Things Are Going to Change

Cornwall is one of 20 Litchfield County towns whose well being and capacity to attract and keep future citizens are analyzed in “Community Crossroads,” published by the Northwest Connecticut Community Foundation.

Edited by Cornwall’s own Tom Bechtle, the study takes a deep dive into the numbers to discover “where we are now and where we are headed.”

The research comes at an opportune time for the town as we are now engaged in updating Cornwall’s Plan of Conservation and Development. That work and the efforts of the Economic Development Commission, the selectmen, and others begin from a common starting point: Cornwall’s population, especially its young people, is declining at an alarming rate.

Cornwall shares a county-wide decrease in the number of young adults, lower birth rates, and a big uptick in the number of seniors. The number and range of job types are not growing and there aren’t enough steady jobs that pay for a “basic needs budget” of $45,000. In Cornwall that’s 31 percent of the households in town. More residents work outside town (88 percent) than in it (22 percent), causing manning problems when the fire department is called out.

These numbers feed right into a core problem in Cornwall and the rest of the county. Owning a home is moving further and further out of reach, especially for households with incomes less than $50,000. Many rent and those who do have mortgage struggles to keep up with payments. This, of all the economic measures cited in “Community Crossroads,” is only going to continue unless the town can build more affordable housing, the banks can loosen restrictions on lending, and a strong public/private push is made.

Gov. Dannel P. Malloy is even threatening to put some muscle behind the need to develop more affordable housing. Towns that don’t submit plans of conservation and development with eased zoning for building such housing might be on notice that state funding, like STEAP grants, will not be available to them. At the moment this is cage rattling, but it does show the state cares strongly about creating more housing for young families.

It’s not all bad. Cornwall is above average in a measure of economic health and growth. Unemployment is very low and the town has made it out of the 2008 recession. The county has experienced net immigration from the rest of Connecticut and other states. What’s more, recent discussions about CCS and the town plan have generated an awareness about the need for being proactive, for not sitting still and letting whatever’s coming roll over us.

“Community Crossroads” suggests three strategies for towns in Litchfield County to pursue. The first is to encourage business investment in the Northwest Corner; second, to ensure that what’s been taught in schools is in sync with 21st century jobs; and last, to focus on “quality-of-place” aspects to build community “attachment and appeal.”

Much of what’s in the community foundation report is being addressed in Cornwall as potentially restrictive zoning regulations get a hard look during the coming year. Things are going to change, that’s for sure. Gordon Ridgway says, “It’s a real wake-up call. Everyone in Cornwall should read this report” and learn to influence and welcome whatever’s coming.

—Lisa L. Simont

Budget Prognosis

Poring over a town budget is like looking through a comprehensive medical examination result. You see the good, the bad, and the ugly, all spelled out in black and white:

(continued on page 2)
let this article be the extent of your understanding, or participation in, the town budget and local government process. Get yourself a copy of the budget worksheet, study it, and show up for the May 18th town meeting. It’s not the most basic form of living in a democracy, casting your aye or nay in a matter that directly affects you.

—Trey Shores (Cornwall Neobtic)

A Cornwall Friendship

They met in their early 20s because Tom fell in love with Bob’s good friend Margaret Van Doren with whom Bob had shared childhood summers on Cream Hill. When he was lifeguarding at the lake, she helped him by sweeping out what was then called the Boathouse. Not long after they met, Tom Bevans and Bob Beers embarked on their first joint project building a wooden sailboat christened, The Margaret.

In their 30s, 40s, and 50s both were deeply involved in pursuing very different careers, but they shared occasional weekend evenings because their wives had become close friends and their children loved to play together.

After retiring in their 60s and moving to Cornwall full time, each man became involved in a number of community endeavors on his own, but eventually they decided to team up creating projects for the Cornwall community.

Their first joint Cornwall community project was to design, produce, and distribute a new town map. Tom designed the map and Bob drove up and down every paved and unpaved public and private road serving two or more houses to check out information provided by earlier town maps. Road names were verified using town records. A visiting daughter was drafted to type an alphabetical listing of all the roads with a location code for each one. A printer was hired. The new Cornwall, Ct Active Roads 1991 map proudly announced: “Published by B&B Maps.” Soon it was for sale at Yutzler’s in West Cornwall.

Their second joint Cornwall project was launched because they felt that news about town events should be more available. Internet blogs and websites were not yet pipe dreams, so Tom and Bob set out to create a monthly newsletter, written, edited, managed, and circulated by Cornwall volunteers. Tom and Margaret knew all about designing publications. Cornwall was full of good writers and artists who could contribute copy and illustrations. Bob began to solicit and collect donations so that a printer, envelopes, and stamps could be paid for and every resident of Cornwall would receive the newsletter free of charge.

The first issue, Volume 1: Number 1 of the Cornwall Chronicle came out in February 1991. Twenty-seven years later all of the Chronicle founders are gone, but the Chronicle is still going strong.

—Trey Shores (Cornwall Neobtic)

Goodbye to Friends

Lee Taliaferro
Frank Tansey

Though the men were totally different in their politics and career choices, the bond of friendship established by Tom and Bob when they were in their 20s never wavered throughout the rest of their lives. Beers-Bevans friendships have continued to flourish among succeeding generations, keeping alive the memory of Tom, Margaret, Bob, and Mary.

—Sarah Beers Jenny

Behold and Believe

What You See!

On March 24 Cornwall Town Hall was the scene of a truly varied display of local talent, both of stage and table. As the 50 or so guests piled plates full of potluck goodies, Fred Thaler opened with seven Shakespearean sonnets to set the mood.

Dominique Lasseur provided additional introductions and context for the evening, which had been organized under the auspices of the Town Hall Players. Fourteen intrepid Cornwallians then took to the stage to provide serious, comic, heartfelt, and just plain fun entertainment. The winter blues were nowhere to be seen.

Representing the younger Cornwallians, Dean Saccardi sang “We Kiss in a Shadow” from his role the previous weekend in HVHR’s production of The King and I, and Danny Saed performed two songs with his own sound effect accompaniments.

Not to be outdone, several veteran Town Hall Players went back in time for their performances. Susan Fox lipped her way along as young Herman coming home from school. Later in the evening Jandi Hanna and Molly Hinchman presented a teen scene from the Players’ 2004 Thanksgiving play The Dining Room. Finally, Dave Cadwell reprised a monologue from his role in both Sharon and Warner Theatre productions of The Best Little Whorehouse in Texas.

Instrumental musical entertainment appeared with Leslie Elias’s skillful whistling and Chris Mullins, who played the banjo and sang three songs to the delight of all.

To balance out the music and acting, several performers chose dramatic readings. John Perry read Dylan Thomas’s “Do Not Go Gentle into That Good Night.” With a drawing of “man’s best friend” beside him, Larry Stevens presented closing comments by George Graham Vest at a trial in Missouri in 1855.

Dominique and Fred then provided some European culture to elevate the evening. Dominique recited “Le Corbeau et le Renard” in French with a brief translation. Fred recited more Shakespeare, “When My Love Says That She is Made of Truth.” Not to be outdone, Nick Jacobs then presented several of his own sonnets, including “Erika” and “Why Should I Write Sonnets Again.”

(continued from page 1)
To close out the evening, and with much encouragement, Dominique "played his teeth" which sounded much like a moving horse. Truly, such a bounty of talent to behold and celebrate! —Virginia Gold

Schools in School
Middle school science teacher Beth Frost has brought a whole new meaning to the word “school” at CCS, as she is raising a school of trout right in her classroom. Trout in the Classroom (TIC) is a program run by Trout Unlimited that supplies free trout and a unique hands-on opportunity for students to raise them as well as learn about their life cycle, their habitat, and the ecosystems that support them.

The students are able to observe trout development, from when the trout arrive as eggs in October, to May when they will be released into the Housatonic or one of the DEEP-approved tributaries. Beth Frost is a strong believer that “science should be hands on,” and after having great success in her previous school, could not pass up the opportunity to bring this program to Cornwall. —Dean Saccardi

Keeping Fit in Cornwall
For those of us who have been hibernating all winter, spring is the time to crawl out of our caves and move about. For some, the woods, trails, roads, and numerous waterways offer plenty of space for exercise. But for others, a more regular and disciplined approach to exercise is called for year-round, and Cornwall has an enthusiastic and accomplished corps of instructors ready to lead. Herewith, a compilation.

Days and times are listed at the bottom of the Chronicle calendar. Please contact the instructors for fee information for all options.

- **Pilates.** Alice Sarkissian-Wolf has studied, performed, and taught modern dance and ballet for over 55 years and has been a Pilates practitioner and instructor for half of that. She was the director of dance at the Hotchkiss School for 26 years. Her classes on Tuesday mornings at the Cornwall Library combine elements of Pilates, dance, and yoga to build strength, flexibility, and balance. For more information, contact her at aswolf@hotchkiss.org or 860-248-9101.

- **Tai Chi.** David Colbert has been teaching a weekly long form Tai Chi Chuan class on Wednesday evenings at town hall for 12 years. His practice is grounded in the teachings of Master Tung Kai Ying, which

David has been following for 22 years. The slow, graceful, and rhythmic sequence of movements promotes balance, control, and good health. Email David at davidcolbert7@gmail.com or call 672-0064.

- **Yoga.** Nancy Opgaard has been studying and practicing various forms of yoga for 35 years and teaches traditional Hatha Yoga in Cornwall. Yoga promotes strength and flexibility, as well as encouraging mindfulness. Her classes take place at the Cornwall Library on Monday, Friday, and Sunday mornings. For more information, contact her at nancyopgaard@gmail.com or 860-248-3147.

- **Zumba.** Anne-Marie Rosaler teaches weekly classes at the Cornwall Library on Tuesday and Thursday evenings. She has been studying dance and taking fitness classes since childhood and became a certified Zumba teacher five years ago. Zumba is a dance fitness workout based on Latin dance, which also combines global rhythms and dance. Movements are simple and repetitive, and aerobic intensity is varied to create total body conditioning. Email Anne-Marie at amrosaler@gmail.com or call 860-491-9881.

—Amelia de Neergaard

Power Line Safety
A safety tip from the Cornwall Volunteer Fire Department: It's a lovely day for a drive, a bit windy but there is no snow. While driving, you come across power lines that are down. Stop, do not proceed closer. Most importantly stay in your vehicle. The ground around your vehicle may be energized. Power lines that are live aren't necessarily arching and twitching. They can look very innocuous but could be quite deadly. Take note of the number on the nearest pole to you. If possible call 911. Report your location, the number from the pole, and nearest cross streets. Back your car at least two full telephone pole lengths away from the wires and wait for assistance.

If the wires have come down on your vehicle, stay inside. If your vehicle catches fire, remove loose clothing and jump without touching the vehicle, landing on two feet at the same time. Do not take steps. Shuffle your feet to gain a safe distance of at least 50 feet away. Do not take steps as that will complete an electrical circuit between the charged ground and your body.

If wires fall outside of your home, the same dangers apply. The ground may be energized. Stay inside. If you were outside when the wires fell, shuffle your feet until you reach safety and call for help.

When power goes down in a neighborhood, generators can inadvertently push electricity back out into the grid. The once-assumed dead wires can be reenergized, so always wait for the power company or emergency personnel to let you know that the scene is safe. Avoid touching or walking over wires at all times.

The Cornwall Volunteer Fire Department wishes you a happy spring and safe times outside.

—Diane Beebe

Cornwall Briefs
- **A Referendum** will be held in the Cornwall Town Hall on Tuesday, May 8, from noon until 8 p.m. for voting on the Region One school budget. Absentee ballots are available in the town clerk’s office.

- **Annual town budget meeting** is May 18 at 7:30 p.m. at CCS to vote on our budget and to appropriate money to replace the docks at Hammond Beach.

- **Don’t miss your chance to vote in the August primary** for candidates for state and district offices, including governor. To vote in the August 14 primary you must be registered in a major party. To change parties, there is a 30-day waiting period. So, May 14 is the deadline to change your party enrollment for voting eligibility in the primary. Unaffiliated voters have until August 13 at noon to enroll in a party.

- **The Fire Department’s ambulance certification** has changed to Basic Life Support from Advanced, which will allow better use of personnel and make response to events easier. More volunteers are always needed, especially those willing to do the needed training for certification.

- **The CVFD has a new 3,500-gallon tanker** in service, with the old one now in Cornwall Bridge.

- **Spring is time for tree trimming and road resurfacing,** which may have begun on your road. Lewis Tree Service will be trimming trees to prevent outages on Cream Hill, Town Street, Great Hill, and Great Hollow. Road resurfacing will take place on Great Hill Road and College Street, as well as some small roads. —Ann Gold
**Events & Announcements**

**WOMAN’S SOCIETY** May 3 luncheon will be held at Pearly’s at noon. RSVP Jen Markow at 672-4875. Applications for Cornwall Woman’s Society financial awards are due May 15. See letter in April Chronicle for requirements. Mark your calendar for annual Rummage Sale—July 21, 22, and 23.

**Come What May Contra Dance** on Saturday, May 5, at town hall at 7 p.m. Lively music with Still the Homegrown Band and calling by National Heritage Fellow Dudley Laufman. All dances taught, no partner needed, and all ages welcome. Donation requested to pay the caller. For more information call Jane at 672-6101 or go to motherhouse.us.

**The 20th Annual Spring Bird Walk** led by Art Gingert and Jean Bouteiller will take place on Saturday, May 5, from 7 to about 9:30 a.m. Limited to 12 participants—first-time birders are welcome! Bring binoculars, wear waterproof shoes, and take precautions for blacklegged ticks. Please do not wear white. Rain date, Sunday, May 6. Call Art at 672-0077 to register and for details.

**Cinco de Mayo Murder Mystery Fundraiser Dinner for the Cornwall Child Center** will be held Saturday, May 5, at Trinity Retreat Center. Call the center for information at 672-6989.

**A benefit for the Little Guild of St. Francis** will take place at Sharon Playhouse Saturday, May 5, at 5 p.m. Theatrical animal trainer Bill Berloni and his Broadway rescue dogs will demonstrate their talents and share stories. Good Dog front row seats $250 and “Sit” open seats $100. Space is limited. Reserve at littleguild.org.

**At the Cornwall Library**
Children’s Programs with Patricia Vanicky: Jewelry Making with beads and seeds on Sunday, May 6, 1 to 3 p.m., and Create a Feathered Creature on Sunday, May 20, from 1 to 3 p.m. Class size limited to eight. All materials provided. Suggested donation is $5 per child. Register at 672-6874 or cornwalllibrary@biblio.org.

**Memorial Day Book Sale** on Saturday, May 26, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. with 9 to 10 a.m. being early bird entry for a fee of $15. Sunday, May 27, from 11 a.m. to 2 p.m., all half price. Monday, May 28, from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., fill a bag for $5.

**Park & Rec Events** Please reserve a space or RSVP Jennifer Markow; email prcornwall@ gmail.com or call 672-4071 for each event.

**Monthly Luncheon** will be held Tuesday, May 8, in the Parish House of the UCC at noon. Cost is $8 per person.

**Paint, Palette and Punch** is an opportunity to enjoy refreshments and to paint the Cornwall Covered Bridge with artist Mary Preble on Friday, May 11. Three workshops: 9:30 a.m., adults only; 3:30 p.m., kids from kindergarten to grade 12; 7 p.m., adults only. $15/person. See insert for more details.

**Kindergarten Registration** for the 2018-2019 school year will be held on Wednesday, May 9. Any child turning 5 on or before December 31, 2018 is eligible. Parents should call the school office at 672-6617 to schedule a time for their child to visit the school. Parents need to bring their child’s official immunization record, birth certificate, and proof of residency.

**Art in Cornwall**
“Portraits of Cornwall Birds.” Photographs by Joe Ellis opens with a reception at the library on May 12 at 5 p.m. The show runs through June 23.

The following exhibits will continue through May: Souterrain Gallery—Gail Jacobson’s “All Over the Map”; Toll House Gallery—works by Donald Bracken, Lennart Swede Ahstrom, Scott Zuckerman, and Susan Rand; and at the UCC Parish House, Iris Hermann’s exhibit “Sew, Clay and Crochet.”

**Cornwall COOP Farm Market** opens on May 12 with a Mother’s Day Plant Sale. Opening Day of full Farm Market will be May 19. The market will run through October every Saturday from 9 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. on the Cornwall Village Green.

**The original Cornwall Farm Market** in West Cornwall will have its Opening Day on Saturday, May 19. It will run through October every Saturday from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. on the grounds of the Wish House in West Cornwall.

**Trinity Retreat Center Events**
Spring Community Dinner on Saturday, May 12, at 5 p.m. No charge, but donations to benefit the Torrington Soup Kitchen welcome. Limited space. RSVP retreat@trinitywallstreet.org.

**Seed Sale and Plant Swap** on Sunday, May 13, from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

**Motherhouse Events**
- Women’s New Moon Drum Circle on Tuesday, May 15, 7 to 9 p.m. at Local Farm.
- Family Cow Workshop on Saturday, May 26, from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. at the Local Farm. Learn all about cows and try a hand at milking one. $35/person, $50/family. Must register at 860-671-7145.

**CCS and Cornwall Conservation Trust** welcomes naturalist/author “Wildman” Steve Brill on May 25. “Wildman” will be presenting several foraging workshops for the community: 12:30 to 2:30 p.m. with CCS middle school students; 3 to 4 p.m. with CCS Afterschool Program; 4:30 to 6:30 p.m. Community Program. Please come with plastic bags for foraging and be prepared with appropriate clothing and no open shoes to spend several hours outside. Digging implements are optional. Meet at CCS.

**The Economic Development Commission** is compiling a comprehensive Business Directory. Owners and service providers who would like to be listed, send contact information and area of expertise to Kate Ward, sandmeyerk@gmail.com, by May 31.

---

**CORNWALL CHRONICLE**

**MAY 2018**

---

**THE CHRONICLE NEEDS YOUR SUPPORT**

We hope you enjoy this on-line edition of the Cornwall Chronicle. Remember that all our revenues come from readers like you, and we need your help to continue producing this electronic edition along with the print edition. If your contribution is $5 or more, we’d be glad to mail the print edition to any out-of-town address. Please mail your tax deductible gifts to: Cornwall Chronicle Inc. PO Box 6, West Cornwall, CT 06796. Comments, letters and news may be E-mailed to the publishers at: info@cornwallchronicle.org