EPA vs. COW

This news made me laugh when I first heard it from Gordon Ridgway—but not when I got the details from Fred and Lynn Scoville. Can you imagine all dairy barns being hermetically sealed, with air filters running 24/7 to remove the methane? Or domed manure pits for the solid waste?

Last month the Scovilles faced a real dilemma. The federal Environmental Protection Agency wanted them to sign a 16-page document acknowledging that their cows have been polluting the air, and agreeing to pay up to $2,500 for air testing at the barn. The carrot: a promise never to be sued by the EPA (but not by the state DEP or in civil action). The stick: the possibility of their being sued down the road for as much as $25,000 a day.

Like most Litchfield County farmers, the Scovilles are refusing to sign up with the EPA. “It’s a no-win situation, no matter what you do,” says Lynn, who has gone to state agencies for the solid waste?

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First Selectman Gordon Ridgway, who organized the forum, talked of the struggle to balance development and preservation, and that struggle was a major theme of the questions and comments that followed the formal presentations. Views ranged from “protect what we have while we still have it” to “people should not be prevented from doing what they want with their own land.” A major concern of both the presenters and the audience was how to keep at least some housing affordable in a Cornwall where real estate values have been shooting up. P&Z Chairman Rick Lynn said that median sales prices of houses had tripled since 1990 and risen 40 percent in just the last four years.

Another focus of discussion was the Town Plan. The current Town Plan was drawn up by P&Z in 1998, but the state requires the town to come up with a new plan by 2008. As it now exists, the plan is an expression of intent, but it has no binding force. The new plan could be established by a town meeting, and it could have mandatory provisions. Rick Lynn foresees an extended process of public discussion as Cornwall decides what kind of a town Cornwall wants to be. How indeed, for example, do we balance preserving not only the town’s land and the town’s values with the development which we must inevitably face, and how do we want to get there?

Gordon said that there will be more forums, starting with one on farm lands on August 19.

—Hendon Chubb

Congratulations

Liz Van Doren to Ken Krug

Luana Santarsiero to Richard Fry

Good-Bye to a Friend

Dorothy Ripley

Land Transfers

United Investors Partnership to Greyledge Trust, four lots on Cornwall Hollow and Hall Roads for $450,000.

Alfred G. and Patricia J. Haut to Christopher A. and Melissa M. Jeans, property at 402 Sharon Goshen Turnpike for $320,000.

Michael Goldman to Eric Zitzman, 15.05 acres on Whitecomb Hill Road for $97,000.

David P. and Jane D. Monagan to John M. Stewart III and Melissa Stewart, property at 31 Stone Hill Road for $610,000.

Philip Rinaldi and Lawrence G. Katen to Gregory V. and Pamela R. Frisoli, property at 63 Poppel Swamp Road for $765,000.

Brooke D. Baxter to Robin K. Tyler, property on Rug Road for $187,000.

Daniel S. Pool to Alexis Hazen and David Boyum, property at 41 Cherry Hill Road for $975,000.

Joyce McMillan, Laraine Primini, Victoria Colaci, and Joseph Colaci to Mies Sourdoval, property at 34 Seeley Road for $185,000.

Jonathan and Deborah Newcomb to Michael LeKowitiz and Tatiana Nieguzetsky, property at 23 Sharon Goshen Turnpike for $655,000.

Orana Corporation Inc. to Robert G. and Audrey G. Tobin, 28 acres in Cornwall for $240,000.

A Fish Story

A hula popper, a torpedo, a slider, a spoon: these are not weapons of mass destruction, unless you’re a bass or a perch. They are a few of the many lures used to entice and capture several species of fish that live in Cream Hill Lake. Bass go for sound and splash and glitter, while a perch or pickerel seems to go for anything that moves if they’re feeling hungry.

One particular day this summer stands out for me. The weather was grey, with little streams of sun piercing the dullness now and then like pewter arrows hitting the water. The houses and trees along the lake’s edge had taken on a blurred patina, everything shrouded in fog and mist. I fitted a hula popper, which is a fat, noisy lure, onto my line, and cast about 20 feet out from the boat. As I began winding in the line, while making little popping motions so the lure skips across the water, a fish hit it with tremendous force. “Oh boy,” I said, “this is IT!” I generally say that whenever a fish bites, but this time I meant it. I was pretty sure I had a battle on my hands. All at once, my line seemed to slacken, and I was afraid I might have lost him, so I let down on my line a bit, then pulled steadily back, winding the whole time. I had to remind myself not to jerk the line too hard, as fish have tough but paper-thin skin around their mouths, and I didn’t know how well he was hooked. As I slowly pulled him in, I realized this was not a run-of-the-mill fish, but a whopper, the one that almost got away.

All at once, the fish left the water and flew into the air, twisting from side to side in his valiant attempt to dislodge the lure. He was the most beautiful bass I’d ever caught, nearly two pounds of silver fins and gray sleekness. In size, he covered the length of my husband’s arm from fingertips to past his elbow. The most wonderful thing was that he wasn’t hooked badly at all. We held him up, gave him a big thank you, and slipped him back into the dark water, probably mad, but unhurt.

—Jane Bean

Our Junior Fire Department

Our fire department now has a junior division. There are juniors, ages 13 to 17, and junior-juniors, ages 10 to 12, who have to be the son or daughter of a CVFD member. They will be supervised by four CVFD members, but in the fall they will elect their own first and second lieutenants and other officers.

Asked why he was joining the department, Will Russ said he wanted to drive a fire truck. They told him they need more drivers, but he’ll have to wait a few more years. Mary Kate Kosciusko says she likes fire fighting and wants to drill with her father, Skip. Jon Hurlburt wants to join the EMTs like his mother, Irene.

The juniors will be doing drills and help-
ing out at the Cow Chip Bingo. They are scheduled to march in the Falls Village, Kent, and Lakeville parades. If you’d like to join, you can pick up an application at the Town Hall.

—Elizabeth Ridgway

Three August Haiku

The Chronicle hasn’t printed many poems, but poems are fun. Recently we came across some haiku by a self-effacing Cornwall poet and thought, ”Why not?”

The first goldenrod: Soon the “Corn $2” signs; Then crickets; then frost.

Mist up our valley: Rising from the hidden ridge A ghostly maple.

The swallows have gone: Dragonflies in the meadow Hawking after prey. —Anonymous

Who Was Rose Algrant?
The Rose Algrant Show (see E&A) was named after long-time Cornwall resident Rose Algrant. Rose was born in Constantinople (now Istanbul) at the turn of the last century and educated in French convent schools. She married Leon Algrant, who had been born in Venice of Turkish parents. He was working for the Harriman oil interests in Russia where the newlyweds went to live. She returned to Turkey for the birth of their son. A few years later, Leon went to work for Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer, a job which eventually took him to Rome. The family emigrated to New York City in 1940. In 1942, when Rose separated from her husband, she moved to Cornwall to be close to her son, who was boarding at Rumsey Hall. Harriet Clark rented her a house on Great Hill Road. The house had neither electricity nor running water, a far cry from the homes she had occupied in her earlier life in Europe. After living in several places in Cornwall, she eventually settled on Cream Hill Road. A large group of friends, including many of the artists who would later be represented in her first show, moved in to help.

Her death in 1992 did not end the legacy as Rose’s friends, new and old, joined forces to continue “The Friends of Rose Algrant” art show. The show continues as a celebration of summer and art—for that we are indebted to Rose Algrant.

—Gail Jacobson

“Am I venomous?
You bet your buns I am”

At the time of Bill Beecher’s recent show at the Outsiders Gallery, we asked him to share some thoughts with us. When you ask Bill for his thoughts, he’s happy to oblige.

“I’ve lived a longish sort of life, painting now for 55 years, more or less, mostly more. Maybe I’m outliving my talent; I don’t know. But I’m not dead yet.

“It’s a tough life out there because there are so many so-called ‘graphic artists,’ and so many who don’t deserve the name. Only the market can determine that. Of course, the minute you mention the words ‘market’ and ‘painting’ in the same breath, there’s always some moron who’s going to stand up and say, ‘Well, isn’t that prostituting your gift, using art to bring in money?’ And I say, ‘Well, that’s what I do.’

“It was difficult when I started out. It’s bad enough to be cursed with a talent that looks for a market in order to sustain itself, but to then try to live up to that and market your artistic product is not ever easy. There are five million people out there who all want your job. I’ve been lucky in one way. What I do is a little bit specialized so that what work of mine you find printed is almost always uniquely mine. [It’s] not the little baby cat with one tear drop coming out of its eye. My stuff is a little more complicated than that.

“Somehow I was never faced with the problem of a first job. I was the first one ever to do a painting for a national magazine—the June 1950 issue of House Beautiful. It was a study of one rose in a drinking glass full of water. I was well paid, and it opened a whole new door to me because all of a sudden graphic arts became not just an expression of what work of mine you find printed but it became a part of what I was doing to express myself. All of us who work in the field for the most part are people who are working out their problems, so to speak. I work them out with paint.

“Thinking about the current art scene can set me off on a wild tangent. I keep a manila folder called ‘The Emperor’s Clothes’ that contains at least a dozen people who are faking it. I can mention Monsieur Basquiat because he’s dead. But there’s another man, alive, who can ruin my entire day. He takes a sheet of plywood, paints the whole thing grey and when it’s dry he takes a pencil, a pen and a crayon, for example, holds them together to make a single stroke. And then he signs it. These things fetch over a million at

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auctions. That really spoils my day. I hate every-things he does and stands for because he is the one who shows how really stupid people are about national reputations in the arts. We don’t have one. We don’t know about geography or history—or particularly art—unless it was done yesterday. We are surrounded by stupidity, particularly in the field of art. The current art scene panders to that. Am I venom-ous? You bet your buns I am.”
—Ella Clark and the August Editors

Art in Cornwall: The National Iron Bank: David Nickeson, photographs of North India, through August.
The Outsiders Gallery: Mr. Imagination and Annie Grigich, outsider artists from Georgia, a group show starting August 6.

Cornwall Child Center: Fall registration Monday, August 29, from 10 A.M. to noon. Or call Pam Brehm at 626-1289 to arrange another time. CCC opens for the fall term on Wednesday, August 31, at 7:30 A.M.

2006 FIFA World Cup Qualifier: Charter bus for soccer lovers to the World Cup Qualifier at Rentschler Field in East Hartford on Wednesday, August 17, leaving CCS parking lot at 5:30 P.M. sharp. Cost is $35 per person for the bus and a game ticket. To reserve tickets send a check payable to Cornwall Park & Rec. and a list of those in your party to Bethany Thompson, P.O. Box 243, Cornwall Bridge, CT 06754. For questions call Bethany at 248-3009.

Exploring Islam and the Koran, a three-Mon-day series at the Library, with Sohaib Sultan, author of The Koran For Dummies, and The Rev. Christopher L. Webber. August 1, 8, and 15 at 7:30 P.M.

The 4-H Fair in Goshen: August 13 and 14. Cornwall 4-H members will show their cattle, oxen, and horses. Free.

Grumbling Gryphons August theater camp. Call Leslie Elias at 672-0286 ASAP to enroll. Ages 3 to 16.

Need Help with Drug Costs? The Sharon Area Community Health Foundation offers help for people who find it hard to afford prescription drugs. Contact Jill Gibbons at 672-2603 for information.

PTA Day Trip to Lake Compounce: August 23 (rain date August 25). The cost is $17.50. A ten-percent discount is available on food and souvenirs. All welcome. To register call David Samson at 672-0616.

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