$20,000 School Plan Gift

In mid-November, New-Site Study Group Chairman Nancy Calhoun announced that an anonymous donor will pay a $20,000 fee to Rhinebeck Architecture and Planning, a firm known for its cost-effective design, to develop a plan for a new school. The three members of the New-Site Study Group had visited the Taconic Hills Central School in Crayville, New York, designed by the firm, and were favorably impressed. After visiting a potential nine-acre building site adjoining Foote Fields in Cornwall Village, architect Louis Turpin expressed an interest in working with Dan Sexton of Casle Construction Corp. to make sure that the schematic plan will try to find out if anyone is interested in buying the present Cornwall Consolidated School by placing a three-day ad in The New York Times.

Meanwhile, the New-Site Study Group will try to find out if anyone is interested in buying the present Cornwall Consolidated School by placing a three-day ad in The New York Times after the holidays.

To learn more, remain seated after the holiday. After the holidays.

Again—Towering Questions

Once again, the tower controversy looms on the horizon of Cornwall’s highest hills. This time, SBA (a tower-building company) and Sprint PCS (the eventual service provider) are proposing to build a tower on land off Popple Swamp Road owned by Ralph Gulliver. The tower would be one of three planned by PCS for cell-phone operation along the Route 7 corridor from Salisbury to Kent.

First Selectman Gordon Ridgway wants to make sure that whatever tower building occurs serves the best interests of the town. In the present case, an alternate site might be on higher town-owned land atop Buck Mountain, off Dibble Hill Road and only a half mile from the Gulliver location. The Buck Mountain option would allow the town to set conditions that make the tower as unobtrusive as possible. Also, a single high tower on Buck Mountain might not only obviate the need for three separate towers to serve Route 7, but also service portions of Route 4 and other areas.

Ridgway’s hope is to work toward a comprehensive plan that will make Cornwall’s towers both inconspicuous and few in number. The legal question of who has the final say on tower building is, in Ridgway’s words, “like a ping-pong game in the courts—and right now the town has a pretty good shot.”

At any rate, no towers will go up tomorrow. Sprint PCS and the state Siting Council will have to do “propagation studies” to see which areas can be reached from several possible tower locations. And when a decision is tentatively made, Ridgway promises a meeting with abutting landowners as the first step. Wide distribution of information and public hearings would probably follow. —Bob Potter

The Cogswells Return

On November 14, Cornwall was visited by two men whose roots go back to the earliest days of our town and our country: Theodore and Truman Cogswell, twin brothers and Native Americans, whose forebears split off from the Schaghticoke Tribe in Kent in the late 1700s to settle in North Cornwall. They served in the local militia during the Revolutionary period, and afterwards became cooperers and stonemasons. The beautiful walls, built by Theodore and Truman’s great, great grandfather, Nathan, can still be seen today, at the intersection of Rattlesnake and Cogswell Roads. And the earliest photograph in the Cornwall Historical Society’s collection is of William Cogswell, known as “Cornwall’s greatest athlete,” who was killed in the Civil War. The last of the Cornwall Cogswells died in 1874. Theodore, an engineer, now lives in Missouri, and Truman, a retired commercial artist, in New Jersey.

The brothers, along with Theodore’s (continued on page 2)

DECEMBER 2001

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SUNDAY</th>
<th>MONDAY</th>
<th>TUESDAY</th>
<th>WEDNESDAY</th>
<th>THURSDAY</th>
<th>FRIDAY</th>
<th>SATURDAY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Isten and the West: Dialogue or Confrontation, 11:30 A.M.</td>
<td>Bd. of Selectmen</td>
<td>New Site Committee</td>
<td>Play Group 10-11:30 A.M.</td>
<td>Bend &amp; Stretch Clinic</td>
<td>Preschool-K Story Hour</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11:30 A.M.</td>
<td>7:30 P.M. Town Hall</td>
<td>9 A.M. Town Hall</td>
<td>9 A.M. Town Hall</td>
<td>9:30-10:30 A.M. UCC</td>
<td>10-11 A.M. Cornwall Library</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9:30-10:30 A.M. CCS Library</td>
<td>Noon UCC Day Room</td>
<td>Inland Wetlands 7-30 A.M. Town Office</td>
<td>St. Peter’s Church</td>
<td>Midnight for Mothers Every Thursday 1:15-2:15 P.M. UCC Day Room</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sale of Holiday Decorations 11-11:30 A.M. at St. Peter’s Church</td>
<td>Hamillian Blood Pressure Screening</td>
<td>Housatonic River Comm.</td>
<td>Play Group 10-11:30 A.M.</td>
<td>Bend &amp; Stretch Clinic</td>
<td>Preschool-K Story Hour</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11-11:30 A.M.</td>
<td>3-4 P.M. UCC Day Room</td>
<td>7:30 P.M.</td>
<td>9:30-10:30 A.M. UCC</td>
<td>9:30-10:30 A.M. UCC</td>
<td>10-11 A.M. Cornwall Library</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Region One Bd. of Ed.</td>
<td>Bd. of Selectmen</td>
<td>Play Group 10-11:30 A.M.</td>
<td>Bd. of Education</td>
<td>Preschool-K Story Hour</td>
<td>Open Rotary Meeting</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 P.M.</td>
<td>9 A.M. Town Hall</td>
<td>9 A.M. Town Hall</td>
<td>5 P.M. CCS Library</td>
<td>10-11 A.M. Cornwall Library</td>
<td>8 A.M. UCC Inn (p.4)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24 Service of Lessons and Carols, 5 &amp; 8 P.M. N. Cornwall Meetinghouse</td>
<td>Film The Ox Bow Incident</td>
<td>Special Town Meeting</td>
<td>Bd. of Finance</td>
<td>CCS Early Dismissal 1 P.M.</td>
<td>Open Rotary Meeting</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25 Christmas Day</td>
<td>7:30 P.M. Town Hall</td>
<td>7:30 P.M. CCS (p.4)</td>
<td>7:30 P.M. CCS Library</td>
<td>8:30 P.M. W. C. Firehouse</td>
<td>8 A.M. UCC Inn (p.4)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Check with Zoning Office—672-4957
daughter Robin, spent a good part of the day at CCS, where in the morning they took turns entertaining grades one through four with a lively Q and A session (“What did you do with deer guts?” one boy asked) and games. They loved it when their teachers got to do silly things like pretending to walk like eagles or when they were told to shout out loud each other, but they got very quiet when Truman spun a folk tale involving crows, turtles, eagle claws, and ice people who melted into lakes.

Following lunch at the Moose (Theodore presented Gordon Ridgway with a check to be given annually toward upkeep of the North Cornwall Cemetery, where many of their ancestors are buried), the brothers shifted gears to meet the seventh grade. After a bit of history and an Algonquian lesson from Truman—the boys learned to shout “We are listening!” to which the girls replied “We thank you!”—the class went outside, where Theodore, a veteran of the 82nd Airborne Division with over 900 parachute jumps, unfurled a well-used parachute and talked about free fall and what to do if your chute doesn’t open. His advice for those contemplating taking the sport: “DON’T DO IT!”

Now that the Cogswells have renewed their Cornwall connection we hope they will return often.

—George Kittle

Let There Be More Lights

There will be 750 additional lights on the Cornwall Bridge Christmas Tree this year. The crews from Hawkeye, who have been re-stringing all the new poles along Route 7 going to Kent, had been staying at the Cornwall Inn. Inn host Tom McKenzie asked them to help out and they volunteered to do the re-stringing using their 55-foot cherry picker trucks. Local businesses donated some 30 new light strands and Brent Prindle at Cornwall Electric rewired a new box for power. The tree will be lit the weekend after Thanksgiving.

—Joanne Wojtusiak

Cornwall Prepared

As distant as Cornwall seems from the rest of the world, recent events remind us how inextricably bound we remain to it. Given present concerns, town residents may be comforted to know we have an Emergency Operations Plan in effect—and have had one for years. It saw us through the tornado of ‘89 and was revised as recently as last month.

This plan works as a protocol for Cornwall’s Director of Emergency Preparedness, Hunt Williams, who—together with First Selectman Gordon Ridgway, Fire Chief Earle Tyler, and Rescue Captain Phil West—coordinates the response to all town crises, from prolonged power outages to overturned trucks containing hazardous material.

Most situations, of course, can be handled by our own Volunteer Fire Department and ambulance squads, who combined to answer 245 calls this past fiscal year, which ended June 30. The Town of Cornwall, CCS Principal Peter Coope, and the State Police have also recently created an emergency plan for the school.

In the event of a high-alert crisis, Hunt Williams can contact Jeffrey A. Daniels, Area 5 Coordinator at the State Office of Emergency Management in Litchfield. Depending on the situation we can then reach out to the Department of Environmental Protection for hazardous material containment and cleanup, to the American Red Cross in Torrington for food, cots, and bedding, even to the National Guard, who sent engineering units to help clear trees after the tornado. In other words, we are pretty well networked.

On October 29, Hunt, Gordon, Earle, and Phill met in Bantam for a workshop on bioterrorism, attended by State Senator Andrew Roraback and U.S. Representative Nancy Johnson. Topics included guidelines for bio-decontamination as well as the formidable problem of anthrax hoaxes, so far totalizing more than 400 statewide.

If Cornwall had a weak point it was our inability to provide centralized shelter and a kitchen for large numbers of people. But the firehouse in West Cornwall has a backup generator that would allow it to serve as an emergency operations center. The generator at CCS has also been recently rewired to handle all school power. In a pinch both locations could house a fair number of people, with the Red Cross bringing in a field kitchen and/or food.

It seems that people prefer staying home rather than moving to a shelter in any case—and some of us are physically incapable of moving. The CVFD and First Selectman’s Office keep an updated list of the homebound elderly and disabled.

Gordon Ridgway suggests preparing for an emergency the way families should prepare for the New England winter: 1) have a ready supply of food and water on hand in the event of a power outage; 2) plan on losing heat and have an auxiliary heating source; 3) buy a battery-powered or hand-crank radio and flashlight; and 4) become trained to take care of yourself and others, perhaps by joining the fire department and ambulance squads.

In the final analysis, if state resources are stretched to capacity, we in Cornwall have the great privilege, and responsibility, of depending on each other. Bound to the world though we may be, emergencies, like politics, turn out to be local.

—Sandy Neubauer

Business Owners Convene

On Monday, November 12, the Association of Businesses in Cornwall (ABC) invited Cornwall business owners to a party at the Cornwall Inn. More than 70 people who earn their livings as merchants or professionals attended.

At the party, ABC’s interim president, Tom McKenzie, discussed efforts to establish a farmers’ market in Cornwall in 2002 as well as plans for a town business directory. He also reported that ABC is working with town officials and the Department of Transportation to create pedestrian crosswalks in Cornwall Bridge.

Stemming from the Community Profile conducted by the Cornwall Association, ABC aims to create a healthy economic environment for those who earn their living in Cornwall, while maintaining the rural character of the area that drew its members here in the first place. —Carla Bigelow

West Cornwall’s Pocket Park

This past summer, the CL&P land adjacent to the Covered Bridge in West Cornwall was transformed into a pocket park by a group of local residents. Art Gingert and Stuart Grant began work in June and ultimately spent between 40 and 50 hours cleaning and reshaping this area. They cut down small trees and brush, and even washed out to the bridge piers and removed the logs jammed against them. Eleven truckloads of brush and trash were taken to the dump. The result is a beautiful open view of our historic bridge and the Housatonic River.

This form of stewardship is not unusual in West Cornwall Village. Don Bachman and Tom Bechtle tended the little island at the intersection of Route 128 and Lower River Road, and Jamie Fowler and Ian Ingersoll contributed two picnic tables to the park. Other neighbors and supporters of the Village Improvement Association have cleaned, planted, and decorated public areas for the holidays.

The Covered Bridge draws visitors from all over the world. In ten days during the fall, visitors from Texas, Michigan, Delaware, the Philippines, the Netherlands, France, Germany, and England were among those who recorded their names and addresses in Ian’s
Letters to the Chronicle

SPEEDING ON 128
On November 1, a small pickup truck struck the back end of the mail truck as it was pulling out of the parking lot across from Barbara Farnsworth's, demolishing its front end. No injuries were reported. The big surprise is that something like this hasn't happened sooner.

Anyone who lives on Route 128 in the vicinity of the village of West Cornwall can provide testimony to the lack of common sense and common courtesy displayed by many motorists, if not their flagrant disregard of posted speed limits. Those of us who live or work here have, in fact, become accustomed to the speed at which many vehicles enter the village that we subconsciously walk and drive with programmed caution.

It's not that we accept it. We've simply gotten used to it, largely because the speed limit has no relevance. It might as well be five miles per hour because without the luxury of enforcement, nothing is going to change.

Is there not some meaningful way we can address this matter, if for no other reason than to attempt to maintain the tranquility and serenity of our village? More signs aren't the answer but what about speed bumps or the sort of traffic surveillance technology that utilizes speed sensors and video equipment? Surely there is grant money available for this and our state trooper barracks would be delighted with the revenue.

Perhaps there is a less obvious solution. If so and even if one doesn't come to mind, comments would be most welcome.

—Al and Pat Haut

YES TO A PLAYGROUND
The idea of Cornwall having its own playground is wonderful. A place to meet other families and play. A place for the Cornwall playgroup to walk to and use on sunny days. A place by the new library where your trip could stop and you might as well be five miles per hour.

And most importantly, the playground is a place where kids can swing and slide and climb in a contained area that belongs to all of us.

Support for this project comes from parents, people who work at the town offices, neighbors next to the site, and the Park and Recreation Commission, which will be responsible for its installation and maintenance. That the playgrounds have been donated and will be moved at no cost are incredible gifts and present an opportunity.

Let's seize this moment to create endless moments of fun for our kids. (See "A Playscape for Cornwall," page 3.)

—Emilie Pryor

TOWN-WIDE BOOK GROUP?
Bewailing the loss of the hand-written records of our reading habits that the coming library automation will cause, I complained to Ginni in the Library. She immediately countered with her reassuring print in the fall issue of the Library Times: the cards will not be removed from books, and borrowers may sign and comment if they wish. She added that the Library is supposed to respect the confidentiality of borrowers and in the future legally cannot require signatures.

This is good news—not only do you get the information that so-and-so was interested enough in a book to check it out, but now the reader has been invited to say what she or he made of it.

It's a way of getting to know people when you know what they like to read. Certain names stand out for me when I'm trying to decide whether or not to bring a book home with me. A really interesting thought is that we have a town-wide forum for communicating our reactions to the books that come our way—sort of like an enormous book group that welcomes any level of participation from its members.

I like the look of the new library, and I bet it will soon feel as inviting, quirky, and unique as the old.

—Helen Vanam

Editor's note: The Chronicle does not publish pseudonymous or anonymous letters. But we will be glad to publish the entertaining letter signed Stacks Kid if the writer will come forward and identify himself/herself.

The Ages of Cornwall
The Bureau of the Census has begun to release more information on what our town looked like in April 2000. Here's an update on age and sex in Cornwall.

In total, our census came to 1,434 full-time residents (just 20 more than in 1990). Of this total, 350, or 24.4 percent, were under 18 years of age. Most of us—1,084 people or 75.6 percent of the total—were 18 or older. A sizeable group, 252 people or 17.6 percent of the total, were 65 years or more. In fact, 30 Cornwilians were 85 years old or a bit more.

Getting a bit more detailed: there were only 69 children, 4.8 percent of all residents, under five years of age in April 2000. Youth in the prime ages for CCS, between five and 14 years, numbered 225, 15.7 percent of the total population.

By sex, Cornwall was composed of 739 females (51.5 percent) and 695 males (48.5 percent). The age group over 18 was even more heavily female (569 vs. 515) than the overall total but Cornwall's under-18s included a

(continued on page 4)
Greet the New Year with breakfast at the UCC Parish House on January 1, from 9 A.M. to 1 P.M. Buttermilk pancakes with Cornwall maple syrup, sausages, cereal, juice, and coffee will be served. Donations will benefit the La Casa Project, an organization that builds homes for the poor in Mexico.

The Skating Rink at the West Cornwall Fire House will open as soon as weather and volunteers permit. Children must be accompanied by an adult, and a waiver concerning personal injury must be signed. Forms will be sent home by CCS and will also be available at a rink-side box. Hockey players must wear regulation protective equipment. People interested in donating money or volunteering time, please call Jeff Fox, 672-0192, or Ian Ingersoll, 672-1116.

Don't Block the Snow Flows: Effective December 1 through March 30, all vehicles must park at least six feet away from the paved portion of the road. Plowing can occur at any time, including setback plowing in clear weather. Vehicles in violation of this order will be removed by the Board of Selectmen.

"Choices" will host three upcoming events: • Design a Gingerbread House, with Joyce Samson, on Wednesday and Friday, December 5 and 7, at CCS from 6:30 to 8 P.M., one adult per child, fee $18. Call 672-0616. • Oriental Origami, with Jack Austine, on Tuesday, December 4, at CCS from 7 to 9 P.M., ages 7 to 8, fee $8. • Tai Chi Chuan, with Leslie Elias, CCS gym, every Tuesday, beginners 7 to 8 P.M., experienced 8 to 9 P.M., fee $5. Call 672-0286.

Last Film in Series: The Ox Bow Incident, a much-acclaimed western with a message, will be shown at the Town Hall on Tuesday, December 18, at 7:30 p.m. (Please note change of date.) The message is a strong indictment of injustice when a mob takes justice into its own hands. It has been called "one of Hollywood's finest moments." With Henry Fonda, Dana Andrews, and Anthony Quinn. 1943.

Tree Lighting and Caroling with the Hot Chocolate Society will take place on Saturday, December 15, at 5:30 p.m. in front of the Town Hall. Refreshments will be served by Park and Rec. Dress warmly.

Candlelight Reading: Tom Walker will read selections from James Thurber's works on Wednesday, December 26, at 4:30 p.m. at the North Cornwall Meetinghouse. This will be the fifth annual Tom Walker reading sponsored by Friends of the Cornwall Library. Admission free, everybody welcome.

Christmas Eve: Enjoy the Christmas Eve performance at the West Cornwall Fire House on December 24th, at 7:00 p.m. Featuring the gang from the North Cornwall Elementary School.

Stand an egg upright on its end; b) Stand a slice of bacon on its end; c) Send a check to CCS, she is described by her teachers as part-time percussionist for the band last year. Congratulations, Kedryn!

(Turn to page 3)