Stix with music by Still, the Homegrown Band. All ages! Donation requested. For information call Jane P. at 672-6101 or go to motherhouse.us.

At the Cornwall Library

The Winter Film Series continues with *Pygmalion* on February 6 at 7:30 P.M. \$5 suggested donation.

The Winter Swing, featuring a dinner and dance, will be held Saturday, February 13, from 6 to 9 P.M. \$30/person.

Après Ski will be held on February 14 from 5 to 7:30 P.M. Food, drink, and entertainment. \$30 per adult, kids under 16 may attend free.

Winter Film Series is showing *An Evening with Kelly and Astaire* on February 27 at 7:30 P.M. \$5 suggested donation.

Carol Ascher reads from her new novel about forgiveness and redemption, *A Call from Spooner Street*, on Saturday, February 6, from 3 to 5 P.M. at the Wish House.

Free blood pressure clinic on Monday, February 8, noon to 1 P.M. at the UCC Parish House. For information contact VNA Northwest at 860-567-6000 or vnanw.org.

Region One Band Concert will take place at CCS during school hours on Monday, February 8. Call Patty Rovezzi at the school office (672-6617) for time.

All Cornwall seniors are invited to a Valentine's Day lunch at the UCC Parish House on Wednesday, February 10, at noon. Bring your sweetheart, or meet one there. Hosted by Cornwall Park & Rec. RSVP to 672-4071 or prcornwall@gmail.com.

Art in Cornwall: Contemporary quilts by Maddie Hare Burke are exhibited at the Cornwall Library through March 16.

The Board of Assessment Appeals will hold hearings on real estate assessments in April. Applications for a hearing are available at the town clerk's office and must be received by March 18. Approved applicants will be contacted for scheduling.

Applications for homeowner's tax relief can be filed until May 15 at the assessor's office. To qualify, applicants' income, including Social Security, cannot exceed \$42,900 for married couples or \$35,200 for singles (proof required). For more information check the town website or call JoAnne Dodge at 672-2703.

The Cornwall Child Center is now accepting donated items valued at \$50 or more for the fundraising auction in May. Please contact briaana@cornwallchildcenter.org.



CORNWALL CHRONICLE cornwallchronicle.org

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