



CORNWALL CHRONICLE

VOLUME 12 : NUMBER 5 JUNE 2002



The Great Library Switch

The well-trodden floors of Cornwall's venerable and much-loved little library echoed hollowly to the steps of volunteers carting away the last odds and ends from its once-crammed shelves. By mid-May, the collection, which had choked it so tightly that browsers were obliged to slither down its narrow aisles, had been blithely swallowed by its capacious replacement like a little school of plankton disappearing down a whale. The 15,000 books almost seem lost in the vast spaces of the open, post-and-beam structure with its soaring cathedral ceiling, but time is sure to fill it like its predecessor.

Sadly, what promised to be a memorable book brigade by a chain of volunteers who would have passed 1,600 mystery books from the old building to the new was rained out. They were moved with all the collection by the pros of National Library Relocation, Inc., who used about thirty rolling bookcase carts to shift the books from old shelves to new in perfect sequence. Although the rain fell in deluges and the moving truck, the carts, and the six guys who trundled them were soaked, the books felt not a drop.

As Lisa Lansing Simont, president of the Library Board of Trustees, reminded me, the new building is the successful outcome of

decades of hopes and dreams. Although concrete plans didn't take shape until 1997, the project had been discussed in board meetings since the fifties. Funding was the major victory, especially obtaining a contribution of \$426,000 from the State of Connecticut, covering about 30 percent of the cost. Additionally, the town agreed to reimburse the Library \$250,000 for the space vacated in its old building. The remainder of the \$1,865,000 raised came from foundations, fund-raisers, and private contributions. This was sufficient to cover the entire cost and begin the endowment which the Library will require for its upkeep and future projects.

But it took more than money. Of course, the lion's share of the labor fell to librarians Ginny Potter and Amy Buck, but a great deal of back-breaking work was put in by a host of volunteers who braved the murky recesses of the attic to clean out the nearly-century-old accumulation of miscellany. This included more than a few treasures, among them, a copy of the Federalist Papers donated by Monty Hare specifically to give Cornwall a proper library to carry it into the new millennium. Many items were consigned for auction at Sheffield's Bradford Gallery and the proceeds become part of the ongoing endowment.

The Cornwall Free Library opened its

new doors on May 22, although the provider is not scheduled to bring the computerized systems on line until June 3. Saturday, June 15, will see the dedication ceremonies, scheduled for 11 A.M.

—Matt Collins

Our New Flagpole

We hope you all admired our new flagpole on the Town Green this Memorial Day. We're indebted to Denny Frost, Scott Monroe, and John LaPorta for the heavy labor of erecting the pole and to Dusty Sandmeyer for coordinating this patriotic effort. The new pole was made possible by a grant from the Sidney Kaye Fund. Many thanks, gentlemen!

—John Leich



School Plans Go Ahead

As everyone probably knows by now, the May 11 referendum on the motion to form a Building Committee for the expansion of CCS and authorizing the expenditure of \$25,000 to cover the cost of preparatory work was approved by 268 to 201 votes cast, or by 57 to 43 percent. The Board of Education and the selectmen had hoped for a bigger voter turnout, and these numbers show that a significant number of people continue to have reservations about the project.

The new Building Committee is now getting organized and is about to put an

(continued on page 2)

JUNE 2002

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
						1 Rotary Meeting: Youth Exchange Program 8:15 A.M. Cornwall Inn
2 Theater Auditions 2-6 P.M. UCC	3  Bd. of Selectmen 9 A.M. Town Hall Park & Rec. 7 P.M. CCS Library	4  Blue Mt. Satsang Every Tuesday 6:30-8 P.M. UCC Day Room Inland Wetlands 8 P.M. Town Hall	5 Play Group 10-11:30 A.M. St. Peter's Church West Cornwall Library Assoc. Annual Meeting 2 P.M. Hughes Mem. Library	6 Meditation for Mothers Every Thursday 1:15-2:15 P.M. UCC Day Room	7 Historical Society Reception 5-7 P.M. (p.4) Community Potluck & Variety Show for Jubilee School 6 P.M. UCC (p.3)	8 Rotary Meeting: CT UCLA 8:15 A.M. Cornwall Inn Teen Night 7-10 P.M. Town Hall (p.4)
9	10  Blood Pressure Screening 3-4 P.M. UCC Parish House P&Z 8 P.M. Town Hall	11  CCS Graduation 6:30 P.M. Housatonic River Comm. 7:30 P.M. CCS Library	12 CCS Last Day 1 P.M. Dismissal	13	14 FLAG DAY Beach Party 6-8 P.M. Cream Hill Lake Assoc. (p.4)	15 Deadline: July Chronicle Copy Rotary Meeting: VNA Home Health Care 8:15 A.M. Cornwall Inn Playground Raising (p.4) Cornwall Assoc. 9:30 A.M. UCC Day Room Cornwall Library Dedication 11 A.M. (p.4)
16 FATHER'S DAY	17 HVRHS Graduation 6:30 P.M.	18  Region One Bd. of Ed. 7 P.M. HVRHS Republican Town Comm. 7:30 P.M. Town Hall†	19 Red Cross Bloodmobile 1:30-6:15 P.M. UCC Parish House (p.4)	20  Bd. of Selectmen 9 A.M. Town Hall† Bd. of Ed. 5 P.M. CCS Library Bd. of Finance 7:30 P.M. CCS Library VFW Post 9856 8 P.M. W. C. Firehouse	21 SUMMER BEGINS Story Hour 10 A.M. Library (p.4)	22 Rotary Meeting: Gale Toensing 8:15 A.M. Cornwall Inn Hammond Beach Opens 11 A.M.-7 P.M. (p.4) Canby Singers 5 P.M. N. C. Meeting House (p.4)
23	24  ZBA 8:30 P.M. Town Hall*	25	26 Green Party 7:30 P.M. Town Hall† Cornwall Fire Dept. 8 P.M. W. C. Firehouse	27	28 Story Hour 10 A.M. Library (p.4)	29 Rotary Meeting: Devereux Glenholme School 8:15 A.M. Cornwall Inn Hughes Memorial Library Book Sale 10 A.M.-3 P.M. (p.4)
30						

*Check with Zoning Office—672-4957 †Check with Selectmen's Office—672-4959

(continued from page 1)

architect to work. Jim Terrall hopes that the six-member committee will be ready to seek public input into their deliberations by the middle of this month.

The Building Committee is charged with bearing in mind the Board of Education's specification of needs, the project's cost, the lasting value of the project, and the development of a proposal which the voters will support.

In order to reduce the burden on Cornwall taxpayers, First Selectman Gordon Ridgway hopes to secure funding from the state in excess of the 15 percent now available, and is exploring the possibilities of private funding as well. —John Leich

2002 Grads

Cornwall is well represented in the graduating class at Housatonic Valley Regional High School this year. Here is a list of the grads with their plans or destinations, if known.

Theodore Austin—unknown; Christopher Barrett—School of Visual Arts; Shannon Davis—UConn Torrington; Corey Fontana—School of Visual Arts; Grace Gilroy—Berkshire Community College; Karin Heaney—U.S. Army; Meghan Kochman—University of Colorado at Boulder; David Nickerson—Universidad Veracruzana; Robert Sterz—employment; Zachary Rudes—Clark University; Devon Root—UConn; Dustin Tuthill—employment and NWCC. Area prep schools will send forth three students from Cornwall: Christine Gray—Tulane; Elise Piker—Tufts; Nick Hunter—MIT.

Beneath the mortarboards at CCS this month will be Aaron Packard, Byron Clohessey, Cody Aakjar, Courtney Shaw, Dain Council, David Kennedy, Emelie Gold, Joshua Martin, Kedryn Samson, Kurtis Whitney, Kyle Julian, Lindsey Stone, Lucia Martin, Margaret Cady, Padraic Murphy-Saunders, Sam Dwyer, Samantha Rudes, Samuel Packard, Shawna Pattison, Sophie Austin, Susan Barrett. The above will all be going on to HVRHS.

Cooper Oznowicz and Matthew Mulberry will be attending Millbrook. Jessie Elliott and Sandra Sterzl are heading for Oliver Wolcott. —Matt Collins

Scandinavian Summer

Jessie Bate will be heading to Längelmäki, Finland, on June 26 under the auspices of the American Field Service, which has chosen her for a six-week stay with a Finnish farm family.

She will be participating in farm and community activities and getting to know her hosts, the Ounis, and their three children.

Before returning to the States, Jessie will join other AFSers for a two-day cruise to Sweden.

—Matt Collins

Neoweld's Legacy

Once upon a time there were two brothers, Felice and Peter Masante, who owned and operated two hostleries side-by-side on Kent Road (Route 7) about two miles south of Cornwall Bridge. The first of these, the River Inn, was acquired by Felice from a previous owner some time during the 1930s. Although no deed to the property is on record at the Town Hall, the owner of the adjoining farm, Arthur Lorch, believes that the place was operated jointly for several years by the Masante brothers, who transformed it from a roadhouse of dubious reputation into a handsome establishment that long-time residents still recall as a fine place to take the family out to dinner ("The best broiled chicken ever," says Dorothy Sandmeyer). This family enterprise continued to expand in 1945, when Peter Masante established the Cornwall Inn on the next-door property just across Millard Brook, where it has remained ever since. Then, in 1961, the Masantes sold both properties; Peter to a new innkeeper at the same location, Felice to the C. H. Stevens Company, later the Neoweld Corporation, which until 1980 manufactured electronic heating and welding equipment both at the ten-acre River Inn site, now known as Neoweld II, and also at Neoweld I, a one-acre parcel on River Road, below the Route 4 cement bridge. The current owner of this property is Burkhart Roentgen International, a producer of medical equipment.

Today, the Cornwall Inn continues to flourish but its former neighbor is a forlorn wreck, barely standing upright on an untended parcel now so polluted by industrial waste that it has become a "brownfield," a term used by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to describe contaminated land. Since 1980, the EPA has tested and removed tons of soil containing lead and other contaminants at Neoweld II. Since solvents have been detected in groundwater nearby, the state DEP also tests the wells at neighboring homes and supplies residents with bottled water where necessary. During all this time, the former River Inn, now a dangerous public nuisance, has remained in place, with few precautions taken to ward off the curious visitor.

This year, however, change is in the air. Last February, apparently inspired by unfavorable reports in our local press, the absentee landlord, Richard Burkhart, telephoned the Selectmen's Office from Florida, where he now lives, claiming that arrangements to tear down the derelict building were already underway. Paul Prindle, the Cornwall Building Inspector, then ordered Burkhart to immediately secure (fence in) the structure and to apply to Prindle's office for permission to tear it down—before proceeding with the demolition process forthwith. Burkhart has verbally agreed to these terms. Meanwhile, the Cornwall Board of Selectmen has requested a grant of \$250,000 in state aid from the new Small Town Economic Assistance Program, based in Hartford, for remediation of both Neoweld sites.

According to First Selectman Gordon Ridgway, the selectmen will continue to work with Burkhart both to clean up the property and to resolve the matter of some \$100,000 in back taxes due the town.

—Jean F. Leich

Welcome

Anna Rebecca Bavis to Audrey Bavis
Lucas Alexander Venturini Calhoun to Will Calhoun and Alexa Venturini
Graham Edward March Nance to Anne and Martin Nance
Samuel Penington Sailer to Gretchen and Joseph Sailer
Daniel John to Catherine Hosterman and Joshua Tyson

Good-Bye to Friends

Marjorie M. Cathcart
Jason Clarke
Marie Kalman
Myron Piker

Congratulations

Leon Bouteiller to Patrice Croghan
Matthew Budge to Kimberly Johnson

Land Transfers

Estate of Bertha Pelletier to Gary R. Bevans, 34 Hall Road, house and 12 acres for \$123,600.
L&B Consultants (USA), Inc., to Pablo Taboada and Susan Vessio-Taboada, 18.289 acres on Cream Hill Road for \$135,000.
Bruce and Deborah A. Bennett to James V. and Pamela M. Agresti, 179 Great Hollow Road for \$585,000.
Christopher Smith to Ian Ingersoll, 11 Railroad Street for \$10,000.
Kenneth O'Hara to Pamela L. Thompson, 90 Cornwall Hollow Road, house and 7.4 acres for \$195,000.
Trevor H. and Lee Ganshaw to Robinson B. Lacy and Karen Doebelin, 150 Valley Road, house and 5 acres for \$750,000.
MR. MADWOM to Donald C. Clarke, 5 acres on Applewood Lane for \$69,000.

Hold the Phone

According to First Selectman Gordon Ridgway, Cornwall's cellular tower, which once seemed likely to rear its head on the ridge of Jack Gulliver's property east of the Housatonic, is on indefinite hold.

Apparently Sprint has had second thoughts about the suitability of the site as far as hooking up with its existing towers is concerned. An alternative location on town property off Dibble Hill Road is also not being aggressively pursued by the



company at present, probably because of potential opposition from neighbors, as well as the general economic downturn.

This will come as heartening news to those residents whose priority is keeping Cornwall a sleepy Brigadoon, but others may be disappointed to know that the absence of a vertical line on the horizon also presages the continued absence of those signal-strength lines on their phones through much of our town. —Matt Collins

So What's Extra for Kids?

Cornwall Extras for Kids is a local organization which enables Cornwall youngsters to participate in independent after-school enrichment activities they would not otherwise be able to afford, such as foreign languages, arts and crafts, nature study, music, chess, computer literacy, athletics, and the like, and in school-sponsored programs like theater trips and inter-school meetings. Applications for assistance are available at CCS, the Cornwall Child Center, and the Town Hall; through the after-school program Choices; and directly from Cornwall Extras for Kids, P.O. Box 143, West Cornwall, CT 06796. Funds are raised by sponsorship of several events during the year and by direct contributions, which are tax-deductible. (All donations are gratefully received at the above address.) Applications for help and disbursements are all kept strictly confidential.

Cornwall Extras for Kids believes that it is best for all concerned if parents also make an investment in their children's activities. For this reason they support only up to 80 percent of the cost of a particular program for a child. In cases of extreme hardship Cornwall Extras will consider paying 100 percent of the cost of an activity, but thus far all parents have covered a portion of the cost of their children's involvement. —John Leich

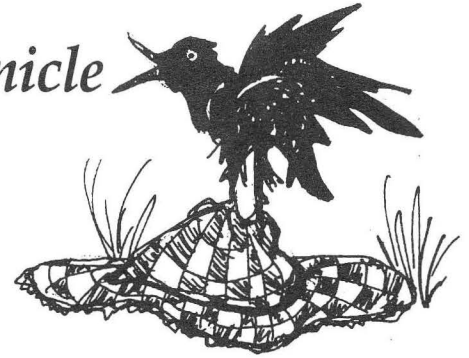


No Place Like Dome

A couple of young jugglers are building a remarkable house just south of the intersection of Routes 7 and 45 in Cornwall Bridge. From the road the house is unprepossessing, looking rather like two possibly misplaced bay windows, but once inside, it is clear that this is a firm, roomy building suitable for living and rehearsing the art of juggling which its builders, Deborah Buxton and Ryan Clark, do for a living. Scrambling into the house you find a two-story structure, one dome with a living-dining area and kitchen downstairs, and a large bedroom and bath on the upstairs interior balcony. There is an additional bath on the ground level, and a garage underneath that. Under the second dome is an ample space, wide and tall (29 feet), for juggling practice.

The building is very strong. Its domes,

Letters to the Chronicle



ACCIDENT VICTIM

On May 5, Buddy Dawson, a much-beloved member of the Hall's Garage staff for the past eight years, had a serious accident while racing his ATV. Buddy sustained a broken back and spinal cord injury, resulting in paralysis. Your much-appreciated donation to The Buddy Fund may be sent to The National Iron Bank or dropped off at several local businesses. For more information, contact Donna or Dave at 672-6289. —Donna Hall

FOI COMPLAINT

Concerning last month's article "Information Please!," I wish to make it known that Judy Herkimer's Freedom of Information complaint is no "sleeper," as it was discussed at a past Board of Selectmen (BOS) meeting at which reporters from The Lakeville Journal and the Waterbury Republican were present. The BOS agenda with the change of location was posted in the legal posting site outside the Town Clerk's office well within the legal time frame mandated, plus in my office and on the website where agendas are posted. I did forget to post a sign at the Town Hall saying we were at the grade school. For that I apologized to Judy and to another who missed the meeting. I was not trying to hide the meeting nor keep people away. I did inform two reporters whom I knew were planning to come. They were there. It seemed a reasonable plan to move three selectmen to the school rather than moving 12 Park and Recreation members from their meeting at the school to the Town Hall. As to the notable subject considered, a grant application was the topic of discussion and not town effort to clean up two polluted sites. I feel the

article implies that this office is trying to hide and keep information hidden away from the public. Truly that is not so.

—Joyce Hart

Secretary to the Board of Selectmen

Jean Leich, who wrote the original article, responds as follows:

"This article was based solely on Judy Herkimer's original letter to the Freedom of Information Commission. No comment was available from Judy herself or from the Board of Selectmen, which is contesting her claims."

A SUPER AUCTION

The eleventh Cornwall Child Center auction on April 29 raised over \$28,000, which will cover a significant part of our annual budget and thus keep tuition affordable for all families. The generosity of the many businesses and individuals who keep giving year after year is truly inspiring. We are deeply grateful to Mohawk Ski Area for the use of that ideal facility for the entire day. Our heartfelt thanks to the committee for rounding up 300 items, the parents who prepared the delicious food, the volunteer cashiers, and the buyers.

—Emilie Pryor and Jean Vitalis
auction co-chairs

created from alternating pentagons and hexagons (like a soccer ball), make for a very solid structure. The design is by a rural builder in Alabama who has created this version of Buckminster Fuller's famous geodesic domes.

—John Leich

Events & Announcements

Jubilee School Visits: On June 7, about 40 students, teachers, and parents of the Jubilee School will arrive in Cornwall for their annual five-day visit. The event is made possible by the generosity of many people who supported *Celebrate Spring*, the April program which raised the \$3,500 needed to fund the visit.

Everyone is invited to welcome the Jubilee visitors at a Community Potluck Picnic to be held under a tent at the UCC on Friday, June 7, at 6 P.M. Grilled meat and lemonade will be provided; bring a salad/side dish or a dessert to share. At 7, following the picnic,

stay to enjoy a one-hour Variety Show, which will feature the talents of Cornwall and Jubilee kids and adults.

Many other activities are planned for the weekend, and all are welcome to join the festivities. Call the church office (672-6840), Nita Colgate (672-6797), or Peg Keskinen (672-6486) for the schedule of events.

Art in Cornwall: Danielle Mailer's show of recent small paintings will continue at the Wish House through June. At the National Iron Bank, Treasa Pattison will be showing landscapes and still-life paintings during the month of June. The first show at the new Cornwall Library will open June 15. It will consist of interesting ephemera relating to the construction of the new building. The Cornwall Arts Collection's first show of the season will feature works by M. I. Cake, Barbara Stone, Cynthia Kirk, Emily Buchanan, Ilisha Helfman, Nan Bevens, Lazlo, Aaron Pequignot, and other local artists and artisans. Open Saturday, 11 A.M. to 5 P.M.; Sunday noon to 5 P.M.; Friday by appointment or by chance. West Cornwall at 7 Railroad Street.

The 2002 Art at the Dump Show on April 20, sponsored by the Cornwall Association, attracted 179 entries (as compared with last year's 37) and netted \$2,271.39 in sales, making possible a grant of \$796.89 to the CCS Art Department.

Summer Reading: The Library invites kids to Join the Circle this summer with a three-ring carnival of story hours, activities, and special events. Story hours resume on June 21 at 10 A.M. in the new Library, with two groups, ages 2 to 4 and 5 to 8, and will run through mid-August. Other events for older children will also be offered. Please call or stop by to register your child for Story Hour, and sign up to read stories (pre-selected) or provide snacks. Summer reading logs will also be available.

The Cornwall Historical Society's next show will be a retrospective of the works of the late T. Merrill Prentice, Sr., noted architect and artist. Among the items on display will be the plates of the botanical watercolors for his book, *Weeds and Wildflowers of Eastern North America*; paintings; design sketches of governmental, industrial, and academic buildings; metal sculptures and wooden toys. The opening reception is June 7, 5 to 7 P.M., at the Society's building, 7 Pine Street; and the show will continue through June 29. Summer hours: Tuesdays, 1 to 3 P.M.; Saturdays, 10 A.M. to 1 P.M. or by appointment (672-6492).

Hammond Beach will be open seven days a week, 11 A.M. to 7 P.M. from June 22 through September 2. Swim lesson and swim team sign-up times will be 11 A.M. to 3 P.M., Sunday, June 23 through Thursday, June 27, at the beach. Season passes are \$10 for individuals and \$20 for families and are available through the Selectmen's Office or by mail at P.O. Box 205, Cornwall, CT 06753. Pre-purchase of passes is strongly recommended. Please make checks out to the Town of Cornwall. For more information please call Jane Prentice, Beach Director, at 672-6101.

To Out-of-Town Subscribers

This is our annual reminder that we ask a \$10-per-year contribution to cover our mailing costs. We don't send renewal notices, but please check the date in front of your name on the mailing label; it indicates the expiration date of your subscription.

Yes, I want the Chronicle to continue.

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

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Please mail the *Chronicle* to the out-of-town address above; a \$10 contribution will be appreciated.

The Hughes Memorial Library needs books for the Library's sale, which will be held on June 29 from 10 A.M. to 3 P.M. Donations may be left at the Library during regular hours, or arrangements made by calling Estelle Stetson at 672-6759.

The annual meeting of the West Cornwall Library Association will be held at the Hughes Memorial Library at 2 P.M. on Wednesday, June 5.

June Is For Dogs: The State of Connecticut requires that dogs six months or older be licensed with the Town Clerk once a year in the month of June. Licenses will be issued only to dogs with a current rabies certificate. The cost is \$6 for a spayed or neutered dog, \$16 if not. Late fees apply after July 1. The Town Clerk's Office is open Monday through Thursday, 9 A.M. to 4 P.M.; or register your dog by mail by sending a SASE, rabies certificate, and fee to P.O. Box 97, Cornwall, CT 06753.

Tennis Courts: Thanks to a partnership between the Hubbard Family, the Town of Cornwall, and the Cornwall Community Tennis Association, the two red-clay courts across from the new Library have been re-conditioned and are ready for use by Cornwall residents and their friends. Please read and follow the rules posted on the courts.

The tennis clinic for 6- to 18-year-olds will use the courts 8 A.M. to noon, Monday through Thursday from June 24 through August 1. If you would like to enroll your child for this, please call Todd Piker at 672-6545. The cost will be the same as in past years (\$25 for two lessons per week). Space is limited. Once again there will be a Discount Week (June 24, 25, 26, 27) underwritten by the Park and Rec. and Todd Piker. These lessons will cost \$12.50 for all four lessons. Please contact Todd if you would like to enroll your child in this special week. Space is limited.



The Canby Singers return to Cornwall on June 22 for a concert at 5 P.M. in the North Cornwall Church. Founded by a long-time Cornwall resident, the late Edward Tatnall Canby, the group will be singing with its new conductor, Sheila Scholbrun, formerly a leading singer in the internationally known New York Pro Musica.

The Red Cross Blood Drive will take place at the UCC Parish House on June 19, 1:30 to 6:15 P.M. Blood is urgently needed. Donors must be 17 or older (no upper age limit), and weigh at least 110 pounds. Walk-ins are welcome, or call 672-6840 for an appointment.

The New Cornwall Free Library will be dedicated on June 15 with speeches, ribbon cutting, music, and tours of the splendid structure. Food will be available for purchase from the CCS eighth graders. Festivities start at 11 A.M.



And Now from Park and Rec.: Saturday, June 8, from 7 to 10 P.M. is the monthly teen night at the Town Hall, free to all Cornwall 9th to 12th graders. Friday, June 14, from 6 to 8 P.M. will be the Beach Party at the Cream Hill Lake Association, with food, a DJ, games, and more, free to all Cornwall residents. June 15 and 16, Park and Rec. will be raising the town playground. Volunteer labor to help install the equipment is needed, as well as donations of food and beverages to sustain those who labor. Please contact Bethany Thompson at 672-6028 to see how you can help.

CORNWALL CHRONICLE

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