Acre Breakers

The old Butler Farm straddling the Falls Village-Cornwall line was the scene of a brainstorming session on Wednesday, August 9. Offered for subdivision by its owners, the riverfront parcel, which includes 229 acres in Cornwall and 79 in Canaan, was subjected to an on-the-spot inspection by First Selectman Gordon Ridgway, State Senator Andrew Roraback, Representative Roberta B. Willis, Housatonic Valley Authority land protection director Elaine LaBella, Hector Prud’homme, president of the Cornwall Conservation Trust, and Denny Frost, representing the Cornwall Land Trust. Representatives of owners, the De Luca family (proprietors of a construction concern in Stamford), were not present, although they had been consulted.

The participants questioned the feasibility of subdividing the tract into as many as 40 building sites (as suggested in the broker’s prospectus) while exploring more land-friendly schemes for the parcel, which contains steep terrain, animal habitats, wetlands, flood plain, railroad right-of-way, and an unimproved road. The less hilly Falls Village portion of the parcel, which has better road access, is considered to be more suitable for development.

Ridgway expressed the hope that public funds might be found to preserve at least a portion of the property in an undeveloped state but did not rule out the possibility of limited residential development, despite the drawbacks. He stressed the mutual benefits when owners of large land tracts consult town agencies before placing their properties on the market.

A meeting with the owners to discuss a range of possibilities is scheduled for August 29.

—Matt Collins

Democratic Primary

It was a contest between political novice Ned Lamont and three-term incumbent Senator Joseph Lieberman. And, as reported, Lamont won the primary by 3.5 percent. Old news, yes, but here are some striking facts about Cornwall’s vote and our role in the election.

The state totals were 146,587 to 136,468. Cornwall supported Lamont 243 to 24, which is a staggering 91 percent for Lamont, by far the largest margin of any of the 169 towns and cities in Connecticut. (Salisbury was next with 81 percent for Lamont.)

We also had a 73 percent turnout of eligible voters, the highest in the state according to the secretary of the state! The state figure was less than 50 percent.

While none of this could have been predicted, Lieberman never campaigned in the Connecticut District 3, which is a staggering 91 percent for Lamont, by far the largest margin of any of the 169 towns and cities in Connecticut. (Salisbury was next with 81 percent for Lamont.)

We also had a 73 percent turnout of eligible voters, the highest in the state according to the secretary of the state! The state figure was less than 50 percent.

While none of this could have been predicted, Lieberman never campaigned in the Northwest Corner. In fact he apparently ignored most of the small towns in the state.

Soon after Lamont announced he was challenging Lieberman, he made an appearance in Torrington that was attended by several members of the Cornwall Democratic Town Committee who came away impressed. Within days the committee, led by First Selectman Gordon Ridgway and Chairman Steve Senzer, unanimously endorsed Lamont and went to work on his behalf.

Cornwall Democrats called people on their party voter lists to remind them of the August primary. There was also a fundraising party attended by Lamont, who spoke to the gathering after some one-on-one conversations with many at the party.

Meanwhile, in the weeks before the primary, our registrars of voters, mainly Democrat Jayne Ridgway, were busy signing up new voters and changing the registration of others. During this period new voters included 14 Democrats, 2 Republicans, and 9 unaffiliated. In addition, 23 unaffiliated voters became Democrats, presumably to vote in the primary. Voter registrars were apparently busy across Connecticut, whose statewide figures showed that 11,496 unaffiliated voters became Democrats and that another 10,344 new voters signed on as Democrats.
Back to School

All members of the Cornwall community are invited to join in the First Day Celebration at Cornwall Consolidated School on Tuesday, September 5, at 8:30 a.m. Dr. Fitz, State Senator Andrew Roraback, and others will welcome to the school community the 129 students currently registered. This is the first time in almost ten years that students have enjoyed the “whole summer” for vacation; that is, they will not have to return before the Labor Day holiday.

Teachers, however, have been back to school for three days of professional development, August 30–September 1. During one of those days they have learned how to implement a new framework for school conduct called Character Counts. All faculty and staff, plus one parent per class, representatives from the Board of Education, PTA, and the community participated in the training, led by two representatives from the Josephson Institute in Los Angeles. The source of funding is a REAP grant and PTA donation.

Carla Whiteside, who attended a training session this summer in Princeton, New Jersey, reports there is a proven record of success among schools who have taught their populations to “think from the inside out.”

Matthew Collins (not the frequent contributor to the Chronicle) joins the faculty as the social studies teacher for grades six through eight. He founded and for seven years directed a school for teaching English as a second language in Japan, then returned to Connecticut to complete the certification process. Dr. Fitz looks forward to the excitement and life experience he brings to his position.

As she begins her fourth year in Cornwall, Dr. Fitz maintains her enthusiasm and plans for making CCS “the best in all the land.”

Murals Tell Cornwall’s Story

Ever really looked at the murals in the National Iron Bank and the Cornwall Village Post Office? Do you even remember that there are pictures on those walls?

Both murals are the work of Clarence Meier, who came to Cornwall Village with his wife Virginia in 1953 to live in the pretty Victorian cottage that used to house the telephone exchange (14 Pine Street). A cartoonist, wallpaper designer, and accountant, Meier worked for years in local organizations and developed an interest in local history.

The mural in the Cornwall Post Office (1959) depicts Cornwall Village in several periods in the 19th and 20th centuries consistent with the tenures of various postmasters. Interesting to see how the P.O. migrated about the town. All the postmasters are listed, too.

For this public art, Meier was awarded a silver medal for placing second in the eastern postal region (7,599 P.O.s) for interior decoration.

Cornwall Bridge in around 1900 went up on the bank’s walls in 1965. Meier’s real tour de force was the reconstruction of West Cornwall in 1900 (finished in 1973, also in the bank). He hunted out old foundations along the brook, destroyed in various floods. A fire in 1925 burned out the Mansion House, which sat in the parking lot between the West Cornwall Post Office and the West Cornwall Market. Other lost buildings visible in the mural are Judge L. J. Nickerson’s law offices and Yutzler’s tailor shop. All the old structures are in Meier’s mural.

Next time you get the chance, take a good look.

Good-Bye to a Friend

Joseph “Brad” Cass

Land Transfers

Nancy Sayles Day Foundation, Inc., to Ira B. Shapiro and Jacqueline Dedell, 24.237 acres on Dibble Hill Road and Route 125 for $400,000.

Donald Craig Behn and Donald Craig Behn, Jr., to Sunset View LLC, property and 118 acres at 344 Furnace Brook Road for $1,125,000.

Dudley H. and Mary R. Grimes to Mary Louise and John Rubin, house and 20 acres at 43 Ballyhack Road for $650,000.

Robert G. Cassidy and Maria Luiza Kos to <br>Matthew Hans and Amy Truax, property at <br>379 Kent Road for $265,000.

Estate of Lynnema Niebergall to Cornwall Conservation Trust, Inc., 1.43 acres on Kent Road.

Are We Growing Yet?

As Cornwall revises its Town Plan, a key question is: Is our population likely to grow in the next decade? The U.S. census, the most reliable count we have, found that there were 1,434 people in Cornwall in spring 2000, a mere 20 more than ten years earlier, when we had 1,414.

The census only counts residents, people whose legal residence is here and who, for the most part, live here full-time. But Cornwall has a second population, sometimes called “weekenders,” who own or rent here but have their legal residences elsewhere.

The census does provide information that helps estimate the number of weekenders. Most useful in this regard is the number of housing units. In 2000, we had a total of 873 housing units, of which 615 were “occupied full-time.” Most of the remaining 227 housing units were occupied on an “other than year-round” basis. Clearly, these were the houses of weekenders. If average household size for weekenders was the same as for year-rounders, then
Hunting and Trapping Schedule, Fall 2006

- Small Game
  
  Species and dates vary. September 1–September 30 and October 21–December 30.

- Turkey, Archery
  
  September 15–November 14, state and private lands. December 20–30, landowner.

- Turkey, Firearms
  
  October 7–October 31.

- Deer, Archery
  
  September 15–November 14, and December 20–30, state lands. September 15–December 30, state bow hunting areas only. September 15–November 14, and December 6–December 30, private lands Cornwall zone.

- Deer, Firearms
  
  November 15–December 5, zones and dates vary. Shotguns, state and private lands; rifles, private lands only. November 1–December 30, shotguns and rifles, landowner only. Muzzleloader, December 6–December 19.

- Trapping
  
  Twelve species may be trapped from November 12 to December 31. Dates and limits vary by species.

Sundays: No hunting.

Information: DEP Guide is available online at www.dep.state.ct.us/burntart/wildlife. It includes hunting hours, rules, and regulations. Or call the DEP Wildlife Division at (860) 424-3011 for a guide.

Safety: Wear orange. If you will be out alone, let somebody know where you will be. Hikers, if you see someone hunting, call out to identify your location. Bikers, attach a bell to your bike to warn of your approach. Check yourself for ticks!

Sightings: The DEP Wildlife Division keeps track of sightings of Bobcat, Black Bear, Fisher, and Moose. If you see one of these species please contact the DEP at (860) 675-8130. You will be asked the date, time, and exact location of your sighting.

Hunters for the Hungry: This program allows hunters to donate their game to charitable food organizations. For information call Connecticut Food Bank at (203) 469-5000.

—Jim Levy
**Events & Announcements**

**Red Cross Blood Drive** will be held on Tuesday, September 19, from 1:30 to 6:15 P.M. at the UCC Parish House. This blood drive is in memory of Nancy Lawrence (Pat Blakey’s sister) and Tom Blakey (Jerry’s brother), who both died of cancer this past spring. For an appointment call the Red Cross at 1-800-GIVELIFE or Jerry and Pat at 672-6516. Walk-ins are also welcome.

**Saturday Youth Hikes in September** begin at 3 P.M., and all have a different theme.
- September 16, Hart Farm Preserve: land conservation and trails. Meet at HF parking area on Cherry Hill Road. Leader: Dan Hubbard.
- September 30, Dudleytown: history in the hills. Meet at top of Bald Mountain Road in Cornwall Bridge. Leader: Dave Colbert.

**Questions? Call Emilie Pryor at 672-4226.**

**Hollaender Chamber Ensemble** will perform at UCC on Sunday, September 17, at 4 P.M. This fourth annual concert features works by Mendelssohn and Schubert. Tickets are $20, or $15 for seniors. Free for children under 16 accompanied by an adult.

**The Annual Cornwall Agricultural Fair** will take place on Saturday, September 9, from 11 A.M. to 4 P.M., on the Town Green. (See insert.)

**Mountain Lion Gossip**

The latest rumor is that the state environment watchdogs have, in fact, reintroduced the mountain lion to our wooded hills. The reason: to control the deer population in a cost-effective, natural way. But all this is being denied because the state authorities fear political pressure from tender folks who get upset when nature gets too red in tooth and claw.

Remember that you depend on the Chronicle for the latest on mountain lions. Remember too that the Chronicle depends on you for financial support. Thanks.

**Art in Cornwall:** At the Library, the exhibit of Contemplative Works by Nancy Daubenspeck and Robin Raderman will continue through the month of September.

The Wish House will be hosting a reception for mixed-media artwork by Debbie Jones on Saturday, September 2, from 5 to 7 P.M. The show will be on display through September.

At the Insiders/Outsiders Gallery, the Master Pastellists show will continue through September 23.

**Art with Agricultural Themes:** Community-wide call to artists, photographers, writers, and appreciators of rural life for works and expressions related, but not restricted, to the cultivation and harvesting of our lands, forests, and streams, and the preservation of open spaces. Works will be exhibited at the second Cornwall Agricultural Fair Exposition in the Town Hall the second weekend in September. A special event will feature works with the Lorch Farm as a subject.

Please bring entries to the Town Hall by Wednesday, September 6. Hanging space will be available; artists must arrange their own display. Questions? Call Cilla Mauro, 672-6969.

**The Board of Assessment Appeals** will meet in the Town Offices on Saturday, September 16, from 9:30 to 11 A.M. to hear appeals on motor vehicle assessments. No appointment necessary.

**Democratic Town Committee** will meet on Monday, September 18, at the Library at 7:30 P.M. Roberta Willis will be a guest. Plans for the November election will be discussed.

**Gunn Brook Farm Autumnfest Horse Show** will be held on Saturday, September 30, at 9 A.M. sharp. There will be classes for English and Western riders. Call Marianne Pirotta at 672-0203 for information. Spectators are welcome.

**Books, Books, Books** are needed to replenish the Cornwall Transfer Station’s “library,” as it seems the heat of July has melted away all of the free reading material. Donations of paperback, hardbound, and children’s books to restock the shelves can be left with Freddie or Steve.

**The Cornwall House Tour,** on Saturday, October 7, will benefit the Cornwall Housing Corporation. For information see www.cornwallct.org (“Coming Events”). Tickets will be available on the day of the tour at the Cornwall Package Store in Cornwall Bridge and at the Wish House in West Cornwall. For advance tickets call 672-6774.

**Children’s Programs at the Library:** Starting September 20, the Library will hold a reading discussion group for third- and fourth-grade girls and their mothers entitled Wings to Fly. The program is sponsored by the Connecticut Humanities Council. For more information call the Library at 672-6874.

On Sunday, September 24, at 4 P.M., children’s author, illustrator, and former Cornwall resident Barbara Ensor will read from her new book, Cinderella (As if You Didn’t Already Know the Story). A modern twist on the age-old classic, this witty book will appeal to nine-to-thirteen-year-old girls. Barbara will enhance her talk with shadow puppets, similar to the illustrations in the book. A book sale and signing will follow.

Story Hour will begin again on Friday, September 29, at 1:15 P.M., for four- and five-year-olds. Sessions will run for eight weeks each season. Kindergartners may take the bus to the Library after school.

**Cornwall Free Library Book Sale:** Columbus Day weekend, October 7, 8, and 9; Saturday, 10 A.M. to 4 P.M.; Sunday, 11 A.M. to 4 P.M. (half-price); and Monday, 10 A.M. to 2 P.M. (bag sale). Donations of gently used books (no textbooks or Reader’s Digest condensed) are gratefully accepted. Donations can be dropped off anytime when the Library is open.

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**SEPTEMBER 2006**

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