Building Committee Named
On April 18, the Board of Selectmen nominated Susan Hatcher, William Hurlburt, Alec Frost, John LaPorta, Thalia Scoville, and James Terrall to the School Building Committee.

The town referendum on May 11 will answer the question: Shall we appoint this committee and authorize it to spend $25,000 from unexpended bond proceeds to prepare plans for improvements to Cornwall Consolidated School?

For those unable to vote in person, absentee ballots are available at the Town Clerk’s Office Monday to Thursday, 9 A.M. to 4 P.M. and also on Saturday, May 4, from 9 to 11 A.M.
—John Leich

Information Please!
Among various items discussed at the 9 A.M. Board of Selectmen’s meeting on April 2 was a brief statement by Gordon Ridgway that turned out to be something of a sleeper. He informed those present that Judy Herkimer had brought a Freedom of Information (FOI) complaint against the board, that the FOI Commission had appointed an ombudsman to resolve the case, and that a hearing date had been set. In response, the selectmen had authorized Town Attorney Perley Grimes to represent them.

As it turned out, Judy Herkimer, a resident of Cornwall Bridge, had brought her complaint to the attention of the FOIC some weeks earlier, in a letter of February 14 that described the following chain of events:

On February 4, at 7:20 P.M., Judy and her husband, Allen, arrived at the Town Hall to attend a regularly scheduled meeting of the Board of Selectmen. Allen had previously thrown his hat in the ring as a candidate for the position of alternate on the Inland Wetlands and Water Courses Agency (a post since filled by Ann Treimann), and his wife had been informed by the First Selectman’s Office that this position would be on the agenda that evening.

On arrival at the Town Hall, however, the Herkimers and a few other interested citizens found no sign of a selectmen’s meeting in progress. On telephoning the First Selectman’s Office the following day, Judy Herkimer was told that a change of venue notice had been posted on the Cornwall website but that due to an oversight no notice of change in venue had been placed at the Town Hall. She also was informed that the wetlands issue had not been on the agenda after all.

As it later transpired, the Board of Selectmen had adjourned the meeting to CCS after a brief preliminary session at the Town Hall with members of the Park and Recreation Commission. A notable subject considered that evening was the town effort to clean up two polluted sites in Cornwall Bridge formerly owned by the Neoweld Company. On learning of this discussion from articles later published in the local press, the Herkimers were doubly disappointed not to have been notified of the change in venue since both are actively involved in environmental issues.

After an initial hearing in Hartford on April 3 before the Freedom of Information Commission, Judy Herkimer rested her case on the claim that her FOI rights as a citizen had been denied by the Board of Selectmen, which had changed the place and agenda of a regularly scheduled meeting without adequate public notice. The legal mills grind slowly in this process and it may be several months before a final ruling is made on Judy Herkimer’s claim.

—Jean F. Leich

Ready When You Are, C. B.
"C. B.," in this case, refers not to Mr. DeMille, but to Cornwall Bridge, to say nothing of the rest of Cornwall. The first Corndance Film Festival, brainchild of Lib Tobin and Donna Murphy, packed the Town Hall to SRO on Sunday, April 7, with devotees of the silver screen. Latecomers were turned away.

Fifteen hopefuls shelled out a $9.99 entry fee to parade their creations before an audience.

(continued on page 2)
A Diamond is Forever
...unless it's got three bases and a home plate, in which case it requires constant TLC. This according to CCS Girls' Softball Team coach Tricia Collins is what her field hadn't been getting.

But after an inspection by First Selectman Gordon Ridgway, the mighty forces of the Cornwall Town Crew swung into action in the person of Jim Vanicky, who brought his backhoe to smooth the field during spring vacation. Ruts and potholes have disappeared and the base paths and home-plate area have a fresh covering of sand. A proper pitcher's mound now rises in the infield.

The quality of their practice field notwithstanding, the Cornwall girls managed to vanquish the vaunted Salisbury team 18-9 on April 11.

Good-Bye to Friends
William Seth Covington
Arllis Suttles
Dianna Mosher Farha

Welcome
Lilianna Beatrice Krug to Liz Van Doren and Ken Krug

Land Transfers
John S. Smyth and Arthur A. Baker to Pierce K. Kearney and Sara E. Cousins, 17.2 acres on River Road for $155,000.

Dolinsky Realty Corp. to SCASCO Inc., three parcels of land and buildings thereon, on River Road South for $150,000.

(a sealed-up fish tank) to those grown more naturally in soil-filled pots. Her conclusion? "Plants do not grow better in biospheres," she said firmly, "though mine might have done better if my fish tank wasn't so small. But the ones grown in regular pots did better. Notably."

Other prize-winners were: Fifth Grade—Jackie Underwood, Paris Costello, Christina Gugel, Emily Thaler; Sixth Grade—Jonathan Coe, Sarah Freedman, Aaron Dryer; Seventh Grade—Nina LaPorta, Charlotte Buck, Tyra Lindholm, Dan Simons; Eighth Grade—Byron Clohessy, Lindsey Stone, Samantha Rudes, Emilie Gold.

An Even Grander List
The new Grand List of taxable private property in Cornwall as of October 2001 has now been made public. It shows that gross property values have increased from $183,943,400 in 2000 to $213,572,220 in 2001, or by 16 percent.

Your own tax bill will be determined by the new assessment you received and the new mill rate, which will be set after the Annual Budget Town Meeting on May 17. For example, if the new mill rate is 19 and your net assessment is $200,000, your tax is 200,000 x .019, or $3,800.

A Diamond is Forever

Greenest Thumb
The biennial Science Fair at CCS went off on April 5 with its usual panache. With much encouragement from science teacher Lynn Meehan, all 96 students from grades five through eight submitted projects ranging from a study of water quality in Candlewood Lake to another on the onset of abstract thinking in early childhood.

Choosing the winners was not easy. The nine judges had to be on the lookout for outstanding examples of scientific thought, ability to design and carry through an experiment, and creativity of ideas and materials used.

The Grand Prize winner was Hannah Colbert, who also won first place for the sixth grade. Her entry was a comparison of plants grown from seed in a biosphere (in this case, a sealed-up fish tank) to those grown more naturally in soil-filled pots. Her conclusion? "Plants do not grow better in biospheres," she said firmly, "though mine might have done better if my fish tank wasn't so small. But the ones grown in regular pots did better. Notably."

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So, give a look for a hovering kestrel, hanging over a windy meadow like a grena­
dier kite, and enjoy these uncommon raptors while they are with us until autumn. We’ll let
you know whether the new kestrel digs worked any magic or not! —Art Gingert

Play Space Placed
With a unanimous vote of approval at its regu­
lar meeting of April 8, the Planning and Zon­
ing Commission brought to an end a lengthy
search for an available site on which to locate a
community recreation area. For some years, the
Park and Recreation Commission fielded complaints from irate locals demanding to
know why the town did not provide its resi­
dents with a public play space. “My usual re­
sponse,” comments Park and Rec. Chair
Dierdre Fischer, “was that Cornwall had no
town property suitable for that purpose.”

Then, in February of 2001 came word of a
$15,000 bequest to the town by the late Mary
Schieffelin for “recreational purposes,”
and the long-delayed play space project began to
gather community support. Early last sum­
mer, the Cornwall Child Center was ap­
proached by Alphonse Fletcher, the new
owner of the Castle, with the offer of an
outsized piece of playground equipment that
had been installed on his property by a previ­
ous owner. This behemoth, known as a
playscape, was a redwood structure approxi­
mately 50 feet square and boasting towers at
all four corners. The Child Center offered to
split the various components of the
playscape with Park and Rec. and also sug­
gested a parcel of land for recreational use
between the Town Hall and the new Library.

That plan changed last March when an alter­
native site was made available by Thomas
and Anne Hubbard, whose tennis courts in
Cornwall Village are leased and maintained
by the town. The new space covers 120 by 20
feet, twice the length of the first site pro­
posed by Tatge-Ilasser Production for the
Library. Also, Principal Peter Coope would
welcome the chance to explain in person on Fri­
day, May 3, to anyone who calls the school; or you can
contact any member of the board.

In the March referendum, voters supported
(by a wide margin) renovation as the way to
address this problem. But until a committee
works with an architect, there is no way to know
the final configuration or the cost of that renova­
tion. Please support improved facilities at CCS
and vote “yes” on May 11.

—Barbara Gold, Chair; Philip Hart, Rebecca
Hurlbut, Scoville Soule, Catherine Tatge,
James Terrall

CATHEDRAL PINE TOWERS
While visiting the Philadelphia area recently
I noted what looked like a transplanted Cathed­al Pine towering over an array of lower-height
trees. To my surprise, it was in fact an attempt
to disguise a microwave communications
tower—and a pretty good job it was. My first
thought was that such a disguise might be a
good idea for towers in the Cornwall area. My
second was that maybe some creative
Cornwallians had come up with a tourism promo­
tion for our community. And third, I thought
this was just the kind of word play characteristic
of so many in Cornwall, creating “Cathedral
Pine Towers” to mock the names given to the
many apartments and condominiums being built
in the East Coast megalopolis.

—Mike MacCracken

ECONOMICAL GYM
They don’t call it a steel gym, but Harwa­
rinton’s Consolidated School has built a
“prefabricated structure” of steel on a concrete
slab. $400,000 bought the complete 108-foot by

52-foot unit, including bathrooms, a phy­s.-ed.
office, lighting, plumbing (with a pump grinder
septic system) and a choice of exterior finish on
the gray clapboard siding. Bleachers, I was told,
are easily available. It would fit just fine into the
Cornwall landscape and meet the stated needs of
the town’s children and adults. Must we spend
millions to build a gym and stage that is 110 feet
by 74 feet?

—Josie Whitney

PULLING TOGETHER
The PTA would like to thank everyone for
their hard work and participation in the process
of improving our school’s facilities. There is little
doubt in most of our minds that we need to up­
grade our school.

Now that a direction has been chosen, we
hope that everyone can come together and sup­
port a building committee, as a plan for our
school is created. Now is the time that we all
need to pull together to bring this project to
completion. The future of our community’s chil­
dren depends on us.

—David Samson
President, PTA

VOTING REMINDER
If you want the CCS building project to go
forward, it is very important to vote for the
building committee and funding on May 11. If
you do not want this project to move ahead, the
May 11 referendum will be an opportunity to
say “no” to spending any money on the pro­
posed school improvements.

The vote last August to stop the previous
school project produced a total voter turnout of
better than 800, a very heavy vote for Cornwall.
We, as voters and taxpayers, have already
wasted $263,000 on this school business.

On May 11, we need another very heavy turnout to
decide if this project can now move forward with
deep and solid support.

—Wm. Earl Brecher

Events & Announcements
The Annual Budget Town Meeting will be
held on May 17 at 7:30 P.M. at CCS. The Board
of Finance will propose a total school and
town budget of $4,834,762, a 5.2 percent in­
crease over last year. This includes $180,000
for CCS expansion.

The Region One budget referendum is
May 7, noon to 8 P.M. at the Town Hall.

Covered Bridge Dance: The Cornwall Vol­
unteer Fire Department will be hosting its
eleventh annual dance in West Cornwall on
May 26. Proceeds will be used for training
and equipment expenses. This year’s band, Timerider, with a mixed bag of rock and
country, will be performing from 7 to 11 P.M.
Food and refreshments will be available
from 5:30 p.m. Admission at the gate is $10 for
adults and $5 for children. Discount tickets
can be purchased on preceding days at area
businesses. Parking is free at lots located half
a mile north on Route 7 and one mile east on
Route 128. Free shuttle buses will run from
the lots to the dance, as the bridge and ap­
proaches will be closed to all traffic from 5
P.M. until midnight. No pets or unattended
children, please.
Memorial Day Observances will be held on May 27 as follows: 9 A.M. service in the North Cornwall Cemetery, where all are welcome to bring flowers; 10 A.M. Seamen’s Service at the Covered Bridge; 11 A.M. Memorial Day Parade and ceremonies on the Town Green. The traditional UCC/Cornwall Child Center carnival will follow on the church grounds.

News from Park and Rec.: Anyone who still has a baseball uniform from last year please return it to CCS or the Town Hall ASAP. They are badly needed and expensive to replace.

Saturday, May 18, is the annual Spring Cleanup. Volunteers meet at the Town Green, 9 a.m. to noon. Contact Debbie Morehouse at 672-0736 or Bethany Thompson at 672-6058.

Donations are needed to help purchase play equipment, landscaping, fencing, picnic tables, and other items to make the town playground a reality. Call Bethany Thompson (672-6058) for more information.

Art in Cornwall: At the Wish House, on May 25, 5 to 7 p.m., Danielle Maiter opens an exhibit of small paintings. The National Iron Bank will show landscapes and still life paintings of Treasa Pattison during the month of May.

60-Plus Wellness Screening: Tuesday, May 14, at the UCC Parish House. The screening is performed by nurse practitioners and offers a wide range of tests including hearing, vision, glaucoma, blood and stool tests, electrocardiogram, blood pressure, urinalysis, pap/pelvic/breast exam, prostate check, height, weight, and health history. The suggested donation is $25. There are only ten spaces available, and an appointment is necessary. Call Jill Gibbons at 672-2693.

Drought

The Chronicle’s reservoir of cash seems to be sinking faster than the water table this spring. We need all you rainmakers to sprinkle us with donations so that we can keep on covering the news from Cornwall.

Sold Out in January, Cornwall in Pictures—A Visual Reminiscence 1868-1941 has been reprinted. Published by the Cornwall Historical Society, the book has a hardcover cloth binding and 224 pages, with text by Jeremy Brecher. He will be on hand to sign copies of the book at the Historical Society from 10 a.m. to noon Saturday, May 25. You can bring your copy of the original printing or buy a new volume from the second. Meanwhile, the book is available in Northwest Corner bookstores and retail outlets for $25, or call Charles Osborne (672-6296) or Maureen Prentice (672-0135) to order a copy.

Thinking Ahead: There are so many things going on in Cornwall that it is a pity when two wonderful events are scheduled at the same time. Events can be listed months in advance on the calendar of the Cornwall website (www.cornwallact.org), where you can look ahead to see what’s already there. Please contact Anne Baren, 672-6637, fax 672-0175, pbaren@snnet.com, with the name and date of your event.

Book Brigade at the Library: On Sunday, May 12, starting at 2 p.m., a line of Cornwallians will form to move the 1,600-book mystery collection from the shelves of the “old” Library to the new building. The books will go one at a time from hand to hand and stream to their new location. At least 100 folks will be needed to reach between the buildings; many hands make light work! Refreshments will be provided. Untimely rain would cancel the event.

The bulk of the books in the collection will be moved professionally during the following week when the Library will be closed. May 22 will find the doors of the new Library open. On June 3, the automated system will be activated: people can bring or pick up their new borrower library cards (or request them) and become acquainted with the computer catalog. The dedication of the new library building will be mid-day on June 15. Everyone is invited to this official opening celebration.

Hazardous Waste: There will be a hazardous waste collection on May 18 at the Housatonic Valley Regional High School. Please call the Selectmen’s Office (672-4959) for an appointment for the exact time of your delivery.

HVA Tag Sale: The Housatonic Valley Association is collecting items for Great Stuff, Too, a tag sale to be held Sunday, June 2, in Kent, including furniture, dishes and china, artwork, books, musical instruments, and more. To request a donation pick-up from your home or to help with the event call HVA at 672-6678.

Spring Nature Walk: Join Carla Bigelow and Celia Senzer on Saturday, May 11, at 8:30 a.m. for an hour-and-a-half walk to look for and identify the many signs of spring in the woods and small ponds along Gold Road. Birds, wildflowers, mosses, ground covers, budding trees, frogs, and more. Children welcome! No rain date. Call 672-0283 or 672-6898 for more information and to reserve a place. Sponsored by Park and Rec.

Golf Tournament: Visiting Nurses Association Northwest is hosting its third annual golf tournament at Torrington Country Club June 3 with a 12:30 p.m. tee-off. The entry fee is $150 which includes lunch and dinner. Contact Nell Nicholas at 672-4457 for more information.

Casting Call: Sunday, June 2, from 2 to 6 p.m. at the UCC for Thornton Wilder’s play Our Town, to be performed in October. Open to all adults and children; first preference to Cornwall residents. Further information will be posted when available on the Cornwall website or call Chris Gyorsok at 672-2715.

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