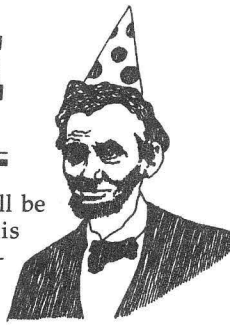




# CORNWALL CHRONICLE

VOLUME 12 : NUMBER 1 FEBRUARY 2002



## Grow or Go?

The two school study committees continue to refine their separate approaches to solving the CCS space problems—the first being to grow the CCS building where it now stands, and the second to go and rebuild in the Foote Field area. The primary object of both groups, however, is still to provide Cornwall citizenry with the information it will need to vote its preference intelligently in a March referendum.

The Existing Site Study Group has developed a simplified expansion plan based on pruning the former Building Committee's work. This plan, basically, would reduce the perimeter of the addition and consequently the total cost of the project. Eliminated in this revision would be the rotunda and the community or multi-purpose room. Also, the kitchen would be cut back slightly in size from the former plan. The educational space, per se, would remain intact. Parking, in this plan, would be expanded on the firehouse side of the school property by leveling the knoll that obstructs the view of cars turning on to Cream Hill Road from Route 128 and re-grading the area. The Existing Site Study Group is operating under the assumption that Cornwall taxpayers turned down the former plan primarily because of its cost and the size of the property tax increase expected to result.

The New Site Study Group admittedly must clear several hurdles to reach its goal of a new school building on a different site, the major one being the selling of the present building. This group's read on the town's rejection of the original plan is that voters felt that we would not get good value for the \$4.7 million that that plan was estimated to cost. This group sees the present site with its cramped real estate as a major problem now and in the future.

On January 10, in open meeting, Jim Terrall and Alec Frost of the Existing Site Study Group reviewed Alec's simplified version of the original plan with David Sessions, president of Casle Corporation, hired by the town to make impartial cost estimates. On January 12 Nancy Calhoun, chair of the New Site Study Group, attended a Cornwall Association meeting to give a status report on the formidable amount of work done by her group and a summary of the information gathered to date. And that same afternoon she showed the CCS building to a prospective buyer, a producer of TV commercials. Earlier in the day, a member of the Cornwall Association had attested to the basic salability of the present school property, having received several unsolicited calls from non-profit entities looking for Cornwall space. Comparative costs based on Casle's esti-

mates for both plans will be aired in February. Louis Turpin, an architect specializing in school buildings and retained by Nancy's group to do a conceptual design of a new building, has assured her committee that if the numbers he and Casle come up with show that the new-school solution is impractical he will say so. Members of the New Site Study Group are in full agreement with this position, but are confident that when all the numbers are taken into consideration their bottom line will suit the town's capabilities and possible future needs. —*Scoville D. Soule*

## Rabies Rundown

That pesky rabies virus, mostly occurring in raccoons and skunks, is still around. Rabies normally runs a cycle that enters a specific geographic area and runs its course before moving on to another. It's Mother Nature's way of cleaning out her closets. After the last cleaning, however, the virus traveled north and rather than continuing on to somebody else's house, made a U-turn and returned to Connecticut for another round.

Between 1991 and 2000 the state logged over 3,605 rabid raccoons, 764 skunks, 156 bats, 79 cats, 43 foxes, 38 woodchucks, 11 cattle, 7 horses, 7 dogs, 3 sheep, 1 otter, 1

(continued on page 2)

## FEBRUARY 2002

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
					<b>1</b> Preschool-K Story Hour 10 A.M. Library	<b>2</b> Rotary Meeting: Ella Clark, Chore Service 8:15 A.M. Cornwall Inn (see "Breakfast with Rotary," p.3)
<b>3</b>	<b>4</b> Park and Rec. 7 P.M. CCS Bd. of Selectmen 7:30 P.M. Town Hall	<b>5</b> Blue Mt. Satsang Every Tuesday 6:30-8 P.M. UCC Day Room Inland Wetlands 7:30 P.M. Town Hall	<b>6</b> Play Group 10-11:30 A.M. St. Peter's Church Soup and Video, Noon UCC Day Room	<b>7</b> Meditation for Mothers Every Thursday 1:15-2:15 P.M. UCC Day Room	<b>8</b> Preschool-K Story Hour 10 A.M. Library	<b>9</b> Rotary Meeting: Invasive Plants 8:15 A.M. Cornwall Inn
<b>10</b>	<b>11</b> Blood Pressure Screening 3-4 P.M. UCC Day Room P&Z Special Hearing 7:30 P.M. Town Hall	<b>12</b> LINCOLN'S BIRTHDAY New Site Study Group 9 A.M. Town Hall "Presidents' Day" Supper Wandering Moose (p.4) Housatonic River Comm. 7:30 P.M. CCS Library	<b>13</b> Play Group 10-11:30 a.m. St. Peter's Church Soup and Video, Noon UCC Day Room	<b>14</b> VALENTINE'S DAY	<b>15</b> <b>Deadline: March Chronicle Copy</b> Preschool-K Story Hour 10 A.M. Library Game Night 7-9 P.M. W. C. Firehouse (p.4)	<b>16</b> Rotary Meeting 8:15 A.M. Cornwall Inn Cornwall Association 9:30 A.M. UCC Day Room Multimedia Art Program 4 P.M. Library (p.4)
<b>17</b>	<b>18</b> PRESIDENTS' DAY Family Ice Skating 9:30-10:30 A.M. Salisbury School (p.4)	<b>19</b> School Vacation Day Soccer Ref. Course 6 P.M. UCC (p.4) Region One Bd. of Ed. 7 P.M. HVRHS	<b>20</b> Play Group 10- 11:30 A.M. St. Peter's Church Soup and Video, Noon UCC Day Room Film: <i>Diabolique</i> (1955) 7:30 P.M. Library	<b>21</b> Bd. of Finance 7:30 P.M. CCS Library Bd. of Selectmen 9 A.M. Town Hall Bd. of Education 5 P.M. CCS Library VFW Post 9856 8 P.M. W. C. Firehouse	<b>22</b> WASHINGTON'S BIRTHDAY Preschool-K Story Hour 10 A.M. Library Technical Film Workshop for Corndance Film Festival (p.4)	<b>23</b> Rotary Meeting: Lyme Disease 8:15 A.M. Cornwall Inn
<b>24</b>	<b>25</b> ZBA 7:30 P.M. Town Hall*	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b> Play Group 10- 11:30 A.M. St. Peter's Church Soup and Video, Noon UCC Day Room Green Party 7:30 P.M. Town Hall	<b>28</b> Cornwall Vol. Fire Dept. 7:30 p.m. W. C. Firehouse		

\* Check with Zoning Office—672-4957

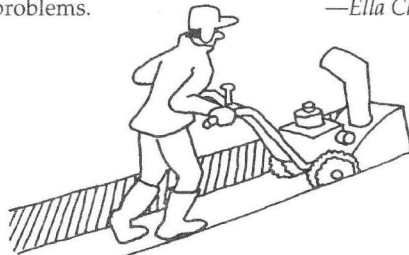
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goat, 1 deer, 1 coyote, 1 bobcat, 1 rabbit, and 1 unlucky human.

This amounts to a total of 4,720 animals infected statewide over a ten-year span, with 452 of those cases occurring in Litchfield County. During the year 2000 there were 273 cases reported statewide, half of those being raccoons. Thirty-six of the total cases occurred in Litchfield County. So if you do find one of nature's little friends that seems hurt or confused DO NOT TOUCH! A small bite from one of these cute little creatures could cause some physical pain along with the pain of having to pay large amounts of money to your local hospital. (Even though they could use the money these days, I don't recommend this type of donation.)

Feel free to contact Animal Control Officers Rick Stone (672-6313) or Brad Hedden (672-2917) day or night for help with animal problems.

—Ella Clark



## Report Card for CCS

Every year at this time, the State Department of Education provides each school district with a Strategic School Profile, a statistical analysis of how the district is doing in comparison with other cities and towns.

The profile ranks individual schools not only against a state average but also against an Educational Reference Group. An ERG is simply a group of districts that share similar determinants of educational achievement: family income, education of parents, etc. Obviously, Cornwall can be meaningfully compared not to Hartford or Bridgeport but only to towns with similar demographics, such as Salisbury or Litchfield.

Some highlights of the CCS profile follow. Note that the information is derived from data provided during the 2000-2001 school year. Figures in parenthesis are ERG data for comparative purposes:

- Percent of kindergartners who attended preschool or nursery school, 36.4 (81.9);
- Percent of students in special education programs, 18.3 (11.7);
- Percent of classrooms wired for Internet, 100.0 (69.6);
- Average class size, four selected grades, 16.5 (18.7);
- Number of students per teacher, 12.2 (17.1);
- Percent of staff retained from previous year, 77.3 (88.0);
- Average number of teacher-absence days, 5.8 (7.4);
- Percent of students retained in grade, 4.0 (0.7);
- Percent of eighth graders taking high school level math, 61.1 (30.0);
- Percent of eighth graders taking a foreign

language, 77.8 (58.0);

- Percent of students meeting all three State Mastery Test goals, Grade four, 26.3 (49.1), Grade six, 33.3 (57.7), Grade eight, 33.3 (57.2);
- Percent of students passing all four physical fitness tests, three selected grades, 35.2 (40.7);
- Cost per pupil, *excluding* special education (in Region One budget) as well as land, building, and debt service, \$8,496 (\$6,605).

After a preliminary look at this year's profile, Barbara Gold, incoming Chair of the Board of Education, observed that any statistical comparisons—some higher, some lower—must be interpreted in context: "What are the specific goals and values of the educational community? Of the community at large? What is the size of the sample group?"

Barbara also pointed out that events of the school year being profiled can affect the numbers: "For instance, the previous two years at CCS have been ones of transition, with three principals and a higher than usual staff turnover—for a variety of reasons. In his second year, after a 'shakedown' year, Principal Peter Coope has begun to implement a new educational vision with a staff that brings commitment, imagination, and excellence to the CCS classrooms."

—Bob Potter

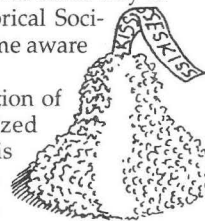
## Cornwall's Book

*Cornwall in Pictures*—highly praised (in *The New York Times*) and a bestseller (1,050 copies printed and all sold in two months)—will be reprinted and available in late March for those who missed getting their copy before Christmas.

The four people who worked on this success—Joe Freedman, Alec Frost, Maureen Prentice, and Charlie Osborne—express satisfaction that their main goals in doing the book have been accomplished. In the words of Michael Gannett, to whom the book is dedicated, they wanted to find some way to demonstrate that the Historical Society could help people become aware of the town's history.

The Society has a collection of 2,400 photographs organized by Maureen; Joe offered his expertise and equipment to scan 600 pictures, of which 408 are in the book and also preserved on disks. He feels that the resultant digital photo archive, initiated by the book's preparation, is priceless. Alec and Maureen worked on background and research to identify people and places, and Charlie wrote the captions. When their project became known in the community, they received help from loaned diaries, letters, and scrapbooks, so, in fact, many made contributions.

Why is *Cornwall in Pictures* so successful? Obviously, the quality is superior. The book is a reliable history as well as an entertaining overview. The price (at \$25) is modest—the Society did not think of it as a fundraiser; rather, they wanted it to be affordable. Charlie Osborne said he feels "it met a need, that after nine/eleven, people close to Corn-



wall appreciated the familiar scenes of a different era and the continuity of names of neighbors in town."

—Ginny Potter



## Welcome

Myah Elisabeth to  
Thomas and Elisabeth Baird

Jessica Gottesman Zuckerman to Alice  
Gottesman and Larry Zuckerman

## Good-bye to Friends

Bruce M. Ridgway

Jonas J. Soltis

## Land Transfers

Anita Wolkowitz to Adrian and Margaret  
Selby, 5.02 acres on Whitcomb Hill Road for  
\$70,000.

Geoffrey Spicer to Ira and Tricia Shapiro,  
5.03 acres on River Road for \$105,000.

Cornwall Housing Corp. to Dudleytown  
Triangle LLC, 1 acre at Valley and  
Dudleytown Roads for \$22,500.

## Our EMTs and What They Do

Sometimes we hear the question, "What does EMS stand for?" Your Emergency Medical Service, part of the Cornwall Volunteer Fire Department (CVFD), provides several levels of emergency medical response and care.

A total of 17 Emergency Medical Technicians make up the ambulance squad. Most are EMT-Is, with training beyond the basic level. Most are available all hours of every day, all year. Some are cross-trained as both EMTs and firefighters (and firefighters often assist on EMT calls).

Cornwall's Emergency Medical Service doesn't stop with our EMTs, for that's only the first level of emergency response. When a patient's circumstances require advanced treatment, paramedics are called from Amenia or Torrington. Their quick response enables them to meet our ambulance at a pre-arranged spot, or even to arrive at the scene of the accident. Weather permitting, serious cases are taken by LifeStar (14 helicopter minutes from Hartford) to Waterbury or Hartford hospitals. For instance, a recent skiing accident at Mohawk brought four levels of care into play. Three Ski Patrol EMTs brought the patient off the slope. The Cornwall ambulance arrived. Simultaneously, LifeStar and paramedics from Amenia had been called. Emergency personnel from four organizations worked together.

In addition, mutual aid is often exchanged with nearby towns. A recent Sun-

day saw our ambulance and crew called to Mohawk. Enroute, a second call came for a fallen-tree victim off Route 45. Sharon's ambulance responded to that one, with other Cornwall EMTs and firefighters. Then a third call came for a medical emergency near Cornwall Hollow. Goshen responded, with still other Cornwall personnel. With guidance from Litchfield County Dispatch (911), the three towns attended to the three emergencies with no appreciable delay.

Cornwall's EMTs and firefighters appreciate the continued support of the community. The CVFD has the benefit of up-to-date equipment and resources. Recently, several new members joined the ambulance squad. Additional firefighters and ambulance personnel are always needed and welcome.

—Huntington Williams

*Editors' Note: The skiing accident referred to in the story above involved an 11-year-old Maryland girl, Emily Ehrenreich, who died in Hartford Hospital three hours after her accident. This was Mohawk's first fatality in its 55-year history.*



### Breakfast with Rotary

The dining room at the Cornwall Inn is crowded at 8:15 this Saturday morning; it's the weekly meeting (open to everyone) of the Rotary Club of Litchfield Hills. I pay \$6 for a continental breakfast—and a continental breakfast is exactly what I get. Next to me is Jean, a French documentary photographer from Canaan. (His wife is here too; Rotary, once a male bastion, now admits couples and women.) "I grew up in Africa," he says. "My business used to be photographing the Third World; now I tell stories to schoolchildren about Africa." Also here are a former Fiat executive from Litchfield, originally from Italy, an oncologist from the Bronx (originally from India), an international lawyer from Kent, and the Treimann family of East Cornwall.

John Leich (a member of the Salisbury Rotary Club) says, "The new club is the result of tireless efforts of [President-elect] Ann Treimann, ably assisted by her father Don, who is Rotary International representative at the United Nations." I also learn that the origins of the group derive in part from a Cornwall Community Forum finding that our town needed a service club.

The club started meeting in March at the Warren General Store until it found space at the Cornwall Inn. Chartered in June, it has about 25 members including two school principals, a painter, an airlines executive, a social worker with Jewish Family Services, a writer, a dentist, a cardiologist, and several portfolio managers. Five of its members, many of whom are new to Rotary, are from Cornwall. The club is rare in that it meets on Saturday mornings. "We particularly wanted to interest weekenders," Ann tells me. Not only do they add to the variety of the

## Letters to the Chronicle

### SCHOOL CHALLENGES

*The New Site Study Group is faced with several challenges, two of which we are seeking help to solve.*

*By far the biggest hurdle is selling CCS, getting as much money as possible for the property, and, if possible, putting it onto the tax roll. Some form of housing has a fairly expensive renovation cost. Headquarters for a small business would require fewer renovations; the building would be ideal for financial, technological, or professional offices. Sadly, there were over 30 million square feet of office space lost in New York City on September 11. Many firms are relocating or establishing branch offices. I would like to hear from people with contacts who might help us find some potential buyers.*

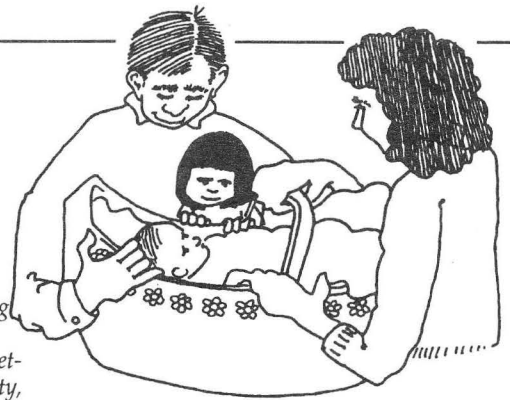
*Our second appeal is for land suitable for a new school. The committee has located 8.8 acres adjacent to Foote Fields on Route 4, and the owners are willing to talk with the town. That land is fairly level, central to most of Cornwall, and next to the playing fields the town already owns. However, other parcels might be suitable as well.*

*If you have any ideas or suggestions for either of these challenges, please give me a call at 672-6747.*

—Nancy Calhoun, Chair,  
New Site Study Group

### A BOON FROM THE CASTLE

*When Coltsfoot Farm was subdivided in 1992, the Calhoun family gave a lot at the end of Valley Road to the Cornwall Housing Corporation (CHC) for its Parcel Program. This 1.5 acre triangle was won in the CHC's lottery by a teacher at Marvelwood School, and despite a*



*lawsuit brought by the then owner of the Castle, a zoning permit was obtained.*

*But Marvelwood moved to Kent, and several subsequent Parcel Program candidates have turned thumbs down of the valley site, which used to be a gravel pit and is somewhat dark and difficult to use. The last rejection was at the time the Castle changed hands, and the CHC board decided to approach the new owners with the idea of selling this parcel to them or exchanging it for other more buildable land.*

*Before this step was taken, the Castle owners made identical overtures to the CHC, and after exploring several options, the parties agreed to a sale. The buyers have paid the appraised value, and have capped it off with an enormously generous donation. Thus the initial gift from the Calhouns has permitted the CHC to access additional funds from still another community-minded neighbor to buy more land for the Parcel Program.*

*There are two morals to this tale: 1) If you have an extra few acres or excess income, please think of the CHC; 2) If you fit our financial guidelines (what renter doesn't?), and your living situation depends on your landlord's whim, and you'd like eventually to own your own house, please apply now to the Parcel Program. For information, call 672-6251. Getting on our waiting list could be your first step to a permanent home in town.*

—Maggie Cooley, President, CHC

club's membership, she says, but participation in the club increases weekenders' involvement in local affairs. The club is rare in other ways as well. "In all of my travels," says Jean, "I have never known a Rotary Club with a dynamic like this one. Lots of our members do business with foreign countries, so we are international in scope, not a closed community. Many clubs miss the fact that what happens in other countries affects us; we try to break down those walls."

Members listen actively to their speakers. Today, they are impressed by Carol Lugar's Mohawk Ski Area programs for kids; they offer ideas for her to get free advertising. And when a young doctor from Mali, visiting from Cornell, describes his public health project, they suggest that he write up a proposal for the club to consider. "We are very much a hands-on grass-roots group," says Ann. "We encourage new members who could volunteer in the Third World and locally, people who want to help us make a difference."  
—Ella Clark

### New Director at Park and Rec.

Cornwall's Park and Recreation Commission has a new part-time director—Bethany Lyon Thompson. A graduate of HVRHS, she went on to earn an MA in child and family services from UCONN. She works for an international adoption organization and has placed over 80 children from more than seven different countries. In 1998, Bethany settled in Cornwall with her husband, John. "We wanted to raise our children in a close-knit and supportive community," she says.

Since becoming director in October, Bethany has taken over much of the organization of the many Park and Rec. events and programs. In addition, she has begun to assemble a manual which will help the volunteers who take responsibility for the dozens of events that occur each year. She has also reduced the blizzard of paper created by the many flyers that children bring home from school each week by listing on a single page all events for two months at a time. Her newest

(continued on page 4)

(continued from page 3)

endeavor is to work with the commission to introduce much needed activities for the older children of Cornwall, sixth through twelfth graders, beginning this winter and spring.

When asked why she wanted to take the position of director, Bethany replied, "I enjoy planning and organizing as well as working with families and children. This job allows me to do all of that and serve my community at the same time." —Carla Bigelow



### "Money Pitch"

An odd headline?

Well, "money pitch" is just what your *Chronicle* editors have long called the earnest but gently humorous appeal for funds that always accompanies the coupon below. This month the appeal takes on new meaning, not because we need money more than ever (we *always* need money more than ever), but because we now know how town monthlies (if any) are financed in neighboring communities.

Thanks to reporter David Parker of the *Waterbury Republican-American*, we've learned that the Kent selectmen have just approved a \$5,000 annual grant to get such a publication started. Goshen taxpayers pony up about the same sum to keep *Town Topics* going. In Salisbury, a budget line item of \$6,000 pays most of the cost of that town's *Sampler*. The *Warren Observer* is published by The Webster Society, privately funded. *Date-line Sharon*, a single-sheet monthly, is covered by a line item in the budget.

In this mix, the *Cornwall Chronicle* is unique. Quirky, perhaps, but unique. It avoids the calendar-and-official-information-only character that comes with tax support. (Why waste public money pursuing a meandering moose or fussing about the symbolism of a straw man on a fence?) It is the only publication of its size supported entirely by its readers. Writers, artists, editors—these come for free. But we do have costs—composition, printing, mailing. That's why there's one feature you'll always be able to count on, the "money pitch." Please . . . and thank you.

## Events & Announcements

**Open Walls at the Library:** March brings the last chance to see how much art can be squeezed into the current Library building. Cornwall artists of all ages are invited to bring their ready-to-hang artwork to the Library on March 2 from 1 to 3 P.M. You can make this last show at the old Library a good one! Questions? Call Ellen Moon, 672-6726.

**Salisbury School Skating:** Free skating at the school rink is offered to Cornwall residents on Monday, February 18, from 9:30 to 10:30 A.M. As usual, hats required.

**Poetry Reading:** Come read, chant, sing, and howl your latest poems at Cornwall's Fifth Annual Poetry Slam. On Saturday, March 9, at 4 P.M. in the Town Hall everyone is invited to read or listen. Sponsored by the Friends of the Cornwall Library; refreshments for all. Please call Phyllis Nauts at 672-6608 to make sure you get a place in the lineup.

**Art in Cornwall:** During February the Library will feature presidential portraits by CCS eighth grade students. At the National Iron Bank, Richard Griggs will be exhibiting both suspended and wall sculptures, some with a Valentine's Day theme.

**Visit to Jubilee School:** Cornwallians young and old are invited to Philadelphia from March 7 to 9 (snow dates March 14 to 16). Visitors will be hosted by Jubilee School families—as Jubilee children and adults are hosted by Cornwall people during their annual visit in June. Parents are strongly urged to accompany their kids. For more information call Nita Colgate, 672-6797, before February 21.

**"Presidents' Day" Pasta Supper:** Truly presidential fare will be offered at the Wandering Moose on Tuesday, February 12 (snow date February 19). Sittings are 5:00, 6:30, and 8:00 P.M.; takeout is also available. Cost is \$10 (\$5 for children 12 or under). For details and tickets call K. C. Baird at 672-6578 (work) or 672-2773 (home). This is a benefit for—and served by—the Republican Town Committee.

**Corndance Film Festival:** Hand your creative muse a video camera and tell a story that might win a prize at the Town Hall on April 7. Entries can be up to ten minutes long, fiction or non-fiction (documentaries, faux commercials, dramas, silent films, music videos, etc.). Blowhards, know-it-alls, and children are welcome. Submissions are due March 22 on VHS tape. Entry fee: \$9.99. Technical film workshop: February 22 (details to come). Call Lib Tobin-Terrall (672-2407) for information, or Donna Murphy (672-6896) for where to send submissions. Sponsored by Park and Rec. and Friends of the Cornwall Library.

**Property Tax Appeals:** Application forms for the Board of Assessment Appeals hearings to be held March 6 to 9 are available now from the Town Clerk or the Assessor's Office. They must be filed at the Town Office—not just postmarked—by February 20. This year, if all available appointment slots are taken, additional hearings will be arranged March 13 to 16. Applicants will be notified by mail or phone of their hearing times. The board asks that any information relevant to making a decision (e.g., maps, comparative property data, realtor appraisals) be brought to the hearings. For further information call the Town Office, 672-2709.

**Soccer Referee Course:** Anyone wishing to become a certified referee can attend a course beginning February 19 and running for six consecutive Tuesdays from 6 to 9 P.M. at UCC. For information and registration call Matt Mette, 364-1400.

**Peter Busby and Sally Pettus,** multimedia artists, will show slides of their work, mostly sculpture, and talk about the creative process on Saturday, February 16, from 4 to 6 P.M. at the Cornwall Library. Admission, \$8, Children under 12 free. Sponsored by Friends of the Cornwall Library for the benefit of the Library's operating expenses. Tickets may be purchased at the door or reserved by calling 672-1007. Refreshments will be served.

**Game Night:** Bring your favorite board games to the West Cornwall Firehouse on February 15, 7 to 9 P.M., and enjoy free pizza and beverages courtesy Park and Rec.

**Cornwall in 1801** by Elijah Allen has been republished by the Cornwall Historical Society and is available for purchase (\$5) at the Society and the town libraries. Originally published in 1985 and for several years now out of print, the 40-page booklet presents the notes of Elijah Allen (1748–1802) written in response to a request from Benjamin Trumbull and Noah Webster, who were writing a state history. Michael Gannett organized the writings by topic and added informative footnotes. The result is a view of the earliest period of Cornwall by a contemporary.

## CORNWALL CHRONICLE

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