



CORNWALL CHRONICLE

VOLUME 26 : NUMBER 3 APRIL 2016



The Winter That Wasn't

"Now is the winter of our discontent," wrote Shakespeare in *King Richard III*. With discontent being defined as "a dissatisfaction with one's circumstances," Shakespeare seems to summarize many folks' feelings about this past winter that wasn't.

Connecticut's record-setting warmth and little snow certainly did set the winter apart.

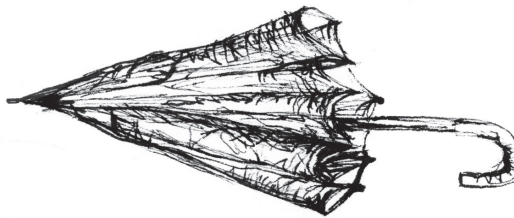
The state came within one-tenth of a degree of tying the record for the warmest winter against records going back more than 110 years. We did set absolute records for the number of days being at least 50 degrees and at least 60 degrees. December, January, and February were all well above average historical temperatures with December's 43.3 being a record of nearly 12 degrees above average. That is astonishing. As for the white stuff, there's not much to report, with only 17.1 inches falling compared to a normal 30.7 inches.

So, it was balmy with clear roads. How could this be considered a discontented winter? Well...it just didn't seem right. Often villagers would remark something along the lines of how they were enjoying a hike without having to be dressed like DiCaprio's *Revenant* character. Then their smile would change to a wrinkled-brow look, they'd glance over their shoulder, and

with a nervous laugh say, "Strange, though, isn't it?" before scurrying down the trail, seemingly alert to a calamity they thought certain was lurking.

That calamity's name appears to be global warming and irrefutable evidence points at us humans for being the cause. The party is over and we now must clean up the mess we made and get our house in order.

The effect on Cornwall is difficult to predict. Carol Lugar, president of Mohawk Mountain Ski Area, can recall only three winters that were similar to the one we just left, and one of those was from her dad's stories of the late 1940s. She says, though, that the area's management is less concerned with gradual warming than with the current dramatic changes. The winter of 2014-2015 had bitterly cold days that were bad for business, but lots of snow, which was great. Now, just a year later, we are finishing a warm/little-snow winter that still threw in several extremely cold days. A mid-February night saw minus 15 degrees,



while in early March we hit 74...nearly a 90-degree swing within a few weeks.

This level of unpredictability makes all of our planning so difficult. How much firewood should be purchased or split? How much can be sold? What should be budgeted for snow plowing costs, and how can plowing income be forecast? Should we buy that new pickup and plow combo?

Difficult, too, for our landscapers. What types of plants should they stock and when? Surely these weather changes will be bad for many species, but acceptable for others. Bugs, birds, and other wild critters will also be changing their habits and seasonal timing.

The trending lack of consistency and the resulting inability to forecast well will impact us all to one degree or another. Ending, as we began, with Shakespeare, we find in *Julius Caesar* this warning: "On such a full sea we are now afloat, / And we must take the current when it serves, / Or lose our ventures." —Jeff Jacobson

The Hills of Cornwall

"It is only by riding a bicycle that you learn the contours of a country best, since you have to sweat up the hills and coast down them."

(continued on page 2)

APRIL 2016

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, 5-7 pm Town Hall call 672-0064; Poetry Writing Class, 6:30-8:30 pm; Stitch 'n Spin, 7:15-8:30 UCC ♦ Thursdays: Pilates, 8:30-9:30 am Library; Toddler Play Group, 10:30-11:30 am Library ♦ Thursdays: Meditation, 4-5 pm call Debra 672-0229; Mah Jongg, 7-9 pm Library call 672-6874; Adult Volleyball, 7:30 pm CCS gym ♦ Sundays: Yoga 9-10:30 am Library; Meditation, 1 pm call Debra 672-0229					1	2
					♦ Kindergarten Registration CCS	♦ Potluck benefit Dolan Family 6-9 pm CCS ♦ Community Contra Dance 7 pm Town Hall
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
♦ Art Opening Reception Cindy Kirk 11:30 am UCC Parish House	♦ Region 1 Board of Ed 6:30 pm HVRHS - Rm. 133 ♦ Agricultural Advisory Committee 7:30 pm Town Office	♦ Inland Wetlands 7 pm Town Hall ♦ Board of Selectmen 7:30 pm Town Hall	♦ Region 1 BOE Budget Public Hearing 6:30 pm HVRHS	♦ Woman's Society Bobbie Tyson Tales from a Troglodyte 10 am		♦ American in Augsburg Janet Walker 5 pm Library
10	11	12	13	14	15	16
♦ Meet/Greet New Social Services Director 4-5:30 pm Town Hall	♦ Free Blood Pressure Clinic Noon-1 pm UCC Day Room ♦ Park and Rec 7:30 pm Town Hall	♦ Eco. Dev. Comm. 9 am Town Hall ♦ Senior Luncheon 11:30 am-1 pm Wandering Moose ♦ Planning & Zoning 7 pm Library ♦ Housatonic River Commission 7:30 pm CCS		♦ WC-Water-Septic Committee 5 pm Ingersoll's Shop	♦ Deadline: May Chronicle Copy	♦ CVIS Annual Meeting 10 am Library ♦ Absentee Ballots 10 am-Noon Town Clerk's Office
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
		♦ Board of Selectmen 7:30 pm Town Hall	♦ Board of Finance 7:30 pm Town Hall	♦ Knitting Group/Hats for Cancer Patients 10 am Library ♦ Cornwall Conservation Comm. 7 pm Library	♦ Town Budget Hearing CCS	♦ Art @ The Dump 10 am-4 pm Transfer Station ♦ Civil War Living History Display 10 am-3 pm Town Green
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
♦ Art @ The Dump 10 am-Noon Transfer Station ♦ TIME Correspondent's Lecture 3 pm Town Hall	♦ Deadline to Enroll in Political Party Noon ♦ ZBA* 7 pm Library	♦ Presidential Primary Election 6 am-8 pm ♦ Committee for Seniors 7 pm Library	♦ Board of Education 4:15 pm CCS Library			♦ Cornwall Conversations Homes of Presidents 5 pm Library

*Check with Zoning Office—672-4957

(continued from page 1)

The words of Ernest Hemingway resonate when I ride the hills of Cornwall, where some are short and brutal, some long and sapping, and some are rolling and exhilarating as the downhill momentum brings me almost the whole way up the next rise. Trees line both sides of the roads on many hills, with vistas of open meadows and distant hills unfolding as the summit is reached. Each hill has the ability to inflict pain on the unprepared bicyclist who does not treat it with the respect it demands.

A friend asked me two years ago to show him round some of the Cornwall hills, and so I put together a challenging smorgasbord. We started from my home at Cornwall Bridge and, following the sweeping downhill into the village, went straight into an uncompromising start by climbing Popple Swamp Road. Here is a hill that starts very tough and definitely gets one out of the saddle for the first hundred yards or so. But then it relents and slowly eases into a flat, followed by a gentle downhill to meet with Route 4. No time to rest here, as we swung hard left into Pierce Lane, a choppy hill with sweeping corners, leading us to Dibble Hill. At first Dibble Hill is gentle, and then we had our brakes well applied much of the way down to West Cornwall.

We turned right onto River Road, which gave us plenty of time to recover, as we rambled along this most beautiful of roads, crisscrossing the railway line and watching fishermen wading in midstream.

The next climb came shortly after the dirt road ended, swinging right up Music Mountain Road, then right again to work our way up Cream Hill. The climb here is not steep, but it is a long hill that requires a balanced effort to avoid blowing up before reaching the summit. We paused at the top to take in the wide view (and ease our aching legs). Descending Cream Hill is exhilarating. This is definitely a downhill with a great "wheeee" factor, turning men into children in an instant. A short rise on Rattlesnake Road, right at the North Cornwall Meeting House, and a few rollers before a right on Route 128. Sharp left onto Route 125, pass through Cornwall Village and down Valley Road to one of my favorites, Everest Hill. Steep, but of medium length, it is a beautiful hill to climb. At the top we turned left onto Great Hollow Road.

"There is more to come," I told my wheezing companion, as we took a sharp right turn onto Great Hill Road, followed by a steady slog up to College Street. We turned right onto Flat Rocks Road, which

starts with a series of downhills where handling skills are challenged, as the road is rutted and steep. We stopped at Hawkins Pond, a serene and almost magical spot, then climbed up a winding dirt road that would not be so difficult if not for the rough surface. Flat Rocks Road ended at Route 45, where we turned right for a long downhill to Route 7. There was no need to touch brakes at all on this long and precipitous descent, but motor traffic and debris on the shoulder kept us alert. We turned right at the Calhoun Cemetery and were home, having sampled five of what I consider to be classic hills in Cornwall.

Riding a bicycle is the surest way to appreciate and grow to love our wondrous terrain. As Mark Twain succinctly put it, "Get a bicycle. You will not regret it. If you live."
—Terry Burke

He's Seen It All

At last month's regional EMS conference, Asa Goddard was recognized by the EMS Institute as Volunteer of the Year. Asa has served his community as a member of the Cornwall Volunteer Fire Department and as an EMT and later as an AEMT, for just about 50 years. Asa joined the fire department to serve on the rescue division in the formative years of Cornwall Ambulance. He has served the squad in many capacities, including heading up the squad as rescue captain.

Asa remembers the days when Cornwall didn't have a transporting ambulance, but only had first responders who responded with a rescue truck, an International Travel All. The first ambulance was a Ford Econoline van that was modified by the members of the squad. The first three members of the squad were Fred Bate, Roly Fenn, and Lou Paniati.

Back in those days, he said, the call for help was sent out by phone because there was no central dispatch. Emergency calls did not go to 911, but instead went to a seven-digit number. The person who initially answered that phone call was Mrs. Paul Chamberlain. She was bedridden, so it was decided that she would be the best resource to answer these calls because she was always there. She had a call list, and Fred Bate was at the top of the list. Later, the squad got its first three pagers. Asa recalls that the pagers were initially used only on week-ends. The pagers were picked up on Friday afternoons and returned on Monday mornings.

The call volume was only a fraction of the call volume handled by today's squad. Asa said that they prob-

ably had fewer than 50 calls a year. Today's squad handles more than five times that many calls.

Asa's current health makes responding difficult today, but he did just pass his required recertification class at the beginning of January. Asa has been a shining example to me and to so many others who have come to serve the squad and our community. His hard work and dedication to EMS have helped greatly to establish Cornwall Ambulance as the strong and vibrant organization that it is today.

—Skip Kosciusko

Goodbye to Friends

Mary Ann Coll
Sara D. Simont
Joan Titus

Land Transfers

Richard J. and Suzanne S. Frank to Richard Pandiscio, land with improvements thereon at 111 Great Hollow Road, for \$525,000.

Kathy J. Tallardy, Trustee to Leonard W. Araza and Dolores A. Sirianni, land with all buildings thereon at 130 Kent Road, for \$298,000.

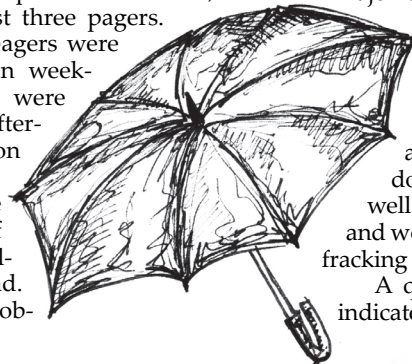
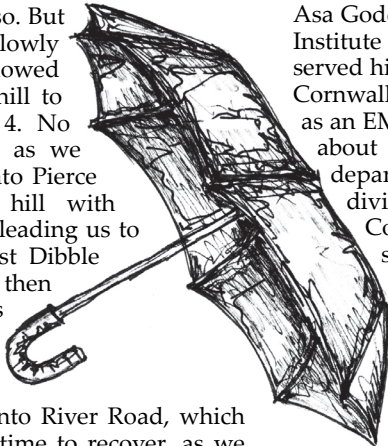
Natural Gas Deposit

Probably the worst-kept secret this town has sat on in many a moon is the belief by a group of energy companies that a huge deposit of natural gas sits undisturbed 12,000 feet below the town gravel bank in the woods just north of Dibble Hill and Route 128. It is said to be worth many millions. The rumor has spiked an interest among a small group of anti-fracking members of the Cornwall community led by Katie Freygang, also known affectionately as Cornwall's Queen of Green, because of her history as a crusader for the environment. The name of her organization is Fruck Fracking LLC (fruckfracking.org).

Just how much gas exists below ground is unknown, but Dr. Piper Methany, professor of geology at Western Connecticut State University, believes the deposit of gas could be considerable. Which is precisely what upsets Ms. Freygang. "Although, like crude oil, the price of natural gas has gone down considerably, the greedy energy companies are not about to turn their collective backs on a possible major deposit of natural gas," she told the *Chronicle*.

"Keep in mind," she added, "that the Cornwall Consolidated School and the Little Guild of St. Francis are nearby, not to mention dozens of homes, and all their wells and septic systems could and would be adversely affected by fracking to retrieve the gas."

A quick check by the *Chronicle* indicated that Freygang probably



has nothing to worry about because, like New York and Massachusetts, fracking is not permitted in Connecticut. In addition, Cornwall's three selectmen all indicated they are very much opposed to the practice.

When this was pointed out to Freygang and her organization, she said: "One can never be sure. Citizens may not realize how dangerous and unhealthy it is. Fracking is very profitable, and even the greenest of towns might be seduced by these companies."

—Archie Leach

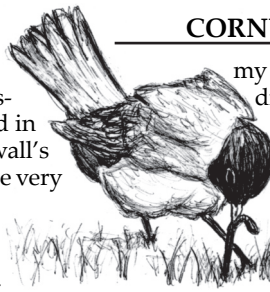
Growing Up Cornwall

I was making small talk during sorority recruitment this fall at George Washington University when a girl asked me why my parents did not move out of my small town of 1,400 people. While trying to explain how I loved knowing all my classmates' birthdays and where they all lived, she was clearly losing interest. In my mind, and many other young Cornwallians' minds, Cornwall's small size is a blessing, not a curse.

For many of us who have grown up in Cornwall, CCS taught us more than what was in the curriculum. We experienced small class sizes rarely seen in public schools. My graduating class in 2009 was 14. Even one of the largest classes to ever graduate from CCS (the class of 2004), had only 28 students. My sister Caroline, one of the students in that class, recalls Mrs. Burdick looking down and teaching her first-grade class to treat your neighbors the way you want to be treated. While many students are taught the Golden Rule, CCS's small classes forced us to learn its true value, even after we left. As Sabina Busby recalls, "We all learned to get along despite our wild differences because forming cliques was simply not possible. I think getting along with anyone and everyone is a crucial life skill that I learned growing up in Cornwall and it has continued to benefit me everywhere I go."

Though many of us yearned to leave our small town by the time we became teenagers, there was that inevitable moment when we suddenly missed Cornwall. Kim Gold, also class of 2004, had her moment while interning in San Francisco: "Spending 9 to 5 in an office made me long for Cornwall summer days, and finally realize how special Cornwall is." For Genevieve Terrall, her moment came two hours into college when she realized she did not know everyone and where everything was, like she did in Cornwall.

Genevieve's realization highlights Cornwall's most endearing quality: the community. Though Caroline did not like growing up in a small town, "moving to a city made me appreciate Cornwall. It's really special when I'm driving around in



my dad's truck and every other driver you pass waves at you." Moving away made Sabina also realize how precious our community is, "I didn't realize how rare that was until I moved away and found that not only did I not know anyone, but also that very few people were reciprocating my persistent smiles."

Cornwall does not resemble the bustling metropolises we have moved to or the colleges and universities we attended. Yet all of us treasure our time in Cornwall whenever we return. So for all the parents whose children lament how boring Cornwall is or how they wish there was more to do, the day will likely come when your children, just like us, will miss Cornwall and do whatever they can to return, even if it is for just a short time. —Mary Kate Kosciusko

Cornwall Briefs

Winter, as of this writing, hasn't happened this year. We're moving smartly into spring, and the outdoorsy character of the briefs this month proves it.

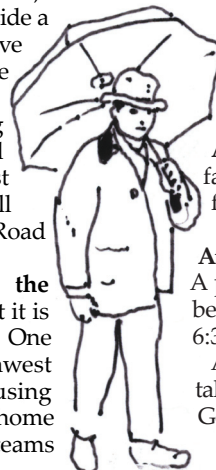
•**Company F**, 14th Connecticut Volunteer Infantry, will occupy Cornwall Green on Friday, April 22, for an overnight bivouac as Civil War soldiers. The troops will parade around the village and open their camp to visitors on Saturday, April 23, between 10 A.M. and 3 P.M. Any donations will go toward the preservation of Civil War battlefields and monuments. The same unit visited Cornwall in 2014 during the historical society's Civil War exhibit.

•**The town budget** will get a hearing on Friday, April 22, at 7:30 P.M. at CCS. You don't have to be a numbers whiz to be part of this, so round up your neighbors and see what the selectmen and the Board of Ed have in mind for next year.

•**The Scion of the Charter Oak**, whose branches shelter the war memorials on the green, will be 50 years old on Saturday, April 23. Phil Hart, who is reading through his father's diaries, discovered this. It's a good opportunity to emulate Harry Truman, who, in his later years in Independence, used to pause during his daily walk beside a favorite elm tree. He would give the tree a nice pat and say "You're doing a good job."

•**Roadwork** will begin during April on the North Cornwall roads that weren't finished last summer and on Cornwall Village streets. Popple Swamp Road is due for a touchup as well.

•**Cornwall is the center of the universe?** Well, maybe not, but it is at the center of the Region One towns and that's why the Northwest United Soccer Club will be using Foote and Hubbard turf as home fields. The regional club has teams



Letters to the Chronicle

MAPLE HILL FARM UPDATE

After the devastating fire on February 16, we would like our family, friends, and neighbors to know that we will rebuild our farm. The new barns may not have the same character or charm that the original barn, built in 1907, did, but will have character and charm of their own, filled with our horses, our miniature donkey, and our pigs. The kindness and generosity that the people of this town have shown is nothing short of incredible. —The Dolans

MORE ON THE SYRUP

We loved reading Jane Bean's article "Sap's Running! Grab a Bucket!" in the March Chronicle. The short history of maple sugaring was interesting. However, she mentioned that Phil Hart's syrup "graces the (UCC) Pancake Breakfast every year."

We would like to add and thank the Scovilles, Potters, Buddy and Bill Hurlburt, Gordon Ridgway, the Heddens, and Denny Frost who, over the past 17 years, have also provided syrup for the breakfast. Proceeds from this yearly event have been given to many non-profit groups including the La Casa Project, the Steve Frost Scholarship Fund at the Cornwall Child Center, Friends of the North Cornwall Meeting House, Pine Ridge Indian Reservation in South Dakota, and the Torrington Soup Kitchen.

—Pat and Jerry Blakey

for several age groups and will host teams like New Milford and Danbury. The club and the town will share field upkeep costs.

—Lisa L. Simont

Events & Announcements

Cornwall Community Contra Dance Saturday, April 2, at the Cornwall Town Hall. Contras, circles, and squares will begin at 7 P.M. with old-time music by Still, the Homegrown Band and multiple callers from the Pourparlez! workshop led by Patricia Campbell. All ages and left feet welcome. All dances taught and no partner necessary. Donation requested to pay the caller. For more information go to motherhouse.us or call Jane at 672-6101.

A Potluck Benefit Dinner for the Dolan family will be held Saturday, April 2, from 6 to 9 P.M.

At the Library:

A poetry class taught by Deb Devins will be offered Wednesday nights in April, 6:30 to 8:30 P.M. The fee \$40.

American in Augsburg: Janet Walker talks about her career as an opera singer in Germany on Saturday, April 9, at 5 P.M.

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Cornwall Conversations: Adam Van Doren and Steven Miller will discuss presidential and other historic homes on Saturday, April 30, at 5 P.M.

Woman's Society Talk: Bobbie Tyson will speak to the Cornwall Woman's Society on Thursday, April 7, at 10 A.M. in the Cornwall Library. She has been a title searcher in Litchfield County for over 50 years. As such, she is a historian of the area and its residents. The title of her talk is "Tales from a Troglodyte." Refreshments will be served.

Meet and Greet for new Social Services Director Jane Muir Sellery will be held Sunday, April 10, between 4 and 5:30 P.M. at the town hall. Everyone is welcome to talk about life in Cornwall. Light refreshments will be offered.

A Free Blood Pressure Clinic will be held Monday, April 11, from noon to 1 P.M. in the UCC Day Room. For information contact VNA Northwest at 860-567-6000 or vnanw.org.

The Cornwall Village Improvement Society will meet on Saturday, April 16, at 10 A.M. at the Cornwall Library.

The Monthly Senior Luncheon will be held Tuesday, April 12, from 11:30 A.M. to 1 P.M. at the Wandering Moose Cafe. Three courses and sprightly company are well worth the small price of \$7.50. No reservations necessary.

Art at the Dump will be held Saturday, April 23, from 10 A.M. to 4 P.M. and Sunday April 24, from 10 A.M. to noon at the transfer station.

Correspondent Lecture: The Cornwall Historical Society will present a lecture by Keith R. Johnson, "A Time Correspondent's Adventures in Europe, Africa, and Vietnam," on Sunday, April 24, at 2 P.M. at the

Share The Wealth

The winter that wasn't, as detailed in this issue of the *Chronicle*, yielded unexpected savings to Cornwallians in the form of lower heating bills and minimal charges for snow removal. Why not share a portion of that windfall and write us a check in support of your local newspaper? Contributions in any amount are welcome!

Cornwall Town Hall.

Mr. Johnson will share sample civil liberties cases that illustrate the complexities of decision making for Supreme Court and other justices. How do judges make decisions? What considerations must be weighed?

Mr. Johnson joined the *New York Herald Tribune* as a reporter in 1957. In 1961, he moved to *Time* magazine, where he served as a writer and editor in New York and as a correspondent based in Los Angeles, Washington, Paris, and London. At Time Inc. he was later executive editor of *Money* and *Discover*. He joined *Fortune* magazine in 1985 and is now a retired member of its board of editors.

Presidential Primary:

Notice is hereby given that a Presidential Preference Primary of both the Republican and Democratic parties will be held in the Cornwall Town Hall, 24 Pine Street, on Tuesday April 26. Polls will be open from 6 A.M. until 8 P.M. Absentee ballots will be available beginning Tuesday, April 5, at the town clerk's office. Office hours are Monday through Thursday from 9 A.M. to noon and 1 to 4 P.M. The town clerk's office will be open on Saturday, April 16, from 10 A.M. to noon, for your convenience, to issue absentee ballots.

Celebrate the Bald Eagle: Join HVA in the great Housatonic River Adventure and Source to Sound Paddle Trip! On Wednesday, April 27, from 3 to 5 P.M., next to the Hughes Library, Lower River Road, West Cornwall, paddlers from the Source to Sound Paddle trip will be greeted by a celebration of the return of the bald eagle to the Housatonic River.

To celebrate, HVA will present "Eagles on Our River," a photo exhibit and talk by Michael Moschen.

Also planned is the construction of a true-to-size eagles' nest near the river in West Cornwall Village. Master twigger Amelia de Neergaard has designed the six-foot-wide and three-foot-deep nest and will be assisted by CCS sixth-graders.

Katie Freygang and Lazlo Gyorsok will also contribute to the art- and science-based activities exploring the bald eagle and its relationship with the Housatonic River. Learn more at hvatoday.org.

Art in Cornwall: As of April 1, the National Iron Bank will be featuring new works by Richard Griggs.

The UCC Parish House is hosting an exhibit of drawings and paintings by Cindy Kirk titled "Into the Woods." The opening reception is on Sunday, April 3, at 11:30 A.M. The show will continue until April 28.

Tattoo art by Annelise Collins continues at the Cornwall Library and paintings by Curtis Hanson and sculptures by Peter Kirkiles and Dan Murray continue to be shown at the Toll House Gallery in West Cornwall.

A new exhibit of photography by Birgitt Pajarola at the Souterrain Gallery of the Wish House titled "Enchanted Trails: The Creative Images of a Professional Traveler," invites you on a journey through foreign lands.

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

Correction

The March issue of the *Chronicle* on the CVFD said Will Russ is the current West Cornwall fire captain. Will is the fire captain for Cornwall Bridge and Ted Larson has that post in West Cornwall.

—The Editors

CORNWALL CHRONICLE cornwallchronicle.org

THIS MONTH

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