



CORNWALL CHRONICLE



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The Pink Balloon

On Saturday, March 15, AT&T flew a hot pink balloon at the town gravel bank/brush dump in West Cornwall. This site is one of the first choices for a new 130-foot cell phone tower in Cornwall. Curious about what it would look like, I decided to drive around town to see if I could spot it. I drove down Route 7, up 128, then up Hart Hill Road. I couldn't find it. I thought I'd go check out the site to see if it was really up. It was a typical blustery March day, so maybe it was too windy to fly.

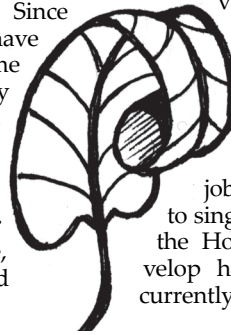
As soon as I drove into the gravel bank (not recommended if you don't have four-wheel drive), there was the balloon. It was kind of low; I wondered if it were stuck in a tree. There were a truck and some men near the balloon site. Since they looked kind of official, I rolled down the window and asked them about it. In the mood for a chat, the balloon meisters told me that this was a great site for a tower, despite the fact that it was surrounded by ridges. They said a tower there would fill in the dead area between West Cornwall village and the entrance to Town Street, providing great service to the school and firehouse. They gave me detailed and accurate directions about where in the area I could see the balloon from the road. Basically, I had to go up, and look down.

Dodging the Herkimers, who were just pulling into the gravel bank, I went back up to Hart Hill Road. Sure enough, near the Harts' old farmhouse, I looked down into the valley and I could see the little pink balloon. This was definitely the best view. I imagine as long as the tower isn't also hot pink, it will be somewhat unobtrusive against the backdrop of Dibble Hill. The only other place that the balloon was visible was from Route 128 near the brush dump. Even then, you really had to know precisely where to look, at just the right moment.

—Annie Kosciusko

Susan Gingert to Retire

Twenty-seven years ago, Susan Gingert answered, "Yes," when Bill Oros, then principal of Cornwall Consolidated School, asked her if she liked numbers. Since then a "couple of days a week" have grown into a year-round, full-time job which includes responsibility for payroll, accounts payable, budget monitoring at CCS, and keeping minutes for the CCS Board of Education. At the end of April, Susan plans to turn off her office computer for the last time, distribute her pig collection, and begin the rest of her life.



She will take with her a satchel full of memories. "Making numbers work" to support the school and staff has been the most satisfying and fun of her tasks. She has served under five principals and one interim. Children of children have appeared on class rosters. At the end of the day on which she was a substitute for a substitute for the second-grade teacher, she made her way home for a four-hour nap and awoke with renewed admiration for teachers (and a vow never to do that again!)

Needless to say, change has been a constant, not just in the personnel who have worked at CCS and the students who have kept her smiling. The state continues to require more and more "paperwork" as meetings become paperless. The school building has seen two major renovation projects. Over the years Susan has added a variety of tasks to her job description: organizing the milk program and the ski program, and serving on the walk-a-thon committee, among them.

Susan's plans for retirement sound as time consuming as the job she is leaving. She will continue to sing with Crescendo, serve as clerk to the Housatonic River Commission, develop her painting skills (her work is currently on display at the Souterrain

(continued on page 2)

APRIL 2014

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
Every Week This Month: Mondays: Yoga, 8:30–10 am Library; Karate, 6:30–7:30 pm Town Hall ♦ Wednesdays: Tai Chi, 6–9 pm Town Hall; Women's Basketball, 7:30 pm CCS gym		1 ♦ Board of Selectmen 7:30 pm Town Hall ♦ Inland Wetlands 7:30 pm Town Hall	2	3 ♦ Woman's Society 10 am UCC Parish House ♦ Meditation (Motherhouse) 4–5pm	4	5 ♦ Railroad Panel Discussion 4 pm CCS Gym ♦ Pot Luck Dinner 5:30 pm UCC Parish Hall ♦ Community Contra Dance 7 pm Town Hall
6 ♦ Enslaved & Freed in Cornwall 2 pm Library	7 1st Q ♦ Region 1 Board of Ed 6 pm HVRHS Room #133 ♦ Park and Rec 7:30 pm Town Hall	8 ♦ Economic Development 8:30 am Town Hall ♦ Seniors' Luncheon 11:30 am–1 pm Wandering Moose ♦ P&Z 7 pm Library ♦ Housatonic River Comm. 7:30 pm CCS	9	10	11	12 ♦ Bread Baking Workshop 10:30 am–1:30 pm UCC Parish House ♦ Tea: Bee Simont Book 4 pm Library
13	14 ♦ Passover ♦ CCS Spring Break ♦ Blood Pressure Clinic noon–1pm UCC Parish House	15 FULL ♦ CCS Spring Break ♦ Deadline: May Chronicle Copy	16 ♦ CCS Spring Break ♦ Dance Movie 7 pm Library	17 ♦ CCS Spring Break ♦ Meditation (Motherhouse) 4–5pm ♦ Cornwall Conservation Comm. 6:30 pm Town Hall	18 ♦ CCS Spring Break	19
20 ♦ Easter ♦ Meditation (Motherhouse) 1–2pm	21	22 4th Q ♦ Board of Selectmen 7:30 pm Town Hall	23 ♦ Board of Education 4 pm CCS Library ♦ Board of Finance 7:30 pm CCS Library	24 ♦ Meditation (Motherhouse) 4–5pm	25	26 ♦ Art at the Dump 10 am
27 ♦ Art at the Dump 10 am ♦ Meditation (Motherhouse) 1–2pm ♦ Teen Center Opening Reception 4 pm Library	28 ♦ Bend and Stretch Class 11:15 am–12:15 pm UCC Parish House ♦ ZBA* 7:30 pm Library	29 NEW ♦ Diabetes Class 10 am–noon Library ♦ Committee for Seniors 7 pm Library	30	Every Week This Month: Thursdays: Pilates, 8:30–9:30 am Library; Toddler Play Group, 10:30–11:30 am Library; Adult Volleyball, 7:30 pm CCS gym ♦ Fridays: Yoga, 8:30–10 am Library ♦ Saturdays: Skating, 7–8 pm Hotchkiss Schmidt Rink ♦ Sundays: Yoga 9–10:30 am Library		

*Check with Zoning Office—672-4957

(continued from page 1)

Gallery), and market her USANA Health Sciences products. Also awaiting her attention are some 500 manila 2-inch x 4-inch coin envelopes, each of which contains a coin collected by her father; on each envelope he recorded the date and family or world events that occurred on the day he found the coin.

It's a sure thing this trained geologist who once worked at the Smithsonian Oceanographic Sorting Center in Washington, D.C., never imagined she would eventually make her career "sorting" numbers and children in the northwest corner of Connecticut. But those who have worked with Susan (count this writer one of them) are grateful and enriched that she did. From all of us, thanks and good luck.

—Barbara Gold

Reading, 'Riting, & 'Rithmetic

Picture Cornwall in 1740: "an almost unbroken, rocky wilderness, with perhaps forty houses...no roads, and few horses," according to Lewis Gannett's essay in *The Schools of Cornwall*. Walking forest trails was almost the only way to get around, and the few schools were usually in the kitchens of larger houses, where Cornwall's best-known schoolboy Ethan Allen probably learned to read.

During the next 20 years, the first one-room schoolhouses were built, and as outlying areas were settled, parents wanted more schools so no child had to walk five or six miles twice a day. One hundred years later, there were 17 of them, in 16 districts, opening and closing during the years according to population flow. Teachers were responsible for groups of anywhere from under 20 to over 45 students, but (no surprise) men earned four times what women teachers were paid according to 18th-century records, a ratio which only improved by half in the 19th century.

The sole teacher in each school had the astonishing task of teaching eight grades to students who at times ranged from age 4 to 16. How could they possibly manage? Marion Blake, who attended the East Cornwall school in the 1920s with about two dozen kids, remembers her teacher Bertha Clark teaching each grade for half an hour, giving them assignments, and moving on. Those students who finished their work were expected to help the younger ones.

Her schoolroom was heated by two woodstoves connected by a leaky pipe, and woe to the child who sat beneath the drip. The early schools taught only the "3Rs" but by Marion's time there were history and geography as well. Ten or so years later, Ray Hart was a student at the West Cornwall school, which by then boasted two rooms and two teachers, each teaching four grades.

They both recall that the toilets were outside, and at noontime the big boys drew drinking water from a nearby stream. They ate their lunches at their desks, usually sandwiches from dinner leftovers or (Ray's mom's specialty) peanut butter and raisins. At recess outside they played "Farmer in the Dell," tag, or ball games and had snowball fights in winter.

Were they "taught to the tune of the hickory stick," as the old saying goes? Not at all, says Marion. Despite the large student-to-teacher ratio, there were very few behavior problems because, she says, "Children were raised more sternly in those days, with respect for their elders." Ray agrees: "The discipline at home carried through."

But naturally there were exceptions. Peter Russ's uncle Robert Ives went to the Cream Hill schoolhouse where his devoted dog would follow and sit beside him every single day. Of course it was against the rules, just like Mary's little lamb, but the teacher must have just given up. And Peter recalls reading a book during his own schooldays that depicted Ethan Allen as "a bit of a rascal." One day the schoolmaster fell asleep, and according to the story, Ethan's gang tied him up in his chair and hoisted him up to the rafters.

The Cream Hill schoolhouse was, and still is, the beauty of the bunch, the star of Scoville Road with its lovely gingerbread trim, built on land donated by the Gold family. After CCS opened in 1940, the four remaining schoolhouses were no longer needed, and Cream Hill became a private home. (The West Cornwall school became the Hughes Library.)

Melissa Andrews, who now rents the Cream Hill house from owner George Lape, whose parents bought it in 1958, gave me a guided tour. Many original features were preserved, including the beautiful tall side windows (there were originally 14-foot ceilings, says George), the blackboards, a desk from that era, and the outhouse (a two-seater!) Best of all are the chalk-scrawled signatures or initials of some of the children on the beams upstairs—a second story was added later—venerable Cornwall names like Hubbard, Cook, Scoville, Wadsworth, and of course, Gold.

Ruth Gannett's much-loved drawing of the school pictures the original two doors with girls filing in on one side, boys on the other, suggesting that they were segregated inside. But the school was integrated in a different way: a photo taken around 1910 shows that a quarter of the pupils were black.

"I'm thrilled to be living with this history," says Melissa, and she has an extra reason: her grandfather, whom she never knew because he died before she was born, was one of the schoolchildren there.

—Carol Schneider

Alllll Aboarrd.....

If you're interested—pro, con, or no opinion—in the effort to bring railroad passenger service back to the northwest Connecticut corridor, get yourself to the CCS gym on Saturday, April 5, at 4 p.m.

That's when the Cornwall Association is sponsoring a community symposium on this much discussed and anticipated subject.

Association chairman Ed Greene will moderate the panel of: First Selectman Gordon Ridgway providing background from Cornwall's perspective; Jocelyn Ayer of the Northwest Hills Council of Governments with a viewpoint of some of our neighboring towns; Brandon Scimeca of Restore our Railway of NWCT discussing the subject with the western Massachusetts perspective, and our own Mark Wilson of West Cornwall with some of the negative aspects of a return of passenger trains on a track that sits about 100 feet from his house. (Many of his neighbors' homes are even closer.)

The event will include a generous opportunity for Q & A and, most important, there will be refreshments. —John Miller

Land Transfers

Julie Benedetto and Sean Walsh to M&T Bank, .43 acres of land with buildings and improvements thereon, at 156 Kent Road.

M&T Bank to Federal Home Loan Mortgage Corporation, property known as 156 Kent Road.

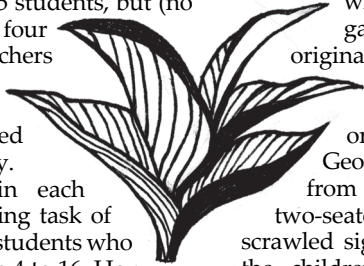
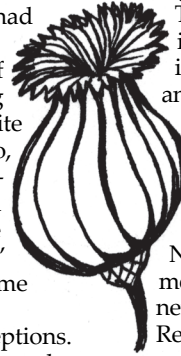
Rose A. Frith and Antony A. Frith to JPMorgan Chase Bank, NA, 1 acre of land with dwelling house and other buildings thereon, at 159 Kent Road.

JPMorgan Chase Bank, NA, to Federal Home Loan Mortgage Corporation, property known as 159 Kent Road.

Canine Bathhouse

In Cornwall we love our dogs and cats, particularly the former, which may explain the latest bit of location scouting going on quietly in town. It may very well be a long shot, but a much-praised dog wash in Santa Monica, California may decide to settle in town.

The Woof Woof Self-Serve Dog Wash, a division of the Five-Star Dog Hotel and Spa in Los Angeles, is itself the recipient of five stars from the consumer site yelp.com. Many dog owners complain about aching backs from bending over bathtubs to wash their dogs, who are likely to jump out and shake themselves, spraying water all over their owners and the bathroom. Woof Woof has cleverly created larger gated tub stalls in three sizes where you stand to wash your pup, with a hook on the back wall to secure a cord so he can't escape. Amenities include a ramp for heavier dogs, an apron

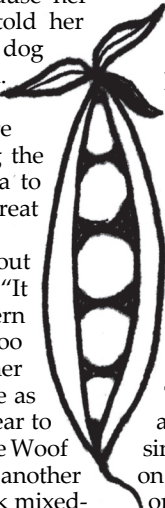


for you, a choice of oatmeal or flea shampoo, all manner of brushes, ear and teeth cleaning wipes, conditioner, towels, and a blow dryer.

They will also wash your dog for you and/or cut nails for an additional charge; customers praise Woof Woof for its reasonable prices. After the bath your doggie gets a treat, your choice of cologne, and time in a play area where Fido can make new friends or pal around with old ones if you're not in a rush.

Owner Carolyn Chienbain has chosen Cornwall as a potential site because her cousin who summers here has told her about the large population of dog lovers and rescue dogs in town. Her daughter will move east to run the operation and if the venture is successful, she intends to bring the more elaborate dog hotel and spa to the area, possibly Litchfield or Great Barrington.

Most residents are excited about the prospect. Nita Colgate says, "It sounds wonderful — my only concern is that the smallest tub may be too big for my little Minnow." And Asher and Priscilla Pavel, who have gone as far as Southfield several times a year to get Leroy soaped up, said they hope Woof Woof finds a local home. But another resident, the owner of a large black mixed-breed rescue dog, who asked not to be named, was alarmed at the prospect. "We don't need all this frou-frou in a town like Cornwall," he said. "You take your dog and a hose into the back yard, and be done with it."
—Herman Shepard



Trinity Land Prospects

The 465 acres of land on the Housatonic in West Cornwall owned by Trinity Wall Street is shaking off its winter sleep: snow melting, sap rising, crocuses showing their early colors. And with the return of spring come two new developments in the unfolding saga of what will become of the property.

First, the Cornwall Conservation Trust is pursuing the purchase of 330 acres of the open space along the river and the thickly wooded and steep slopes above. The trust, a not-for-profit corporation devoted to preserving land in Cornwall, is currently in negotiations with Trinity Wall Street about the price of the parcel (which would include neither the 90 acres on which the current conference center buildings sit nor 35 acres of prime real estate on Dibble Hill). In a meeting with the selectmen, CCT President Barton Jones indicated that he expects the price for the 330-acre parcel to be somewhere between \$500,000 and \$900,000, and added that he hopes to have a contract signed by next month.

The money for the purchase would come from private fundraising, from the state Department of Energy and Environ-

mental Protection, and from federal funds available under the Highlands Conservation Act.

According to Jones, the trust's purchase of this land would bring many benefits to the town: it would protect the land along the river corridor, provide public access for recreational use, and would allow conservation of Ivy Brook, an important trout refuge.

The other development, unrelated to the trust's proposal, comes from the Silver Lake Conference Center in Sharon. The center, which is operated by the United Church of Christ, is looking to purchase the conference center portion of Trinity's property to use as a non-profit, mixed-age, affordable housing community for seniors.

Anne Hughes, co-director of the center, met with selectmen to discuss the proposal for the 90-acre parcel. According to Hughes, who represents a group of local clergy and those involved in housing organizations, the riverside site can initially accommodate 16 to 30 residents, and within five years that number could be expanded to 30 to 45. The existing stand-alone houses would accommodate families, couples, and single residents, while the large building on site could be refurbished for independent or assisted living units. In the future, the group envisions a skilled nursing component.

Hughes said there is state money available for repurposing buildings for senior housing, adding that Trinity Wall Street was aware of the proposal. She did not disclose a purchase price.

The proposals by the conservation trust and the conference center are independent of each other, and, according to Jones, there is still the possibility that a buyer could purchase the entire parcel. Whatever happens, though, the proposals will come under the purview of the Planning and Zoning Commission. "They'll have to do a lot of research," First Selectman Gordon Ridgway said. However, Ridgway has indicated that both proposals seem aligned with the town's vision. "We just," he said, "have to see who Trinity wants to marry."
—Maja Gray

The Wizards of CCS

For 100 magic minutes on the evening of March 21 (with an intermission timeout for munching designer cupcakes), the stage in the school gym was turned into the Land of Oz. The kids—a lot of them in grades five through eight—put on a staged version of the grand old movie with the largest crowd this old critic has ever seen in said gym cheering them on.

And the cheering was well deserved for all, from Eliana



Calhoun, who played Dorothy, to the four youngsters who played the talking apple trees. The superb cast also included Caleb (Scarecrow) Shpur, Olive (Tin Girl) Cowan, Caleb (Cowardly Lion) Boucher, Kaitlyn (Toto) Buckley, Annika (Wicked Witch) Elwell, Ella (Good Witch Glinda) Matsudaira, Dean (Wizard of Oz) Saccardi, Ella (Auntie Em) Hampson, Patrick (Uncle Henry) Kennedy, Ewa (Miss Gulch) Urbanowicz, Emily (Professor Marvel) Geyselaers, plus Roxy Hurlburt, Trevor Hampson, Arieh Saed, Dartanian Oyanadel, Nicholas O'Neil, Mitch Kosciusko, Daniel Saed, Amelia Budny, and the kids of the Lullaby League, Lollipop Guild, the crows, and the rest of the wonderful ensemble.

We should also mention some of the women and men behind the scenes who coached and worked with the kids and others who designed and built the sets and costumes: co-directors Kristi Pramuka and Danielle Krueger; music director Alicia Simonetti-Shpur; choreographer Danielle Krueger; set and prop designer Tricia Collins; costume designers Valorie Fischer and Tricia Collins; lighting designer and sound engineer Tom Brown, plus a bunch of others who put in many hours on the production and made it work beautifully.

And to the 42 students who made up the big cast and crew: kids, you made Cornwall proud. A big thanks from all of us who think our town is sort of a magical Land of Oz and you are part of the magic.

—John Miller

Cornwall Briefs

•**Maple Syrup.** The savagery of the past winter (I'm saying "past" hoping it will be by the time you read this) has put the brakes on the sugaring season. The first buckets usually go out during the third week of February but this year the days hadn't been warm enough by then to let the sap flow freely.

By the second week of March, sap was boiling all over town. Phil Hart said it was a real struggle to get to the trees through the deep snow. The effort called on "the energy that goes into producing a quart of good syrup." Phil supposed the tapping season might go through mid-April before the trees bud out.

•**Snow removal** funds were nearly used up by mid-March. The same goes for diesel, repairs to the town's trucks, and overtime for the highway crew. It's testimony to the hours the guys put in keeping the roads clear.

•**Budget time** is here again. The trend is up with health insurance costs leading the way. It seems the town, part of the Region One plan, can't avoid a 22.9 percent increase in premium cost.

(continued on page 4)

•The social services office will be open a second day each week to take care of heavy demand. The office helps about 60 families a year and also applies for grants, and takes care of mountains of paperwork. Add in answering telephone inquiries, making referrals, and everything else. Director Jill Gibbons puts in 1,100 to 1,200 hours a year in the office and at home. She's getting a raise in the new budget year.

—Lisa L. Simont

Events & Announcements

Potluck Dinner: The Cornwall Ag. Commission is sponsoring a potluck dinner on April 5 at the UCC Parish House. Please bring your favorite dish to share. Dinner will start at 5:30 P.M. Questions? Call Bill Dinneen, 672-6509, or any member of the commission.

Cornwall Community Contra Dance on Saturday, April 5, at 7 P.M. at the town hall. Calling by Eric Hollman and music by Still, the Homegrown Band. No partner necessary; all ages and left feet welcome. Donation for the caller. For information call Jane at 672-6101.

Cornwall Historical Society presents Enslaved and Freed in Cornwall, a talk by Ryan Bachman, at 2 P.M., Sunday, April 6, at the Cornwall Library. Ryan will present his findings from an archaeological dig in Cornwall at the ruins of a home owned by an African American couple enslaved, then freed. Free, refreshments will be served.

Senior Luncheon: Tuesday, April 8, from 11:30 A.M. to 1 P.M. at the Wandering Moose Café. Fine food and fabulous conversation for a fair price. No reservations necessary. For more information call Jane at 672-6101.

Free blood pressure clinic on Monday, April 14, from 12 to 1 P.M. at the United Church of Christ Parish House. For info call 860-567-6000 or email vnanw.org.

At the Cornwall Library: Dance movie: April 16 at 7 P.M., title to be determined.

Money Pitch

The first *Chronicle* April Fool's story ran ten years ago, when John Miller hoodwinked both readers and the local press into believing that an English royal visit was soon to occur. Keep the contributions coming so we can keep the stories flowing.

Made possible with a grant from the Cornwall Foundation, the new teen center will open with a show of teen art at a reception on Sunday, April 27, at 4 P.M. All are welcome.

A tea will be held to celebrate Bee Simont's new publication, *The Green Scarf*, on Saturday, April 12, at 4 P.M. Selections from Bee's poetry and short stories will be read by Tom Walker.

Art in Cornwall: Through the month of April, Rudi Wolff's show *Tulipmania* will be at the Cornwall Library; Richard Griggs' exhibit of mobiles called *Recycling Works for Me* is at the UCC Parish House; and Rita Vitalis' exhibit of photos and collages is at the National Iron Bank. *Art Among Friends* continues at the Souterrain Gallery through May 18.

Motherhouse Events: Serious Dough—Bread Baking Workshop on Saturday, April 12, 10:30 A.M. to 1:30 P.M. at the UCC Parish House. Grind wheat, mix, and knead dough to form a loaf of bread to bake at home. Learn the difference between sprouted grain, sourdough, and yeast breads. Sample them all and discuss the ingredients during a potluck lunch. \$35/family. Please register early with Debra or Margaret at 672-0229.

Early Bird Special—Camp Eureka Registration: Register before May 1 and take \$25 off per child per session of Camp Eureka's three sessions of day camp visiting different farms and workspaces in Cornwall: June 23 to 27, July 21 to 25, and August 11 to 15. Visit CampEureka.us or call Debra at 672-0229 for more information.

Meditation: 1 to 2 P.M. Sunday and 4 to 5 P.M. Thursdays, except April 6, 10, and 13. Please call Debra for location at 672-0229.

Kindergarten registration for the 2014–2015 school year will be held on Thursday, May 1. Any child turning 5 on or before December 31, 2014 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 and birth certificate with them.

Lend A Paw! During the months of April and May, National Iron Bank will be helping Little Guild of St. Francis fulfill its wish list. Donations accepted at the Cornwall Bridge office. These are the most popular items: smooth peanut butter, small piece dog treats, canned cat and dog food.

Bend and Stretch: VNA Northwest is offering free exercise sessions for older adults with an emphasis on preventing falls. Mondays, April 28 to June 9, 11:15 A.M. to 12:15 P.M. at the UCC Parish House. Registration preferred at 860-567-6000, or just show up. Call or visit vnanw.org for more information.



Free diabetes course at the Cornwall Library. Anne Hummel, RN MS, will offer her free course in *Managing Your Diabetes Well* on Tuesdays, April 29 through June 3, from 10 A.M. to 12 P.M. All aspects of diabetes self care will be discussed, including the four cornerstones of medication, meal planning, exercise, and attitude. The course is appropriate for everyone with diabetes, pre-diabetes, caregivers, family, and friends. Registration will take place at the library before the first class on April 29 at 9 A.M. Call Anne Hummel at 672-2325 with questions.

Local Businesses: the Cornwall website is looking to update its business listings. If you would like your business listed on the website, please contact Richard Griggs at thingmkr@optonline.net or go to the contact page on Cornwall.org.

Woman's Society Scholarship applications are now available for graduating high school seniors from Cornwall who are attending public or private schools. The deadline is May 15 and applications are available at the HVRHS guidance office or through Jen Markow at 672-4875 or email daisy1612@optimum.net.

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THIS MONTH

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