

# ORNWALL CHRONICL

**VOLUME 18 : NUMBER 8 SEPTEMBER 2008** 

## A Question of Sprawl

Dolores Hayden is Professor of Architecture, Urbanism, and American Studies at Yale and the author of several award-winning books about the American landscape and the politics of place, most recently A Field Guide to Sprawl. Since 1981 she has owned a vacation home in Cornwall and knows the town's special beauty and the problems in preserving it.

At the August 7 meeting of the Planning and Zoning Commission, Ms. Hayden led a discussion of the update of the Town Plan of Conservation and Development. She offered several suggestions. "Have a meeting where you all think like developers. Try to figure out what opportunities may exist for them and act to prevent unwelcome ones."

She also recommended an inventory of structures that are historic or admired—not only homes, but barns and even commercial buildings—as well as landscape features like stone walls. (P&Z has contracted to prepare similar inventories, though not to the extent of surveying things like barns or stone walls.)

Hayden described an unused historic factory in Katonah, New York, that was successfully turned into a mixed-use facility including a library and affordable housing. Heads were bowed momentarily in memory of the late Rumsey Hall.

When Tim Prentice asked about design review, Ms. Hayden replied that it was diffi-

cult to enforce with private homes. "It's better to identify buildings you care about and influence builders through things like publications," she said. This might discourage development like the subdivision on Todd Hill Road, which some in town find out of place, though far more offensive and aggressive houses can easily be found as close as Fairfield County.

Rick Lynn asked a key question: "Cornwall is one-third protected and one-third unbuildable. How do we best protect the remaining one-third from rural sprawl—by mandatory clustering, upzoning?" Ms. Hayden sidestepped this question, perhaps because there was no easy answer. Rick later said that both possibilities were controversial but worth considering. That is only one dilemma facing P&Z members as they move to complete the plan.

Subcommittees on housing, natural resources, economic development, and cultural and community resources will complete their work this fall. This will be followed by more public hearings, and P&Z hopes to present the plan to the town by year's end. —Ed Ferman

#### What's New?

.. Plenty, at both the Cornwall Child Center (CCC) and Cornwall Consolidated School (CCS) as they prepare to open their doors to children on September 2.

At CCC, new space, new teachers, and a new program are available to Cornwall's youngest (12-month-olds to 3-year-olds). Made possible in part by a grant from the Berkshire Taconic Foundation's Northwest Daycare Initiative, this new start addresses two complementary needs, according to Board Chair Cay Hosterman. The Child Center was facing the financial challenges of declining enrollment as a result of other afterschool opportunities for children, and working parents of younger children need local child care (though enrollment is not limited to Cornwall residents). With a ratio of one teacher to four children, the center can enroll eight children full-time, though more can be accommodated on a part-time basis. Kay reports the center has been fielding phone calls about the program all summer.

At CCS, four new teachers are joining the faculty. For kindergarten, the teacher is Candise Stiewing; her aide, Linda Snyder. Indira Oasba is the new special education teacher for grades six through eight. Erica Foster will be the science teacher for grades six through eight while Kathy West is on maternity leave.

Some changes in the physical plant will be immediately noticeable, like the new, improved, much safer playscape, which will be

(continued on page 2)

#### **SEPTEMBER 2008 SATURDAY SUNDAY MONDAY TUESDAY** WEDNESDAY **THURSDAY FRIDAY** 6 Brunch Art Reception 11 A.M.-2 P.M. Library † 1 2 5 LABOR DAY CCS Opens Arsenic & Old Lace Stanchion Building 1:30-Auditions 4:30 P.M. Local Farm † Bd. of Selectmen 7-9 P.M. Town Hall † Arsenic & Old Lace Auditions 3–5 P.M. Town Hall † Inland Wetlands Opening Reception 8 P.M. Town Hall 5-7 р.м. iO Gallery † 13 Bd. of Assessment Motor Vehicle Appeals 9–11:30 A.M. Town Office † 8 9 10 11 12 **Blood Pressure** P&Z Make Your Own Milking Screening 7:30 P.M. Town Hall Memoir Writing Course Annual Cornwall Library Clean-up 10 A.M.-Noon † Noon-1 P.M. UCC 6:30 P.M. Library † Stool 10 A.M.-4 P.M. Local Housatonic River Comm. Farm † Old Style Life Skills Workshop 10:30 A.M.-Democratic Town Comm. 7:30 P.M. CCS Library 7:30 P.M. Library 1:30 P.M. Local Farm † 16 Red Cross Blood Drive Cornwall Ag Fair 17 19 14 15 18 1:30-6:15 P.M. Village Green Bd. of Ed. 5 P.M. Iraq War Moratorium UCC Parish House † (see insert) Deadline: October Memoir Writing Course **CCS** Library Discussion 7 P.M. Heroines of the 20th Quilt Show 11 A.M.-4 P.M. Chronicle Copy Library † Bd. of Finance 7:30 P.M. 6:30 р.м. Library † Century 2-4 P.M. Library † UCC (see p.3) CCS Library Bd. of Selectmen 7:30 <sub>P.M.</sub> Town Hall Reading by Roxana Robinson 3-5 P.M. Library 21 22 23 25 26 24 27 Memoir Writing Course Heroines of the 20th Story Hour Our Sister Loves an Indian ZBA 8 P.M. Town Hall\* Cornwall Bridge Walking Century 2-4 P.M. Library 1 6:30 P.M. Library † 1:15 P.M. Library † Reading 3 P.M. CCS † Cornwall Vol. Fire Dept. Tour 10:30 A.M. Iron Bank P&Z 7:30 P.M. Town Hall Family Round Sing Parking Lot † Cancelled 7:30 P.M. Local Farm † 8 р м W. C. Firehouse 28 29 30 Rosh Hashanah **Every Week This Month:** Mondays: Jam Session, 7:30 P.M. Village Meeting House How to Pay for College Heroines of the 20th Wednesdays: Stretch Class, 5 P.M. Town Hall; Tai Chi, 7 P.M. Call David Colbert 672-0064 for location 1-3 р.м. Library † Century 2-4 P.M. Library †

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

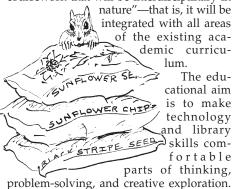
Sundays: Meditation Group, 1-2 P.M. 672-0229 for location

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ready for the opening of school. It was paid for by donations, by capital funds, and by the PTA. Thanks to leakages after the ice storm of December 2007, there's a new "flat" roof (with a certain amount of slope) over part of the building.

As a result of some water damage inside the building, insurance provided restoration and repairs in the teachers' work room, the principal's office, the main office, and the music/art wing. Principal Kathleen Fitzgibbons commented that these fresh new surroundings are "a psychological boost, a lovely way to head into a new year of educating children."

Dr. Fitz went on to mention her excitement about another "freshening," this one in the curriculum. Supported by a grant from the CCS Fund for Excellence, Library Media Specialist Terri Kirkland and Technology Coordinator Vicki Nelson have created a new middle school curriculum, the Unified Studies Informational Technology Program (USIT). They describe it as "technology-based coursework that will be interdisciplinary in



problem-solving, and creative exploration. The US-IT Program shows the easy reciprocity of traditional academic topics and Unified Studies units. And the new program handsomely satisfies the specifications of the Connecticut Information and Technology Literacy Framework.

—Barbara Gold and Franny Taliaferro

#### **Roots & Shoots**

Jane Goodall is not all about chimps. The scope of her interests is broad enough to include small bipeds known to frequent Cornwall. I refer, of course, to the third, fourth, and fifth graders of Cornwall Consolidated School, members of Goodall's worldwide youth organization known as Roots & Shoots (R&S).

Last year they and many people from the Northwest Corner raised money toward building a library/clinic for Ethiopia's impoverished Mekele Blind School. This year R&S's goal was to buy braille books for the new library. The Cornwall kids added a new twist to their fundraising efforts by baking dog biscuits and making cat toys from recycled socks stuffed with homegrown catnip. Some CCS teachers also purchased favorite books to be sent. The titles ranged from Goodnight Moon and Chicka Chicka Boom Boom to biographies of Louis Braille and Helen Keller. Together the teachers and students purchased 45 books. To further en-

hance the English literacy experience for these African students, young R&S volunteers and the eighth graders from Jane Hanley's Spanish class recorded the books on cassette tapes that will accompany the books to Mekele in time for the new school year.

—Tricia Collins

## **Ongoing Sagas**

You may recall earlier chapters in the ongoing saga of renovating the Hughes Memorial Library in West Cornwall. Last we heard, it was hoped that a septic system could be planted under the lawn just south of the Library. But Connecticut Light & Power (CL&P) owns the land and—according to First Selectman Gordon Ridgway—has no plans to sell it, nor does it want to approve a long-term easement. The State Health Department, on the other hand, will not approve a septic system installed under a temporary easement. In Gordon's words, "It all comes down to septic"—and for the time being, the outcome is clogged.

In May, the *Chronicle* reported on the free solar panels earned by the Cornwall Energy Task Force, to be placed on the roof of a municipal building as a reward for signing up enough people to switch to renewable energy. Now the first selectman reports that "a decent site"—decent from the photovoltaic point of view-has been found at the Cornwall Consolidated School building. He adds that because the power utilities fund the installation as part of the program and the hardware will already be in place, it would be "relatively inexpensive and good payback" for Cornwall to buy more panels to add to the free ones. This month the project will go out to certified installers for bids; in consultation with the Board of Finance, the selectmen will request funding for the extra panels, probably at a special town meeting. Depending on the bids, it may be possible to install as many as 32 3' x 5' panels.

—Franny Taliaferro

#### **Matica Arts**

Matica means "little plant" in Spanish, and just like a little plant, Matica Arts is always

changing and growing. The two instructors, Heidi Kirchofer and Joel Melendez, believe that with each program, Matica Arts leaves a little seed behind. After meeting in Palenque, Mexico, in 2000, the two traveled through Mexico performing street circus acts. Their acts included juggling, stilts, devil sticks, and Chinese yo-yo. Then they traveled to the United States and were married, receiving their first unicycle as a wedding gift.

They are now instructors at camps and workshops in the area such as the Children's Circus of Middletown and, of course, the circus workshop that took over CCS's gym for the first week in August. Heidi and Joel, and their newborn baby boy Inti, instructed eight energetic kids in all sorts of circus acts like ball walking, Chinese yo-yo, juggling, stilts, and unicycle. At the end of the week, the kids put on a show to be remembered. Heidi and

Joel's patience and skill can turn even a bumbling fool into a class act.

—Aidan Cowan and Liam Lynch

## Who Wants to Be a JP?

The State of Connecticut says Cornwall can have 58 justices of the peace for a new four-year term starting January 2009: 19 each for registered Republicans and Democrats, and 20 for unaffiliated or minor-party electors. Democrats and Republicans endorsed candidates at meetings held in May. Now the town clerk is charged with appointing unaffiliated or minor-party candidates for JP.

If you are an unaffiliated voter or a member of a minor party and have a hankering to marry people, take acknowledgments and depositions, or administer oaths, please contact the Town Clerk's Office (672-2709) for an application to be returned no later than November 1. Names will be drawn in a pubic ceremony should more than 20 people apply.

—Vera Dinneen

#### Welcome

Tyler John Roberts to Tammy Decker and Dylan Roberts Rebecca Faith and Susanna Joy to Emily and James Batterton

## Congratulations

Phyllis Curry and Steven Zoeller Davina Magdalina Piker and Joshua Nolan Lewis

#### **Land Transfers**

Audrey F. Morris, Trustee (Zerbe/Morris Family Survivor's Trust), to Stephen Kilroy and Grace Jaihee Yoon, 5.409 acres and buildings thereon at 25 Cherry Hill Road for \$217,500.

Audrey F. Morris, Trustee (Zerbe/Morris Family Exemption Trust), to Stephen Kilroy and Grace Jaihee Yoon, 5.409 acres and buildings thereon at 25 Cherry Hill Road for \$217,500.



## **Summer Sports**

The two red clay courts in Cornwall Village have seen continuous use since they were refurbished this spring. Thanks to the combined efforts of the Hubbard family, Park and Rec., the Cream Hill Lake Association, and the Cornwall Community Tennis Association, over 50 children ranging in age from 4 to 18 took tennis lessons from late June through mid-August.

The two courts in the village have been the meeting place for many weekend warriors of all ages, and the four courts at the Cream Hill Lake club have hosted several exciting matches with visiting teams. In a county-wide effort to grow the sport, the Cornwall kids also traveled to clubs in Litchfield, Washington, Sharon, and New Milford. The six available courts make Cornwall an extraordinary setting for public tennis and demonstrate an exemplary civic commitment to this great pastime.

Cornwall's swim team had a "wonderful season, and we hope that everyone enjoyed it as much as the coaches did," says Katherine Stewart, who coached the team with Kerri McKenna. She commended the 30 participants for their hard work and "a lot of improvement" over the five-week season.

Team practices, which began the last week of June, were on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, with home-and-away meets against North Canaan, Salisbury/Lakeville, and Sharon on Tuesdays and Thursdays. The team's record for these dual meets was four wins and two losses. The Championship Meet at Lakeville, with all four teams competing, ended the season; no score was kept for that meet.

Although the team was disappointed that they could not make the traditional swim from the Cream Hill Lake Association beach to Hammond Beach because of threatening weather, members nevertheless enjoyed the end-of-season picnic after the Championship Meet.

—Todd Piker and Barbara Gold

#### **Moratorium Commitment**

I hereby make a commitment that, on the Third Friday of every month, I will break my daily routine and take some action, by myself or with others, to end the war in Iraq.

In observation of this pledge, eight friends met on Cornwall's first Moratorium Day one year ago. Tired of feeling hopeless and alone, and tired of hearing outrage from so many people with nowhere to go with their feelings, the group decided to hold events that would include others. Since then, hundreds of Cornwall folks have attended one or more of the greatly varied Third Friday events. They have watched films, heard Iraq vets, listened to local Vietnam vet Dave Cadwell and Veterans for Peace National President Elliot Adams, hosted State Senator Andrew Roraback for a talk on Iraqi refugees, feasted at a potluck, and enjoyed a concert. In July, they staged one of the largest anti-war vigils here in recent years.

The Iraq Moratorium is a national campaign, but it depends on local people to work out and implement their own ideas. Local groups announce events and post reports on www.iraqmoratorium.com, the national website. Folks at the national level have cited Cornwall as one of the small towns—along with Hayward, Wisconsin, and Sewanee, Tennessee—that serve as "poster children" for the whole Moratorium campaign.

—Dody Clarke-Wolfe

## Michael Gannett Makes History

For over 20 years, Michael Gannett has been the official Town of Cornwall historian. The Board of Selectmen recently accepted his resignation with deep regret.

A small ceremony was held in the Selectmen's Office on July 22 honoring Michael's many years of service. Ginny PotLetters to the Chronicle

SHARE AND SAVE

I guess it is fair to say that things are changing because of the high price of gas—there is a new feeling in the air. People are sharing rides at last. I heard of one woman who needed two lemons and in exchange picked raspberries from her raspberry patch and made the trade at the delivery. I have had calls and made calls—"shared a ride and used half the gas." Or simply shopped for another and then another time accepted an offer to shop for me. We are careful to give clear bills and careful to pay fast. It is a loose system wherein we all thrive. —Anne Zinsser

#### CALLING ALL LOCAL QUILTS

We are soliciting loans of local quilts, old and new, large and small, for the Warm Quilts Warm Homes Quilt Show to take place at the United Church of Christ as part of the Cornwall Agricultural Fair, September 20, at 11

A.M. Donations to see the show will help support

heating fuel needs in Cornwall this winter. The show will be held September 20 even if the Ag Fair is postponed due to the weather. If you are willing to lend a quilt, please contact Corinne Levy, 672-6377, c.levy@snet.net, or Ann Gold, 672-6077, rcg16@yahoo.com.

-Corinne Levy and Ann Gold



ter, president of the Cornwall Historical Society, presented him with an honorary key made by Denis Curtiss, representing the keys he gave to Cornwall's history. First Selectman Gordon Ridgway read a signed and sealed proclamation from the state legislature that cited his accomplishments.

Perhaps Michael Gannett's most important contribution has been to successfully link present-day Cornwall—its events, families, and landmarks—to its past. He has given many people a deep appreciation of those connections. Especially important are his numerous publications, which pull together much of the history of various parts of Cornwall.

—Joyce Hart



#### **Hunting and Trapping Schedule, Fall 2008**

- Small Game Species and dates vary. September 1–September 30 and October 18–December 31.
- Turkey, Archery September 15–November 18, state and private lands. December 24–31, landowner.
- Turkey, Firearms October 4–October 31.
- Deer, Archery
  - September 15–November 18, and December 24–31, state lands. September 15–December 31, state bow hunting areas only. September 15–November 18, and December 10–December 31, private lands Cornwall zone.
- Deer, Firearms

November 19–December 9, zones and dates vary. Shotguns, state and private lands; rifles, private lands only. November 1–December 31, shotguns and rifles, landowner only. Muzzleloader, December 10–December 23.

Trapping

Twelve species may be trapped from November 2 to December 31. Dates and limits vary by species.

Sundays: No hunting.

Information: Department of Environmental

Protection (DEP) Guide is available online at www.ct.gov/dep site. It includes hunting hours, rules, and regulations. Or call the DEP Wildlife Division at (860) 424-3011 for a guide. *Safety:* Wear orange. If you will be out alone, let somebody know where you will be. Hikers, if you see someone hunting, call out to identify your location. Bikers, attach a bell to your bike to warn of your approach. Check yourself for ticks!

Sightings: The DEP Wildlife Division keeps track of sightings of bobcat, black bear, fisher, and moose. If you see one of these species please contact the DEP at (860) 675-8130. You will be asked the date, time, and exact location of your sighting.

Hunters for the Hungry: This program allows hunters to donate their game to charitable food organizations. For information call Connecticut Food Bank at (203) 469-5000.

Rabies: Rabies is a disease caused by a virus affecting the central nervous system. Left untreated, rabies is almost always fatal. Please download a hunting guide to read more. The guide offers information on how to reduce exposure to rabies and what to do if you or your pets are exposed.

—Jim Levy

#### **Events & Announcements**

#### At the Cornwall Free Library

• Annual Library clean-up is scheduled for Saturday, September 13, from 10 A.M. to noon. Bring rakes, hoes, and green thumbs.

• Children's story hour will begin Friday, September 26, at 1:15 P.M., with stories, crafts, and a snack. Kindergartners may take the bus to the Library after school with a permission slip. The fall session, which will run for eight weeks, is geared to children ages four to six. For more information call 672-6874.

• Memoir-writing course with Betty Krasne will run September 10, 17, and 24, beginning at 6:30 P.M. Sign up at the Library; call 672-6874 for more information. There is a fee for the course.

• Heroines of the 20<sup>th</sup> Century: Al Dietzel will teach the Taconic Learning Center course at the Library on Tuesdays from September 16 through November 4 from 2 to 4 P.M. Sign up through Taconic Learning Center.

• Roxana Robinson will read from her new novel, *Cost*, at the Library on Saturday, September 20, from 3 to 5 P.M. Copies of the book will be available for purchase.

• College financial aid guidance will be provided by Carol Brown, Ph.D., founder of Education Resource Services, on Sunday, September 28, from 1 to 3 P.M. Dr. Brown will help parents and college-bound students with the FAFSA application and explore other college funding options.

The Money Pitch, which occupies this corner of the Chronicle each month, has been a gentle reminder that we'd welcome a contribution. Now and then, over 18 years, we've needed to be more assertive, and this is one of those times. Paper costs more because it gets trucked to the printer; ink, a petroleum product in our enlightened age, costs more, too. And postage creeps upward. Then, we've done a traditional mailing. Now, to save on the costs of that method of fundraising, we use this small space in the Chronicle to ask for your financial support. Our costs are up, and our income has not kept pace. We need your generous help now, please, to continue the Chronicle, our community publication, into its 19th year. Many thanks.

**Auditions** for *Arsenic and Old Lace*, to be presented by the Town Hall Players, will be held at the Town Hall on Friday, September 5, from 7 to 9 P.M., and Saturday, September 6, from 3 to 5 P.M. Both helpers and actors are needed for the November production. For more information call Bobbie Tyson at 672-6762.

The Board of Assessment Appeals will meet on Saturday, September 13, between 9 and 11:30 A.M. at the Town Offices for the purpose of hearing appeals regarding motor vehicle assessments. No appointment is required. There will be no other time for hearing such appeals.

**Red Cross Blood Drive** will be held in the UCC Parish House on Tuesday, September 16, from 1:30 to 6:15 P.M. To register please call the Red Cross at 1-800-GIVE LIFE or Pat Blakey at 672-6516. Walk-ins will be taken as quickly as the schedule permits.

#### **Motherhouse Events**

• September 6: Build a wooden stanchion to install at home for your own cow, 1:30 to 4:30 P.M. at Local Farm with local craftsmen Joe Brien and Israel Fitch. \$50/family. Must pre-register with Debra@Motherhouse.us or 672-0229.

• September 7: Make Your Own Milking Stool, 10 A.M. to 4 P.M., with Joe Brien using traditional hand tools at Local Farm. \$50/family. Must pre-register with Debra@Motherhouse.us or 672-0229.

• September 13: Old Style Life Skills Series workshop, ? = Pi, 10:30 A.M. to 1:30 P.M. at Local Farm. Pluck a ripe squash, collect eggs, make maple syrup, grind flour, churn butter, and render lard to make a "pumpkin" pie from scratch. \$35/ family. Contact Debra@Motherhouse.us or 672-0229 to preregister or for more information.

• September 20: Something Corny in Cornwall at the Ag Fair.

- September 26: Family Round Sing, 7:30 P.M., at Local Farm barn. Join voices in singing simple staggered melodies to create beautiful harmonies. No charge. Call Debra Tyler, 672-0229, or Jane Prentice, 672-6101, for more information.
- October 4: Family Contra Dance, 7 to 9:30 P.M. at the Town Hall with Homegrown Band playing and Bill Fischer calling. Suggested donation is \$5/adult, \$3/child. For details call Rachel Gall, 672-6328, or Debra Tyler, 672-0229.

Jeremy Brecher will lead a discussion on the 2008 elections and ending the Iraq War at the Cornwall Library on Friday, September 19, at 7 P.M. The meeting is sponsored by the Cornwall Iraq Moratorium Network. For information call 672-0183.

Art in Cornwall: At the Cornwall Library, *Hendon—Paintings and Mezzotints* continues through September 3. Starting Friday, September 5, *Dick Frank's Photographs* 1968–2008, a collection of personal and commercial photographs by the award-winning photographer, will be on exhibit, with an opening brunch for the artist to be held on Saturday, September 6, from 11 A.M. to 2 P.M.

The iO Gallery will host an opening reception for Michael Whelan, a 15-time Hugo Award winner, on Saturday, September 6, from 5 to 7 P.M. Scott Fischer is featured in the emerging artists room.

*In Black and White* continues at the Northern Exposure Photographic Gallery through September 21. Gallery hours are Friday through Sunday, noon to 5:30 P.M.

"Our Sister Loves an Indian": A reading by Blair Brown and Sam Waterston of letters written during the upheaval in Cornwall when Harriett Gold married Elias Boudinot, a Cherokee of the Foreign Mission School, will take place at CCS on Sunday, September 21, at 3 P.M. A reception will follow. Tickets in advance are \$25 and may be purchased at the Library, the Wandering Moose, or by calling the Cornwall Historical Society at 672-6191. At the door: \$30. Proceeds will benefit the Historical Society's building renovation.

Guided Tour of Cornwall Bridge: Walk with Dody Clarke-Wolfe and Jeremy Brecher and hear about the railroad, the iron industry, the 1930 cement bridge, and all the changes they caused. The tour and descriptive map are sponsored by the Cornwall Historical Society. Meet at the National Iron Bank's parking area on Saturday, September 27, at 10:30 A.M.

## CORNWALL CHRONICLE

SEPTEMBER ISSUE Nan Bevans, Illustrations Barbara Gold and Franny Taliaferro, Editors

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