



CORNWALL CHRONICLE

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Bridge Repair Slated for 2018

The Connecticut Department of Transportation is planning a major restoration of the West Cornwall Covered Bridge, with work currently expected to take place during the month of June 2018. The steel reinforcement positioned under the old wooden bridge in the 1970s has rusted significantly and needs to be replaced. The wooden plank surface of the bridge will also be replaced, and some repairs will be made to the wood walls and concrete supports.

Beyond the inevitable inconvenience, the month-long bridge closing will cut off the most direct access to Sharon Hospital and force residents right across the bridge to use Sharon rather than Cornwall emergency services, resulting in longer waits for ambulance arrivals. The closure is also likely to have a negative impact on businesses in West Cornwall.

Plans for extensive detours will be provided, and the selectmen are pushing for some sort of guarantee that the work be finished within a single month, even if it requires night work. Hopes of beginning the renovations earlier had to be abandoned. It is still too cold in early spring for the crew to work in the river, and late spring is trout spawning season. Renovation plans can be

reviewed at the first selectman's office. An informational meeting will be held in the town hall at 7 P.M. on February 2.

—Paul De Angelis

Farmers' Market Vendors Mull Move

The vendors and organizers of the West Cornwall Farmers' Market met in an open meeting January 6 at town hall to begin a search for ways to improve the current market set-up.

Hosted by founders Bianca and Richard Griggs since its inception in August 2007, the market is open Saturdays from June through October on the lawn of the Wish House in West Cornwall. Eight or more vendors bring products from baked goods to fresh vegetables and locally raised meat to sell between 9 A.M. and noon.

The January 6 meeting was sparked by some vendors' interest in moving the market to a larger site with more parking and less exposure to the traffic on Route 128. Several vendors said it wasn't worth it financially to set up in West Cornwall any longer; the market needs to grow.

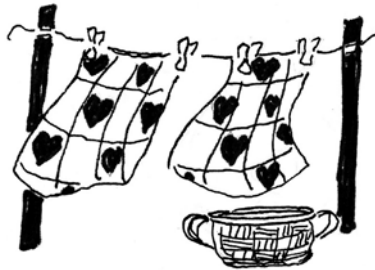
Becky and Bill Hurlburt said safety and accessibility for the vendors were key issues for them. "I think we have to try a new location," Becky said. Others agreed, remembering at least two fender benders and a couple of close calls when small children, liberated from car seats, ran into Route 128.

Other sellers favored the market's current location with its "sense of community" on the Wish House lawn. They also credited the Griggses' efforts to develop the market.

Patty Bramley, who has sold her herbs and plants at several area outdoor markets, proposed a move to the green in Cornwall Village. "Let's create a place in town where people can hang out together," she said. She and others suggested collaborating with the library on activities; the tennis court playground is there for children. If it rains, someone pointed out, the market can be moved into the town hall.

Gordon Ridgway, first selectman and

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FEBRUARY 2017

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
			1	2 ♦ Walking the Camino Portuguese, B. Underwood 10 am Library ♦ Public Info Mtg. DOT-Covered Bridge Reno. 7 pm Town Hall	3 ☾ 1st Q	4 ♦ Children's Day 10 am-2 pm Library ♦ Community Contra Dance 7 pm Town Hall ♦ Film: <i>Notorious</i> 7:30 pm Library
5	6 ♦ Region 1 Bd. of Ed. 6:30 pm HVRHS ♦ Snow Date for Bridge Public Info Meeting 7 pm	7 ♦ Inland Wetlands Agency 7 pm Town Hall ♦ Board of Selectmen 7:30 pm Town Hall ☿	8	9	10 ☉ FULL	11 ♦ Annual Jazz Dinner 6-9 pm Library
12 ♦ Documentary Film <i>Standing Rock</i> 11:45 am UCC Day Room	13 ♦ Free Blood Pressure Clinic Noon-1 pm UCC ♦ Park & Rec. 7:30 pm Town Hall	14 ♦ Eco. Dev. Comm. 9 am Town Hall ♦ Senior Valentine Lunch Noon UCC Parish House ♦ West Cornwall Septic Committee 5 pm Ingersoll's Shop ♦ P&Z 7 pm Library ♦ Housatonic River Commission 7:30 pm CCS	15 ♦ Deadline: March Chronicle Copy ♦ Board of Education 4:15 pm CCS ♦ Bd. of Finance 7:30 pm Town Hall	16 ♦ No Knitting Group at Library Today	17	18 ☾ ♦ West Cornwall 4th Q Mid Winter Stroll 3-6 pm ♦ Film: <i>Au Hasard Balhazar</i> 7:30 pm Library
19	20 PRESIDENTS' DAY	21 ♦ Deadline/Application Real Estate Assessment Appeals ♦ Board of Selectmen 7:30 pm Town Hall ☿	22	23 ♦ Senior Trip to Hartford Flower Show 9 am UCC ♦ Cornwall Conservation Comm. 7 pm Library	24	25 ♦ Artist's Reception: Karl Goulet 5 pm Library
26 ● NEW	27 ♦ ZBA* 7 pm Library	28	Every Week This Month: Mondays: Yoga, 8:30-10 am Library; Mat Squad at 6:30 pm UCC; Karate, 6:30-7:30 pm Town Hall; Men's Senior Basketball 6:30-8:30 pm CCS ♦ Tuesdays: Zumba, 5:30-6:30 pm Library ♦ Wednesdays: Tai Chi, 5-7 pm Town Hall call 672-0064; <i>Stitch 'n Spin</i> , 7:15-8:30 pm UCC ♦ Thursdays: Pilates, 8:30-9:30 am Library; Toddler Play Group, 10:30-11:30 am Library; Meditation, 4-5 pm call Debra 672-0229 Zumba, 5:30-6:30 pm Library; Mah Jongg, 7-9 pm Library call 672-6874; Adult Volleyball, 7-9 pm CCS gym ♦ Fridays: Yoga 8:30-10 am Library ♦ Saturdays: Ice Skating, 7-8 pm Schmidt Rink, Hotchkiss School ♦ Sundays: Yoga 9-10:30 am Library; Meditation, 1 pm call Debra 672-0229			

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organic vegetable grower, said the lawn next to the West Cornwall Library on River Road will be available, keeping the market in that village but off the busy main road.

Supporters of keeping the current location praised the Griggses' efforts to publicize and improve the market. Why move it to another part of town? Joanne Wojtusiak asked. "Pulling the farmers' market out of West Cornwall," Richard Griggs said, "will turn it into a ghost town."

The meeting was in agreement that the discussion should continue. Gordon said that as the market itself evolves, questions are inevitably raised. Could the vendors be in more than one location? Could the market run through the year, as Norfolk's does, under the shelter of the town hall? Could the farmers' market become certified to accept food stamps?

A neighbor and business owner in West Cornwall, when asked about a new site, said she will go wherever the market goes. "The choice is the vendors" to make, she added.

At deadline, the *Chronicle* learned that a group of five vendors met Friday, January 13, and agreed to form a separate entity, the Cornwall Co-op Farm Market. The group plans to set up for business in Cornwall Village next summer. —Lisa L. Simont

First Year Report on Social Services

Early in January, Jane Muir Sellery, Cornwall's director of social services, celebrated her first anniversary on the job. She marveled at the generosity of the recent holiday toy drive. "We had an unbelievable amount of toys—enough to fill a minivan," she said. Thirty or so children received presents they had specifically requested. Sellery said it is just one of the many times she has seen Cornwall's generosity over the year.

Sellery had big shoes to fill. Jill Gibbons created the position in 1985 and stepped down after more than three decades in the role. Sellery said she has tried to provide the same level of care and attention and continue Gibbons's legacy. It is a busy job, especially this time of year. In fact, she gets so many calls she got caller ID so she can jot down a number when she's meeting with a client. A big part of the job is prioritizing competing needs.

There have been some key changes to her role over the past year too. Her hours have increased from 16 to 21 a week (Mondays, Wednesdays, Thursdays). The extra time allows her to make more connections with other area service organizations.

With First Selectman Gordon Ridgway and Treasurer John Green, Sellery developed a formal policy on how the services

work and how to assure recipients of their privacy.

Sellery also has her sights on the horizon. She is exploring whether the town should join the Connecticut Food Bank, which would provide free bread, milk, and produce for the town's food pantry, but brings some financial constraints. She is also on a mission to find more affordable dental care, an often overlooked part of the healthcare system.

Sellery said she has about 200 people on her caseload, from elderly residents who need some amount of regular assistance to more short-term challenges, such as a sudden car repair or an unexpectedly hefty oil bill during lean times.

Sellery said there are days when the job gets overwhelming. "Need doesn't take a vacation," she said. Yet she is "so blessed to have this job." In her off hours, she is the vice president of the Connecticut Professional Genealogists Council, so she particularly appreciates the deep, local roots of many Cornwall residents.

Sellery encourages everyone to swing by and say hello, but maybe call first (672-2603) to make an appointment. With winter still holding us in its clutches, she is likely to be busy until the end of heating season.

—Kerry Donahue

Russ Guerin, Clockmaker

At the top of Dibble Hill Road is a neat red barn that quietly seems to proclaim that it is no ordinary barn. Stepping across its threshold is to be immersed into a soothing world of quietly ticking pendulum clocks, a sound interspersed at regular intervals by the cacophony of many clocks, including important Big Ben chimes, the silvery tones of French carriage clocks and the sonorous song of a German cuckoo clock.

The 150-year-old barn, a snug retreat heated by a wood-burning stove, is home to the Clock Shop, a business owned by Russ Guerin where he repairs and sells clocks.

Russ came to the world of clocks after the death of his father-in-law, John Hinchman, a clock repairer. "I fixed all his clocks that were broken and then just kept on doing it," he said. Originally a tool and die maker for DuPont, Russ easily stepped into the world of clock repair.

"I was able to use my die cutting tools and jeweler's bench lathe for clock repair." Pendulum clocks, considered the world's most precise timekeeper for centuries, are Russ's specialty. Through membership in the Association of Watch and Clock Collectors, he has refined his skills. Now, after over 20 years in the business, he teaches others how to fix clocks.

Under a wooden sign on the wall that

exhorts visitors to "Come, Sit, Stay Long and Talk Much," Russ goes about the delicate business of fixing clocks. It is a time-consuming process with many levels of repair, including baths in different solutions, oiling, adjustment, and observation. Many of the clocks around the barn, in various stages of repair, are from the early 19th century and no longer being made, as digital clocks take over. Despite this, Russ could work seven days a week fixing clocks as "there are many people who love old clocks and collect them."

What advice would he offer to someone with an old clock? "The worst thing you can do to a clock is not run it. Have it cleaned and lubricated every two years and don't wait until it stops or runs out of oil. That's when I get them," he said, pointing to a clock with a note on it reading "Needs Russ."

In his many years repairing clocks, Russ has occasionally seen some one-of-a-kind clocks: made for a king or queen or for a centennial celebration. He may also get to fix a clock for a well-known figure. Several years ago while on vacation in Maine, he visited Campobello, the former summer retreat of President Franklin Roosevelt. On a tour of the house he noticed a clock that wasn't working and offered to fix it. The staff agreed and he repaired it.

Surrounded as he is by so many clocks, is Russ ever late for an appointment? "Yes," he admits, "once in a while...but never for dinner." —Brenda Underwood

Congratulations

Dwight Hatcher III and Tricia Tupper

Goodbye to a Friend

Jean V. Elliott

Land Transfers

John B. Zabriskie and Paulette L. Zabriskie to William K. Spencer and Stephen C. Templeman, vacant land on Cream Hill Road, for \$170,000.

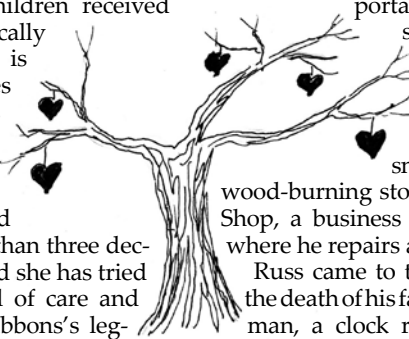
Michael Kling, Trustee of the Kling Family Property Trust, to Cornwall Conservation Trust, 2 acres of land on Sharon Goshen Turnpike.

Gina Maolucci and Gregory Galloway to Rocco Botto, land with all buildings and improvements thereon at 28 Bunker Hill Road, for \$225,000.

Laura Anne Tyson to Marianne Winslow, 1.92 acres of land with all buildings and improvements thereon at 94 Popple Swamp Road, for \$148,000.

The Economic Scene, Part 1

Cornwall business owners can all agree on one thing these days, "It's the economy, stupid!" After that, well, everyone is entitled to their opinion. Most admit that we have emerged from the low point of the recent



"Great Recession," and agree on what they see as the current culprit: dwindling full-time residents.

Richard Bramley, proprietor of the Cornwall Package Store, thinks that the economy has "bottomed out," but fundamental changes in the demographics of the community are making it difficult to get back to where things once were. He points to signs of improvement, citing the reopening of Northeast Building Supply's lumber yard and development of the Trinity Conference Center as two indications that the town is recovering. He'd like to see more being done to bring young full-time residents with families to town.

Just across the street James Shepard, owner and operator of the Cornwall Country Market, says his business is slowly improving in the three years he has been at it. He cites a widely diverse clientele as a foundation of his business and also points to the importance of a healthy river to the vitality of Cornwall Bridge. He wishes we could better promote the wealth of attractions that people come here for.

Tom Delekta, manager of Housatonic River Outfitters, confirmed the importance of a healthy river to business. The recent drought has been a challenge in supporting ongoing efforts to bring more young people into the sport, including the "trout in the classroom" program. By rearing fish eggs and stocking local streams and ponds with newly hatched stock, students gain an appreciation for angling from a young age.

A short trip up the road just out of Cornwall Bridge has us swapping stories with Carol Lugar, second-generation operator of the venerable Mohawk Ski Area. Mohawk has been operating continuously since 1947 and is still going strong. Lugar credits youth and school programs and a vigorous outreach effort to attract organized groups as keys to her success.

Lugar sees a need for increased diversity in our schools, for more volunteer opportunities, and for a reduction in regulations to make the town more business friendly. Such changes might attract young families to the area.

Finally, I had a long chat with Janet Carlson Sanders, head of the Economic Development Commission. Sanders acknowledges the challenges facing small businesses not just in Cornwall, but also in most towns in the region. She is focused on making Cornwall a business-friendly town with affordable housing to attract a new generation of families. Sanders and the EDC are looking to appeal to what she refers to as "portable" businesses, those that can operate in ways that, in her words "are not locally dependent."

The very attractions that bring in tourists can serve as magnets for families looking for the unique quality of life that a town like Cornwall can deliver, according to Sanders. She believes the future of Cornwall depends on our ability to communicate the benefits



of our live-work environment to people in communities like Red Hook in Brooklyn. Working with the EDC, her goal in the next few years is to attract at least 10 families from outside Connecticut. This she believes will create a "virtuous circle," bringing in full-time residents who will help fill the schools and revitalize the economy.

In a future issue we'll touch base with proprietors in West Cornwall to get their take on the direction of our economy and prescriptions for the future.

—Bob Meyers

Budget Woes

At the end of 2016 the state's Office of Policy and Management informed all Connecticut towns that because of a shortfall in income it has had to make additional mid-year funding cuts in education and capital improvement aid to local governments beyond those announced earlier. According to First Selectman Ridgway the loss of state aid will create a hole of over \$60,000 in the current budget, a shortfall that will either require an additional appropriation or, in a best-case scenario, could be covered by unbudgeted revenues accrued before the end of June.

Cornwall and some other northwest Connecticut towns are among those being cut the most. Local officials consider the formulas for determining which town gets what hard to fathom, and Cornwall selectmen met with the governor in Hartford in early January to discuss the implications of the state aid cuts.

Prospects for next year's budget look to be even more challenging. Since CCS graduated a fairly large class in 2016, Cornwall's contribution to the Region One budget has had to rise at the same time as the overall grand list is in decline. What this means: pressure on the Board of Finance either to raise taxes or cut expenses.

—Paul De Angelis

Winter Rambles

If you like snow, February is often our best month. Winter heaven for me is complete if we have enough snow to make snowshoeing significantly easier than simply walking in the woods. The landscape becomes so quiet: almost any woods, marsh, or stream becomes transformed into something magical. Places in Cornwall suitable for this activity are virtually infinite.

You don't need as much snow for cross-country skiing as snowshoeing. Some suggestions: Wickwire Road, to the right off Cream Hill Road close to Music Mountain Road (see green fence, cross brook when frozen); a little farther on the left, Gold

Letter to the Chronicle

MYSTERY GIFT

The Tuesday after Christmas, Yvonne Dutton brought a wrapped gift to my office, which her family had found in the road in North Cornwall. It has a tag on it which says "Merry Christmas Shelly & Billy. To Be Continued..." and is signed with a heart "Krissie & John." The wrapping paper is torn and by peeking inside, you can see that the gift is personally engraved. I put a notice on the Cornwall Community Network, but had no response. Perhaps some reader of the Chronicle can help me find either the giver or the recipient of this gift?

—Vera Dinneen, Cornwall Town Clerk

Road; and the northern part of Town Street, unpaved and unplowed in winter, which connects with Music Mountain Road. One trail along the Housatonic River starts at the Trinity Conference Center. Another favorite along the Housatonic starts at the end of South River Road (Sharon side of Cornwall Bridge) and goes all the way to Kent. Finally, there are innumerable trails at Mohawk Mountain Forest off Route 4 and at Great Mountain Forest in Canaan (for trail maps, see respective websites).

Walking in winter can be fun even without snow to cheer things up. Moisture oozing out of rocks makes wonderful ice sculptures. Moss is often vibrantly green. Even plenty of ice needn't keep us out of the woods. Easily strapped-on "microspikes" can free us to walk up any icy trail or bushwhack across any crazily dangerous slope.

Finally, no article that attempts to entice one out of doors in Cornwall in winter would be complete without its slam-dunk selling point: the absence of ticks!
—David Colbert

Less Snow?

Snow is an enjoyable part of the Cornwall experience unless you are driving to or from work or a weekender returning to New York on a Sunday. Was the mild winter with little snow last year atypical? Snowfall records for Norfolk, the nearest weather station to Cornwall, were examined to evaluate snow precipitation over five-year intervals from 1940 to 2005, and annually for the last ten years.

From 2006 to 2015, the last year of published data, snow averaged 73.07 inches per year with a minimum of 50.5 inches in 2006 and a maximum of 108.1 inches in 2011. Examining five-year intervals from 1940 to 2005, the average precipitation was 86.4 inches with a range from 44.3 inches in 1999 to 135 inches in 1945. For further information, go online to the NOAA website at: www.ncdc.noaa.gov/cdo-web/datasets/

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GSOY/stations/GHCND:USC00065445/detail.

It appears that the average amount of snow in Cornwall has indeed declined over the years, something we might either enjoy or suffer. —Jim Fishman

Cornwall Briefs

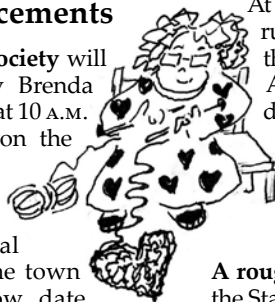
• **New Hire at Little Guild:** The new executive director is Justin Vagliano, a resident of Norfolk whose veterinarian wife, Katie, was until recently a member of the Little Guild's board of directors. She remains chair of the guild's kennel committee. Vagliano joins Brianna Dacey, a resident of Kent, who became shelter manager late last year.

• **My Hoops Adventure:** I picked up my guide Trish Collins on Popple Swamp and we headed to the high school gym on a recent Monday evening. Trish had told me the Lady Mountaineers basketball team had a 7-1 record and was very good. So this sports junkie said, "Let's go!" Part of the appeal was that three Cornwall girls were on the team: two starters, forward Caroline Hurlburt and speedy guard Emily Gey-selaers. Also substitute guard Kailyn Reilly. A close game turned into a rout in the fourth quarter and the team went 8-1, headed perhaps to a conference championship. Love the way these girls play the game! —John Miller

Events & Announcements

The Cornwall Woman's Society will sponsor a library talk by Brenda Underwood on February 2 at 10 A.M. about her 400-mile walk on the Camino Portuguese.

Covered Bridge Renovation: An informational meeting will be held at the town hall on February 2 (snow date February 6) at 7 P.M. on the DOT's plans to repair the West Cornwall Covered Bridge.



Feeding the Fire

The Peck Mountain fire may have burned itself out, but the *Chronicle's* still blazing with important news about where you live. Keep this winter fire going with a generous check!

Warm your feet to an old-time beat at the Cornwall Contra Dance February 4 at the town hall at 7 P.M. with calling by Peter Stix and music by Still, the Homegrown Band. All left feet welcome. Donation requested. For more info call Jane at 672-6101 or go to motherhouse.us.

At the Cornwall Library

February 4: Bring Your Child to the Library Day, 10 A.M. to 2 P.M.

February 4: Winter Film Series presents *Notorious*, 7:30 P.M. \$5 suggested.

February 11: "Bella Luna," annual jazz dinner and dance with Bob Parker's Jive by Five, 6 to 9 P.M. \$30/cash bar. Please reserve.

February 18: Winter Film Series is showing *Au Hasard Balthazar*, 7:30 P.M. \$5 suggested.

Starting March 1: Introduction to Creative Writing, six-week class led by Deb Devins, 6:30 to 8:30 P.M. For beginning writers. \$50; please preregister. Library phone: 672-6874.

Cornwall Park & Rec Ice Skating takes place at Hotchkiss School ice rink every Saturday in February from 7 to 8 P.M. Children need to be accompanied by an adult. Help us build an inventory of skates by dropping off unneeded ones at the town hall or CCS.

Art in Cornwall

At the Cornwall Library: James Woodruff's "Real Abstraction" continues through February 9. February 20 to April 1: "Two Dogs," Karl Goulet's drawings and paintings; reception February 25 at 5 P.M.

At the Souterrain Gallery: Kathleen Love Mooney's show has been extended through February 19.

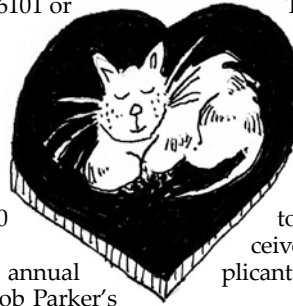
A rough cut of Fidel Moreno's film about the Standing Rock protests will be shown in the Day Room of the UCC at 11:45 A.M. on February 12. No charge, and all are welcome.

Seniors' Valentine's Day lunch on Tuesday, February 14, at noon at the UCC Parish House: bring your sweetheart or meet one. Hosted by Cornwall Park & Rec. RSVP 672-4071 or prcornwall@gmail.com.

West Cornwall Mid-Winter Stroll on February 18 from 3 to 6 P.M. West Cornwall Library, Wandering Moose, Ingersoll

Furniture, Bain Real Estate, Housatonic Hairworks, Cornwall Bridge Pottery, Souterrain Gallery, and the Wish House will offer nibbles and libations as well as services and products by other Cornwall businesses.

Take the Hughes Library's self-guided historical tour and help kick off the Wish House's 20-year celebration.



Board of Assessment Appeals hearings will be held in March. Applications, available at the town clerk's office, must be received by February 21. Approved applicants will be contacted with a date.

Seniors Ride to the Connecticut Flower Show in Hartford on February 23. Park & Rec vehicle leaves the UCC Church at 9 A.M. and returns at 3 P.M. RSVP to Jen by February 15 at prcornwall@gmail.com or 672-4875.

CORNWALL CHRONICLE cornwallchronicle.org

The *Chronicle* mourns the loss of Bob Potter, who died on December 18, 2016. Bob served as writer, editor, and director of the *Chronicle* for over 22 years, including four years as president.

From "Heaven's Seven"

Dirges be damned for me when I am dead
Add dust to dust but let the spirit soar
On streams of spangled sound. Bring on instead

St. Gabriel's horn to roar forevermore
An endless encore down the windy waste
Of Time curved into Space curved into All.
I will be there. Not pall encased but graced

By harmonies that rise, and float, and fall.

—From his book of poetry, *Frames of Mind*.

THIS MONTH

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