CORNWALL CHRONICLE

VOLUME 17: NUMBER 9 OCTOBER 2007

1907: A Very Good Year

What do the following women have in common: Rachel Carson, Florence Gomez, Daphne du Maurier, Katharine Hepburn, Mildred Preston, Rosalind Russell, Barbara Stanwyck, and Helen Tennant? 1907, the year of their birth. Of those eight women, three have something else in common: Florence Gomez, Mildred Preston, and Helen Tennant all are or have been residents of Cornwall.

In a town with a population of 1,400, three centenarians in one year seems noteworthy. To what do they attribute their longevity? Perhaps it is the unpolluted air? Perhaps it is the lack of the stress found in more urban environments? Or is it something in the water? None credits that daily glass of red wine or that bowl of oat bran, but....

Florence Gomez, who was born in Wassaic, New York, on August 10, 1907, and came to Cornwall as a child, attributes her health and long life to "plain living. We never had a whole lot when I was growing up except plain food and fresh air." Florence, who served as postmaster at the Cornwall Bridge Post Office for many years until she retired at age 70, said cheerfully that she has "no complaints." She has four children: a daughter Connie, who lives in Los Angeles, and three sons, Fred, Bob, and Francis. She celebrated her 100th birthday quietly with family and friends.

Helen Tennant, born Helen White in Beverly, Massachusetts, on October 15, 1907, thinks it is more likely a matter of luck. "My parents and grandparents were not longlived, so it's not genes." Helen, a 1928 graduate of Smith College, is a voracious reader with a lively mind and great interest in the world. She said she has always lived moderately and in younger years was a great walker. Helen's daughter, Susanna Gretz, who lives in England, will be in Cornwall to help her mother celebrate her 100th birthday.

Mildred Preston, born Mildred Parsons-Hull in Seymour, Connecticut, on October 17, 1907, lived with her daughter Jean Pond until she moved to Geer four years ago. Her son,

Lauren Preston, noted that his "mother had a good attitude towards - life and was

always cheerful." Her granddaughter, Eileen Levine, said her grandmother "was very active and very sociable; she loved to play cards and was always baking and having friends over. She was also very accepting, and you could tell her just about anything." All of Mildred's children, grandchildren, and greatgrandchildren are looking forward to celebrating her 100 years.

If we could pinpoint one quality that stands out in the lives of our three centenarians, perhaps it would be sociability. What better place than Cornwall to exercise that trait?

Florence, Mildred, and Helen: Happy 100th birthday from all of Cornwall!

—Brenda Underwood

Barn Burning

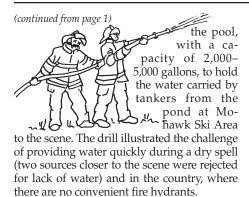
On Sunday morning, September 9, some 60 firefighters, EMTs, and fire police gave up a Sunday of sleeping late, attending church, washing hot rods, and playing with children to participate in a live-burn mutual aid drill. "Mutual aid" in the firefighting community refers to the willingness of surrounding towns to help when one department needs extra manpower and equipment for a fire, car accident, or other disaster. Cornwall Volunteer Fire Department Chief Earl Tyler organized the live burn (and extinguishing) of the collapsed Hopf barn on Route 128. Personnel from Cornwall, Falls Village, Goshen, Kent, Sharon, Warren, and Farmington participated and exchanged information on equipment and techniques.

Among the equipment tested was a Portable Pond, a large portable swimming pool consisting of a collapsible metal frame and pliable vinyl waterproof box, all of which is stored on a fire truck. In this case firemen used

quietly with family a	nd friends.	-000	TOBER :	2007	ed on a fire truck. In t	nis case firemen used (continued on page 2
SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	Park & Rec. 7 P.M. CCS Library Region One Bd. of Ed. 7 P.M. HVRHS Bd. of Selectmen 7:30 P.M. Town Hall	Agricultural Comm. 7:30 P.M. Town Hall Inland Wetlands 7:30 P.M. Town Hall	3	4 Enjoying Poetry TLC Class 10 A.M.—noon Library Family Book Discussion 4–5 P.M. Library	5	6 W. Corn. Farmers' Market 9 A.M.—1 P.M. Opposite P.O. Columbus Day Book Sale 9 A.M.—4 P.M. Library † Historical Soc. Benefit Tag Sales 9 A.M.—4 P.M. Pine St. Sedgwick Talk/Walk 1:30 P.M.
7 Columbus Day Book Sale noon–4 _{P.M.} Library †	8 COLOMBUS DAY OBSERVED COlumbus Day Book Sale 10 a.m2 p.m. Library † Historical Soc. Benefit Tag Sales 9 a.m4 p.m. Pine St. Blood Pressure Screening Noon-1 p.m. UCC	Housatonic River Comm. 7:30 p.m. CCS Library P&Z 7:30 p.m. Library	10	Enjoying Poetry TLC Class 10 A.M.—noon Library Family Book Discussion 4–5 P.M. Library	12 CCS Walk-A-Thon 1 P.M. † Art Reception 5–7 P.M. Insiders Gallery †	Sedgwick Monument † 13 Hazardous Waste Day 9 A.M.—noon Torrington † Cornwall Assoc. 9 A.M. UCC Day Room Motherhouse What's in a
14 Cornwall Conservation Trust 20 th Anniversary noon †	Motherhouse Wreath- Making Workshop 1–3 p.m. Local Barn † 15 Deadline: November Chronicle Copy Democratic Town Comm. 7:30 p.m. Library	Bd. of Selectmen 7:30 P.M. Town Hall	17	Habita Poetry TLC Class 10 A.M.—noon Library Bd. of Ed. 5 P.M. CCS Lib. Bd. of Fin. 7:30 P.M. CCS Lib. VFW Post 9856 8 P.M. W. C. Firehouse	Story Hour 1:15 Library	Pickle Workshop 10:30 A.M1:30 P.M. UCC 20 † Motherhouse Old Style Life Skill Herb Walk 10:30 A.M1:30 P.M. UCC
21	22 ZBA 7:30 P.M. Town Hall	P&Z 7:30 P.M. Town Hall	24 Cornwall Vol. Fire Dept. 8 P.M. W. C. Firehouse	Enjoying Poetry TLC Class 10 A.M.—noon Library	Story Hour 1:15 p.m. Library Library Halloween Party 6:30–8:30 p.m. † Annual Town Meeting 7:30 p.m. CCS †	27 Electronic Waste Day 9 A.M.—1 P.M. Torrington † Art Reception 4–6 P.M. Library † Music of Parlor & Porch 5 P.M. UCC †
28	Agriculture in the Town Plan 7:30 P.M. Library †	30 Influenza & Pneumonia Vaccines 10 a.m.–noon Town Hall †	31 HALLOWEEN Park & Rec. Halloween Events 5–8 p.m. Town Hall †	Tuesdays: Adult Volleyball, 7 Wednesdays: Bend & Stretch Women's Adult Basketball, 6:3	Class, 9:30 a.m. UCC; Stretch Cla	ass, 5 p.m. Town Hall;

Thursdays: Meditation for Mothers, 1:15 P.M. St. Peter's, call Debra Tyler 672-0229 to confirm

Sundays: Meditation Group, 1-2 P.M. Debra Tyler 672-0229 for location



After the barn was burned and the fire was out and safe, the cleanup began. Here's the drill. Pull the hose off the scene, drain the water, roll up the hose, return the hose to the fire house, unroll the hose on the pavement, scrub and wash the hose, brush it dry, repack the hose onto the fire trucks, clean all of the air packs and other equipment, fuel up the trucks, wash the trucks, all to be ready for the next call. Get something to eat! —*Rick Stone*

Bramley Wins Primary

Cornwall's unprecedented fling with a primary election for local office ended with defeat for challenger Richard Griggs.

Results of the September 11 contest for selectman were: 102 for incumbent Richard Bramley and 34 for Griggs. Thirty-seven percent of Cornwall's 371 Democrats came out to vote on the new electronic voting machines, which worked just fine according to Democratic Registrar Jayne Ridgway, except that many voters complained that sliding a paper into a slot didn't quite have the authority of a dinging lever.

After the polls closed, Bramley smiled and said, "Back to business." First Selectman Gordon Ridgway commented, "It's good to be politically active, but there are less cumbersome and expensive ways to do it."

Griggs later told the *Chronicle* that he had no regrets and would continue to attend selectmen's meetings.

—Ed Ferman

Apple Fatigue

You've heard of metal fatigue, which causes propellers to crack and tanks of molasses to burst. You know about chronic fatigue, that syndrome you'd hardly wish on your worst enemy. But you probably haven't given much thought to the phenomenon of apple fatigue.

Apple fatigue happens in years like this one, when all the circumstances are right: a wet spring, a temperate summer, bees behaving appropriately. The apple trees have loved it. No fatigue for *them*! They've produced with great enthusiasm. If there's an apple tree near your bedroom window, when the time comes you can lie in bed at night and listen to

the apples drop.
(Those little thuds may be followed by the unmistakable heavy breathing of deer who come to munch,

but that's another story.)

No, apple fatigue does not affect the trees or the apples themselves: it afflicts the people who regard themselves as custodians. At particular risk are those tidy puritans who can't bear to see apples lying in disarray on the ground and slowly becoming useless. This group, which can also be called the something-for-nothing crowd, finds windfalls a reproach and a challenge. Smooth and pink or green and gnarly, immaculate or worm-spotted, these apples have volunteered! They must not be wasted! We'll be glad of applesauce in February! And so forth.

As the Book of Ecclesiastes could have said but didn't, of making applesauce there is no end. Not when you can go out and gather half a bushel of windfalls every morning, anyway. If you let them sit too long in your kitchen, the air is filled with little fruit flies, so you really have to make applesauce every single day. For weeks. That's weeks of quartering, stewing, cooling, milling. Weeks of decanting gallons of applesauce into smaller receptacles and then hoping to give them away because the freezer is full. Weeks when your first question to anyone you encounter is "Do you like applesauce?" And even if they say no, you may leave a quart of the stuff on their doorstep under cover of darkness.

That's what I mean by apple fatigue.
—Franny Taliaferro

Food for Thought

"Nyet" and "Mais, oui" may now be heard echoing in the halls at Cornwall Consoli-

dated School as a result of Principal Kathleen Fitzgibbons's determination to offer a variety of relevant educational opportunities. Built into



the school schedule is a one-hour period for accelerated studies. To fill that period for the 2007–2008 school year, Dr. Fitz recalled a request made last year during one of her periodic student interviews for a course in Russian language; she remembered the offering of Russian as an Adult Education class at HVRHS. Fourteen of the 21 eighth-graders responded enthusiastically to the possibility of a Russian-language class at CCS. A call to Matt Collins (the one who does live in Cornwall but is not a member of the CCS staff, as opposed to the one who does not live in Cornwall but is a member of the CCS staff) nu vot! In addition, three seventh-graders have begun studying French at their request with Jane Hanley, who is already teaching Spanish in kindergarten through eighthgrade classes.

Says Dr. Fitz, the children need "solid chew-on food" in their educational diets; it would seem they have taken some good bites.

—Barbara Gold

Good-Bye to Friends

Caleen "Cookie" Degreenia Aletha K. Sunderland

Congratulations

Chelsea Peters Bardot and Nathanael Burhans Lewis Sarah Jones and Steven A. Cohen Elaine Beun and William Robert Paley Blair Lynn McElroy and Jonathan Roth Doolittle

Land Transfers

Lawrence B. and Nancy O. Cohen to Robert I. Meyers and Harriet R. Saltzman, 9.984 acres with buildings and improvements thereon at 8 Flat Rocks Road for \$2,100,000.

Pricilla Hart Mauro to Henry George, Jennifer Rose, and Victoria Ann LaBalme, and Lisa LaBalme Osterland, 0.7052 acres on Hart Hill Road and Route 128 for \$7,052.

No Convenient Answer

On September 11 about 25 people attended the continuation of the Planning and Zoning Commission's public hearing for the petition by the owners of the Berkshire Country Store to change the zone from Residential to General Business for their five-acre property at the intersection of Routes 4, 43, and 128. With the advice of Martin Connor, their planning consultant, Beth and Rick Cochran offered to voluntarily limit development and not permit further re-subdivision, a compromise that responded to concerns expressed by citizens at the August hearing.

Comment by persons present and in letters read into the record was against any regulation change that might permit several or large businesses and buildings on the site. On the other hand, most of those who commented agreed that a small, owner-operated neighborhood store would conform to the

rural character of the

town

Tom McGowan, the P&Z planning consultant, cautioned that a major change such as a zone change

normally takes place when recommended by the Town Plan. He offered alternatives, such as an amendment to the Plan for a Neighborhood zone. P&Z members mentioned that the commission's Economic and Development Committee might consider such an option as they continue work on recommendations for the new Town Plan.

When there was no further comment from the public, the hearing was closed. The commission has 65 days in which to render a decision.

—Ginny Potter

Selectmen's News

Town Trade

One would assume that the picket fence attached to the stone markers north and east of the Randall house at 27 Pine Street, across from the Library, actually marked the boundaries between that property and the Town Green and Pine Street. One would be wrong. In fact, as new owners Natalie and Greg Randall discovered, the town owns an odd-shaped piece of their lawn on the west side of Pine Street. On the other hand, the piece of the Town Green along the north fence that former owners used as a driveway is actually

not part of the property.

So the Randalls and the town have agreed to a swap: the town will relinquish ownership of a piece of the Randalls' lawn in return for a quit claim to the old "driveway" across the green. A new driveway is in place on the Randalls' property, but various boards and commissions and the town itself must approve any such property transfer. Participants in the Town Meeting on October 22 will be asked to approve the transaction. Seems like a deal.

"No, Thanks" to Feds

The opportunity to participate in a federal program with a grant administered by the State Department of Transportation turned out to be too good to be true. Having Pine Street resurfaced, with a new crown, under the DOT plan would have required grinding up the present road, then raising it six inches, with major disruption to the community and with the town paying 25 percent of the cost. Specifications even called at one time for a double yellow line down the center of the street. Instead, the town crew will repair, repave, and "recrown" the road next summer with minimal disruption and at a cost of no more than the 25 percent of the federal plan. In the meantime, the road is ready for winter with oil and sand recently applied for protection.

Energy Success

First Selectman Gordon Ridgway reports that the town is close to the 87 customers needed to agree to buy their power from renewable energy sources. When this goal is reached, the town will be eligible for a solar electric panel to be placed at Cornwall Consolidated School. For more information call Kate Freygang (672-6010); forms are available at the Town Hall. —Barbara Gold

Agricultural Education

September 8, the day of the 16th annual Cornwall Agricultural Fair, was sunny and sultry—a good day to sit in the shade and eat a hamburger prepared by the eighth grade at CCS, and then rise up to inspect some exhibits and discover a thing or two about the practice of agriculture.

The fair is always full of hands-on educational experiences. You could learn about felting, or making corn meal, or preparing diesel fuel from plant sources. You could watch the Housatonic Valley Regional High School portable sawmill turn hardwood logs into beautiful planks, or the antique press transform apples into gleaming cider. You could observe a blacksmith and a woodworker exercising skills that are bygone but not forgotten. It's fun to sidle up for a chat with goats and ponies and ducks and Jersey heifers. In the cool of the

Town Hall, there's inspiration in the garden and farm produce, the flower arrangements,

and even the vegetable oddities. Some view Cow Chip Bingo

as the main event of the day. It's not about to dis-

Letters to the Chronicle

NO MORE EXTRAS

Cornwall Extras for Kids was started fourteen years ago by a group of people committed to providing all children in Cornwall equal access to after-school and summer enrichment activities, regardless of financial need. Since then, the organization has been able to contribute to the cost of music lessons, ski rentals, drama classes, sports camps, and foreign travel programs for many Cornwall students.

The board has produced three fundraising events each year and has met monthly to plan and review funding requests. In recent years it has become difficult to replace retiring officers and board members, and fundraising events have ceased. This has also coincided with a dwindling of requests for funding. The organization has therefore decided to fold, unless there is interest from new volunteers to take over. For more information, please call Amy Buck at 672-6589 or Scott Cady at 671-9049. —Amy Buck

COYOTE CHORUS

Late in August, a pack of coyotes moved through the woods above Ballyhack feeding on small game and doing whatever coyotes do. We knew this in our house on Pierce Lane because whenever the siren at the Town Garage let go the

pack howled, yipped, and yodeled in response. We kept the cat indoors and enjoyed the conversation between the pack and the big coyote on the roof of the garage. -Lisa Simont

PROTECTING WETLANDS

I was delighted to read in the August issue of the Chronicle that of 4,000 acres of wetlands in Cornwall, 31 percent is protected.

Does that include the wetlands near the Cornwall Village Post Office at the juncture of Route 4 and Bolton Hill Road, that the Town is filling with salty road sand? I see amphibians and reptiles in that area which need protection from habitat destruction.

Does the Town have a permit, or is the Town exempt from regulations about permitted uses of wetlands?

Surely there is a better way to recycle used Town Highway Department road sand than filling wetlands. —Ben Gray

place any Connecticut casinos, but it's always satisfying to onlookers and helpful to the Cornwall Volunteer Fire Department,

Cornwall agriculture is as old as Cornwall itself; the numerous and varied entries at the Ag Fair testify that our heritage is alive —Hunt Williams and well.

Bears, Bears Everywhere

On a patch of lawn outside the Wish House in West Cornwall stands a life-size fiberglass bear painted in brilliant squares of every imaginable color. It seems to be gazing wistfully at the wooded hills beyond the Housatonic, unaware that a bear of its coloration wouldn't last long in the wild. At its feet is a plaque reading, "I am a Berliner." It is dedicated to Hans Lugar, father of Manda Lugar Gropings, who painted it, then "liked it so much I wanted to keep it" and so became its sponsor.

In front of the Insiders/Outsiders Art Gallery, at the intersection of Routes 7 and 45, is another upright bear, this one garbed in a dizzy array of black-and-white circles, curlicues, zigzags, dots, and squiggles. Labeled "Hi 'Bear' Nation Dreams" (sorry

about that), it was painted by Suzanne Kirschner and sponsored by Crystal Rock. "It's based on American Indian motifs," explained gallery owner Kelly Futerer.

These Cornwall bears are two of 77 bear statues scattered about the Northwest Corner, most of them commercially sponsored. The Bear Affair is a collaborative effort of the Northwest Connecticut Arts Council, two health organizations, and two chambers of commerce. All bears except those pre-purchased by sponsors will be auctioned off on November 10 at Lippincott Van Lines in Winsted at 5 P.M., with proceeds going to the collaborating organizations.

There's also a Bear Hunt contest: locate and record the title of each of the 77 bears, and you could win a Cape Cod weekend getaway or a Lime Rock Park season pass, to name two prizes. If nothing else, you'll pick up some atrocious "bear" puns. Bear maps are available at any bear site, or online at www.abearaffair.net.

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—George Kittle

Events & Announcements

The Cornwall Conservation Trust will celebrate its 20th anniversary on Sunday, October 14 (rain date October 21), at noon. The event will include CCT's annual membership meeting (brief) and walking tours of the new trails at the Rattlesnake Road preserve. Meet at the mowed field near the Cogswell end of Rattlesnake Road. Bring your own picnic lunch; beverages will be provided by CCT. New maps showing all CCT holdings and policies of use will be distributed during the meeting. Questions? Call Emilie Pryor at 672-4226.

CHS Offers Sedgwick Talk: On Saturday, October 6, starting at 1:30 P.M., the Cornwall Historical Society will join upper Housatonic Valley towns giving Heritage Hikes. Joe Marchetti will lead a discussion of Major General John Sedgwick's military life and a walk to his gravesite and homes. Participants should meet at the Sedgwick monument at the intersection of Route 43 and Hautboy Hill Road. For more information, call 672-0505.

Columbus Day Book Sale at Cornwall Free Library, October 6 to 8. Hours are as follows: Saturday, 9 to 10 A.M., early bird for \$10 entry fee, and 10 A.M. to 4 P.M., full-price sale; Sunday, noon to 4 P.M., half-price sale; Monday, 10 A.M. to 2 P.M., bag sale. This year's sale includes a large collection of art books. Please bring your donations to the Cornwall Library through Thursday, October 4.

Hazardous Waste Day will be held Saturday, October 13, from 9 A.M. to noon at the Torrington Water Pollution Control Facility on Bogue Road in Torrington. Registration at the Selectmen's Office is required (672-4959).

Art in Cornwall: At the Insiders/Outsiders Gallery, on October 12, from 5 to 7 P.M., a 12-string guitarist will entertain at an opening reception for artists Amy Buck, Peter Seltzer, and Jake Bell.

Catherine Noren's show of photographs entitled *Things Change* will continue at the Cornwall Free Library through October 20. Beginning October 23, a show of paintings by Lynn Fowler entitled *Shadows, Sky, and Water* will fill the walls, while ironwork by Israel Fitch of Battle Hill Forge will be displayed in the case. A reception for the artists will be held on Saturday, October 27, from 4 to 6 P.M.

Free Wreath-Making Workshop will be offered at the Local Farm Barn, 22 Popple Swamp Road, on Monday, October 8, from 1 to 3 P.M. Bring dried flowers and ribbons; all other materials will be provided. Questions? Contact Debra@Motherhouse.us or 672-0229.

And Now, Seriously

This space is the *Chronicle*'s monthly chance to speak to its readers about donations to allow us to continue publishing. The casual jollities that appear here now and then should not conceal the paper's very real need: as of this date the *Chronicle* has money for only six more issues. We need to hear from you.

Fifth Annual Walk-a-Thon will take place on Friday, October 12, at 1 P.M.; meet at Cornwall Consolidated School. Walk one, three, or five miles with CCS children, staff, and parents to benefit the Cornwall Food and Fuel Banks and the Little Guild of St. Francis and to add to each class's fund for its class

trip. Rain date is October 19. Call
Bente Busby (672-2543)
for more information.

"What's in a Pickle" Workshop, part of the Old Style Life Skills

Series, will teach lacto-fermentation food preservation techniques and offer a chance to make pickles, sauerkraut, and drinks at the UCC Parish House on Saturday, October 13, from 10:30 A.M. to 1:30 P.M. Cost is \$35 per family; pot-luck lunch. Preregister with Debra@Motherhouse.us or 672-0229.

Music of Parlor and Porch, a concert on Saturday, October 27, at 5 P.M. at the United Church of Christ, will feature Nan Frost, Linda Bell, and Sarah Garrison of the Trillium Trio; and Rachel Gall. They will play selections characteristic of historical periods and locations. Refreshments will be served at intermission. Admission is \$20 to benefit the Cornwall Historical Society.

Annual Town Meeting will be held Friday, October 26, at 7:30 P.M. in the Gathering Room of Cornwall Consolidated School. The purpose of the meeting is to receive the annual reports of the town and all boards and commissions published in the Town Report, available at the Town Hall and at the meeting, and to approve the transaction concerning the Randall property. (See "Selectmen's News," page 2.)

Agriculture in the Town Plan will be discussed on Monday, October 29, at 7:30 P.M. at the Library. To open the program, Dan McGuinness of the Northwest Connecticut Council of Governments will present a summary of initiatives in other towns. Some Cornwall farmers will then offer short statements on agricultural issues.

Then and Now Extended: The Cornwall Historical Society's photo exhibit showing old and present views of familiar houses and other sites has been extended by popular demand through October 31. CHS is open on Wednesdays from 1 to 4 P.M. and Saturdays from 10 A.M. to 4 P.M.

Library Halloween Party: Using mime and movement, storyteller Rona Leventhal will be the featured entertainer at a Halloween party at the Library on Friday, October 26, from 6:30 to 8:30 P.M. Haunts, Haints, and Hollers: Stories for a Halloween Eve will be preceded by a pizza supper. Suitable for ages 8 through adults. Babysitting will be provided for younger siblings. This is a free program, but please call to register at 672-6874.

Electronic Hazardous Waste Day will be held Saturday, October 27, from 9 A.M. to 1 P.M. at the Torrington Water Pollution Control Facility on Bogue Road in Torrington. Registration at the Selectmen's Office is required (672-4959).

Flu and Pneumonia Vaccines will be available at the Town Hall on Tuesday, October 30, from 10 A.M. to noon. No appointment is required; recipients must be at least nine years old, and pregnant women must have a note from their doctor. Cost is \$30 for the flu shot and \$45 for the pneumonia shot. If you have Medicare, bring your card. If you have questions, call Torrington Area Health District at 489-0436.

Park and Rec. will serve dinner foods and drinks and will show Halloween movies on Wednesday, October 31, from 5 to 8 P.M. at the



CORNWALL CHRONICLE

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