Cornwall: First in Connecticut

Because Cornwall qualifies as a U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Green Power Community, the Connecticut Clean Energy Fund (CCEF) has awarded one additional kilowatt of solar PV (photovoltaic) to the town. Cornwall will become the first town in Connecticut to achieve this distinction and will probably never be terribly high on Robert Vaughan’s list of priorities.

What is high on his list is “maintaining and expanding the atmosphere of educational excellence so clearly established by Dr. Fitzgibbons.” He has learned that in Cornwall, high parental expectations begin as soon as a child enters kindergarten, and he is determined to support this “quest for the best” at every grade level in every way possible. “I want every ninth-grade student from the Cornwall Consolidated School to be considered among the best at HVRHS or at any of the other schools they might attend, and for them to maintain that standing throughout their high school careers.”

From the very beginning, Mr. Vaughan’s résumé indicated the strong viability of his candidacy. “I believe that my extensive background as a building principal in three different settings and my depth of knowledge of elementary education make me an outstanding candidate for this position.” His bachelor’s degree in sociology from Wesleyan, his M.A.T. degree in reading from Harvard, and his M.Ed. in educational administration from Plymouth State College support this claim, as do the numerous outstanding letters of reference that accompanied his application.

But applications seldom tell the whole story, and this one is no different. It does not reference what is clearly Robert Vaughan’s calm, reflective—rather than reactive—demeanor. It tells us nothing about his obvious love of children or his strong desire to become an active member of the Cornwall community, and it certainly never mentions his athleticism and love of tennis, a pastime he is hoping to be able to continue to pursue here. And the résumé never mentions Mr. Vaughan’s wife and four grown children, or the love and obvious pride he clearly feels for each of them.

By their very nature, schools are rare amalgams of continuity and change. The combination fosters the security and curiosity necessary for continued educational success. Under Robert Vaughan’s leadership, CCS has the chance to make the best of both of these valuable commodities.

—Sharon Dietzel

A New Car in the Parking Lot

The Massachusetts license plate on the navy blue Honda Accord in the CCS parking lot attested to the fact that although not officially hired until July 1, the new principal had arrived well before that date.

Robert Vaughan is anxious to use these summer days to get to know his new surroundings as well as the individuals it includes. The office walls are devoid of adornment, and the two distinctly unmatched chairs do not lend themselves to a terribly impressive professional environment. But all that will change before the first day of school and will probably never be terribly high on Robert Vaughan’s list of priorities.

Every Week This Month:
Mondays: Jam Session, 7:30 P.M. Call 672-0229 for Location; Men’s Adult Basketball, 7:30 P.M. CCS Gym
Tuesdays: Adult Volleyball, 7 p.m. CCS Gym
Wednesdays: Stretch Class, 5 p.m. Town Hall; Women’s Adult Basketball, 7-30 P.M. CCS; Tai Chi, 6 P.M. Call 672-0064
Sundays: Meditation Group, 1–2 P.M. 672-0229 to confirm

Every Week This Month:
Mondays: Jam Session, 7:30 P.M. Call 672-0229 for Location; Men’s Adult Basketball, 7:30 P.M. CCS Gym
Tuesdays: Adult Volleyball, 7 p.m. CCS Gym
Wednesdays: Stretch Class, 5 p.m. Town Hall; Women’s Adult Basketball, 7-30 P.M. CCS; Tai Chi, 6 P.M. Call 672-0064
Sundays: Meditation Group, 1–2 P.M. 672-0229 to confirm

For additions and updating, visit www.cornwallct.org*Check with Zoning Office—672-4957† Details in Events and Announcements
(continued from page 1)

on May 9 with the arrest of Ralph Dzenitis of Cornwall Bridge on charges related to allowing minors to drink alcohol at his home.

For several years, Region One towns have been engaged in discussion of what to do about underage drinking and drug use. What once was “kids being kids” has become dangerous, even life-threatening.

Ralph said he agreed to a party for about 30 of his son’s friends. His intention was to keep them in safe surroundings during what could become a boisterous evening. Instead, the Dzenitis home became a magnet for uninvited students, Housy alumni, and a group of youngsters from nearby New York State. Social networks—tweets and text messages—drew the uninvited and turned the party into a nightmare. Police estimated that between 80 and 100 youngsters crashed the party. Many were very drunk.

Ralph joined with state troopers and his fellow volunteer firefighters to get the young people off his property. Parents were called to retrieve their children.

In 2006, Connecticut stiffened an existing host-liability law so that anyone who “knowingly” permits minors to drink or fails to make “reasonable efforts” to stop such drinking on his property will be accountable under the law. The first offense is an infraction; the next earns a fine and

The Cornwall Civic Club provided awards in art to Phillip Gyselaers, in music to Matthew Matsudaira, and in physical education to Erica Kavanagh and Liam Lynch. The Mark Van Doren prize for writing went to Aidan Cowan. Brian Saccardi received the Edna Peet English prize. He also received the social studies award. Erica Kavanagh received the science award, and Matthew Matsudaira received the world language award. In math, Mary Kate Kosciusko received the algebra award, and Caitlin Redmond the eighth-grade math award. The history award provided by the Cornwall Historical Society went to Matthew Matsudaira.

—Sharon Dietzel

Cornwall Came Through

Who was it that said Cornwall people look out for one another? I Googled the Litchfield County directory of favorite quotations, and there it was: Jill Gibbons, Cornwall’s director of social services.

So I paid the lady a visit to find out how we met the needs of economically stressed residents seeking help this past very cold winter. She said that if you add up all the assistance administered by her department, it came to more than $61,000 from a variety of sources, including the federal and state fuel-assistance programs, the Northwest Corner Fuel Bank, Cornwall town funds, and generous contributions from individuals and organizations like the Community Foundation of Northwest Connecticut and the Cornwall Town Players.

About 50 households with around 90 people were helped, mostly with utility shut-off interventions and remaining balances for heating fuel. Jill reminded me that “the need for help doesn’t disappear come spring, the season of overdue oil and utility bills.

“As the economy worsens and unemployment rises,” Jill said, “I am seeing a whole new clientele, people who have never found themselves in this position before. We have seen a 240 percent rise in Cornwall of people seeking fuel assistance in the past five years. Next winter could be even worse, because the state will be cutting back funding, putting an even greater burden on local resources.”

Any article about meeting local human needs must also mention the wonderful work of the Cornwall Cupboard Food Pantry. Volunteer Anne Scott shelves and organizes the groceries and also opens the pantry on Tuesday and Thursday mornings. The UCC Women’s Society, St. Bridget’s Church, and many individuals have been regularly re-stocking the larder. In light of existing needs, discussions are now underway for a possible expanded facility and local farm contributions that could eventually include meat.

—John Miller

Welcome

Glory Eloise to Carly Jacobs and Ted Schillinger
Rowan Theodore to Gretchen Carlson and Philip Taaffe

Good-Bye to Friends

Helen Tennant
Kim Waller

Congratulations
Brigitte Baron and Stephen Sander

Land Transfers

Federal Home Loan Mortgage Corporation to Christopher Hopkins, 1,213 acres and improvements thereon at 301 Kent Road, for $166,700.

Charles D. Day and Amy Carron Day to Wayne A. Hendrickson and Ann Temkin, 5,710 acres with buildings and improvements thereon at 186 Great Hollow Road, for $852,000.

Helen Vanam to Wade Wolfe, dwelling and associated outbuildings (excluding land) at 78 Bald Mountain Road, for $50,000.

James Leathy to CVA Everest, LLC, 11,701 acres on Everest Hill Road, for $315,000.

Tornado Memories

I was not in Cornwall on July 10, 1989, but my Cornwall friends vividly described the roaring winds and torrential rains. When I arrived the following afternoon and drove up Poppple Swamp Road (inexplicably open to traffic when Route 4 was closed) I was overcome by the incredible view of the destruction.

Parts of Cornwall Village were virtually denuded of trees. The beautiful Cathedral Pines had been flattened. Roofs were blown off, barns destroyed, and several houses rendered uninhabitable.

The view from my home on Route 128 was of a swath of matchsticks (formerly trees) stretching across Colt’sfoot Valley and Mohawk Mountain. The distant ski slopes were littered with debris, and several of the ski lifts were badly damaged. Miraculously, despite all the property damage, no lives were lost.

Within a few days, my partner and I departed on a long-planned trip to Ireland. When we returned ten days later, the first wave of cleanup was complete. Roads were cleared, downed trees removed, and power and telephone service were restored. But the incredible destruction was evident everywhere in the scarred landscape.

Today a casual drive through the areas of destruction reveals few clues to the massive damage. Thanks to a major tree-replanting effort, Cornwall Village is again full of maturing trees. While the massive Cathedral Pines are gone—only a few stark skeletons remain standing—the area is well on the way to natural reforestation.

The adage “time heals all wounds” is borne out by the disappearing physical clues to the destruction, but those who experienced the tornado or witnessed the damage it wrought that July day 20 years ago are unlikely to forget anytime soon.

—John Green
A Favorite Cornwall Holiday
Under brilliant blue skies, Memorial Day, my favorite Cornwall holiday, began with a service at the North Cornwall Cemetery.

By 11 A.M. a large group of townsfolk sat and stood in front of the Town Hall waiting for the annual parade to begin. The uniformed honor guard representing various branches of our service people from previous wars came first. The CCS band followed on a hay wagon, musically leading our junior Red Sox baseball team, the Brownies, the Girl Scouts, the Child Center little ones, and the 4-H wagon. The large group of orange-shirted Junior Volunteer Fire Department members, our dazzling trucks both new and old, a very old pumper, and two new ATVs that are invaluable on difficult terrain. As always, Cornwall’s vintage motor vehicles pulled up the rear.

The moving program, led by Ralph Gold, featured a uniformed Hunt Williams, who spoke eloquently of the Korean War, the extreme physical difficulties our troops encountered, and the remarkable statistics of the dead and wounded. A stunned audience listened in hushed silence.

Cornwall’s supreme pickle-maker, Ginny Potter, received the VFW Community Service Award. Ginny has worked tirelessly over the years on countless town projects, including the current renovation of the Cornwall Historical Society building. Her energy is amazing, her organizational skills are superb, and her sunny smile is a magnet for all who encounter her.

The annual children’s carnival followed immediately at UCC. Highly anticipated events included the famed frog-jumping contest and the lollipop tree. The food was wonderful, and smiles, giggles, and laughter provided the perfect ending to our very special Cornwall Day.

—Carol Goodfriend

CHS Celebrates with Ice Cream
In between ice cream socials at the Cornwall Historical Society, something wonderful has happened: A building has been reborn. It was in July 2007 at an ice cream social on the Society’s front lawn at 7 Pine Street that the first plans for the building renovation were unveiled and fundraising began in earnest. Cornwall came through with donations from nearly 200 families. On Sunday, August 2, from 2 to 4 P.M., a free ice cream social will celebrate the completion of the building, which today on the outside more resembles its first life as the local undertaker’s Victorian carriage barn. To add to the festive mood, Roger the Jester will perform, and Cornwall residents will have a chance to see how their donations have transformed the inside of the building.

The construction project began not with a gold shovel and ceremony, but with the demolition of the rotted wooden shed at the back and the placement of a massive and very “unlike Cornwall” sign mandated by the state announcing the project. Like many community building projects, this one generated great debates about removing the massive chimney (it went), restoring the cupola (it is back), and window and door placement. Perhaps the best thing—in addition to having a great new home for Cornwall’s treasures—is that the building, a beautiful Cornwall landmark, has been saved. And for that we are all truly grateful.

—Louise Dunn

Correction
The June issue of the Chronicle neglected to include the names of two recent graduates. Phillip Geyselaers, a proud graduate of CCS, will attend Housy next year. Stephen Hedden graduated from the Kent School and will attend Colorado Mountain College in Leadville, Colorado. The Chronicle extends its apologies and best wishes to both of these young men.

—John Miller

Help for Housing
Development of housing policies instead of housing developments is a major concern for the Planning and Zoning Commission as work continues on the Town Plan revisions. A

CELL TOWER POSSIBILITIES
If Verizon has its way they will be erecting either a 157-foot cell tower at 78 Popple Swamp Rd. or a 117-foot tower at 16 Bell Rd. Extension (off of Popple Swamp). No doubt, either would be highly visible from the Village and other locations around town. Verizon’s lawyer notified the town in early June and publicly on June 17 in the Waterbury Republican-American (p. 10B) of their intentions. The public has until July 17 to send comments to Coreen Kelsey, c/o Vanasse Hangen Brustlin, Inc., 54 Tuttle Place, Middletown, CT 06457, ckelsey@vhb.com or (860) 632-1500 regarding any potential effects of the proposed facility on historic properties.

This is just the beginning of the process. Concerned citizens should contact the Selectmen’s Office to view correspondence and to keep up to date on what’s happening. There are books at the Library on the telecommunications industry. Check www.bioinitiative.org. Stay informed. —Bianca LaPorta

AN OWL SMILES
Now that summer is here, let’s not forget the wonderful job Rick Stone and the town road crew did all winter. Many nights I awoke to the sounds of plows clearing away snow or ice or both and sanding away... and this was at 2 or 3 A.M. When they slept it was a mystery to me, but our road was always ready in time for neighbors to go to work. Several out-of-towners have remarked on how well our roads were kept in comparison to the ones in other towns. I just smiled like a wise old (well old anyway) owl and agreed.

—Jane Giddens-Jones

NEW DOCKS AND KIDS’ PROGRAM
Thanks to a grant, Peter Russo and crew, and the town crew, new docks have been built and floated at Hammond Beach. During the month of July, they will be used to test fly a new program called Crafty Kids. It will run from noon to 2 P.M. on July 10 and 24 for children ages 4–12. Parents provide lunch, and we will supply crafts, swimming, and fun. A $3 fee will cover the cost of crafts. There is a ten-child limit, and sign-up at the beach will be on a first-come, first-served basis. Rain will cancel the event. We are looking forward to a fun summer!

—Tammy Decker

FOOD FOR THOUGHT
As a result of hamburgers devoured, root beer floats slurped, ice cream licked, and lemonade drunk at the Memorial Day celebration, the Christian Education Committee of the UCC raised money to help children locally and worldwide. Checks will be sent to the Christian Children’s Fund to continue our sponsorship of Ruleka, a young Maasai we have supported for ten years; to Silver Lake Camp and Conference Center in Sharon for camper scholarships; to the local Youth Services Bureau; to Women’s Support Services for children’s programs; to summer Vacation Bible School for local children, and to Malaria No More, which provides sleeping nets for children in Africa.

—Barbara Gold

Letters to the Chronicle

JULY 2009 CORNWALL CHRONICLE
housing subcommittee, co-chaired by Pat Hare and Chris Hopkins, has sought input from guest speakers advising on both options and obstacles. The challenge of providing for both drinking and waste water is a problem in West Cornwall village. Affordable housing for all ages is needed throughout the town. Allowing for future residential growth while preserving the rural landscape and character is not necessarily a contradiction.

The firm of Milone and McNulty is currently conducting a hands-on study of the villages of West Cornwall and Cornwall Bridge. Town Planner Tom McGowan will be drafting a housing section that will be available later this summer. The weighing of information and opinion expressed by Cornwall citizens and experienced consultants will direct recommendations for the plan. In addition to the co-chairs, the Housing Committee includes Anne Baren, Don Bardot, Will Calhoun, Dave Cadwell, Denny Frost, and Tim Frenette. They will welcome your suggestions.

—Ginny Potter

Events & Announcements

Community Picnic: July 4 (rain date July 5) at Foote Field. Events include pick-up soccer game (10 A.M.), pick-up softball game (1 P.M.), and inflatable rides (noon to 4 P.M.). Free burgers, hot dogs, and drinks. Bring your own picnic.

Reilly’s Lemonade Stand: As part of her fifth birthday celebration, Reilly Hedden will be hosting her fifth annual lemonade stand on July 4 at the Cornwall Bridge Firehouse. All proceeds go to the Alex’s Lemonade Stand Foundation to fight childhood cancer.

A Guided Tour of West Cornwall: Walk with Denis Curtiss and hear about the village of 50 years ago when he was growing up. Learn about previous industrial activity and later years when he was growing up. Learn about the village of 50 years ago when he was growing up. Learn about the village of 50 years ago when he was growing up. The tour and a demonstration with Dave Colbert.

When Summer Comes

...all thoughts will turn to gardens, hikes, rides, and swims. That’s what we wait for through the endless New England winters. The trouble is, all those activities take us far, far away from our checkbooks and our indoor disciplines like writing a nice fat donation to the Chronicle. So before you hit that tennis ball, make a mental note to self: “Suitable award to Chronicle—today.” Thanks.

The Cornwall Democratic Town Committee will hold a caucus on Wednesday, July 22, at 7:30 P.M. at the Library for the purpose of nominating candidates for municipal offices in the November elections. All registered Democrats are invited to attend and are eligible to vote.

Art in Cornwall: The Cornwall Library will display Metcalfe Architecture & Design’s recent work and thoughts on The Space Between, including Betty Spence’s new house on Lake Road. The opening reception will take place on July 3 from 5 to 7 P.M.

The Wish House will continue to show Deborah Persson’s photography through July.

An opening reception for a new exhibition entitled House and Gardens Tour will be held on Sunday, July 5, at Lady Audrey’s Gallery (under the Wish House) from 4 to 7 P.M.

The Cornwall Village Improvement Society will hold its annual meeting on Saturday, July 11, at 11:30 A.M. at the Town Hall.

Library Family Programs will be held on six consecutive Wednesday evenings at 6:30 P.M. beginning July 1. Recommended for ages 5 and up. Workshops require advance registration, and younger children will need an adult to help them. All programs are free and are one hour long except for workshops, which are one and one-half hours.


Farmers’ Market Events

• July 4, 10:30 A.M. to 12:30 P.M., Battle Hill Forge demonstration.
• July 11, 10 A.M. to noon, Susan Fox Milkhouse Pottery demonstration.
• July 18, 10:30 to 11:30 A.M., Tai Chi demonstration with Dave Colbert.
• July 25, 10 A.M. to noon, music performance by Ragged but Righters Yelpping Hill String Band.

Tai Chi: For the months of July and August, the Wednesday Tai Chi class will not be held at CCS. The class will still meet from 6 to 8:15 P.M. Please contact Dave Colbert at 672-0064 for further information.

A Red Cross Blood Drive will be held at its summer location at the Cornwall Library on Pine Street on Thursday, July 16, from 1 to 5:45 P.M. Registration and refreshments will be in the Library’s meeting room at the rear of the building. Blood donations will be taken in the Red Cross Bloodmobile in the parking lot. Call 1-800-GIVE LIFE or Pat and Jerry Blakey at 672-6516 to make an appointment. Walk-ins are always welcome.

Motherhouse Events

• July 11: OSLSS Workshop: Jam Session. Angela Greco will show how to make jams, jellies, and preserves from 10:30 A.M. to 1:30 P.M. at Local Farm. $35/family. MUST pre-register with Debra@Motherhouse.us or 672-0229.
• July 18: Free Family Round Sing, 7:30 p.m. at Local Farm barn. Call Debra at 672-0229 for more information.

A Republican Caucus will be held on Thursday, July 23, at 6:30 P.M. at the Town Hall. Candidates will be endorsed for next November’s municipal election. All registered Republicans are welcome and encouraged to attend.

Tax Collector News: The first half of real estate and personal property taxes is due July 1. Tax bills of $100 or less and motor vehicle bills are due in full during July. Any tax not paid on or before August 1 is delinquent and subject to interest at the rate of 1.5 percent per month. Taxes may be paid at the Town Office on Mondays from 1 to 4 P.M. and on Wednesdays from 9 A.M. to noon and 1 to 4 P.M. or sent by mail to Cornwall Tax Collector, P.O. Box 97, Cornwall, CT 06753.