CORNWALL CHRONICLE
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Marvelwood Maneuvers
Cornwall Village residents may see changes soon in their village center. Ownership of the Calhoun House of the former Marvelwood School will shortly be transferred to Tom Hubbard of Cornwall. With completion of the sale Ben Gray announced that he was divesting himself of his partnership in the Cornwall Limited Liability Company (CLLC), leaving Rick Wolkowitz as sole owner. (See letter on page 3.)

The eventual use or disposition of the Calhoun Building is yet to be determined. The potential development of the entire CLLC property is being discussed. Whether to exclude the following: "adult or juvenile remands to be seen.

Norfolk last month rejected a proposal from Community Solutions Inc. to renovate part of the Bruderhof property for a facility to serve youths under the jurisdiction of the CDCF. Opponents stated concerns about "public safety" and "unsuitability" in urging denial of a permit to create such a facility. Whether Cornwall shares Norfolk's views remains to be seen.

In anticipation of such future buyers, 13 Cornwall Village residents are petitioning the Planning and Zoning Commission for changes in the regulations to limit the uses permitted in the Cornwall Plains Zone. Concerned that the former Marvelwood property might be attractive to state agencies such as the Department of Correction or the Connecticut Department of Children and Families (CDFC), the petitioners want regulations to exclude the following: "adult or juvenile correctional institutions, institutions that operate as schools or rehabilitation centers for adult or juvenile offenders, organizations that accept referrals from the aforementioned entities, organizations that accept referrals from the court system or government agencies, whether or not for institutional treatment, drug and alcohol rehabilitation centers, and institutions that house mentally ill or criminally insane clients." A hearing before P&Z is set for March 8.

It's The Dams, Damn It!
When my twin brother Ralph and I were boys back in the early twenties, Tanner Brook ambled along Great Hollow Road, its clear fresh water singing to us. Lush green hay fields sloped to the curving river banks. Cardinal-red plants, blue-fringed gentian, and yellow dandelions graced the curvatures we found tracks of heroes. The sight of native square-tailed trout darting to the surface after mayflies quickened our heartbeats. Homemade fishing rods with worms for bait were equipment enough for us.

As years passed, rumors grew about the quaint beavers that were moving into the northwest corner of Connecticut. However, those "quaint" beavers are great dam- and channel-builders that can turn flat lands into large swamps. These furry engineers, working day and night, also use existing roads as dams, building them up to flood even more land, causing trouble for cars and school busses.

I once watched a beaver chew around an aspen tree that was one foot in diameter, leaving a circular hinge of three inches before the tree finally fell. Another time a woodchopper felled a five-inch maple so that it was hung up on a standing tree. I had to admire the beaver's reasoning as it completed its task. The animal stood on webbed hind feet, chewing through the under side of the leaning tree trunk until a section broke off. Then he chewed off another section. The maneuver was repeated until the leaning tree was vertical enough to drop into the pond.

I may admire the beaver's mind and his skills, but now Tanner Brook is an ugly mu-

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* Check at Town Office

(continued on page 2)
A recent story in The Litchfield County Times, based on interviews with fire companies in the county, reported an urgent countywide need for more volunteers to staff both fire and ambulance divisions.

Local firefighting and ambulance rescue teams in danger of dying out? Since Cornwall's situation was not specifically mentioned in the LCT article, the Chronicle talked to CVFD Chief Ron Laigle to check the current state of departmental readiness in the town. Laigle stated that the department is down from 55 members five years ago to 41 at present, with five lost to illness or death, and others moving away. However, the department has picked up new volunteers from recent arrivals in town. One member each of the ambulance and fire divisions has "married into" the department. One recent member specifically responded to the need for more women on the Rescue Squad, which is now sufficiently staffed. Laigle says that when the department responds to a fire or accident scene, there are more than enough people to get the job done.

Laigle says that the main problem facing towns is the lack of availability of personnel during daylight hours. Most of the volunteers have jobs, and more are working outside of town than was the case a few years ago. Another factor that discourages volunteers is the number of hours required for qualification—140 hours for firefighters, and up to 300 for ambulance personnel.

Other than the knowledge that one is a trained member of a skilled team, and that one is helping one's neighbors, and that, as a volunteer, one helps keep local taxes down, there has never been much to attract or retain members—but then, members of the department have never needed more than that to motivate them. That's what small-town living is all about.

—Earl Brecher

Welcome

Gunnar Christian to Karolene and Clay Carlson
Caleb Conrad to Karen and Michael Dutton
Ciara Marlies Huriburt to Irene Fossati and Allyn (Bud) Huriburt III
Andrew Forest Pittman to Veronique Choa Pittman and Robert Pittman

Good-bye to Friends

Mary Swift Calloum
Cynthia Charity

Congratulations

Stefan Bibro to Karen Voss

Land Transfers

Peter W. and Sandra E. Ripley to Joshua E. Perlstein, house and 3.2 acres on Jewell Street for $132,500.
Dorothy S. and Eugene L. Scott, Trs., to John and Bethany K. Thompson, house and 4.25 acres at 342 Kent Road for $183,000.
Estate of Lotte Goslar Seehaus to the Cream Hollow Trust, house at 359 Town Street plus 10.06 acres for $380,000.
Estate of Lou Calhoun Frost to Alec C. and Nancy H. Frost, house at 1 School Street for $200,000.
Stephen M. Drenen, Franklin Moss, and Melyn L. Toomey to James LaPorta, 9.5 acres, Lot 4 on Great Hollow Road for $30,000.

New Library Comes Into Focus

Once a kaleidoscope of disparate views on the "where, what, and how" of growing more library space, the bits and pieces of our new library are assuming a unified reality before our very eyes.

On Valentine's Day, contractor Jim Terrall, chairman of the Building Committee, gave an audience of about 40 a progress report on the building plans as developed to date. Architect Ken MacLean's aim, he said, is to design a building with simple lines that blends in rather than overwhelms, housing a multi-purpose library that goes far beyond being a book repository only. These plans are displayed in the entry hall of the current library.

Clearly, an enormous amount of work has been devoted to getting things this far, with the Library's Board of Trustees, Friends of the Library, the Cornwall Association, and town selectmen joining forces to turn Cornwall's dream into a building.

Now the task is to raise about $750,000 for the library building and endowment to add to the $426,000 library-constructed grant awarded by the state, the $250,000 payment promised by the town to the Library for vacating the present building, and the approximately $300,000 already donated in the prefund drive.

—The Editors

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Coping With Growing Pains

As a result of the rapid expansion of Cornwall's student population over the last few years, the Education Strategic Study Committee is continuing its intensive analysis of the Consolidated School's long-term as well as immediate needs for growth. Led by Chairman Ralph Gold, the committee has been investigating a variety of issues: the proposed new gymnasium, the wisdom of acquiring additional land, and the solution of other current crowding problems.

In the February 11 meeting, Roger Kane analyzed the possibility of gaining an additional acre immediately in front of the school by diverting Cream Hill Road through the existing sand parking lot across from the firehouse. This option, which his analysis indicates could be accomplished with complete regrading for $150,000 to $180,000, would create room for expanded parking facilities and a site for the proposed new gym, while solving the potentially dangerous problem of having so many children tramping back and forth across the road from the heavily used sand parking lot.

For now the committee has formally rejected the notion of starting a second school on the former Marvelwood property because it would be prohibitively expensive, requiring considerable duplication of current staffing and other costs. The committee's queries to surrounding towns have shown scant interest in sharing in the burden in a region-wide middle school.

For the time being, CCS appears to be coping with its growing population, currently 210, by creative scheduling, program reduction, and adapting to expanded class size. But advocates argue that there would be a number of benefits in either expanding the current gym into the existing parking lot or building a new multiple-use facility.

The committee has heard detailed reports on the inadequacies of the present gym, which is too small to handle the expanded school population's physical education needs, or even to allow home basketball games, traditional school assemblies, and a variety of other enrichment programs. A new facility could alleviate much of the school's crowding problems, by freeing up space for future classroom needs, and allowing a more encompassing physical education program. (CCS students currently spend indoor recess at their desks.)

The committee has a considerable agenda to complete before solidifying any recommendations to be brought before the voters. Projections of future growth in the student population, which were gathered by Dan McGuinness of the Northwestern Connecticut Council of Governments for Selectman Gordon Ridgway, seem modest at the present. But prudence dictates a thorough review of the school's current and future ability to meet the town's needs, and the committee is tackling that responsibility energetically.

—David Monagan

Letters to the Chronicle

A SPECIAL KIND OF TOWN
I would like to thank the many people of Cornwall who gave so generously of their time during the construction of the new CCS. Without the CCS summer volunteers who came so quickly on Christmas Day, my husband probably would not be alive today. To us, they are heroes. The Rev. Scott Cady of St. Peter's and Father John of St. Bridget's spent numerous hours with my family, helping us to cope. Dinners were delivered for two solid weeks, and volunteers plowed and sanded our driveway, brought our garbage to the dump, and drove my three children to their various activities.

We just moved here in September, and having my husband so ill in the hospital was terrifying. I could not even begin to explain to the outside world how special Cornwall is. You just have to be lucky enough to live here. Thanks to everyone who helped my family.

—Marie Savan

BE A GOOD SCOUT
The Cub Scouts need men and women from Cornwall to give an hour a week or month, afternoons or evenings, to help the leaders of Cornwall Pack 15 (35 boys in five dens) with its program. Currently we are very hard pressed to properly supervise and conduct the Scout program. Please give thought to your own childhood and acknowledge the favorable influence that many adults had on you. Volunteers can help supervise and have fun at the same time. Call me at 672-6377 for more information.

—Jim Levy

THE MARVELWOOD OPTION
Congratulations to Tom Hubbard for his pending purchase of Calhoun House (on the former Marvelwood School property). I have not discussed its imminent use, but there may still be possible community use for all former Marvelwood buildings.

With this sale I am divesting my personal interests in the Cornwall Limited Liability Company and can speak without conflict of interest. I believe those spaces hold tremendous opportunities for us. If used as a community resource, they could provide the space to develop and promote the activities which preserve and enhance the community we all love for a long time into the future.

Again, we find ourselves at a cross-roads for the Cornwall Consolidated School. We need a new full-size gym, more parking, ball fields, classrooms, and program spaces. I know buying more land, new construction, leasing new temporary classrooms, and rerouting a road are very expensive improvements, but Marvelwood represents true value. It is the same size as CCS with more level land. There are excellent science labs, classrooms, a fine library larger than at CCS, offices, a small theater, an indoor gym, a good kitchen, modern efficient systems, basketball and tennis courts, an art studio, all in good condition and in a wonderful location, without traffic, near CCS's Foote Fields, the town's Hubbard Field, the Village Green, and the new library. Maybe we should consider a middle school.

These Marvelwood spaces make real economic as well as community sense, particularly when we still have many individuals and groups, such as our school or Park & Rec., our seniors and teens, non-profit organizations and church rummage sales, artists, exhibitors, and performers, who could make use of such space. All of us would benefit.

—Ben Grey

By the Grace of Amahl
Almost $4,000 was raised through the recent performances at the UCC of Amahl and the Night Visitors in support of the June trip toour town by the Jubilee School. Thank you, Cornwall! And thank you, Anne Chamberlin, cast, and crew!

Plans are under way for the June visit as well as for one to Philadelphia by a Cornwall group, perhaps this spring. It is too early to consider being a host family or to let us know of your interest in other participation. Call the church office for more information, 672-6840.

—The UCC Jubilee Fund Committee

All's Well
Long before there was a Chronicle, remarkable letters flowed into Cornwall. Early in the 19th century, according to Starr's History of Cornwall, a Rev. Samson Occum, a minister from the Stockbridge (sic) tribe, wrote this to his Cornwall daughters, while visiting England:

Dear Mary and Esther,

Perhaps you may query whether I am well. I came from home [Cornwall] well, was by the way well, got over well, am receiv'd at London well, and am treated extremely well,—yes, I am caress'd too well. And do you pray that I may be well, and may do well, and in time may return home well. And I hope you are well, and wish you well, and as I think you begun well, so keep on well, that you may end well, and then all will be well. And so farewell.

—David Monagan
Cornwall Homeowners who were 65 or older by December 31, 1998, or who are receiving Social Security disability payments, may be eligible for credit on their property tax. The property must be their principal residence and total income including Social Security must be less than $23,600 single and $28,900 married. Applications may be filed in the Assessor’s Office until May 15, and, if eligible, will apply to the July billing. Once on the program, re-application is every two years. Forms have been mailed to homeowners who must re-apply this year.

Persons currently receiving a veteran’s exemption may be eligible for an additional exemption if they meet the above income requirements. There is no age requirement for additional exemption. Application period is from February 1 to October 1 for application to the October 1, 1999, Grand List. Application forms are available from the Assessor’s Office, open Tuesdays and Thursdays, 9 A.M. to noon, and Wednesdays, 1-4 P.M.

Art in Cornwall: In March, Stefanie Plunkett will show a series of gouache paintings and drawings at the National Iron Bank. The bank would like to thank Howard Stone for showing his paintings in February. At the Cornwall Library, Nancy Calhoun’s exhibit of watercolors of flowers continues through April 3. Pieter Lefferts’ exhibit of paintings continues at Hedgerow through March, as does Nick Jacobs’ show of photographs at the Wish House.

Medicare and Managed Care will be the topic of a discussion sponsored by the Senior Club on Thursday, March 18, at 2 P.M. at the Town Hall. Eric Rodko of the Western Connecticut Area Agency on Aging will answer questions.

Kids’ Night Out at the Cornwall Library, a book-based film series, continues Friday, March 5, with Black Beauty, and Friday, March 19, with Matilda, both at 6:45 to 8:30 P.M. Films for preschoolers on Saturday, March 6 and March 20, from 10:30 to 11:30 A.M. will include Frog and Toad Together, Dr. DeSoto, Ina Sleeps Over, and Corduroy. Please register: 672-6874. Snacks provided.

Events & Announcements

The Cornwall Child Center Eighth Annual Benefit Auction is set for Sunday, May 2, at the Mohawk Mountain Ski Lodge. If you have items to donate or would like to be involved, please contact Jean Vitalis (672-6880) or Jamie Monagan (672-4815).

Musical Theater

Trip: Cornwallians are invited to join a CHOICES sponsored bus trip to see a matinee performance of Children of Eden at the Thomaston Opera House on Sunday, April 11. This “joyous blend of fable and biblical allegory” is a musical adaptation of the first nine chapters of Genesis, with music and lyrics by Stephen Schwartz, whose credits include Godspell, Pippin, Pocahontas, The Hunchback of Notre Dame and The Prince of Egypt. Tickets are $10, plus bus fare (based on numbers attending). The bus will leave CCS at 12:45 P.M. Call Jamie Monagan (672-4815) by March 13 for reservations.

Bake Sale: Extras for Kids, which has helped send kids to the theater, lessons, camp, etc., will be selling gourmet baked goods on Saturday, April 3, 9 A.M. to noon, at Bairs’ and at Hedgerows. Splurge on that chocolate mousse pie, and support the cause.

Park & Rec. Concert: David Darling, known as the “maverick cellist” who has redefined the way the cello is played, will perform at Cornubia Hall on Saturday, March 27, at 7 P.M. His innovative style has helped open the world of music and improvisation to thousands of people. In 1995, Mr. Darling received the Artist of the Year award from the Board of Directors of Young Audiences, Inc., in recognition of his contribution to arts-in-education. Tickets are $5 for adults. Seating is limited. Call Skip Hunt for reservations, 672-3171.

Cornwall on the Internet

We typed in Cornwall, CT, on a search engine the other day and came across a surprising and lovely site titled “A Schoolgirl in Cornwall.” It comprises the 1905 diaries of Ethel Oliver Hart, complete with family photos and a report card from the West Cornwall School. Take a look at: http://www.ultranet.com/~harts/family/olivers/school/school97.html. We’ll be glad to send a printed copy to the first March contributor who requests it. Don’t forget, we need your continued support.

Yes, I want the Chronicle to continue. Here is my tax-deductible contribution of: $_________.

Name ____________________________
Address __________________________
City/State/Zip ________________________

Mail the Chronicle to the out-of-town address above: $10.