Next Stop for Class of ’96
Due to a long winter and numerous snow days, Housatonic’s class of ’96 will not be receiving its diplomas until June 21. Seniors are enjoying their last few weeks together before going their separate ways.
This year there are nine members of Housatonic’s graduating class from Cornwall. Sandra Geyserlaers, the class valedictorian, will be attending Wheaton College next fall, double-majoring in political science and international relations. Zachary Tyler and Caroline Calhoun will be heading north to Yale, and Caroline to Colby College to major in international relations. Zachary Tyler and Caroline Calhoun will be attending Yale, and Caroline to Colby College to major in international relations.

Jennifer Martin will be in Elmira, New York, focusing on pre-veterinary medicine at Elmira College. Christopher Hurbut will be working at his family’s Cornwall dairy farm. Guillermo Valdez Martinez, who has been visiting Cornwall for a year, will return to his home in Mexico to study international business at the Universidad de la Coehouila.
Matthew Wolf is enrolled at the venerable St. John’s College in Annapolis, Maryland.

Jennifer Ripley, who graduated from Housatonic at half-year, will take courses at San Francisco State University. Colorado College will welcome two Cornwall students in the fall, double-majoring in political science and economics, and Caroline to Colby College to major in international studies.

The Pit and the Petulant
At an April 29 special hearing on the FS&Z gravel mining application, the Bridgeport lawyer disclosed on P&Z’s duty to “restore the integrity” of its regulations. Later in the proceedings, Taylor’s associate Peter Stiglin was to augment these drifts with a blizzard of his own copier’s produce.
Repeatedly forewarned by the attorney that inattention to one or more of his fine points might be grounds for appeal if the permit were to be granted, the commission listened quietly and arranged the papers dealt out to them in neat piles.

With attorney Blum and Peter Stiglin snowing away in one direction, and Strobel’s Hartford lawyer Michael Zlaska and Jackie Strobel shoveling just as hard in the other, and accusations of misrepresentation and “poppycock” flying in all directions, the legal storm intensified. It was three hours of this before the audience had a chance to be heard.

Speaking in favor of the application were Arthur Lorch, long-time Cornwall Bridge resident, and James Terrall, a building contractor who grew up in Cornwall Bridge.

Lorch expressed resentment of “outsiders” who move into town and tell the inhabitants living and working there what to do. Terrall defended small business owners operating under controlled conditions and said almost every home in Cornwall needs gravel at some point. He posed the rhetorical question of whether it would be kinder to the environment to truck gravel in from distant mines or be there to become a certified outdoor educator through the Wilderness Education Association program. Hope Chenay, a Hotchkiss graduate, will begin her freshman year at Colorado College; she is undecided about her major. Marrian Sullivan, after finishing at Taft in May, will matriculate at the University of Wisconsin in Madison in late August, majoring in psychology and minor in American government.

The Town of Cornwall provides the single unifying bond among these high school students whose plans range from farming to international relations. Whatever faces them, Cornwall graduates will meet these challenges wholeheartedly, knowing that their families, schools, and communities have prepared them well.

—Caroline Calhoun

JUNE 1996

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<td>1. June Art Show</td>
<td>National Iron Bank</td>
<td>2. Cornwall Bridge</td>
<td>3. Bd. of Selectmen 8 P.M. Town Hall</td>
<td>4. Apric Fair planning meeting 7:30 p.m. W.C. Firehouse (p.3)</td>
<td>5. W. Cornwall Merchants Assoc. 10 a.m. Caldwell’s Play Group visit to CCS 10-11:30 a.m. (p.4)</td>
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<td>7. June Art Show</td>
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<td>8. Open House 2-4 p.m. Hughes Memorial Library</td>
<td>9. Art Show, Sarah Calhoun Paintings, 6/10-7/13 Library P&amp;Z 8 p.m. Town Hall</td>
<td>10. Housatonic River Comm. 7:30 p.m. CSS Library Rep. Town Comm. 7:30 p.m. CSS Dem. Town Comm. 7:30 p.m. Town Hall</td>
<td>11. CCC Fall Registration 10-11:30 a.m. (p.4)</td>
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<td>13. Cornwall Housing Corp. 4-5 p.m. Kugman Village Bd. of Education 5 p.m. CSS Library</td>
<td>14. Park &amp; Rec. sponsored travelogue, Scott Cady in Israel 7:30 p.m. CSS Library</td>
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<td>17. HVRHS Board of Ed. 7 p.m. HVRHS Library</td>
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<td>20. CCC Graduation 7 p.m. CSS Gym</td>
<td>21. HVRHS Graduation 6 p.m.</td>
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<td>23. CCS closes 1 p.m. Conservation Comm. 7:30 p.m. Town Office</td>
<td>24. Park &amp; Rec. 8 p.m. Town Office</td>
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*Check time and place at Town Office
from a local source. "We allow sawmills," he said, "even though we might not like them right next to us, and farms even though we might not like the smell of manure."

But the preponderance of sentiment of those who stuck it out into the fourth hour was anti-gravel mine. Reasons cited: the danger of increased truck traffic, the noise and dust, the violation of natural beauty; the reduction of land values, the silicosis potential, and the difficulty of entering Route 7 from driveways near the mine site. Joseph Marchetti contended that opening up the pit was "just not the right thing to do" to your neighbors. Lisa Wojan pointed out that Rocky River Associates in the past had consistently violated the terms of the permit with impunity and she saw no reason to believe the new operators wouldn't do the same. Also speaking out against granting the permit—though somewhat less vehemently—were Douglas Chrisie of the Appalachian Trail Conference and Lynn Werner, executive director of the Housatonic Valley Association, who emphasized the natural beauty of the area and cited the potential for grade graduation. But the preponderance of sentiment of those who stuck it out into the fourth hour was for preserving its natural beauty and cited the potential for housing and recreation outside the development of land values, the silicosis potential, and the difficulty of entering Route 7 from driveways near the mine site. Joseph Marchetti contended that opening up the pit was "just not the right thing to do" to your neighbors. Lisa Wojan pointed out that Rocky River Associates in the past had consistently violated the terms of the permit with impunity and she saw no reason to believe the new operators wouldn't do the same. Also speaking out against granting the permit—though somewhat less vehemently—were Douglas Chrisie of the Appalachian Trail Conference and Lynn Werner, executive director of the Housatonic Valley Association, who emphasized the natural beauty of the area and cited the potential for grade graduation.

The Cornwall Consolidated School eighth grade graduation will be held Thursday, June 20, at 7 p.m. at the CCS gym. Congratulations to Dillon Bracken, Heather Dinneen, Richard Dolan, Heidi Gantner, Nicole Geyselaers, Maja Gray, Benjamin Hammond, Jason Lynn, Brett Mason, Alexander Merola, Connor O'Shaughnessy, Adam Rosenbeck, Mark Sager, Michael Sterzl, Amanda Stevens, and Winfield Wilson.

---Denise Bate

The Great Oil Spill of '96

About eight o'clock on the morning of May 3, an oil truck carrying 8,000 gallons lost its brakes on Cemetery Hill above Cornwall Plains. It sped onward down Route 4, through the Route 125/Pine Street intersection. Then the driver, Bryan Doehr of Meriden, saw ahead of him a yellow light and a lot of bridge construction equipment. A pickup truck blocked a temporary one-lane traverse over Baldwin Brook. Doehr leaned on his horn, but in another instant the truck had bounced off a concrete Jersey barrier on the right of the construction, struck the pickup, taken out the Jersey barrier on the left side, and flipped sideways into the brook.

In about a minute, Cornwall Fire Chief Jim Vanicky, who was working at the Town Garage nearby, was on the scene. Within five minutes, other Cornwall firefighters were there with emergency equipment. Within 30 minutes, a crew came from Bantam carrying absorbent materials to soak up the spill. Within 45 minutes, a Department of Environmental Protection suction-pumping truck arrived from New Britain.

Initially, Chief Vanicky did what he had been trained to do. He looked at the placard on the side of the truck, a code number all hazardous carriers are required to display. The number 1203, according to Vanicky's manual, meant "gasohol, gasoline, motor spirit, petrol." Liquid was pouring from a tanker's forward compartment. According to Vanicky's manual, meant "gasohol, gasoline, motor spirit, petrol." Liquid was pouring from a tanker's forward compartment. The truck's brakes were scorching. The Fire Department quickly decided to warn and evacuate people on the west side of Cornwall Plains.

Meanwhile, the truck's driver and the owner of the pickup, Edward Grimm of Bethel, were rushed by EMTs to Sharon Hospital, where they were treated for minor injuries and released.

The code number 1203 turned out to be incorrect. The truck, owned by Island Transportation of North Haven, carried home heating oil—very dangerous, but without the explosive potential of gasoline. In another hour the area was crowded: vehicles with flashing lights, helmeted emergency crews from Goshen, Sharon, Bantam, Kent, and Falls Village. The hole in the tanker was soon plugged as well as possible. Three boom systems—giant hot-dog-like devices that stop and absorb the flow of oil on water—were deployed on Baldwin Brook. The suction truck did its job. By 10:30 that evening, the work was done. Route 4 opened to traffic the next morning.

The DEP estimates that 1,100 gallons of oil spilled into Baldwin Brook, all of which was contained within a half mile of the accident. An estimated 97 percent of the spill was recovered, a remarkably high figure in the DEP's judgment.

Also proud of the town's accomplishment is First Selectman Gordon Ridgway. "Our emergency crew has been trained in hazardous material spills," Ridgway said, "and all that training really paid off. The whole town owes the Fire Department a big debt of gratitude on this one." Ridgway added that about 30 people had lost a day's work.

---Bob Potter

Congratulations

William J. Hurlbut to Rebecca Laughlin

Land Transfers

Darrell R. Lund to Anita Wolkwitz, 5 acres on Whitcomb Hill Road for $49,000.

Anne M. Smith to Neal Ossen, Plan Administrator to 603 Danbury Road, Inc., house and 95 acres on Johnson Road for $261,000.

Barbara J. Anasazi to Steven R. Butler and Janet R. Hanna-Butler, house and land on Pine Street for $217,500.

Coltsfoot Farm Limited Partnership to Jessica K. Fowler, Lot #5, 4.8 acres on Valley Road for $66,500.

Jonathan L. and Diana R. Ruhsam to Donald C. and Catherine Madigan, house and land on Flat Rocks Road for $365,000.

Frederick H. and Beverley Marchiomma to John A. Nuese, house and 10 acres on Great Hill Road for $210,000.

Mary Ann Matyas to Yvonne A. Barron and Martin Buckley, 2 parcels of land totaling 12 acres and house on Flat Rocks Road for $130,000.

---

CHC: Land Needed

Anticipating future needs for more parcels of land to be leased to Cornwall's young people, the Cornwall Housing Corporation is once again looking for gifts (or bargain purchases) of land.

Through special regulations adopted by P&Z to support affordable housing, such parcels need only be one acre, as long as they can meet the Torrington Area Health District requirements. Under P&Z regs, parcels are allowed on driveways that already serve two homes.

The corporation has also learned that it can swap land with the state (which owns more than 20 percent of Cornwall's land) through the Department of Environmental Protection. Cornwall landowners who have interior land abutting state forests can give (or sell) such land to the CHC, which, in turn, can swap with the state for accessible parcels.
Beavers and Bureaucracy

Many of us have been annoyed by the three-way traffic light at the construction on the Route 4 bridge near Cornwall Plains. It is particularly irritating as we pass, day after day, to see the site deserted, with absolutely nothing going on. Why the delay?

The reasons, according to Dave Flatau of Flatau Construction, are several. The work, begun in November, was first planned to be done by Christmas. The cold and snowy winter did not help. Neither did the oil tanker that came barreling into the site on May 3. But if we want a first cause for the delay, we can blame it on the beavers.

In early December, the water in Baldwin Brook, diverted to one side under the bridge, rose a foot and a half and looked black. Someone was apparently breaking down a series of beaver dams upstream from the construction. The Department of Transportation inspector was aware of the situation at the construction site at all times. The water rose again, and again, and again, debris flooding the job site. Meanwhile, the Cornwall Inland Wetlands Commission had alerted the Department of Environmental Protection. The DEP shut down the project down and called for an entirely new water control and siltation plan, a complex project that took a week to design, three weeks to implement, and still more time to inspect and approve. The DOT, DEP, and IWC were working with venerable Route 4, hardly the Information Superhighway. Communication at times was slow.

But now, says Dave Flatau, the project is back on track, and those stoplights will soon be hauled away.

—Bob Potter

A Must-See: Condoluci's Art

Salvatore Condoluci is now exhibiting a fascinating group of ink drawings at the Cornwall Library. To create texture, contour, and shape, the artist uses intricately drawn whorls, spirals, and curls—sinuous, folding, twining webs of lines. Mostly his subjects are fanciful, imaginative, cartoon-like images of animals, sure to bring a smile to your face. The best of the show? Hard to say, as the truly superb drawings are too numerous to mention. Dragonfly, Rhino, and Mermaid with Fish and Shell are fine pieces, as well as the mysterious Other World and the humorous Host of Heavenly Pigs. But as favorite of the show my vote goes to Praying Mantis, in which Condoluci adds green and yellow to good effect.

—Alfred Bredenberg

Letters to the Chronicle

GRACEY GRATITUDE

On Sunday, May 5, Cornwall residents once again demonstrated what "community" is all about. The outpouring of support for the lasagna dinner held to benefit the Dan Gracey Fund was, in a word, PHENOMENAL!

To Mohawk Ski Area which let us use their facilities; to the dozens of businesses that donated ingredients for the meal, door prizes, and T-shirts to sell; to the many individuals who sold tickets, made salad, and baked yummy desserts; to Mrs. Budge’s CCS fourth grade class who made posters and place mats and helped clear tables; to the Connecticut Freemasons who came to prepare, serve tables, and clean up; to the hundreds of you who bought tickets and came to eat dinner—to all we say THANK YOU! All told, $4,713.10 was added to the Dan Gracey Fund at the National Iron Bank.

—Barbara and Charlie Yohe, Cheryl and Dan Evans

IT’S GREAT TO BE HOME

When I first heard of the lasagna dinner to be held on my behalf, I was embarrassed. I’ve never enjoyed being the center of attention. However, after entering the lodge my concerns disappeared. All about me were faces I hadn’t seen in months. Your smiles and kind words put me at ease.

My sincerest thanks to all who participated, either by organizing, attending, or both. Thanks also to everyone who helped Caitlin, Madden, and Jed during my time in the hospital. Caitlin relayed to me how much support she was receiving during my absence. Knowing that my family was being well cared for by fellow Cornwallians made being away much more bearable.

Now it is time for me to get on with living, though I’m not exactly sure how I’ll approach it. I do know one thing, though—there’s no place I’d rather do it. Thanks again to all of you. It’s great to be home.

—Dan Gracey

BEARLY CREDIBLE

When Celia turned on the outdoor lights one night recently and let the dog out, she excitedly called, “There’s a bear on the deck!” And so there was: a black bear attacking a bird feeder, not more than six feet away.

Under the sudden glare of the lights, the bear moved quickly down the steps off the deck, past Murphy, the dog, and into the woods. But Murphy defended her turf and took off after the six-foot-long, over two-hundred-pound visitor, only to be pulled up short by a shock from the forgotten radio fence at the edge of the woods. The bear could be heard hissing—I never knew bears hissed—from the safety of the woods.

Armed with a very large flashlight, I walked around the house, to find that the bear had totally demolished another feeder on the opposite side of the house. In the process, he had bent a solid iron hanging pole all the way to the ground.

The next day discovered that he had also climbed 12 feet up a nearby tree and taken down a suet feeder.

Suet I understand, but bears and sunflower seeds?

—Stephen Senzer

IT’S P&Z’S CALL

I write on the subject of the Strobel application to mine gravel at their Cornwall Bridge property. I’m against it and I have signed a petition to that effect. But let me add that I have complete faith in the men and women who make up our Planning and Zoning Commission and if they decide to approve the application, I have absolute respect for their judgment and integrity.

—John Miller

CCC SAYS THANK YOU!

The fifth annual Cornwall Child Center auction made $18,500, thanks to all those in the community who came, ate, drank, and spent their money.

Special accolades are due all those who worked so hard to ensure the success of the auction, particularly Joanne Pastre and Jamie Monagan. Joanne ran the silent auction with great efficiency and Jamie, our chairman, spent literally hundreds of hours organizing the whole show.

We now have enough money for operating costs and we hope to put some funds aside in our new capital fund intended for future improvements at the Center.

Our heartfelt thanks to everyone, and come back next year.

—Sarah Paul, president

AGRICULTURAL FAIR NEEDS HELP

With warmer weather finally arriving, the Agricultural Advisory Commission has begun planning for the 1996 fair. This year the fair will be held not in August, but on September 21.

Our hopes are for another great fair, but we are in desperate need of help. The simple truth is that without more help in the planning stages, the fair won’t happen.

If you enjoy the fair and would like to be involved, please call Priscilla Mauro, 672-6969, or Chris Hopkins, 672-0229. Or come to our next planning meeting on June 4 at the West Cornwall Firehouse at 7:30 p.m.

—Chris Hopkins
Budget Breezes; Fields Fly

It took the 27 people at the May 17 town meeting only 14 minutes to approve the $3,629,096 budget for 1996-97 and to formally accept the gift of Foote Fields, a four-acre athletic greensward to the left of Route 4 below Cornwall Plains.

Immediately after the short meeting, the Board of Finance met to increase the mill rate from 17.25 to 17.75. This will mean an increase of $29 for every $1,000 in current taxes. The notable decrease from last year was a reduction of nearly $73,000 in Cornwall’s HRHS assessment; our official high school head count went from 55 to 48. The notable increase was the capital budget, up from $165,210 to $347,555 for things such as a new highway truck, town office renovations, and bridge reconstruction. —Bob Potter

Events & Announcements

Welcome, Jubilee School: On Monday, June 17, 50 students, teachers, and parents from inner-city Philadelphia’s Jubilee School will arrive in Cornwall to stay until Friday, hosted by the United Church of Christ. Everyone is invited to a very informal program to arrive in Cornwall to stay until Friday, inner-city Philadelphia’s Jubilee School.

Inflation

The town budget this year is $3.6 million. How far back would you have to go to find a budget under $2 million? The answer may surprise you: only to 1989. There are many volunteer organizations in town that need your support (including us!), and for the most part you respond generously. But the next time you give, check to see if you’re still giving the same amounts you did years ago. —Bob Potter

Tim Prentice Studio Tour: Whirligigs, reflecting fields of mobiles, a barn full of sculptures, the studio, the house, the pavilion in the woods, the miniature church, the pond house: all yours to wander to and through at the Prentices, Lake Road 1/2 mile above Route 43. Sunday, June 30, 4-6 P.M. Refreshments. Suggested minimum $10, $15 per couple. Bring everyone you know.

Region One Study Group: At 7:30 P.M. on Wednesday, June 19, at CCS, the Regional Study Group will present its findings to the PTA and any interested citizens. The RG5 was formed in 1995 to study our affiliation with Region One. A question-and-answer period will follow the presentation.

Cornwall Child Center Announcements: 1) A five-week session for children three to eight years old will offer outside activities with summer themes from July 1 to August 2, weekdays 8-1 P.M. For information/resgistration, please call the Center at 672-6998. 2) Registration for the fall program will be held at the Center June 12, 10-11:30 A.M., and June 13, 3-5 P.M., or by calling Director Pam Brehm, 672-6998 or 824-1289. 3) Cornwall’s littlest are invited to visit the CCC on Wednesday, June 5, 10-11:30 A.M. The Play Group members and all small children will join in a program of songs, games, projects, and playground activity.

Choices Offers Summer Session: Choices, the after-school enrichment program sponsored by the CCS PTA, will offer a summer session this year. Parents can enroll children in art, music, and/or physical fun and games over a six-week period during July and August. There will be six three-day mini-camps available as well as classes that meet Monday or Friday for six weeks. Classes are taught by certified and experienced teachers for children 5-1/2-13 years old. Drop off at the school office to pick up catalogue/application or for information call David Samson, 672-6797.

The Canby Singers of New York, Sheila Schonbrun, director, and Edward Tatnall Canby, director emeritus, will give their 38th consecutive June concert in Cornwall on Saturday, June 15, at 8:15 P.M. at CCS. The concert is free—no contributions. Once again Ed Canby will act as anchor and commentator. He still "has the gift of gab," he says, and doesn’t at all mind using it on such an occasion.

July Jaunt for Juliet: The Republican Town Committee announces that Juliet Lyon has been selected to attend the Congressional Intern Program in Washington in July.

Cub Scout Pack 15 was rechartered last May and is active again. Membership has grown to 21, and a host of projects and fun-filled activities have been completed. A new member sign-up will be held on Thursday, June 13, at 6:30 P.M. in the regular meeting place, the UCC Parish House. Boys seven to ten, or in grades one to five, should appear with a parent. Further information is available from K. C. Baird, 672-2773, or Jim Levry, 672-6377.

Volunteers Needed: Our Historical Society seeks help in updating the "Roads and Residences" section of Starr’s History of Cornwall and collating it with current road nomenclature and the house lot numbering system. The goal is a listing of past and present owners of all numbered lots. Those interested in taking part or with pertinent information please contact Michael Gannett, 672-6958.

Book Sale/Flea Market to benefit Hughes Memorial Library will be held June 22, 9:30-4, at the library in West Cornwall. Call Josie Whitney, 672-6172, for information or to rent display space.

Hammond Beach: The town beach on Cream Hill Lake will open June 22. Hours 11-7 daily. Beach passes can be secured at the Town Office (Monday–Thursday, 9-4—not at the lake). Individual passes are $10, a family $20.

Rabies Alert: Rabies has now spread to dangerous proportions. If you want advice or help with a rabid animal, call Animal Control Officer Rick Stone, 672-6313, or his assistant, Brad Hedden, 672-2917.

USA Soccer School of Excellence: Enrollment forms for the summer camp are available at the Town Office or at CCS. This year's camp will be held at CCS, July 15-19. For more information call (203) 832-8557 (USA Soccer School) or 672-6373 (Martha Bruehl).

Burning Permits: State law requires all persons wishing to burn brush or other waste to first fill out an application. The forms are available at the selectman’s office.

CORNWALL CHRONICLE

JUNE 1996

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