



CORNWALL CHRONICLE

VOLUME 4: NUMBER 2 MARCH 1994



Rethinking School

When mandates come down from the state legislature, a collective Cornwall groan is the usual response. But a recent directive, PA 93-263, actually makes sense and, wonder of wonders, is practically without cost. Its thrust is to require each local school board to appoint an ad hoc citizens' committee to rethink the local school system. "There's a fast-changing, multicultural world out there," goes the reasoning. "Schools need to adjust to this reality."

Accordingly, on January 29 our CCS board gathered 20 interested Cornwallians for an all-day brainstorming session at the beautiful Trinity Conference Center. Included in this group were such luminaries as our first selectman, the CCS principal, the UConn Torrington Branch director, and — recently out of the trenches — a 1993 HVRHS graduate. School Board members Pat Blakey and Dianne Heiny did much of the organizational work, and Peter Hammond served as facilitator.

The brainstormers were first asked to suspend their preconceived paradigms (paradigm: mode, archetype, pattern) of elementary schools as we know them. To prime the panel's mental pumps, examples of non-educational paradigms that have

outlived their usefulness were suggested. Examples: "Watches are wound regularly, have hands, and go tick"; "Japanese goods are shoddy imitations unfit for American markets."

The brainstormers immediately warmed to their task. The paradigm of the 9:00 to 3:00 school day, the nine-month year, and classroom-confined education all came under fire. Called into question also was the subject-by-subject compartmentalization of learning processes. Judging student performance by test scores on a curve was found wanting by some, and group learning itself took a few hits. Suggested replacements for these "sacrosanct" practices were a profusion of innovative philosophies and programs provoking reactions ranging from "already being worked on by CCS teaching staff" to "unrealistic in the real world ... or is it?"

A second meeting of the committee took place on February 12 to edit the jumble of ideas left on the table. The edited version of the committee's paradigm-breaking ideas will join those proposed by ad hoc committees from other towns in this region. A convocation or representatives from each Northwest Corner town will, in turn, attempt to stitch together a regional educa-

tional quilt.

Will anything substantive come of these combined exercises? It's up to the school board of each town to decide. Cornwall is justly proud of CCS — we hope not complacent about it.

— Scoville Soule

... And Still Champion

For the fourth time in a row, Cornwall Consolidated School students ranked highest in the state in their Mastery Test scores.

A new category has been added to the scoring system this year — excellence — which, as school principal William Oros says, "is what we strive for." The other two categories, proficiency and "remediation needed," remain unchanged.

The tests, mandated by the state, are given in the fourth, sixth, and eighth grades. CCS fourth graders scored 94% excellent or proficient in math; 100% excellent in language arts; 100% excellent or proficient in reading; and 93% excellent or proficient in writing.

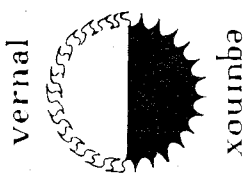
All sixth and eighth graders were in the excellent category in math, language arts, and reading. In writing, the eighth graders were all either excellent or proficient, while 91% of the sixth graders also

(continued on page 2)

MARCH 1994

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
<i>The deadline for calendar notices is March 18. Earlier is helpful!</i>	 LQ 4 NM 12 FQ 20 PM 27	1 Agric. Adv. Comm. 7:30pm CCS Inland Wetlands 7:30pm Town Hall* Park & Rec. 7:30pm Town Office	2 W. Cornwall Merchants Assn. 10am Cadwell's	3	4	5 Kugeman Village Open House 11am-3pm (p.3)
6	7 Bd. of Selectmen 7:30pm Town Hall Conserv. Comm. 7pm Town Office	8 Hous. River Comm. 7:30pm CCS Lib.	9 CCS PTO 7pm CCS Lib. Rep. Town Comm. 7:30pm Town Hall	10 Corn. Housing Corp. 7:30pm UCC† Bd. of Finance 7:30pm Town Hall, selectmen present budget	11 Bd. of Ed. public hearing on Quality Ed. & Diversity 8pm CCS Travelog (Poland) Lydia Wolf 7:00pm CCS Lib.	12 LINCOLN'S BIRTHDAY Poetry Reading 8pm Cadwell's
13 Cornwall Lib. talk by Charles Osborne, 4pm (p.4)	14 Corn. Lib. Art Show "Mixed-up Media" Brigitte Hanf P&Z 7:30pm Town Hall	15	16	17 ST. PATRICK'S DAY Bd. of Ed. 5pm CCS Lib. Budget meeting with Selectmen, Bd. of Ed & Bd. of Finance 7:30pm CCS	18	19
20	21 Bd. of Selectmen 7:30pm Town Hall HVRHS Bd. of Ed. 7pm HS Lib.	22 Dem. Town Comm. Meeting & Caucus 7:30pm Town Hall (p.4)	23	24	25	26
27 FIRST DAY OF PASSOVER PALM SUNDAY	28 ZBA 7:30pm Town Office*	29	30	31		

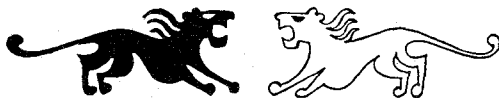
*Check time and place at Town Office. † United Church of Christ



(continued from page 1)
scored in one of those two categories.

The test format was different this year, Oros explained, with no multiple choice questions and more writing required. Unlike past years, the school now receives only a numerical score for each student, rather than the corrected tests, which teachers could use to identify individual problems. Since the new system is therefore not helpful to the school as a teaching guide, Oros wonders if the two weeks spent every September administering the tests is educationally worthwhile: "I think we could put those two weeks to better use."

Oros, who hadn't been sure how the new tests would affect CCS scores, said, "I certainly am proud of the youngsters, the teachers, and the community." He feels that the community's support of the school, and its strong commitment to education, play an important role in the school's success. And, he added, "It certainly doesn't hurt that Cornwall gets such poor television reception."
— Barbara Klaw



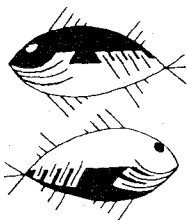
Poet on Film

Football offered no competition for an enthusiastic audience of 50-odd people who showed up in Cornwall on Super Bowl Sunday to view the latest in a series of presentations by the Cornwall Library Association — a documentary on Mark Van Doren (1894-1972) by his grandson, Adam, an architect, painter, and filmmaker.

By way of introduction, Adam Van Doren described his grandfather as a daunting subject: a poet, teacher, and critic who wrote over 50 books, published 20 volumes of poetry, and for 40 years was a revered professor at Columbia University. Like his elder brother Carl, who first inspired him to become a writer, Mark started out in New York as literary editor of the *Nation* (where he met, and later married, another editor, Dorothy Graffe). Carl and Mark both won Pulitzer Prizes (in 1939 and 1940). Both were devoted to Cornwall.

From the 1920s on, Mark and Dorothy Van Doren found refuge from New York at their 150-acre farm, the old Bradford place in Cornwall Hollow, which, according to one of their two sons, Charles, became for his father "a great poem" in itself.

Adam Van Doren's film provides a well-rounded portrait of his grandfather through comments by a critic, a publisher, and several poets who knew him well. Through it runs the voice of the poet reading from his work, accompanied by pic-



tures of the Cornwall countryside, the "little Eden" that he celebrated in his poetry for half a century.
— Jean F. Leich

More Home/Work Options

The most important business at the Planning and Zoning Commission's Valentine's Day meeting was the public hearing for, and subsequent passage of, revised and new regulations for uses of homes beyond their primary residential use. These include four levels of activity that can be allowed by special permit: traditional home enterprises, i.e., the production and sale of homemade goods; general home occupations such as small-scale business or professional activity; shop and storage uses by contractors and building tradespeople whose work is off the premises; and major home businesses which, in select, qualified locations, could operate at more intensive levels of use with conditions set so as to insure consistency with a residential neighborhood. Among other requirements, all of these uses would require a site plan, a public hearing, and, unless otherwise specified, a permit valid for two years and renewable by the applicant.

Also approved were revisions reflecting state statutes regarding agriculture, and an addition to the signs section of the regulations allowing, by right, personal, decorative flags, as well as national flags.

— Ginny Potter



More Bridgework

On January 24, a lively hearing took place at the Cornwall Bridge Masonic Lodge on the future of the Popple Swamp Road bridge over Furnace Brook. This bridge was inspected recently by the state, and the town was put on notice that it had to undergo substantial repairs, costing more than \$150,000. If the town agrees to abide by state specifications for road bridges, the total reconstruction cost (about \$200,000) will be covered by state or federal funds.

However, these specifications require that the bridge be widened from 16 to 24 feet, that the approach guardrails be extended on both sides, and that the bridge be connected to the state-owned railroad bridge as a means of controlling possible fast-flow water damage. Widening the bridge will entail some encroachment on the land of the adjoining property owners.

At the January 24 session, Popple Swamp Road residents expressed great concern lest the widening of the bridge increase the speed of traffic descending the road toward the old station. Already there have been accidents near the bridge, involving pets and children. Strong sentiments were voiced that the town should repair the bridge at its present width, even if this meant that Cornwall would have to foot the entire bill.

The following week, on February 4, the selectmen met and approved a contract

with Lenard Engineering to rebuild the bridge in accordance with the state's specifications. In order to take into consideration the concerns of Popple Swamp Road residents, appropriate warning signs and speed limits will be posted, and the contractor will be asked to persuade the state to permit the use of wooden rather than metal guardrails, of a shorter length than is normally required.
— John Leich



Cornwall In Concert

On Sunday, February 6, the nave of the United Church of Christ in Cornwall rang with Celtic, English, and American folksongs, many of which dealt with the scenery of Cornwall-like parts of the world — hills, valleys, and woods. The singers were Cornwall's own Coltsfoot Chorus in their third public performance, and first benefit.

The second half of the concert featured Anne Chamberlain and John Miller in a nostalgic program of show tunes sung with charm and vigor. Some were chosen for their ecclesiastical content: "Pennies from Heaven," "I Married an Angel," and the like. Other songs reminded us all too poignantly of our youth, as we joined in on those whose lyrics we could remember.

The benefit performance will allow students of the Jubilee School, an inner-city school in Philadelphia, to come to Cornwall for a 5-day visit in June.

— John Leich

Welcome

Clotile Lawrence Laigle to
Hilary and Ron Laigle, Jr.

Kale James Prentice to
Jane and Jim Prentice

Goodbye to Friends

Thelma Kearns
Clifton R. Read
Vladimir M. Steucek

Congratulations

Glenn Arthur Cass to Chwee Hong Tiong

Yoshihiro "Mappe" Matsudaira
to Rachel Migliacci

Land Transfers

Joseph L. and Lois M. Golden to Joseph A. McKenna, house on Sharon-Goshen Turnpike for \$80,000.

Coltsfoot Farm Limited Partnership to April Stevens Neubauer, house and 9.954 acres on Valley Road for \$235,000.

Getting Ready for Refugees

Cornwall's Refugee Resettlement Committee is seeking community support to help relocate a refugee family to our area. Working through Interfaith Refugee Ministry, the committee has requested a family with young children from any country where

people are fleeing from persecution, war, or starvation. We hope to be able to welcome a refugee family to Cornwall this spring.

The committee must raise \$2,500 to \$3,000 to assist a family of four for about four months, after which time the parents will begin to be able to support their family themselves. Donations may be sent to the United Church of Christ in Cornwall; checks should be made out to the Deacons' Fund and earmarked "refugee." We are also interested in hearing from folks with housing or employment opportunities.

At an orientation meeting on February 13 at the United Church of Christ, a representative from Interfaith Refugee Ministry presented a model outlining the process for receiving a refugee family, explaining the responsibilities of the sponsors and the family. Committee members were to meet again on February 27 to sign up for subcommittees such as fund-raising, housing, employment, medical care, publicity, transportation, finance, language, and acculturation. New members from the community are welcome. Please contact Jill Gibbons (672-0033), Ann Baren (672-6637) or Peter Ebersol (672-0081).

— Jill Gibbons

Rapping With Ridgway

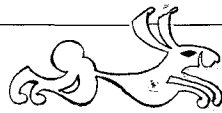
A Valentine's Day chat with First Selectman Gordon Ridgway started with the weather, which has been on everyone's mind. Foreman Don Reid reported that 74 inches of snow have fallen on Cornwall since the beginning of winter. Eight storms in January and three in February (as of mid-February) dropped 59 of those inches.

Of the \$36,000 budgeted for snow removal, \$10,000 remains. Sand and salt costs have come to \$16,000, contracted help to \$4,000, and costs of operating equipment total \$6,000 to date. Town workers have accumulated 150 hours of overtime, with some of those hours coming in 30-hour stretches. For ecological as well as economic reasons, the road crew has plowed more frequently in order to use less salt and sand. Ridgway praises the "crew that has managed to handle a punishing situation by working incredibly hard." His remark will no doubt be echoed by many grateful townspeople who welcome the flashing of lights and the rumble and clanking of the trucks as they surf waves of snow onto the shoulders and into the ditches of the 58 miles of Cornwall's town roads.

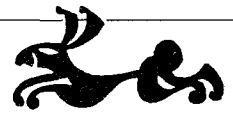
Firemen have also been busy. In the freezes of January, they responded to 18 calls having to do with automobile and chimney fires and with downed power lines. No overtime pay, however, for these volunteers, except for the ongoing appreciation of the community. — Ken Keskinen

Selectmen Present Budget

At the March 17 meeting of the Board of Finance, the selectmen presented their budget for discussion. The carefully-pre-



Letters to the Chronicle



THANKS, CVFD

This letter started out as a personal letter of thanks to our friends and neighbors on the Cornwall VFD but it has come to our attention that although the Fire Department responds to over six calls a month, this is (one of) the only letter(s) of thanks to the CVFD the Chronicle has received. So for ourselves and on behalf of all the others in town who sleep a little better at night knowing that these great folks are on the job — Thanks VERY MUCH!!!

— John & Nancy Bevans

CHOICE NUMBER THREE

I suppose I should feel like a skunk at a picnic for having urged the Chronicle to print the prices of real estate sales, but I am not persuaded that this is an item of pure gossip and nosiness, as suggested in recent letters from the Zinssers and the tackiness police.

I think many people follow such sales because their home is their most significant asset and they have at least a passing interest in tracking the value of Cornwall real estate, as they would follow the price of stocks or bonds. Also, the figures are of obvious use to anyone considering the sale or purchase of property. Sure, the information is available elsewhere, but so is almost everything else in the paper.

We could print the prices anonymously with some description, e.g., Town Street, 3 bedroom colonial on 10 acres, taxes \$3000, sold for \$235,000. This would give more information and perhaps ruffle fewer feathers.— Ed Ferman

OF \$ AND STREET LIGHTS

As a realtor, I appreciate the Chronicle's publishing the real-estate transfer values. Perhaps it would be even more interesting to know the sale-to-assessed-value ratio. That information is relevant because town budgets and resulting taxes are based on such values.

Regarding street lighting: here in Cornwall Village during the long summer evenings we hardly need artificial lighting generated by polluting non-renewable fossil



pared budget stuck to the guidelines of the five-year plan approved by the town. Costs for roads and bridges are expected to increase slightly, as are salaries; but in all areas the selectmen are trying to keep expenses down. Discussion also revealed that the town must anticipate increased costs of sending more students to the high school in the coming years.

Taxpayers who have ideas and concerns to share are urged either to attend budget hearings or to write to the BoF or the Board of Education. All hearings are listed in the Chronicle, with the final Town Meeting vote on May 20. — Ken Keskinen

There'll Always Be An ...

Park & Rec's Travelog program continued on February 4 with a talk by Julia Scott on

fuels or dangerous radioactive nuclear energy. And now, during these long winter nights I keep thinking the full moon is rising. We no longer need to pay for street lights, thanks to the illuminating spill-over from Mohawk Ski Area by which I can read at almost any hour of the night. I'm sure we'd be happy to share some bottled sno-light; come by anytime and help yourself ... Oh, be sure to turn off the lights when you leave. Thanks. — Ben Gray

P & Z PROTESTS STATE PLAN

The Cornwall Planning and Zoning Commission has many objections to HB 5941: An Act Concerning Comprehensive Land Use Planning.

First, the creation of two more state boards, a state planning commission, and an advisory state planning council, just adds complexity, distance, and bureaucracy to land-use planning. Municipalities should continue to draw up their own plans; each town knows its land, people, and needs better than any regional or state board could fathom.

Further, the proposed establishment of a regional advisory planning council is another redundancy. In our area, the Regional Planning Agency does a fine job of reviewing local regulations and identifying possible conflict or negative impact. However, requiring a regional and state agency to issue certificates of compliance for a town's plan removes local autonomy. Cornwall's elected Planning and Zoning Commission members strongly object to multiple state-established agencies having the final say over what can or can not be done in our town.

— Virginia B. Potter, Chairman

Virginia Potter's letter, endorsed by all P&Z members, was sent to area town officials, to Representative Mary Ann O'Sullivan and Senator Dell Eads, and to Representative Mary Mushinsky, chair of the Land Use Task Force shaping up HB 5941.

— The Editors

England. Julia had a number of tips for prospective travelers: do research on the places you will see, don't try to see too much, and connect your own interests to the places and things that you will be seeing. Julia suggested different forms of locomotion — barging, biking, walking, going on small railroads — as ways of getting to know people and places better. She talked lovingly of cathedrals, churches, and — especially — gardens, which, she said, reflect the English "passion for the landscape." She offered to give advice to anyone planning a trip to England. At the end she introduced Helen Tennant, who described her preparations for an upcoming trip to the Scilly Islands. — John Zinsser

Tranquil Photographs

An aura of serenity is what unites Verne Henshall's diverse photographic studies at Cornwall Library. Quiet compositions and muted colors evoke the tranquility of another age, particularly in the portraits. Except for the shrewd, challenging stance of pioneer aviator Gus Graf, all these people, whatever their phase of life — youth, maturity, old age — are preoccupied with inner rather than earthly concerns. At the end of his life, "Pappy" lies inert in his bed gazing into the beyond, far from his watchful dog companion and the dead world of winter framed in his window. "Trulli rooftops" and "Gondolier's view" are studies in shapes, and a haunting still life of black tulips, black lace, and oriental embroidery reflects Ms. Henshall's own past life in the world of fashion and fabrics. Until March 12. — *Brigitte Hanf*

Kugeman Village — Moving In

Interviewing Kugeman Village applicants for the initial applicant pool has now been completed, and it is expected that the first residents will move into their new apartments in March. Other applicants will be interviewed to be placed on a waiting list.

An Open House will be held on Saturday, March 5, from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. for any and all townspeople who wish to see what has been created. The formal dedication, to which all are also invited, is to be held in May.

The CHC board is saddened by the death of its long-time vice president, Clifton Read. An enthusiastic and hard-working member, Clif was dedicated to helping people in Cornwall. At his families re-

quest, the CHC board has created in his memory the Clifton Read Housing Assistance Fund. Many contributions have been received; others may be sent to PO Box 174, Cornwall, CT 06753. — *Ken Keskinen*



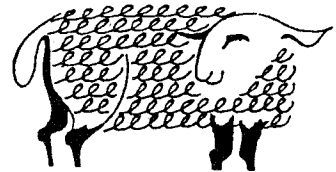
Events & Announcements

Rumsey Mural Competition: Artists of all ages are invited to design a new unit to replace the mural now existing on the attic window space in the pediment of Rumsey Hall. Designs for the ten-foot by two-and-a-half-foot space are to be turned in to the Cornwall Library by April 9. Detailed information and rules are available at the Library, Town Office, and Cadwell's Corner, or from Tim Prentice.

A Profane General at the Library: On March 13, Charlie Osborne will talk about his new book, *Jubal*, and what it was like for a Yankee to put together a biography of the profane, difficult, and complex Confederate General Jubal Early. His talk is part of the ongoing series of Sunday afternoon talks sponsored by the Cornwall Library Association, and will take place at 4 p.m., followed by refreshments.

The Democratic Town Committee will meet on Tuesday, March 22, at 7:30 p.m. in the Town Hall to elect officers. That meeting will be followed by a caucus to elect delegates to the various state conventions. All Democrats are urged to attend.

Red Cross Bloodmobile: We are all aware that should we urgently need a blood transfusion it will come from donors like ourselves who give blood that is tested, processed, and delivered by the Red Cross blood program. At the present time supplies are low, particularly for the negative blood types. Although Cornwall is not large enough to justify a day-long Bloodmobile visit, the unit does come to nearby towns. Dates of those visits are published in local papers. The Cornwall branch of the Red Cross will provide transportation to any of those locations. Just be over 17 years old, more than 110 pounds in weight, and



in good health. Call Jack Forster (672-0141), Pauline Hayes (672-6413), or Scoville Soule (672-6117) if you need a ride.

Early Childhood Screening continues to be held at CCS on a monthly basis, offered by Regional School District One. It is open to all three- and four-year-olds. Each child's developmental level is assessed in motor skills, language development, cognitive skills, and social development. If your child has turned three and you are interested in this service, please call Martha Bruehl at 672-2939 to schedule an appointment.

CCS Student Wins Scholastic Art Award: Congratulations to eighth grader Becky Wolfe for winning a silver key in the statewide Scholastic Art Awards. Of the 2,500 contestants, Becky was one of 100 students who received a silver key (second place).

Tax Credit, Anyone? Cornwall homeowners who were 65 or older by Dec. 31, 1993, or who are receiving Social Security disability payments, may be eligible for credit on their property tax. The property must be their principal residence and total income including Social Security must be less than \$20,700 (single) or \$25,400 (married). Applications may be filed in the assessor's office until May 15; credits for persons found eligible will apply to the July billing. Homeowners in the program must reapply every two years. Forms have been mailed to homeowners who must reapply this year. Applications are available from the assessor's office, open Tuesdays and Thursdays 9 a.m. to 12 noon and Wednesdays 1-4 p.m.

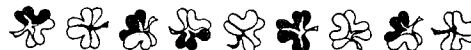
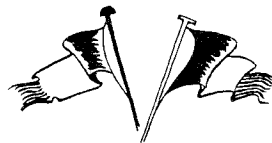
Correction: The listing in the Feb. issue of Republican Town Committee members for 1994 unfortunately erred on two counts: Dick Dakin is no longer a member, and Joan Thitchener will continue to serve on the committee. Sorry, Joanie.



**Last Chance
to
Enter
Sweepstakes**

Just send us the coupon, and we'll enter you in the first annual *Chronicle* sweepstakes. We're giving away the following prizes in a random drawing: 1) A framed print of *Chronicle* art by the artist of your choice. 2) a bound volume of the *Chronicle*. 3) Dinner for two at Cadwell's.

This would also be a great time to send in a small contribution if you haven't done so lately, but of course no contribution is necessary to enter.



CORNWALL CHRONICLE

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