



# CORNWALL CHRONICLE

VOLUME 25 : NUMBER 3 APRIL 2015



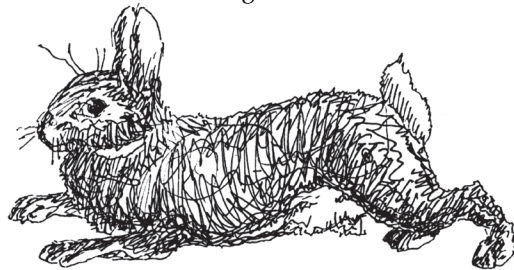
## Simply Foolish

The Connecticut Department of Transportation has decided to update and renovate the West Cornwall Covered Bridge. According to department officials, years of bridge mishaps and traffic impingement have put burdens on both the budget and patience of the department. The covered bridge poses several problems for the DOT: the wooden floor needs constant repair, the sides get damaged frequently by motorists, and the height of the bridge precludes its use by large trucks. The bridge clearance height is of most concern to the DOT. As its goal is to ensure easy access to all of its highways, having trucking hindered between Route 128 and Route 7 is no longer considered acceptable.

The DOT's solution is to raise the clearance of the bridge from its current ten feet 11 inches to a generous 14 feet six inches, which will allow tractor trailer trucks to access the bridge. Furthermore, the DOT plans to return the bridge to its turn-of-the-century appearance, using naturally weathered wood and squaring off the ends. By replacing the unfortunate red siding, the bare wood will adhere to the style of "the new authentic." Boards from the original bridge have been in storage in the attic of the Cornwall Bridge firehouse, and will be used to side the taller bridge.

Unfortunately there aren't enough boards to side both sides completely. Composite wood siding will be used on the north side of the bridge, where it will resist weathering and mold. The DOT has assured the town that the boards will be indistinguishable from the real wood boards, and it has gone so far as to hire an artist to replicate the 50 shades of grey that can be found in the reclaimed boards.

Stunned speechless at this news, Selectman Gordon Ridgway's initial response was "Blargh!" Apparently there's little the town can do, as the bridge is owned by the state. Citizen outrage and appeal planning are on the agenda of the next selectmen's meeting. —Annie Kosciusko



## Lake Update

As the snow finally melts, Cornwall residents can think with pleasure about dipping toes and oars into the waters of

Cream Hill Lake. Some Cornwall residents were already focusing on the lake on a snowy afternoon in February when noted limnologist (lake scientist) George Knoecklein presented the findings of a study he undertook in 2013 in response to the concern of Nancy Berry.

Swimming in the lake in summer, Nancy worried about its clarity, and wondered whether there was more plant life than there had been in the past. She formed a committee, found a report from a 1986 study, and asked Dr. Knoecklein of Northeast Aquatic Research to assess the current health of the lake.

Knoecklein took a set of measurements in October 2013 and compared them with the 1986 lake study. He examined the kinds of plant life in the lake; measured its depth in order to check for excessive sedimentation; and measured the current levels of phosphorus and dissolved oxygen in the water.

A healthy lake is clear, with limited plant life and plentiful amounts of dissolved oxygen in the deepest water (oligotrophic). As a lake ages and sickens, the water becomes murkier; more aquatic plants and algae appear; and there is less oxygen in the colder waters at the bottom (mesotrophic). As lakes continue to de-

(continued on page 2)

# APRIL 2015

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
<b>Every Week This Month:</b> <b>Mondays:</b> Yoga, 8:30–10 am Library; <b>Karate,</b> 6:30–7:30 pm Town Hall; <b>Men's Basketball,</b> 7–9 pm CCS gym ♦ <b>Wednesdays: Meditation,</b> 4–5 pm call Debra 672-0229; <b>Tai Chi,</b> 5–7 pm Town Hall			<b>1</b> ♦ Region 1 Budget Public Hearing 6 pm Rm 133 HVRHS ♦ Creative Writing Class begins 6:30 pm Library ♦ Solar Energy Basics Talk 6:30 pm HVRHS	<b>2</b> ♦ Woman's Society 10:15 am Library	<b>3</b> PASSOVER	<b>4</b> FULL MOON ♦ Panel Discussion: Renewable Energy 10 am Library ♦ Community Contra Dance 7 pm Town Hall
<b>5</b> EASTER	<b>6</b> ♦ Region 1 BOE 6 pm HVRHS Room 133	<b>7</b> ♦ Board of Selectmen 7:30 pm Town Hall	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>11</b> ♦ CVIS Annual Meeting 10 am Town Hall 4th Q ♦ Falls Village 5K Run/Walk 11 am–1:30 pm HVRHS ♦ CHS Talk: Jeffrey Jacobson 4 pm Town Hall
<b>12</b>	<b>13</b> ♦ Blood Pressure Clinic Noon–1 pm UCC Parish House ♦ Park & Rec 7:30 pm Town Hall	<b>14</b> ♦ Economic Dev. Comm. 9 am Town Hall ♦ Senior Luncheon 11:30 am–1 pm Wandering Moose ♦ P&Z 7 pm Library	<b>15</b> ♦ Deadline: May Chronicle Copy	<b>16</b> ♦ CCC 6:30 pm Town Hall	<b>17</b> ♦ Family Movie 7 pm Library	<b>18</b> NEW MOON ♦ Artist Reception: Michael Quadland 4–6 pm Library
<b>19</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>21</b> ♦ Board of Selectmen 7:30 pm Town Hall	<b>22</b> ♦ Board of Ed 4 pm CCS Library ♦ Board of Finance 7:30 pm CCS Library	<b>23</b>	<b>24</b> ♦ Town Budget Hearing 7:30 pm CCS Gathering Room	<b>25</b> ♦ Art @ The Dump 10 am–4 pm Transfer Station 1st Q ♦ Spring Fling Auction & Cocktail Party 2–5 pm Mohawk Lodge ♦ Artist Reception: Constance Old 3–6 pm Strn Glry ♦ Pasta Bonanza 5–7 pm UCC
<b>26</b> ♦ Art @ The Dump 10 am–Noon Transfer Station ♦ Art Opening: Zejke Hermann 11:30 am UCC Parish House	<b>27</b> ♦ ZBA* 7:30 pm Library	<b>28</b> ♦ Cornwall Committee for Seniors 7 pm Library	<b>29</b>	<b>30</b>	<b>Every Week This Month:</b> ♦ <b>Thursdays: Pilates,</b> 8:30–9:30 am Library; ♦ <b>Toddler Play Group,</b> 10:30–11:30 am Library; ♦ <b>Meditation,</b> 4–5 pm call Debra 672-0229; ♦ <b>Mah Jongg,</b> 7–9 pm Library; ♦ <b>Adult Volleyball,</b> 7:30 pm CCS gym ♦ <b>Fridays: Yoga,</b> 8:30–10 am Library ♦ <b>Sundays: Yoga</b> 9–10:30 am Library	

\*Check with Zoning Office—672-4957

(continued from page 1)

teriorate, they fill with plants and algae; boating and swimming become almost impossible (eutrophic).

A lake is like a living thing and has a lifespan. Like other living things, lakes age at rates that partially depend on what happens in their environment. The more that phosphorus and nitrogen leaches into a lake, the more hospitable it will be for plant life, and thus the faster it will become inhospitable for boating and swimming. Knoecklein noted that Cream Hill Lake has few springs, and is largely fed by groundwater from its surroundings (its lake shed). Because its water runs off the surrounding land, its health ultimately depends on the amount of phosphorus and nitrogen coming into the lake from the lake shed. In 1986 Cream Hill Lake was pretty clear, with slightly elevated, but not unhealthy, levels of phosphorus.

Knoecklein's report included a list of plants found in the lake. Included was the carpet of Robbins' pondweed, a low-growing plant that doesn't interfere with recreational uses. The lake also hosts a population of water marigold, a rare, beautiful, and harmless aquatic plant. The one invasive he found, Eurasian milfoil, can spread rapidly and make swimming and boating impossible where there are large quantities, but although it had been present in 1986 it has not spread a great deal.

The most distressing finding from the 2013 testing was the discovery of high levels of phosphorus in a few places, and low levels of oxygen at the deepest points. His depth measurement went only to 33 feet (the 1986 study found 36 feet, and previous measurements indicated a depth of 42 feet). These findings herald the lake's movement towards a eutrophic state.

What, if anything, can Cornwall do to preserve the lake? Knoecklein stated that the community needs to manage the lake and the lake shed. He suggested that a complete set of measurements, taken once a month when the lake is unfrozen, would allow him to understand better how phosphorus gets into the water and is recycled by the aquatic plants. Volunteers, trained by Knoecklein and using simple equipment purchased from him, could take these measurements. The Eurasian milfoil should be removed before it spreads further; plastic mats could be placed to contain it, or perhaps herbicide is necessary.

Since the phosphorus, nitrogen, and sedimentation in Cream Hill Lake come from the land surrounding it, we need to begin thinking about how that land is used. Knoecklein pointed out that, for example, cutting trees on the hillside causes sediment to run down to the lake, and using fertilizer,

even organic fertilizer, releases phosphorus and nitrogen that ends up in the lake waters. Cream Hill Lake is a jewel in Cornwall's crown; we all need to be involved in its preservation. In May Nancy Berry will be seeking volunteers for the Cream Hill Lake Committee, which was established by the selectmen, both to take samples and to think about caring for the lake in the future. Contact her: nancy.g.berry@gmail.com. —Jill Cutler

## Longing for Spring

The winter that would never end is over. It had to be on March 21, the spring equinox. Still, the past season, with its sub-zero temperatures, has left its mark on our physical surroundings and also on our spirits.

"It was just storm after storm," recalled First Selectman Gordon Ridgway. "Having a seasoned highway crew and reliable equipment has made all the difference." He remembered years back in the 1990s when "we couldn't even get out of the town garage" because the town's trucks kept breaking down.

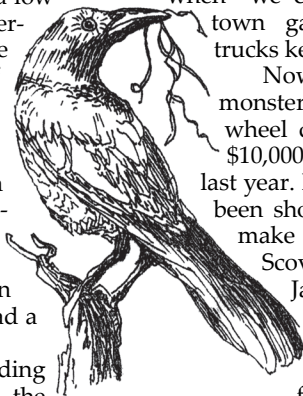
Now Cornwall can boast of a monster Walter Snow-Fighter, a four-wheel drive truck, bought used for \$10,000 from the town of Salisbury last year. It has a wing plow which has been shoving back roadside drifts to make room for more snow. Fred Scoville drove the big Walter and Jack Malahan operated the plow, expertly avoiding mailboxes, fences, boulders, and the rest of the roadside furniture. It helps that Jack has

worked for the town for over 30 years and could possibly do this in his sleep. They got around town three times "pushing back." Only one report of a damaged mailbox made it to town hall.

The budget for snow removal has stayed within bounds, thanks in part to the town's practice of reclaiming road sand early in the spring and stockpiling it for road resurfacing and future winter use. Freeze-and-thaw damage affected many structures in town and even managed to split the twin columns on the front of town hall. They had been weakened by many past winters but this one opened cavities in the upper sections of the hollow structures. They're in no danger of falling down but repairs must be made.

The intense cold froze up the ground to as much as six feet, damaging underground pipes in Cornwall Village and cutting off water to four homes, according to Aquarion Water Company.

As the days warm up, homeowners will learn the full extent of damage done to water and septic lines. Flooded cellars and cracked pipes will be a likely outcome after the coldest February since 1934. —Lisa L. Simont



## Congratulations

Dorcas Blake Beatty and Daniel D. Hubbard

## Land Transfer

Consuelo A. Gomez to Mary-Lee L. Clark and Terrance R. Bell, one-half acre of land with buildings thereon at 20 Brook Road and another lot on Brook Road for \$157,000.

## Ebola Nurse

Devon Root, daughter of Mike Root and Laurie Bianchi, recently resumed her nursing post in the emergency room at Sharon Hospital after taking an eight-week leave of absence during January and February. She spent most of that time in Magburaka, Sierra Leone, at the Ebola Management Center caring for patients with Ebola.

Ebola, a rare and deadly virus, is responsible for 3,576 deaths in Sierra Leone. The disease is extremely virulent, with a high death rate. It is spread through direct contact with body fluids—saliva, urine, feces, blood, vomit—and the sicker the person, the more virus is in those fluids. Since the disease's symptoms are fever with pain, nausea, vomiting, and diarrhea, keeping patients clean and comfortable are the primary functions of the nursing staff. The bodies of the dead are also highly infectious, and must be sprayed with a chlorine solution to disinfect them before putting them into bags for burial.

This was not the first time that Devon traveled overseas to volunteer. She has worked in Haiti, Nigeria, and Chad with Doctors Without Borders, which provides medical humanitarian assistance in health emergencies worldwide.

Devon's recent stint in Sierra Leone put her directly into personal danger. "This was my first time in a hemorrhagic fever project," she says, "so it was all very new to me." Along with the epidemic, civil unrest had been reported in Sierra Leone, with violence against health workers, so she was headed into an unpredictable situation.

In action, Devon and her colleagues all obeyed strict protocols for personal protection: rubber boots, a plastic non-breathable jump suit, an apron over that, a face mask, a hood over the head and down over the shoulders, two pairs of gloves, and goggles. Since patients could only see their eyes, their names were written on their foreheads, and a nurse's appearance was pretty alarming, especially for the children. "The hardest part," Devon adds, "was wearing all that around in 90- to 100-degree temperatures."

After her period of active service was over, Devon was required to monitor her own health for 21 days—the longest possible incubation period. She spent some of that period with friends in Holland and Germany; European guide-



lines for Ebola vary from one country to another, but they are based on science and the real risks involved: helpers from the epidemic are not infectious when they have no symptoms, so she was given more freedom than if she had come directly home. She then returned to the United States and spent her last week here reporting twice daily to Connecticut's Department of Health. She returned to her job at Sharon Hospital at the beginning of March.

—Ann Schillinger

## VFD Gets a Cardiac Monitor

He's a cute little feller, two-tone blue and gray. Smallish: 9 by 10 by 8 inches. He is a Zoll cardiac monitor: good friend to all of us with potential cardiac problems. His home is a shelf in the Cornwall ambulance.

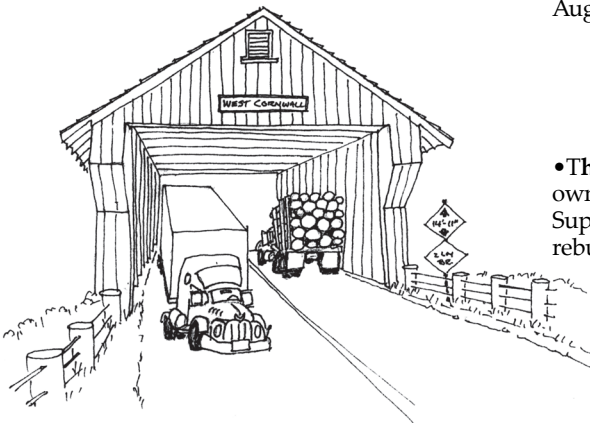
The fire department voted to purchase the monitor at a cost of \$30,000 from donated funds and very soon 30 members of the ambulance squad will be trained in its use. Three members, including Ambulance Captain Zach Sawicki, are professional paramedics and already qualified in its use.

Zach told us the monitor can be used to take all the vital signs: pulse, blood pressure, and oximetry, plus do a 12-lead EKG. The information from the monitor can then be transmitted wirelessly to a hospital. The monitor also has a defibrillator if the patient goes into cardiac arrest. Doctors at the hospital can survey the information quickly and be prepared when the patient arrives, or can divert the ambulance to another hospital if indicated. Recent pilot programs have shown that this type of monitoring in the field and early identification of life-threatening problems resulted in such an improvement in patient care that the state quickly approved the use of 12-lead monitoring in all basic life-support ambulances.

Several other fire companies in the area—North Canaan and Kent—already have monitors and Goshen has one on order.

Zach, with a slight grin, looked at this writer and said "Cornwall isn't getting any younger and we want to preserve our senior community as best we can." Amen, Zach. Amen!

—John Miller



# Letters to the Chronicle

## THE BLOOD FLOWED ANYWAY

A Red Cross blood drive was scheduled for March 3, and space at the UCC Parish House was reserved. Everything was in place EXCEPT the building had no water. The lines were frozen solid. Then many hands came to the rescue. We got an OK from Gordon to use the town hall.

Jim Vanicky and his road crew spent hours chipping ice from the steps, removing mounds of snow, and then sanding. Joyce Hart arranged telephone service. Meanwhile, the Red Cross notified their donors, nurses, and technicians of the change in location. And guess what? We had one of our best blood drives yet!

We hope the next drive on June 2 will be less stressful and just as successful.

—Pat and Jerry Blakey

## FOOD PANTRY NEWS

Thanks to a generous grant from the Cornwall Foundation, the Cornwall Food Pantry was able to purchase a shiny, new, energy-efficient refrigerator/freezer. Located off the Day Room at the United Church of Christ, the new fridge will enable the food pantry to continue to offer fresh dairy, eggs, meats, and produce to those in need, in addition to offering

dry and canned goods and household products. And, it will do all that with less energy consumption!

After eight years of steadfast dedication, the food pantry's volunteer coordinator Anne Scott is stepping down. Anne's leadership, her calm and welcoming demeanor, and her organizational skills have made the pantry the success it is; a confidential respite for those struggling to keep food on the table. We are pleased to announce that our very capable Jennifer Hurlburt Markow has agreed to become the new volunteer coordinator. She can be reached at [cornwallfoodpantry@gmail.com](mailto:cornwallfoodpantry@gmail.com). Food pantry hours are Monday to Friday, 9 A.M. to 1 P.M. for drop-offs; and Tuesday and Thursday, 9 A.M. to noon for pick-ups.

—Jill Gibbons

## DELIVERY DELAYS

The Chronicle apologizes to its readers for the unusual delays in getting its February and March issues into Cornwall mailboxes and post office boxes. Hopefully problems have been resolved. Remember the online version is available at [cornwallchronicle.org](http://cornwallchronicle.org).

—Paul De Angelis

## Cornwall Flag Contest

Flags have been around forever. In fact, we're told, ancient tribes fleeing Egypt had flags. Country flags date back to the 15<sup>th</sup> century, and soldiers apparently carried them into battle even earlier.

Which brings us to the point of this story: to celebrate this year's 275<sup>th</sup> anniversary of our town, the Cornwall Association will be sponsoring a competition to design a town flag. The idea comes from that man of ideas, Richard Griggs, as something special for the town's special year. Details for the contest will be available on April 15 at the association's website: [cornwallassociation.org](http://cornwallassociation.org). The eventual winning designer can expect a prize: one dollar for every year since our founding (you do the arithmetic). The winning flag design will be on display big time when Cornwall celebrates with a parade and much more this summer on August 1. Please save that date!

—Joanne Wojtusiak

## Cornwall Briefs

•**The Charred Lumberyard:** We spoke with owner Jan Cohen (Northeast Building Supply of Bridgeport) who told us it will be rebuilt but he could not commit to a date until insurance issues are straightened out. Those at town hall are trying to expedite the work in hopes that the process could get going soon and possibly be running by the fall. One

plan that we heard was that the paint and hardware businesses would be relocated at the rebuilt lumberyard in a new larger building. Mr. Cohen didn't reject the idea, but said it was too early for him to commit to such a plan. He did say that the new building would be "aesthetically pleasing and the best possible structure we can build."

•**275<sup>th</sup> Anniversary:** So far the committee charged with planning the town's celebration has picked Saturday, August 1, for the big day that will include games, a parade, dancing, and a dinner prepared by Cornwall food entities. Rumor has it that our own ribmaster, Dan Evans, is coming out of retirement to smoke up a batch for the occasion. Other plans include a flag-making contest, a regatta on the river sponsored by the Housatonic Valley Association on August 9, a bridge dance on September 19, and other events to be announced soon.

•**Upcoming Road Work** is scheduled to begin on Cream Hill and Dibble Hill, both hit hard by the record-breaking winter. No sand this time, but a heavier variety of oil. This to begin, we hope, by the third week of this month.

•**2015–2016 Proposed Budget:** A public hearing to discuss the budget is scheduled for April 24 in the CCS Gathering Room at 7:30 P.M. with a town meeting to vote on it May 15, also at CCS at 7:30 P.M. Here are the proposed numbers: selectmen's budget: \$1,818,591, up \$33,000; capital projects: \$500,000, up \$117,000; debt service: \$175,675, down \$3,625; board of ed: \$4,201,640, up \$44,408. Total? \$6,695,906, up \$190,884.

—John Miller

## Events & Announcements

### At the Cornwall Library

Debbie Devins is holding a creative writing class. The fee is \$50 for the six-week course held Wednesdays at 6:30 P.M. beginning April 1. No writing experience is necessary. Please preregister as the class fills up quickly.

Family Movie night on Friday, April 17, at 7 P.M. will feature *Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Day*. Please call ahead if planning to attend. Free. Donations welcome.

The library has received two grants. The first is a grant from the Cornwall Foundation to continue the work of replacing rotted exterior siding. The second grant is from the Community Foundation of Northwest Connecticut for technology upgrades. This grant will fund an enhancement to the library's website to make it more user-responsive, a new printer/scanner, and one-to-one technology tutorials.

**Renewable Energy Programs:** A presentation on solar basics, including leasing, will be given at Housatonic Valley Regional High School at 6:30 P.M. on Wednesday April 1 by Ray Furse of Litchfield Solar.

On Saturday, April 4, a panel discussion will be held at 10 A.M. in the Cornwall Library. Panelists include: Selectman Gordon Ridgway on renewables, including solar and wood; Mark Lenz of Lenz Electric on new local hydro projects; and Karen Nelson of Cornwall P&Z and the Northwest Conservation District on wind, particularly developments in Colebrook. Clean energy task forces in the Northwest Corner will be attending for an extended discussion of these challenges and opportunities. Coffee and refreshments provided. The event is hosted by the Cornwall Energy Task Force.

**Cornwall Woman's Society** meeting on Thursday, April 2, at 10:15 A.M. in the Cornwall Library will feature Verne Henshall speaking about Auroville, City of

## April's Sighs

Inspiration of poets, harbinger of summer, maker of rain and daffodils, April has it all. Celebrate by writing the Chronicle a nice check and may you be showered with apple blossoms in return!

Dawn. It is an experimental township in India with people from 46 nations endorsed by UNESCO and created for the purpose of allowing people of good will to learn to live in harmony.



**A Contra Dance** will be held Saturday, April 4, at 7 P.M. at the town hall with Still, The Homegrown Band and Patricia Campbell calling. All dances are taught, all ages and left feet welcome. No partner necessary! Requested donation to pay the caller. For information call Jane at 672-6101 or go to motherhouse.us.

**Cornwall Castle** talk by Jeff Jacobson on Saturday, April 11, at 4 P.M. at town hall. Mr. Jacobsen will discuss his new book *The Castle, A Cornwall Love Story*, which tells the fascinating history of Cornwall's famed landmark. Refreshments will be served. Admission is free.



**A Free Blood Pressure Clinic** will be held Monday, April 13, from noon to 1 P.M. at the UCC Day Room. For information contact VNA Northwest at 860-567-6000 or vnanw.org.

**Art in Cornwall:** From April 14 to May 30, the Cornwall Library will be exhibiting abstracts by Michael Quadland titled *Selections 2011-2014*, which features materials such as hardware, plaster, and concrete. An artist's reception is April 18 from 4 to 6 P.M.

At the UCC Parish House, a selection of Zejke Hermann's paintings, *Surf, Turf, Sunsets and Sunflowers*, will be shown mid-April until mid-June, with an opening on Sunday, April 26, at 11:30 A.M.

The Souterrain Gallery will be hosting an artist's reception for works by Constance Old titled *Prints & Fiber* on Saturday, April 25, 3 to 6 P.M. The exhibit will be on display through the Memorial Day Weekend.

**The Monthly Senior Luncheon** will be held Tuesday, April 14, at 11:30 A.M. at the Wandering Moose Cafe. A full stomach and a merry heart are well worth the small price of \$7.50. Questions? Bob Potter at 672-6191.

**Child Center Auction and Cocktail Party** will be held April 25 from 2 to 5 P.M. at Mohawk Mountain Lodge. All proceeds go to the Cornwall Child Center. Live and silent auctions will feature some of the best in art, dining, personalized experiences, and unique goods and services. To donate an item or give a monetary contribution, please contact Amy Bresson at 672-6989 or email amy.bresson@cornwallchildcenter.org

**A Senior Events Newslines** regularly informs the elders among us of upcoming happenings. Anyone not now on the list who would like to be added should contact cornwallctseniors@gmail.com.

**Scholarship Opportunities:** The Marie Baum scholarship is for a student "who displays enthusiasm for an achievement in music." Applicants must have graduated from Housatonic and attended CCS for four years. Applications must be received in the guidance office or the selectmen's office by May 1. The scholarship is worth \$500.

Cornwall 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.

## CORNWALL CHRONICLE

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### THIS MONTH

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