



CORNWALL CHRONICLE

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Recovery in Sight Here

Cornwall's economy is at least keeping pace with the nation's slow recovery from recession—and there are some signs that it may be moving even faster. To take our economic pulse, I talked with a few key local players:

•First Selectman Gordon Ridgway was pleased that "We're not shell shocked any more as we were when the recession hit us." He sees this year as one of modest gains; at least vacant houses seem less of a problem.

•Assessor Barbara Bigos noted that vacant land sales are up from last year—four so far compared to only one before. House sales are roughly steady, going from 18 a year ago to 15 so far this fiscal year.

•Priscilla Miller at Bain Real Estate told me that house sales are up from last year. They have been about evenly split between Cornwall Bridge and West Cornwall. Two-thirds are to local residents, and the rest to weekenders. Two-thirds were below \$500,000, and the rest above. The highest was for \$2.4 million.

•Building Inspector Paul Prindle sees no sign yet of new housing starts. There was one over a year ago, but none in the last 12 months. Soon, though, a 10-unit senior housing project should break ground in Cornwall Bridge.

•Richard Bramley at the Cornwall Package Store says business is up: "Since Christmas, I have become cautiously optimistic." His industry resists downturns: "People still drink as well as eat."

•Dana Beecher and Louise Coogan-Beecher of the Cornwall General Store in Cornwall Bridge have only been operating since last July. So far, they note that business is 5 percent ahead of their projections.

•Russ and Sharon Sawicki at the Wandering Moose in West Cornwall have seen little change so far this year compared to last. Russ said, "The restaurant business tends to feel downturns early and comes out later."

•Adam Franceschini, head guide at Housatonic River Outfitters, told me this looks like a very good year for them. A warm winter and early spring brought out both fishermen and trout. The fish have "put on weight. Rainbow and brown trout are being caught 15 to 20 inches long."

And so it goes. Some branches of our economy flourish; some don't. All in all, though, it feels better than it did a year ago. Let's hope the uptrend continues.

—David A. Grossman



JUNE 2012

Here Come the Graduates!

With spring comes the bursting rite of passage... graduation! Transition at its most exciting, with decisions about life and education—what's next?

Thirteen eager and curious students will graduate from Cornwall Consolidated School on Friday, June 8, at 6 p.m. This year's class is small and ready to be sprung... ready to conquer its next challenges. Ten of the 13 CCS graduates will head to Housatonic Valley Regional High School: Patrick Considine, Madison Frith, Jacob Hurlburt, Chelsea Kearns, Zackery Larson, Marina Matsudaira, Jamie Murphy, Brittany Pinette, Malcolm Scott, and Sam Thaler. Anna D'Alvia is headed to Italy for a year with her parents and will attend St. Stephen's International School in Rome. Cian Kalmes will attend Kent School and Eve Labalme is headed to The Hotchkiss School. (There are no Cornwall graduates from IMS or WMS this year.)

Graduating from HVRHS on Friday, June 15, are 14 Cornwall students: Myles Clohessy (Central Connecticut State University), Brandon Coe (University of Connecticut), John Hare (University of Hartford), Brian Hurlburt (Florida Institute of Technology), Allison Lacko (University of New Haven), Sebastien Lasseur (Vassar College, N.Y.), Lizzie Morehouse (Western

(continued on page 2)

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
Every Week This Month: Tuesdays: Adult Volleyball, 7:30 pm CCS gym Wednesdays: Tai Chi, 6–9 pm Town Hall; Karate 6:30–7:30 pm CCS; Women's Basketball, 7:30 pm CCS gym Saturdays: Cornwall Farm Market 9 am–12:30 pm Wish House Lawn Sundays: Meditation, 1–2 pm, call Debra for location, 672-0229					1	2 ♦ Car Wash & Bake Sale 9 am–12:30 pm CB Firehouse ♦ Let's Get Growing with Debbie Bennett 10 am–noon Library ♦ Art Reception Opening 4–7 pm Library ♦ Contra Dance 7 pm Town Hall
3	4 ○ FULL ♦ Board of Selectmen 7:30 pm Town Hall ♦ Park & Rec 7:30 pm Town Hall	5 ♦ Inland Wetlands 7:30 pm Town Hall	6 ♦ Economic Development Comm Open House 7 pm Town Hall	7	8 ♦ 8th Grade Awards Assembly 10 am CCS gym ♦ CCS Graduation 6 pm Gym	9 Cornwall Village Imp. Soc. Mtg 10 am Town Hall ♦ Motherhouse Eggs! Chickens Workshop 10:30 am–1:30 pm Local Farm ♦ NC Meeting House Welcome 4–6 pm ♦ Big Little Kid Dance 4–5 pm Town Hall
10	11 ☾ 1st Q ♦ Blood Pressure Clinic noon–1 pm Parish House ♦ Democratic Town Committee 7:30 pm Library	12 ♦ Blood Drive 1–5:45 pm Library ♦ Economic Development Committee 8 pm Town Hall	13	14 ♦ Last Day Of School! ♦ Community Beach Party 5–8 pm CHLA	15 ♦ Deadline: July Chronicle Copy	16 ♦ Plant Diagnostic Clinic 10 am–noon Library ♦ Keeping A Family Cow 10 am–1 pm Local Farm ♦ Hammond Beach Opens 11 am ♦ HVRHS Graduation 6:30 pm HVRHS
17	18	19 ● NEW ♦ Board of Education 3:30 pm CCS Library ♦ Board of Selectmen 7:30 pm Town Hall	20	21 ♦ Conservation Commission 7 pm Town Hall ♦ Board of Finance 7:30 pm CCS Library	22 ♦ Forests Exhibit Opening 5–7 pm Historical Society	23 ♦ Cornwall Garden Tour 11 am–5 pm ♦ Garden Tour Cocktail Party, Raffle 5–7 pm ♦ Summer Solstice Celebration 7 pm Local Farm
24	25	26 ☾ 4th Q ♦ Committee for Seniors 7 pm Town Hall	27	28	29	30 ♦ Cornwall Artists Open Studio 11 am–5 pm ♦ Tim Prentice Reception and Book Signing 4–6 pm Library

(continued from page 1)

Connecticut State University), Christopher Pavia (Porter and Chester Institute), Kale Prentice (University of Maine), Hilary Rogers (Springfield College, Mass.), Wilson Terrall (Occidental College, Calif.), RJ Thompson (Boston University, Mass.), Ethan Tuthill (Northwestern Connecticut Community College), and Laurel Woodruff (University of New Hampshire). Kent School will send three students on to their next adventures: Dan Hedden (St. Lawrence University, N.Y.), Bronwen Kalmes (Roger Williams University, R.I.), and Elizabeth Ridgway (St. Lawrence University, N.Y.). Andrea Bramley will graduate from Explorations Charter School and plans to spend a year in South America (Quito, Ecuador; and Cochabamba, Bolivia) volunteering and learning Spanish. Kyle Hurlburt will graduate from Oliver Wolcott Technical High School and is pursuing a career in auto mechanics. Clotile Laigle will graduate from Berkshire School and is headed to the University of Denver (Colo.).

Best wishes and congratulations to all of you, with love from your Cornwall family!

—Becky Hurlburt

“Cathedral Pines”

It all began in February with a phone call to the Historical Society from a New York law firm. It seems that the late Sharon resident Carol Robinson had bequeathed a painting of the Cathedral Pines by her aunt Katharine Nash Rhoades to the Society, with the stipulation that it retain the painting for at least 20 years. No photo, size, or description was provided. Much discussion ensued about the pros and cons of accepting what could possibly be a large, ugly object that would languish in the archives, taking up valuable space.

Research revealed that Rhoades, while not well known, was a modernist painter and member of the Stieglitz/O’Keeffe inner circle. She exhibited in the 1915 New York Amory Show and in Alfred Stieglitz’s Gallery 291, as well as in Chicago. She was a poet and a founder of the little magazine 291, which focused on French modern art. For unknown reasons, she destroyed most of her artwork in the 1920s. Society board members held their collective breaths and voted to accept the painting, sight unseen.

To everyone’s delight, “Cathedral Pines” is a lovely representation of the late jewel in Cornwall’s crown, destroyed in the tornado of 1989. Its arrival couldn’t have come at a better time; the new Historical Society exhibit, “Out of the Woods,” opens on June 22. Visitors to the exhibit will see Rhoades’s painting and will surely agree that this is a welcome addition to the Cornwall story.

—Gail Jacobson

Bonney Brook Advances

Senior housing in Cornwall Bridge moved another step forward in May when the state’s Bonding Commission approved \$565,000 for the building project. This was the last piece of the \$3.1 million budget, all of it coming from state or federal sources.

“We have the money,” said Cheryl Evans, president of the Cornwall Elderly Housing Corporation. “It just has to filter through to us.”

When the money is released, work will begin, perhaps in September, on the 10,781-square-foot building. About half the interior is dedicated to 10 apartments, each 540 square feet. The remaining area is taken up by common space such as hallways, a library, a large sitting and activity room, and a mechanical room.

Cheryl said the first stirrings of the need for elderly housing were in 1985 when the late First Selectman Patsy Van Doren began talking about how to care for Cornwall’s elderly, often single and in need of a safe place to live.

No applications for space in Bonney Brook are being accepted at the moment; however, town residents 62 years and older are welcome to express an interest to Cheryl at 672-0094.

—Lisa L. Simont

Putting on a New Face

Since the 2010 reopening of the Cornwall Historical Society building on Pine Street following an overall renovation, CHS’s focus has been on completing all of the interior details and, most importantly, getting on with one of the Society’s main missions: being the village storyteller and presenting well-researched and interesting exhibitions to the community.

Last year a plan was developed to make the Society’s front yard more inviting and to bring it up to the standards of the building itself. The existing asphalt walkway has been replaced with a classic brick walk installed by John LaPorta. An elegant granite wellhead circa 1800 from the Dark Entry Forest area and donated by the Marola family of Litchfield has a featured position. A Rumsey Hall granite foundation stone, donated by Cornwall’s Greg and Natalie Randall, is now a footrest to one of the Cornwall Village Improvement Society’s wonderful wooden benches.

Financing for the facelift has come from the Village Improvement Society and a major anonymous donor. Kent Greenhouse has provided the overall plan layout. The work will be finished in time for the June 22 opening of the 2012 exhibit, “Out of the Woods: A History of Cornwall’s Forests.”

—Tom Bechtle

Good-bye to Friends

Loraine Kaman
Donald Weigel
Patricia Williams

Land Transfers

Estate of Frank R. Trager and Estate of Marie B. Trager to Kevin P. Conway, property with improvements thereon at 72 Popple Swamp Road, for \$340,000.

Frederick V. Bronner and Judith Starr Bronner to Michael Martin, 3.02 acres of land with improvements thereon, on the easterly side of Great Hollow Road, for \$145,000.

Local Girl Makes Good

Sarah Calhoun, daughter of Nancy and John Calhoun and graduate of CCS, HVRHS, and Gettysburg College, put her environmental studies major to use working for Outward Bound and the Student Conservation Association. All was well, but she couldn’t find sturdy yet comfortable work pants that fit. So, what else (?), she started a business making pants for women who work outdoors.

Sarah moved to Montana, opened a shop, sat on various town committees, joined the EMT, and coached volleyball. She traveled throughout the U.S. and Canada selling her Red Ants Pants out of an Airstream trailer. The energetic young woman wanted to go to the next level so, what else (?), she decided to produce a music festival.

Last year 6,000 people came to White Sulphur Springs, Mont., to hear Lyle Lovett and other musicians for three days. This year Emmylou Harris is headlining the second annual Red Ants Pants Music Festival from July 26 to July 29.

All of this has led to many awards and accolades. Sarah was invited by the U.S. State Department to participate in an APEC conference for women in business hosted by Hillary Clinton. She has been to Washington, D.C., for an economic forum. She has been awarded Montana Entrepreneur of the Year and has received the national Small Business Association Woman in Business Champion award from President Obama. Sarah recently gave a TEDx talk. You may view it online at www.youtube.com/watch?v=ArKlij40_30.

As her mother, Nancy, says, “It does take a village to raise a child and there is no better village than Cornwall.”

—Gail Jacobson

Preserving a Treasure

On Saturday, June 9, from 4 to 6 P.M., the old Congregational Meeting House in North Cornwall will open its elegant doors to the public for a guided tour of the premises and walkabout of its neighborhood. The Friends of the North Cornwall Meeting House, spon-



sors of the event, want to focus attention on this iconic architectural gem built in 1826. The exterior is derived from a Christopher Wren design, and over the years the interior has been beautified by the church's worshipers. The Friends are a small, secular group made up of members of the UCC and the Chapel of All Saints, the Episcopal congregation that meets in the church, plus neighbors who just plain love the place. With the 200th anniversary 14 years away, their goal is to harness the energy and attract the funds to do what must be done before we reach that milestone.

Action has been needed before to preserve the building. In 1926, with the 100th birthday coming up, some of its neighbors organized the Samuel Scoville Associates, which undertook major repairs. Thirteen years later, at an Old Home Sunday service, a wooden supporting post in the cellar gave way with a loud crack, and the crowded balcony sagged a short distance, causing a scramble to escape (no one was injured); brick columns were then added under the floor and, last year, replaced with steel posts. In 1958 the spire was removed by a crane, restored, and reset. Recently the church was closed all summer because of a sagging beam over the back of the balcony, but reopened after it was found that there was no danger. More needs have come to light. The steeple must have substantial repairs, and "there are always things you haven't anticipated that you're going to find," says Jim Longwell, chairman of the Friends. To keep the public informed, there is a website, www.preservethenorthcornwallmeetinghouse.org.

Visitors interested in exploring North Cornwall will get a copy of Tim Prentice's map of the 19th-century hamlet. The June 9 tour and walkabout will be followed by a reception at the home of Richard Schlesinger and John Guenther, 118 Town Street, from 5 to 6 p.m.

—Ann Schillinger

Cornwall Briefs

- **Master Stonemason** John LaPorta is a very busy guy. You've already read about his beautiful brick walkway at the Cornwall Historical Society (see story above). Now here's another LaPorta project down the road, so to speak: a stone wall to replace the ugly chain-link fence at the entrance to the Town Beach on Lake Road. There are two piles of large rocks inside the property awaiting the LaPorta touch.
- **The CCS Art Department** has itself a brand new printing press thanks to the contributions from Cornwall's annual "Art at the Dump," whose gift this year came to \$910.10. Art teacher Diane Dupuis said it took "five years of saving and a lot of research," but her choice was a Master Press II, weighing 275 pounds and costing \$3,500. Diane said the first print off the new press was a work by CCS first-grader Melody Matsudaira.
- **Burn Permits:** The Selectmen's Office reports giving out a record number of these



Letter to the Chronicle

A SWEET SWEET PEET STORY IN FOUR CHAPTERS

Chapter One—The Buy—Saturday, March 24.

Purchased one bright yellow bag of Sweet Peet at the Kent Greenhouse. Took it out of the car and left it by the side of my porch.

Chapter Two—The Loss—Monday, March 26.

Noticed that the Sweet Peet was gone, just gone! Looked all around the house and into the woods all around the house and no sign! Someone took away a 40-pound bag of Sweet Peet—must have seen it from the road and knew what it was. No sign of other damage. No drag marks or sign of Peet leaking, so couldn't have been the bear. Creepy to think of someone at my house. Told many about the theft.

Chapter Three—The Dream—Tuesday, April 3.

permits this year but notes that some people in town are unaware that you need a permit to burn brush. To learn more or obtain a permit call Joyce Hart at 672-4959.

• **CEDC**, which stands for the Cornwall Economic Development Commission (Todd Piker, chairman) is holding an open house with refreshments on Wednesday, June 6, at the Town Hall from 7 to 8:30 p.m. The program will include some of the plans the CEDC is considering to improve Cornwall's business climate and to get feedback and ideas from the community.

• **Mini Parks:** That's what the first selectman calls them, cute little patches in Cornwall where people can sit and enjoy the view and maybe take a picnic. There's one on the Cornwall side of the Covered Bridge where plans call for adding a bench and a table or two and some fresh plantings. A second mini park would start from scratch on a patch of grass at the intersection of Great Hill Road and College Street.

• **Tax Relief:** Tax bills go out at the end of June, and we are reminded by the first selectman that Cornwall has a couple of options for people facing difficulty paying their bill: you may apply for a \$200 reduction if your tax bill exceeds 10 percent of your income; also, if your bill exceeds 8 percent of your income, you may enter a tax-free deal with the town, which then takes a lien on your tax-abated property. The lien is eventually settled when the property is transferred (sold). Now, people, if you understand all of the above you are one smart cookie!

—John Miller

Whether the Weather

This spring many of us were asking what will be the effect of the warm and dry winter we just had. Despite agreement about the long-term trend of the warm season coming

Woke up thinking of the list of people I'd have to call to tell them that I found the Sweet Peet—I had put it in the shed. Cleared the sleep from my head and realized—I don't have a shed!

Chapter Four—The Find—Wednesday, April 4.

Parked in a slightly different place to be ready to leave on an early morning trip. Sun shining on a bright patch of moss 50 yards up the hillside. No, that's not moss. Out of the car, walk a bit, it's yellow plastic? It WAS the bear! Must have picked the bag up in his teeth, rambled up the hillside, found the largest tree to hide behind, checked to see if I could see him, set it down, and dug in! Disappointed in the deceptive description—no honey! For me, such a relief. And very impressed with the toughness of the Sweet Peet packaging!

—Susan Gingert

earlier and lasting longer and the cold season being shorter, particulars about this summer in Cornwall are less sure. Data over the past 50 years indicating a steady advancing of spring weather and earlier budding and blossoming is borne out in peony shoots popping up in some of our gardens in April.

But what will the summer bring? The bug and pest populations are already evident. The lack of a prolonged freezing spell allowed ticks and mosquitoes, among others, to survive and multiply at a much-higher-than-normal rate. Additionally, the easy winter helped improve the survival rate of deer, field mice, and other small animals—all links in the tick chain. Local maintenance services have seen an increase in the number of requests for tick control around homes.

How might our farms and gardens be influenced? Warm conditions may produce a longer growing season, but soils dry out faster with these temperatures. Farmers, noting the decreased precipitation this year, are following a number of different paths. Some are hedging their bets by holding, rather than selling, leftover hay in anticipation of smaller yields this summer. Others are proceeding as normal and will make adjustments later, if needed. In all cases they started planting and harvesting earlier than usual. The old timers' adage to "plant corn when oak leaves are the size of squirrels' ears" eliminates the calendar and may be a surer way to gauge when to plant rather than depending on the date. The local lawn-care industry also geared up to start mowing earlier than usual this year.

Will there be cooling, quenching rains? As with most weather-related topics it is often a guess, and the only sure way to know is to wait and see. The trend may be for fewer but more powerful storms, but the tracks of hurricanes may change. So the best approach may be to prepare for the worst and hope for the best.

—Ralph Gold



Events & Announcements

Art in Cornwall: A reception for Cathrine de Neergaard Fetterman's debut show of paintings will be held at the Library on Saturday, June 2, from 4 to 7 P.M. Her show will continue through June 23. Beginning June 26, the Library will feature an installation of kinetic sculptures by Tim Prentice with a reception and book signing of his new book, *Drawing on the Air*, on Saturday, June 30, from 4 to 6 P.M.

At the Cornwall Library:

The fourth in the raised-bed gardening series will be held Saturday, June 2, from 10 a.m. to 12 noon. Under the tutelage of Debby Bennett, the group will plant the second bed with plants that are best planted in early June. There will also be a demonstration of "Creative Food Gardens for the Patio." On Saturday, June 16, from 10 A.M. to 12 noon, there will be a diagnostic clinic where folks are invited to bring in their plant problems. Harvesting and succession cropping will also be featured.

The Library's third Annual Garden Tour on Saturday, June 23, from 11 A.M. to 7 P.M. will feature four Cornwall gardens. The 5 P.M. cocktail party will be followed by a vacation raffle at 7 P.M. Offerings will include one week at a vacation home in Nevis, and stays at hotels in Charleston, SC, and New York City. For prices and contact information, see insert in this issue.

Wash and Nosh: The girls from the CCS softball team will be washing cars and selling yummy baked goods at the Cornwall Bridge Firehouse on Saturday, June 2, from 9 A.M. to 12:30 P.M. Proceeds will go to the Center for Cancer Care in Torrington.

Motherhouse Activities:

June 2: Contra Dance with teaching caller Anne Banks and music by Still, the Homegrown Band, 7 P.M. at the Town Hall. Suggested donation \$5/child, \$8 for 10 and up. For more info, call Jane or Jim Prentice at 672-6101.

June 9: OSLSS Workshop, EGGS-perience Chickens. From egg to table, learn about raising poultry in your backyard, from 10:30 A.M. to 1:30 P.M. at Local Farm with a potluck lunch. \$35/family. Pre-registration required, please email to

The Summer Season

Warm days and nights cool enough to sleep well ... summer in Cornwall is a wonderful time. Before you go fishing or turn the page of that romance novel, take a moment to write a check to the *Chronicle*. Thanks!

Debra@Motherhouse.us or call 672-0229.

June 9: Big Little Kids Dance; especially for the younger crowd and their adults, 4 to 5 P.M. at the Town Hall with Tom Hanford teaching and calling the dances. To be followed by a finger-food potluck. \$10/family donation. For more info contact Rachel at 860-824-8404.

June 16: "Keeping a Family Cow" workshop, 10 A.M. to 1 P.M. at Local Farm. \$35/person or \$50/family of four. Preregister with Debra@Motherhouse.us or 672-0229.

June 23: Free Summer Solstice Celebration at Local Farm. Potluck supper and campfire sing-a-long starting at 7 P.M. For more info call Debra at 672-0229.

Cornwall CEDC Forum, June 6. See notice in "Cornwall Briefs," on page three.

The Cornwall Village Improvement Society will hold its annual meeting on Saturday, June 9, at 10 A.M. at the Town Hall.



Annual Community Beach Party: Park & Rec invites all Cornwall families to this event at the Cream Hill Lake Association (on Town Street) on Thursday, June 14, (the last day of school for Region One), from 5 to 8 P.M. Hamburgers, hot dogs, chips, and beverages will be provided. Please bring a salad or side dish to share. The Cornwall Agricultural Commission will sponsor its traditional ice cream social. Lifeguards will be on duty.

Senior Survey: All Cornwallians over 50 are asked to complete the survey distributed with the *May Chronicle*. Additional copies are available at the Library. Deadline for mailing is June 15.

Hammond Beach opens for the season on Saturday, June 16. Hours are 11 A.M. to 7 P.M. seven days a week except during inclement weather. Swim team and swim lesson registration will be held the week of June 18 to 22 from 12 noon to 3 P.M. Swim lessons are free to town residents with a beach sticker. There is a small fee for swim team to offset expenses. Questions? Contact Tammy Decker at tdecker74@att.net.

Talk and Tea: "Out of the Woods" at the Cornwall Historical Society, 7 Pine Street, Sunday, July 1, 2 to 3 P.M. Exhibit Curator Raechel Guest expands on the stories, triumphs, tragedies, and puzzles of Cornwall's forests over the centuries. (See insert

in this issue for details of the show's opening on June 22.)

The 7th Annual Cornwall Artists Open Studio will be held on Saturday, June 30, from 11 A.M. to 5 P.M. For a list of participating artists, directions to their studios, and a map, go to www.cornwallct.org and click on "Cornwall Artists." The list and map will also be available at the Library one week before the event.

June Is for the Dogs: The state of Connecticut requires that all dogs six months of age or older be licensed annually on or before June 30 in the Town Clerk's Office in the town where the dog is owned or kept. Licenses will become available on June 1. A current rabies vaccination certificate must be submitted or be on file. Neutered or spayed dogs cost \$8, and male or female dogs cost \$19. For a neutered or spayed dog being licensed for the first time, a certificate from a licensed veterinarian must be presented. Penalties apply for late registration. If you register by mail, enclose a SASE for return of tag and license; otherwise the Town Clerk's Office is open Monday through Thursday, 9 A.M. to 12 noon, and 1 to 4 P.M. Please notify the town clerk if your dog is no longer living with you so that he/she can be removed from the dog register.

The Cornwall Woman's Society Annual Rummage Sale is not far away. The dates this year are: Saturday, July 21, Sunday, July 22, and Monday, July 23. Almost everything accepted—clothes, collectibles, china, books, bicycles, beads, furniture, fans, and photographic equipment. (To see the detailed flyer, click on "Upcoming Events" at cornwallct.org.) For more information or if you would like to volunteer at this town-wide event, call Brenda at 248-3089 or Thalia at 672-6288.

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