



CORNWALL CHRONICLE

VOLUME 2: NUMBER 9 OCTOBER 1992



Vandalism with a Motive?

The mailboxes of three families holding minority positions on hotly debated zoning issues have recently been vandalized. According to State Trooper Paula Brunetto, who was called in on all three incidents, the mailbox tamperings did not have the appearance of the occasional childish prank, but were of a more serious nature. A police investigation is in progress.

Toby Cole, whose Cream Hill Road mailbox was blasted by a shotgun that had evidently been thrust through its open door, feels that "someone is sending me a message."

The Cole family had just returned from a trip to England, and had put their daughter and a visiting cousin to bed, when they heard three shots and a car pulling away. The next day Cole discovered a hole in his mailbox and birdshot imbedded in a tree.

Anne Estern, also of Cream Hill Road, whose mailbox was stuffed with a long-dead raccoon, discovered the vandalism upon coming home at dusk. When Trooper Brunetto attempted to remove the animal, the gas generated by decomposition caused it to explode. Mrs. Estern, too, feels that her minority stand on a zoning issue was the instigation for this "act of intimidation."

The third incident involved Jeffrey

and Vivian Gordon of Town Street. They returned home to find their mailbox missing. Neighbor David Stearns told them he had heard gunshots during the night. Later, the Gordons discovered two spent shells near the spot where their mailbox had stood.

West Cornwall Postmistress Jeanne Litwin points out that tampering with mailboxes is a federal crime. She, too, noted that the recent incidents of vandalism go well beyond childish mailbox-bashings, and have the aspect of dangerous meanness. She has reported the incidents to the postal authorities.

First Selectman Gordon Ridgway is working with the police to find out who is responsible for these acts. He urged against speculation and finger-pointing until such time as some further facts can be brought to light.

— *Scoville Soule*

Affordable Update

The Cornwall Housing Corporation has voted to accept a \$1,419,000 bid for construction of the long-gestating Kugeman Village rental project. The winning bid, by Jachimowski Construction of Seymour, CT, was the lowest of 12, which ranged as high as \$1,838,000.

Kugeman Village, on Route 7 just north

of the Cornwall Inn, will consist of 18 town-house units. Rents, for tenants who meet income standards set by the Connecticut Department of Housing, will range from about \$300 per month for a one-bedroom unit to a maximum of about \$675 for three bedrooms. Applications will be received when ground is broken, which CHC President Ken Keskinen says may be before the end of October. For information and to be put on the mailing list for application forms, call 672-6516 or 672-6486.

There were these other affordable-housing developments:

• Habitat for Humanity's application for a permit to build on its Route 7 site has been approved by P&Z. "We hope to build as much as possible with volunteer labor and contributed materials," said Paul Baren, director of Habitat for Humanity of Northwest Connecticut. "We hope to get started on the foundation in October." Applications from people wishing to live in Cornwall's first Habitat house are still being accepted; for information call Baren (672-6637) or Ella Clark (672-4817).

• The CHC put off for a few weeks the lottery that was to have determined the order in which sites for affordable housing would be offered to qualified applicants.

(continued on page 2)

OCTOBER 1992

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
<i>The Grumbling Gryphons, with help from Cornwall children, will present "Monsters We Love" at 8pm after Halloween games at the 7pm CCS party.</i>		 FQ 3	 FM 11	 LQ 19	 NM 25	1
					2	3 <i>Story hour 10:30am Corn. Lib. every Sat.</i>
4 Agricultural Advisory Comm. 7:30pm W. Cornwall Firehouse	5  Board of Selectmen 8pm Town Hall	6 Inland Wetlands 8pm Town Hall* Plan. & Zoning 7:30pm Town Hall	7 YOM KIPPUR West Cornwall Merchants Ass'n 3pm Freshfields	8 Cornwall Housing Corp. 7:30pm UCC†	9	10 <i>Poetry Reading 8pm Cadwall's Corner</i>
11	12 COLUMBUS DAY 	13 Park & Rec 7:30pm Town Off. Dem. Town Comm. 7:30pm CCS Lib. Hous. Riv. Comm. 7:30pm CCS Lib.	14 Rep. Town Comm. 7:30pm Town Hall* <i>Painting & sculpture by Irene Gross Berzon Cornwall Library</i>	15 Board of Ed. 4:30pm CCS Library Bd. of Finance 7:30pm CCS Library <i>Harvest Supper Parish House (p.4)</i>	16	17 Mohawk Fair 8-4 ski area (p.3) Special voter reg. 9-5 Town Hall (p.4) Women's Group 10am W. Cornwall Firehouse (p.3)
18 Mohawk Craft Fair 8am-4pm ski area (p.3)	19  Bd. of Selectmen 8pm Town Hall	20 Special voter registration 9am-8pm Town Hall (p.4) Last chance!	21 <i>Ethics in America series 7:30pm †UCC (p.4)</i>	22	23	24 <i>Halloween party 7pm CCS (see above)</i>
25	26 Conserv. Comm. 7:30pm Town Off. Z.B. of Appeals 8pm Town Hall*	27	28 <i>Ethics in America series 7:30pm †UCC (p.4)</i>	29 <i>Elderly Health screening W. Cornwall Firehouse (p.4)</i>	30 Town Meeting 8pm CCS*	31 HALLOWEEN 

*Check time and place at Town Office.

† United Church of Christ

(continued from page 1)

The CHC, Keskinen explained, needs time to obtain more detailed information from applicants. So far, CHC has received 12 applications, and has seven building sites to offer, not counting the Town Street site opposed by some of the neighbors.

• The Town Street site was taken up at P&Z's Sept. 14 meeting. But while members were clearly inclined to go along with CHC's plans, a formal vote was put off until Oct. 13. This was to allow time for the drafting of a motion that will specify in precise language certain restrictions on the use of the site. Most of the contemplated restrictions are identical — or nearly identical — to those proposed by CHC.

• On Sept. 11, members of CHC's board met with Jeffrey Gordon, one of the chief critics of CHC's plan for affordable housing on Town Street. Gordon and his wife, Vivian, along with Eugene and Susan Flamm, have filed a lawsuit challenging the legality of Cornwall's affordable-housing regulations.

Gordon has suggested that the lawsuit might be dropped if CHC would agree to certain additional restrictions — they have not been made public — on the use of the Town Street site. "We're encouraged by their willingness to negotiate," Keskinen said after the meeting. "We hope to come to some agreement so that legal action will be unnecessary." He said he anticipated a second meeting soon.

— Spencer Klaw



Beautifying the Beach

Since Hammond Beach opened, I have been hoping the town would develop a plan for the habitat of the beach. The idea would be to provide a little lawn for picnicking under the trees, improve access to the beach for the elderly, and create some shade for sleeping babies.

Last winter I got together with Roxanna Hammond, Tim Prentice, and Anne Bevans, a landscape designer, to discuss Hammond's thoughts about the beach. She wanted only native plants, some blueberries for the kids to pick, and to keep the trees and the natural setting. She likes the idea of a rear access and some lawn.

We came up with a plan for a little mound of lawn below the dressing rooms and a small exit off the back end of the porch that would have nice, wide steps to allow people to lounge under the trees and have access to the beach house from the sand area. Tim donated a design for the steps and Anne donated a design for the landscaping and an outline of a five-year plan for maintenance and improvements.

We presented the plan to Park and Rec, which voted its approval of the idea. Karen Stevens supported the plan because she said she wants to put the "Park" back in the title Park and Rec.

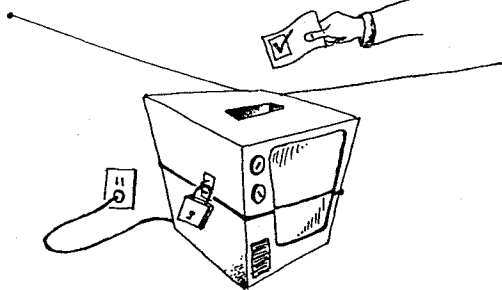
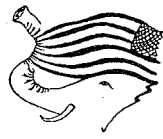
— Janice Bracken



Primaries

In the primaries that took place in Cornwall on Sept. 15 Republicans gave Brook Johnson a 55 to 47 victory over Christopher Burnham in the Senate race, and Andrew Roraback defeated John E. Calkins, 70 to 34, for the state's 64th Assembly District. Democrats picked Eugene F. Slason over Alan R. DiCara, 35 to 10. Brook Johnson, the state-wide winner, will run against Sen. Christopher Dodd in November, while Slason takes on incumbent Rep. Nancy Johnson.

— John Zinsser



Unwanted Guests

Only two years ago I thought flying squirrels were rare, shy nocturnal animals with a magical way of jetting around by swooping from above. When these endearing woodland creatures moved into my walls and began extending their family, my illusions were destroyed. Squirrels scuttled across the roof after dark and frolicked inside the eaves, rolling nuts around. They established latrines over the ceilings. They gnawed by night, and by day their hungry young yelped like baby condors.

When my human tenants protested, I found an exterminator licensed to trap "nuisance wildlife," at a price per head (squirrels run to \$40). He is a jail guard in Litchfield. He hung a Hav-a-Heart trap by my gutter, baited it, and checked it every morning. After the first squirrel, he told me he averaged three per structure. After the fourth he said he never got more than six. After the seventh, awed, he did not charge me for further catches. In 13 days he caught 13, then neatly sealed the squirrel entrance and departed. It's quiet in my house now but it may be livelier for the people over in Torrington. He released all my squirrels in their woods.

— Anne Schillinger

CCS Report

Over the summer Haystack Cable Company donated a satellite dish to CCS, enabling our students to participate in learning programs or video tape specials that have been available to towns with cable.

Over 90 percent of our families attended the orientation programs on the nights of Sept. 9 and 10. Teachers presented their curriculums for each class and answered questions. Excellent job!

— Lynn Cheney

Selectmen Target Infrastructure

The selectmen have been preparing this year's update of the five-year plan. Their first priority is restoring the town's infrastructure — its roads, bridges and buildings. The draft plan they presented to the Board of Finance on Sept. 17 was down \$750,000 from last year. It eliminates a number of items from the 1991 plan but defers to a later town meeting any planning for funds for a possible new town office.

The infrastructure news is not all bad. During the summer the savvy of acting road foreman Jack Preston enabled the town to do far more road and bridge work than expected for the amount budgeted. The recently completed Klar's Bridge on River Road came in at half the original estimate, which will allow the town to restore Popple Swamp Bridge with the leftover funds. The town has now hired Don Reid of Salisbury as permanent foreman, but Jack will continue to work on long-range planning and relations with vendors, and will consult with Don about current work.

At the September 21 meeting, Ben Gray presented a letter from 27 Cornwall residents asking the selectmen to create a study group on a possible historic district. The selectmen promised to consider the idea.

— Hendon Chubb

Welcome

Oliver William Fox
to Mary Ann and Jeff Fox

Brian Charles Allen
to Peggy and Peter Allen

Luke James Gellatly
to Kim and Michael Gellatly

and a correct welcome this time:
Christina Holly Kent
to Wendy and Robert Kent, Jr.

Congratulations

Daniel W. Gracey to Caitlin C. Lynch
Jeffrey Gladding to Patricia J. Marinelli
Richard M. Hurlburt to Jennifer Norberg
Peter J. McKendry to Harriet F. Hubbard

Goodbye to Friends

Patrick O. N. LeBeau
Earl Wickwire
C. Paul O'Connell

Land Transfers

Nala Consulting, Inc. of Connecticut to
Ruth E. Chapell, land on Cemetery Hill Rd.

Coltsfoot Farm Limited Partnership to
Cornwall Housing Corp., lot on Valley Rd.

Michael R. Gannett to Caryn Johnson,
27.829 acres on Cream Hill Rd.

Mohawk Update

This summer marked the first full season of mountain biking at Mohawk Mountain Ski Area. On weekends and holidays since May Mohawk has been running a chairlift up the mountain carrying mountain bicycles and riders as well as hikers and visitors enjoying the scenery. Bikers ride down ski trails or fan out onto state forest roadways. A shop provides bicycle and helmet rentals, repairs, and sales, and food is available at the lodge.

It is difficult to evaluate this season's success since weekend weather has often been bad. But as many as 80 people have turned out on the best of the rare dry and sunny days. The ski area expects to resume mountain biking next summer.

Summer activities will end on the weekend of Oct. 17-18 with our Third Annual Craft Fair. More than 35 regional craftspeople will be exhibiting and selling their products. Lunch and snacks will be available. — Carol Lugar

Agricultural Fun

The first Cornwall Agricultural Fair in decades was held on August 29, a day when the rain stopped long enough to permit hundreds of fair-goers to look, listen, and marvel at the exhibits and demonstrations.

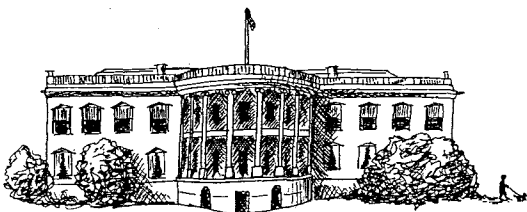
The event was organized by the Agricultural Advisory Committee and the Park and Recreation Commission. The Cornwall VFD provided action for all the serious handicappers in town with the Cow Pie Contest.

Ribbons were awarded in many fruit, vegetable, bakery, and flower categories. There isn't room to name the winners; anyway, you know who you are.

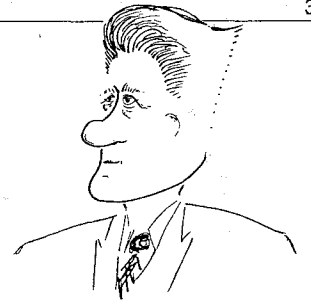
Demonstrations included old farm machinery, weaving, spinning, candle dipping, butter churning, farm animals, and new farm equipment.

The Cow Pie Contest began 20 minutes late because the state inspector detailed to weigh the parts of the pie in case it fell on more than one of the numbered squares (so that the winnings might be divided fairly) never showed up. Luckily for the gamblers holding the 900 tickets that were sold, Vanna, an attractive young Scoville cow, was remarkably accurate when she plopped on Peter Bishop's square less than ten minutes into the proceedings. The second cow, Maybelle, a graceful English shorthorn who is boss of Gordon Ridgway's herd, did not produce.

The VFD earned about \$3,600 toward a new ambulance. — Lisa Lansing



Letters to the Chronicle



MALICIOUS VANDALISM? A PRANK?

I can only speculate as to why our mailbox was selected to be the recipient of a dead and decomposing raccoon on Aug. 31.

Horrible as the incident was, it at least gave me a reassuring opportunity to observe one of our state troopers acting in the line of duty.

I would like to both thank and praise Paula Brunetto, the courageous young trooper who responded to my call for assistance. Horrified also by this nasty act of vandalism, she nonetheless immediately put on plastic gloves, removed the dead animal and sprayed the box with a fumigant. After writing up the incident for the police files, she told me that she had recently purchased a house in Cornwall. This incident, along with other similar incidents, must have made her wonder about the town she had chosen to live in. I can only hope that she will never see such things in Cornwall again. — Anne Estern

CANNONBALL, ANYONE?

Almost everyone who goes to a lake or pool has been splashed at least once. A lot of these splashes come from children (like us) doing cannonballs off rafts or docks.

Everyone who swims has their own style of cannonball. We personally like the Spread cannonball that makes water fly everywhere. Other styles include the Genie, the Siamese, the Flying Egg, and the Slip cannonball. So if you like to flip, dive, belly-flop, or just splash around, try the cannonball. You'll like it.

Enjoy the splashing and

if you don't like it
SWIM SOMEWHERE ELSE!

— Carla Geisser and Winfield Wilson

AFFORDABLE HOUSING & THE STATE

During the recent controversy, it was stated that if a town did not act on its own to provide affordable housing, the state would. To the surprise of more than a few, myself included, a review of state statutes reveals that no such law exists. However, it is also clear that the state has not only taken an active role in promoting affordable housing at the local level, but it appears to be doing so increasingly.

In 1988, the legislature passed Public Act (PA) 305, which authorized Housing Partnership Committees to be appointed by town officials (in our case by the Board of Selectmen) as vehicles to develop affordable housing. Although local municipalities were not required to do this, the law offers strong incentives to those that do, including 25 percent more road money for each of the three years following completion of the first project.

The year 1989 saw passage of PA 311, which provided an appeal process allowing a developer — with some exceptions — to force a

town to permit housing construction if the developer's plan included a specified minimum number of affordable units. It is significant that the first challenge by an applicant under this statute was upheld by Hartford Superior Court in March of this year.

In 1991, PA 392 was passed, requiring towns to take certain steps to encourage housing development. Among its four requirements: a town's zoning regulations and plans must promote housing choice and diversity, including housing for low- and moderate-income people.

Thus it seems safe to say that, although towns and municipalities face no present threat of the state's taking over affordable housing programs, the state has become increasingly active in this area and its intent is clear — another good reason for us to develop an acceptable program of our own rather than wait till a state-sponsored program is forced upon us. — Bob MacDonald

WOMEN'S GROUP

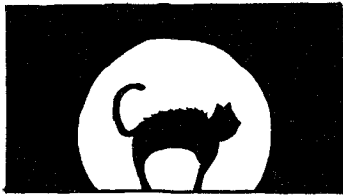
Two and a half years ago about twenty women from Cornwall began meeting on a weekly basis, in groups of six to eight, to share with and support one another in such areas as empty nests; physical aging; relations with our relatives and others; loss and grief; spirituality; use of time; etc. We have grouped and regrouped as the process has evolved, giving us all a chance to meet and know each other in ways we never had before. It is an exciting, rewarding, and warm experience.

If you are over 50 and are interested in participating in such a group, please join us for an information session at the West Cornwall Firehouse on Saturday, Oct. 17 at 10:00 a.m. — Becky Williams

SCRAM! BEAT IT! GET LOST!

The sort of vicious bullying that led to the recent vandalism of three mailboxes in West Cornwall has no place in Cornwall. The community leaders and the rest of us who support affordable housing and small sawmill operations are offended by these actions. Anyone in this town has a right to speak out against affordable housing and sawmills without being subjected to violence against their property.

The persons who shot up the Gordon and Cole mailboxes and stuffed a dead animal in the Estern box are miserable cowards and do the entire community a horrible disservice. Whoever you are, you don't have any concept of what this great town is about. Scram! Beat it! Get lost! Leave! Slink away under cover of darkness! — John Miller



Coltsfoot Chorus

The Coltsfoot Chorus made its debut in a concert at the Prentice barn on August 31. The group, which is made up of Cornwall members of the Kent Singers, wowed the audience with its tonal quality and skillful ensemble work in a varied program.

Especially applauded were a complicated but perfectly performed rendition of "I Had a Little Talk with Jesus," a hilarious Ogden Nash song about chickens, a Bruckner motet with words by the group's leader, John King; and two solos featuring the dulcet soprano of Beth Samuels.

The enthusiastic audience was delighted to hear that the concert will be an annual affair. Besides King and Samuels, members of the group are: Susan Fox, Joan Hinchman, Nora Horan, Lisa Lansing, John LaPorta, Tim and Marie Prentice, Julia Scott, Jim Whiteside, and Greg Zabielski.

— John Zinsser

Students Show at Library

Six adult students, the Cornwall contingent of Ed Fales's Adult Education class in painting, are showing their work in the Cornwall Free Library through October 10. Tricia Collins, Dick Dakin, Elizabeth Locke, Arleen Nielson, Mary Jack, and Barbara Stone are obviously having a thoroughly good time finding out what watercolors, pastels, and oils can do. As citizens of Cornwall their themes naturally have to do with country things — hummingbirds, gardens, autumn leaves. All have a light touch, paying homage to the fine guidance of their mentor. Makes one want to go back to school.

— Brigitte Hanf



Eternal Revenue Report

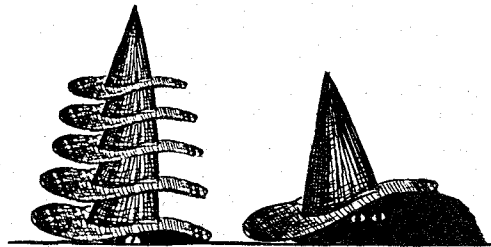
Thanks to all who responded to last month's appeal for funds. Our treasury is now in better shape, but we intend to go on forever, and so our needs never end. If you haven't sent a check recently, please send your tax-deductible contribution to the *Cornwall Chronicle*.

.....
• A \$10 contribution will get the Chronicle mailed to an out-of-town address. Other contributions welcome.
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P&Z: Sawmill — and Nostalgia

Affordable housing applications (see story page 1) continued to be the most important work before P&Z. In addition, the agenda for the Sept. 14 meeting included an application by John Nuese for a sawmill in Cornwall Hollow. If the required papers are submitted, a hearing will be held at the next regular meeting on Tuesday, Oct. 13.

John Calhoun shared a six-page pamphlet-sized copy of the 1945 P&Z regulations which he found among Frank Calhoun's files. Indeed, the procedures were simpler in those days! — Ginny Potter



Events & Announcements

Harvest Supper: The Cornwall Child Center is off to a busy fall with a Potluck Harvest Supper at the Parish House for all its staff on Thursday, Oct. 15, 5:30. At 6:30 everyone in town is invited to a demonstration and sale of Discovery Toys 6:30-7:30. This is a chance to buy good-quality toys for your children or as gifts.

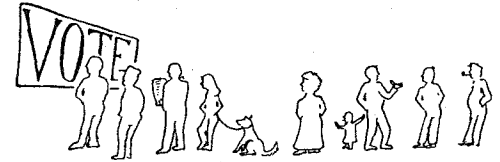
Girl Scout Registration: Registration for Cornwall Girl Scout troops is nearly over! There are troops for girls of all ages, from kindergarten up, and adult help is always welcome. If you'd like more information or if your daughter didn't receive it from CCS, please call Carol Lugar at 672-6890 (home) or 672-6100 (work).

CHLA History: For an "official" history of the Cream Hill Lake Association, anyone with archival materials, photographs, memories, and/or good stories, please contact City Lansing (672-6411) or Lisa Lansing (672-2659).

Season Ski Passes: Because of a change in tax laws, Park and Rec is unable to issue tax-exempt ski passes for Mohawk this year. Cornwall residents may apply for pre-season discount tickets until Oct. 10. Call 672-6100 for information.

CCS Fundraiser: The CCS eighth grade is selling Cornwall logo hats as part of its ongoing fund-raising efforts to meet expenses of its spring class trip. These hats are showing up on heads all around Cornwall so we

know they're popular! The hats — \$12 apiece — are beige with either blue, green, or red brims and trim. They will be sold until Christmas. You can buy them at Cornwall Bridge Pottery, at New England Catering, or at a booth during Cornwall Bridge Days. Or call CCS at 672-6617.



Last Chance to Register: The cut-off day for new voters is Oct. 20. This means that people who register to vote after Oct. 20 will not be allowed to vote on Nov. 3 unless the "Matured Rights" provision applies with respect to *age, residence* in Cornwall, or *citizenship*. For explanation call Maureen Prentice, 672-6035, or Judith Gates, 672-6568, registrars.

Ethics in America: There will be a discussion series at 7:30 p.m. on five Wednesdays from October 21 through November 18 in the day room of the United Church of Christ. Based on a video course aired on PBS several years ago, the series' topics will include our criminal justice system, personal ethics, medical ethics, the integrity of public officials, and corporate takeovers. For more information call 672-6840.

Health Screening: An Elderly Health Screening is scheduled for Thursday, October 29, at the West Cornwall Firehouse. This service is available to Cornwall residents age 60 and over. A wide range of tests are offered for a minimal fee (\$18 or \$19 with PAP test). Representatives from Torrington Area Health District will also be offering annual influenza shots that day. To schedule an appointment or receive more information, please call Committee on Aging member Lucy Kling, 672-6137.

Cornwall Town Report: Cornwall's annual town report will be available in mid-October at the Town Offices, the Cornwall Library and the Cornwall Consolidated School, and also at the town meeting on Oct. 30.

CORNWALL CHRONICLE

PRESIDENT Tom Bevans

OCTOBER EDITORS

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NOVEMBER EDITORS

Anne & John Zinsser Lisa Lansing

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