The Gleaners

If a tree falls in the forest and the landowner isn’t around to hear it, does it still make a sound? Apparently it does. It must say, “Take me, I’m yours,” because a few hours later it will be cut up and loaded in the back of a pickup and will vanish into the distance.

The Lewis Tree Service is back in town, cutting down potential threats to the power lines: branches overhanging the wires and unhealthy trees leaning roadward. Behind the tree men rolls a faithful army of camp followers, ready to glean that precious “Connecticut crude,” now selling for around $200 a cord. One town resident returned home to find an independent crew fully 30 yards from the road, busily cutting up a downed 20-inch oak in his backyard.

Lewis foreman Mike Coffey told me their policy is to haul the softwood logs to “Connecticut crude,” now selling for around $200 a cord. One town resident

Taking the Next Step

Given our weird winter and shocking spring, kids worried that Region One would still be in session on the Fourth of July. In fact, however, CCS will hold graduation on June 17 and the high school on June 19.

Graduating from CCS and heading for HVRHS are Eliana Calhoun, Emily Geyselaers, Roxana Hurlburt, Patrick Kennedy, Teagan Lynch, Sky Trapella, and Ewa Urbanowicz. Classmates continuing on elsewhere are Annika Elwell, Indian Mountain School; Ella Hampson, Cheshire Academy; Olive Cowan and Pia Labalme, Hotchkiss. Willa Neubauer is also headed for Hotchkiss.

Making the giant step on to college will be the following HVRHS graduates, listed with their chosen destinations: Sabrina Brashares, Drew University; Zachary Busby, Macalester College; Anna Geyselaers, University of Southern Maine; Thomas Hatcher, U.S. Navy; Efraise Hermes, Northwestern Connecticut Community College; Heather Kearns, Southern Connecticut State University; Katelyn Keams, Western Connecticut State University; Chloe Ocan, Connecticut College. Carl Hurlburt will graduate from Oliver Wolcott and continue at Northwestern.

(continued on page 2)
Connecticut Community College, while Connor Elwell leaves Millbrook for Ohio Wesleyan. Sam Neubauer graduates from Hotchkiss and will attend Bates College.

The Chronicle sends congratulations and best wishes for success in their new endeavors to all these hopeful graduates.

—Maggie Cooley

No Boom, But Some Progress

Cornwall’s housing market shows modest signs of a spring upturn, but we’re still well short of a housing boom—as reflected by either the volume of sales or rises in house prices.

The housing market in Cornwall is still dormant,” assures Barbara Bigos told me, “even though Salisbury [for which she is also the assessor] is booming.” Barbara hopes the effect will soon spread to Cornwall. So far, however, in the first quarter of 2014, there were only 18 houses sold in Cornwall, plus four sales of vacant land.

Construction of new houses is moving at an even less vigorous pace. “Last year was the worst winter in my memory,” said building inspector Paul Prindle, “and it generated little construction in Cornwall.” The total value of building permits this year was the lowest for April that he has recorded over the past decade. In all, he issued only two permits for new houses in the past 12 months.

The pace of bank foreclosures on local properties slowed in the early months of this year, says Cornwall’s town clerk, Vera Dinneen. There have only been two so far, although three more are in process.

On a somewhat more upbeat note, Priscilla Pavel of Bain Real Estate told me: “It’s getting a little better.” Her office has already had two closings in Cornwall in the past several months. Priscilla thinks that the “local resident” housing market in Cornwall is for houses below the $400,000 price range; above that, it’s primarily “weekenders” who are interested. Another thing she has noticed is that more of the weekender inquiries are now coming from Brooklyn, not just Manhattan.

Another real estate broker, Ira Goldspiel of Sotheby’s, also sees the housing market here as on the way up. He calculates that six houses were sold in Cornwall in the first four months of 2014, as compared to only three sales in the same period last year.

However, Ira also notes that all of this year’s sales so far have been below $500,000, which he views as the “lower end” of the market. He has seen very little movement thus far in either the “mid-market” range of $750,000 to $1 million or in the “upper range” priced above $1 million. Agreeing with assessor Bigos, Ira also sees the overall Northwest Corner market as healthier than Cornwall’s recent experience indicates. He told me that in the surrounding region there were 21 sales in the $1 to $2 million range last year as compared to only four the previous year.

Finally, in case you’re interested in what’s on the Cornwall housing market: according to Realtor.com’s website, there are 29 residential properties looking for buyers. Asking prices range from a modest $195,000 to $8,850,000. The most expensive property, called “Hidden Valley,” has seven bedrooms and ten bathrooms, plus a landing pad for your helicopter. But if you need something a bit more spacious, you might check out the former Trinity Conference Center; it offers 25 bedrooms and 25 baths.

Of course, if you’re content with where you live now, why not wait a bit? Things may pick up soon in Cornwall’s housing market.

—David A. Grossman

Cornwall Bird Walk

Sunday, May 11, was a perfect day for Art Gingert and Jean Bouteiller to lead the 15th annual spring migration walk along the Housatonic River. Art and Jean are skilled birders, able to identify birds by sight, sound, and behavior.

The walk this year took place across the river in Sharon. We met near Swift’s Bridge in the Stanley Works area, a mixture of woods and farmland, with the Appalachian Trail nearby.

After a cold, late spring, the day was sunny and bright, and it was easy to see birds since the leaves were not out yet. As the group gathered, we were welcomed by two pairs of Baltimore orioles, and the day’s tally included scarlet tanagers, redstarts, warbling vireos, chestnut-sided warblers, blue-winged warblers, blue-gray gnatcatchers, kingbirds, common mergansers, yellow warblers, Carolina wrens, red-eyed vireos, black and white warblers, and more. Jean and Art helped us identify songs and encouraged the less-experienced birders with their knowledge and enthusiasm.

—Jim Sheffield

Farm Market Turns Eight

Like dandelions that pop up in our yards heralding the warmer weather, white tents pitched on the front lawn of the Wish House signal that the new growing season is underway. And, with that new burst of green, the Cornwall Farm Market reappears.

Now in its eighth season, the market opened for business on May 10. Bianca and Richard Griggs are once again providing space for the weekly market. Vendors pay a small fee to help defray advertising expenses. And, with much-appreciated support from the Cornwall Foundation and the Cornwall Association, this year market organizers were able to purchase insurance and some additional advertising.

According to Gordon Ridgway, this year’s growing season is about two weeks behind. He explained: “When I was tilling I was tilling with a rototiller, so you could actually see the frost underneath the ground, and this was in early April.” But, if the weather cooperates, shoppers should see early potatoes, greens, strawberries, and peas by early June.

In addition to Ridgway Farm, other long-time vendors are back, including Nick the Knife, Carol Bonci, Margaret Tully, Alicia North (North Star Botanicals), Hurlburt Farm, Larry Stevens, Deb Tyler (Motherhouse), Love Heart’s Bakery, Tom Levine (Longmeadow Farm), Mark Orth (Birdseye & Tanner Brooks Farm), and Nunwell Glass. On opening day, Carol Bonci noted, “It’s like we never left.”

New to the scene are Idella and James Shepard (Cornwall Country Market) and Lost Ruby Farm (goat cheeses and eggs).

Like Cornwall, the market is eclectic and unique—one can find ingredients for a meal, goat cheese chocolate truffle for dessert, and glassware for the tabletop. Locally foraged herbal preparations are available for what ails you, and Motherhouse provides food for thought. Of course, if you’re not in the market for any of the above, just grab a cup of coffee and enjoy conversing with your neighbors. The farm market season runs through the end of October. For up-to-date information and to read Bianca’s blog, check out cornwallfarmmarket.org.

—Pam Longwell

Dognapper Nabbed

On a Friday afternoon in early May, Jessie Bate pulled into the Little Guild parking lot and saw a young man load a dog into his car and drive off. “Something didn’t seem...
right,” she said, “and so I got his license plate number.”

When she went inside, her suspicion was confirmed. According to Little Guild Executive Director Denise Cohn, the man had posed as an adopter, was allowed to take Sherman, a pit bull mix, for a short, get-acquainted walk, and had stolen the dog.

The police were called and given the plate number and video from the guild’s security cameras. Armed with that information, it didn’t take them long to identify the perp, a 19-year-old New York resident who had several previous arrests. That evening, Denise got a call; the cops had located Sherman and the dognapper at a house in Salisbury. “Off we went to get him. The cops came out with Sherman, who was wagging his tail, seeming to have fun with his adventure is” —Ed Ferman

**Meeting Yields Split Vote**

Friday nights in Cornwall are typically quiet and uneventful. Not so at the special town meeting that took place on May 9. Seventy-five people apparently ate their Wheaties and showed up energized to share their impassioned views.

Two items were on the agenda. The town was asked to approve a $10,000 transfer from the Gates Bequest to the House­tonic Youth Service Bureau. A brief presentation was made by Director Nick Pohl, and the attendees voted unanimously to approve the funds. This proved to be the calm before the storm.

On to the vote to determine if our representative to the Region One Board of Education should be chosen by the Corn­wall Board of Education or elected directly by the citizens of Cornwall. Supporters of a “yes” vote, which would change the existing system to require a popular vote, made references to the U.S. Constitution, the right to vote, and googled definitions of democracy. Those supporting a “no” vote, which would allow Cornwall’s BOE to continue to select our Region One representative, evoked issues of trust, and pointed out that the choosing of com­missioners and delegates by elected officials is a widespread, time­honored practice.

The vote: 37 yes, 37 no. So the motion failed and will be referred to town lawyer Perley Grimes. This debate will probably continue. —Janet Carlson Sanders

**Letter to the Chronicle**

**ART AT THE DUMP 2014**

Neither rain nor cold deterred art lovers from participating in and attending this year’s Art®
TheDump. Artists from Connecticut and New York brought their recycled creations, such as mobiles, chalkboards, and tote bags to the sand shed at the transfer station in Cornwall on Saturday, April 26, and Sunday, April 27. Collectors were not far behind, snapping up the unique artwork. Goshen’s Spencer Albano won first place in his Choice Award for his rooster made of rusty garden tools. Winsted’s Theresa Cannavo garnered second with a lovely jacket crafted from sunflower seed bags, and Wilton’s Linda Peterson, last year’s first-place winner, took a solid third with her doll bed.

Sales equaled last year’s in spite of the lack of cooperation from Mother Nature. Thirty percent of the proceeds will again be donated to the art department of CCS.

Special thanks go to the amazing Cornwall road crew who spent days clearing and cleaning the sand shed. —Gail Jacobson

**Cornwall Briefs**

• **Cell Tower News:** There is some action to report this time. First off, Planning & Zoning gave the go-ahead for a tower at the town gravel bank just off the intersection of Route 128 and Dibble Hill Road. This at a meeting last month. Next comes an informa­tional meeting on Tuesday, June 24, at the town hall at 7:30 p.m. Then there will be a town meeting at a date to be announced in July for an actual up-or-down vote. Unlike a private site, a town meeting must vote to approve the proposed tower because the gravel bank is on town property. Finally, the matter goes before the Connecticut Siting Council.

• **Big Town Tent:** Cornwall has one (20’ x 40’), but it’s old and apparently needs replacing at a cost of $2,500. And replacing it will be done with a grant from the town’s Sydney Kaye Fund, hopefully in time for use at this month’s graduation ceremony at CCS.

• **Bye Sue, Welcome Valerie:** Sue Gingert’s replacement as Board of Education clerk at CCS is Cornwall resident Valerie Barber, a graduate of Post University in Waterbury and mother of two. She previously worked for Superior Plus Energy Services.

• **Christmas Tree:** It’s being called a “holiday tree” in the local press, but I’ve never heard of a “holiday tree.” It’s the giant fir on the Cornwall Bridge Green that gets a modest amount of lighting starting in the days before Christmas. Anyway, the nearby branch of the National Iron Bank began a campaign, since taken over by the town, to raise funds to upgrade the solar­powered system so that it can support more lights with greater luminosity. (That’s the first time I’ve ever used luminosity in a sentence, and maybe the last!) The project is a fundraiser, and contributions can be dropped off at the bank or town office.

• **Tax Relief:** Tax bills should be in the mail, and we are reminded that Cornwall has a couple of options for people facing financial difficulty. Property owners may apply for a $200 reduction if their tax bill exceeds 10 percent of their income. If the bill exceeds 8 percent, taxpayers may enter a tax-free deal with the town, which then would take a lien on your property. The lien would eventually be settled when the property is sold. Applications are due at the selectmen’s office by June 15. (If you are able to follow the above, you probably have a master’s degree in accounting!) —John Miller

**Events & Announcements**

**Red Cross Blood Drive:** UCC Parish House and parking lot, Tuesday, June 3, from 1 to 5:45 p.m. Info: Pat Blakey, 672-6516.

**Community Contra Dance:** Saturday, June 7, at 7 p.m. at the town hall. Live music by Still, the Homegrown Band; calling by Rachel Gail. Everyone welcome, all ages. Donations requested to pay the caller. Info: Jane Prentice, 672-6101.

**Senior Events:** Free Bend and Stretch Clinic: Mondays, June 2, and 9, 11:15 a.m. to 12:15 p.m., at the UCC Parish House. Free Blood Pressure Clinic at the UCC Parish House on Monday, June 9, from 12 to 1 p.m. For both events, call VNA Northwest, 860-567-6000, for more info.

**Senior Lunch at the Wandering Moose,** Tuesday, June 10, 11:30 a.m. to 1 p.m. Fine buffet, fascinating company, and a great price. Reservations not needed.

**Art in Cornwall:** The Souterrain Gallery will feature Harvey Offenhartz’s Drawing Color from June 7 to July 13. Artist’s reception is Saturday, June 7, 3 to 6 p.m. At the library, Home and Away, drawings and watercolors by Steve Foote, continues through June 28. Nine photographs by Cornwall students at HVHRS are on display at the new teen center at the library. Becky Hurlburt’s 2003: A Photo Perspective, continues through June at the UCC Parish House, with morning viewing hours (except Saturdays). Raymond Olson’s work continues at the National Iron Bank in June.

**Connecticut Walks Day:** A two-mile, self-guided walk along the Housatonic River, is scheduled for Saturday, June 7. Meet at the
Household Hazardous Waste Collection Day is at the Falls Village Public Works Garage on Saturday, June 7, from 9 a.m. to noon. Get a required free entry ticket to the collection from Joyce Hart at town hall.

P&Z will hold a public hearing at the library on Tuesday, June 10, at 7 p.m. regarding revisions to the Housatony Overlay Zone that alter the nature of development that is permissible alongside and near the river. Karen Nelson, ZEO, 672-4957, has copies of the proposed new regs, or find them online at cornwallnet.org.

IRIS Talk: On Sunday, June 8, Chris George, executive director of Integrated Refugee and Immigrant Service, will speak about IRIS’s work in resettling refugees in Connecticut. The talk will take place at the UCC Parish House at 11:30 a.m.

Join a Trails Day Hike, 9 a.m. to noon on Sunday, June 8, led by naturalist and CCT member Ron Hummel, to explore two old growth forests. Meet at Cathedral Pines parking lot for the first walk, then take a short drive to Ballyhack. Both walks are moderately difficult: bring water and snacks.

CCT Program: Learn about the bluebird box nesting program and visit young nestlings with local resident Sandy Fiebelkorn. Meet Sunday, June 15, at 5 p.m. in the library parking lot. Limit 10; families welcome. Call Ron Hummel, 672-2325, for required registration.

Annual Community Beach Party, hosted by Park & Rec., will be held at the Cream Hill Lake Association on Friday, June 20, from 5 to 8 p.m. Bring a salad or side dish to add to the burgers, hot dogs, chips, and beverages provided. The Cornwall Ag Commission will dish out ice cream. Lifeguards will be on duty.

Hammond Beach opens Saturday, June 21. Required sign-ups for swim lessons and swim team are the weekend of June 21, 11 a.m. to 2 p.m. Get scheduling info at registration. Swim team begins Monday, June 23. Pick up beach passes at the town hall.

CCT Program: The Grumbling Gryphons Theater Arts Camp for children ages 6 to 14 will be held at the town hall, Monday through Friday, August 4 to 8, from 9 a.m. to 2 p.m., with a special intensive theater class for 10-to-14-year olds, from 2 to 3 p.m. Both groups will perform on Friday, August 8, at 5 p.m. at the town hall. Register by June 30 with Leslie Elias by calling 672-0286, or email grumblinggriffons@gmail.com.

June Is for the Dogs: All dogs six months old or older must be licensed by June 30 in the town clerk’s office. A current rabies vaccination certificate must be submitted or be on file. Neutered or spayed dogs cost $8; unfixed dogs cost $19. A spayed or neutered dog being licensed for the first time must have a certificate from a licensed veterinarian. If registering by mail, enclose a SASE for return of tags and license; otherwise the town clerk’s office is open Monday through Thursday, 9 a.m. to noon and 1 to 4 p.m. If you no longer have a previously registered dog, please inform the town clerk, 672-2709.

At the Library
Sondra Zeidenstein, editor of Speaking for My Self: Twelve Women Poets in Their Seventies and Eighties, will conduct a workshop on creativity in later life on Wednesday, June 4, at 4 p.m.

“The Sense of Place”: Jane Garmey will discuss the pleasures and perils of gardening in this part of the world on Saturday, June 7, at 5 p.m. Garmey’s latest book, Private Gardens of the Hudson Valley, will be available for sale and signing.

Dance Movie series: Mark Morris’s Falling Down Stairs will be shown on Wednesday, June 11, at 7 p.m. No charge, but donations are welcome.

Family Movie series: Because of Winn Dixie, rated PG and based on the book by Kate DiCamillo, will air at 7 p.m. on Friday, June 20.

Summer Camp for Kids: June 24 to 27 and August 19 to 22, from 9 a.m. to 3 p.m. Crafts, music, games, and books typical of the Civil War era, suitable for grades K to 3. $10 materials fee. Space is limited; call the library to register.

Mah Jongg has at least one table going every Thursday from 7 to 9 p.m. Drop-ins welcome, no experience needed.


A Non-Fiction Book Group is forming and looking for participants. Call Melissa Andrews at 672-6173.

Treasurer’s Report
The Chronicle has had only three treasurers in 23 years. They’ve all been known as “moneymogs,” and all ran a tight ship; our budget has scarcely changed over the years. But last year we ran a deficit of $1,700 (partially because of expenses on our new website), and so this would be a great time to send us another gift.

Camp Eureka: Monday through Friday, June 23 to 27, 9 a.m. to 1 p.m. Meet at different Cornwall farms and discover the source of our food and shelter. Visit www.CampEureka.us or call Debra.

CCT Program: George, executive director of Integrated Refugee and Immigrant Service, will speak about IRIS’s work in resettling refugees in Connecticut. The talk will take place at the UCC Parish House at 11:30 a.m.

JOIN A TRAILS DAY HIKE, 9 A.M. TO NOON ON SUNDAY, JUNE 8, LED BY NATURALIST AND CCT MEMBER RON HUMMEL, TO EXPLORE TWO OLD GROWTH FORESTS. MEET AT CATHEDRAL PINES PARKING LOT FOR THE FIRST WALK, THEN TAKE A SHORT DRIVE TO BALLYHACK. BOTH WALKS ARE MODERATELY DIFFICULT: BRING WATER AND SNACKS.

MUSIC MOUNTAIN INVITES CORNWALL RESIDENTS TO A FREE CONCERT ON SATURDAY, JUNE 14, AT 1 P.M. TOP MUSIC GRADS WILL BE JOINED BY CONDUCTOR AND COMPOSER PETER ASKIM, TO PERFORM WITH THE QUARTET ETHEL. CORNELL FAMILIES AND THE QUARTET ETHEL. CORNELL FAMILIES WILL HOST THE STUDENTS.

MOTHERHOUSE EVENTS: OLD STYLE LIFE-SKILL SERIES WORKSHOP, SATURDAY, JUNE 14, FROM 10:30 A.M. TO 1:30 P.M., HERBAL WE’D WALK AND FIRST AID, WITH LOCAL HERBALIST ALICIA NORTH AT LOCAL FARM. POTLUCK LUNCH. $35/FAMILY. REGISTRATION VIA EMAIL AT DEBRA@MOTHERHOUSE.US OR 672-0229.

TREASURER’S REPORT
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