

CORNWALL CHRONICLE



VOLUME 25 : NUMBER 5 JUNE 2015

Phoenix

At about 4 A.M. on April 21, an alert cable company man fixing equipment damaged during the night's thunderstorm saw flames a quarter of a mile away at 344 Cream Hill Road. The fire had started a few hours earlier; three separate neighbors reported hearing an "enormous explosion" around 2 A.M. Lightning had hit a pignut hickory and ripped three trenches through the earth, two of which—68 and 69 feet long—sizzled directly to two corner downspouts and set the building ablaze. But the fire alarm, dependent on a lightning-zapped phone connection, did not go off.

By the time Cornwall firefighters responded at 4:18, the roaring fire was high; the back roof had already burned off and the flames were spreading to the main house. Fire Marshal Stan MacMillan told me that "Fires in older buildings are always harder to fight. The balloon framing creates a funnel for the fire to go upward." Huge amounts of water were needed. Cornwall has a 2,500-gallon tanker and two 1,000-gallon pumpers. "We did a blitz attack with the first engine," said Cornwall Fire Chief Fred Scoville. "Meanwhile, we got our water system hooked up, and started bringing water from Rattlesnake and Wickwire Road ponds. Crews from seven other towns came fast. We couldn't have fought the fire

without them. They were essential for water and manpower." But except for the facades, the building was destroyed.

This was not the first time that the Reed-Gannett house had been hit by lightning. Some years ago, according to Nick Bruehl, a strike from an oak tree entered the north wall of the house and punched "giant" holes ("like a sledgehammer") in the sheetrock. And the house had burned before, too. Ingersoll Reed, who had inherited it from his parents, James and Rhoda Wickwire Reed, had had to rebuild in 1868. But Lewis and Ruth Gannett, who bought it in the 1920s, wrote and painted and drew and gardened and pickled cucumbers peacefully there for many years. Ruth died in the house in 1979. After two brief tenures by others (including Whoopi Goldberg), the house was bought in 2010 by Douglas and Kate Green.

On a fine day in May I met with Kate, interrupting her inventory work with the insurance man. We walked through the house, the smoke smell still thick. "I love the house and old vintage stuff," she said. "We took such pains to restore it with old parts from the original and elsewhere." She showed me a window from their house on Yelping Hill repurposed as a cabinet door, the tiny sink from eBay, a window seat she had hand painted. We crunched over the

floors, cinder, and broken glass loud underfoot. She pointed across a charcoaled room. "That's a bookcase from the old house. And those black things? Those are books."

The greatest loss, for Kate, was the "thousands of pieces of family memorabilia and photographs—including my grandparents' beribboned love letters—which were stored in the attic; some are just partially burned so worth the effort to try to dig out and salvage. A heartbreaking and very tedious task."

She added, "It has been an amazing experience to be on the receiving end of the heroic work of the Cornwall Volunteer Fire Department and our surrounding towns' volunteer fire departments. They all did their best to keep the fire contained, and if it hadn't been for them, we would not have had any house for me to walk you through. The burned-out house looks awful, but it could have been so much worse, and we hope to be able to save two of the original facades because they put out the fire in time. In addition, many personal and beloved items were rescued... At some point a volunteer firefighter walked back into the burning house and rescued our family photo albums and wedding photos! When I found the photo albums days later safely tucked under a tarp, I screamed with surprise and joy. Later, on the afternoon of the

(continued on page 2)

JUNE 2015

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	1 ♦ Region 1 BOE 6 pm HVRHS Room 133 ♦ Cornwall Ag Commission 7:30 pm Town Office	2 ○ FULL ♦ Red Cross Blood Drive 1-6 pm UCC ♦ Board of Selectmen 7:30 pm Town Hall	3	4	5 ♦ Regional Senior Luncheon Noon Salisbury Grove	6 ♦ Haz. Waste Collection 9 am-Noon Falls Village Garage ♦ Cheese Making Wrkshp 10:30 am-1:30 pm Local Farm ♦ Crnw! Artists Open Studio Noon-5 pm ♦ Artist Recept. Joan Morosani 4-6 pm Library ♦ Comm. Contra Dance 7 pm Town Hall
7	8 ♦ Free Blood Pressure Clinic Noon-1 pm UCC Parish House ♦ Park & Rec 7:30 pm Town Hall	9 ♦ Economic Dev. Comm. 4th Q 9 am Town Hall ♦ Senior Luncheon 11:30 am-1 pm Wandering Moose Cafe ♦ P&Z 7 pm Library	10	11	12	13 ♦ Music Mountain Free Concert 4 pm
14	15 ♦ Deadline: July Chronicle Copy	16 ● NEW ♦ Board of Selectmen 7:30 pm Town Hall	17 ♦ Board of Ed 4 pm CCS Library ♦ Board of Finance 7:30 pm CCS Library	18 ♦ Pasta Dinner & Play 5:30 pm CCS ♦ CCC 6:30 pm Town Hall	19 ♦ Talk and Book Signing Page Dickey 6 pm Library	20 ♦ Hammond Beach Opens ♦ Family Cow Workshop 10 am-1 pm Local Farm ♦ Garden Tour: Gardening Book Sale 11 am-5 pm Library ♦ Books and Blooms Cocktail Party 5-7 pm Library
21	22 ♦ CCS Graduation 6 pm ♦ ZBA* 7:30 pm Library	23 ♦ CCS Last Day of School ♦ HVRHS Last Day of School	24 ☾ 1st Q ♦ HVRHS Graduation 6:30 pm	25	26 ♦ Reception Moo! Then and Now 5-7 pm Historical Society ♦ Annual Community Beach Party 5-8 pm Cream Hill Lake Assoc	27 ♦ Book Reading and Signing Hendon Chubb 5 pm Library
28	29 ♦ Children's Summer Camp Session begins 9 am-5 pm Library	30 ♦ Cornwall Committee for Seniors 7 pm Library	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 ♦ Thursdays: Toddler Play Group, 10:30-11:30 am Library; Meditation, 4-5 pm call Debra 672-0229; Mah Jongg, 7-9 pm Library call 672-6874; Adult Volleyball, 7:30 pm CCS gym ♦ Fridays: Yoga, 8:30-10 am Library ♦ Sundays: Yoga 9-10:30 am Library; Meditation 11:00 am call Debra 672-0229			

*Check with Zoning Office—672-4957

For additions and updating, visit www.cornwallchronicle.org

(continued from page 1)

fire, friends and neighbors quietly and quickly helped rescue other precious things. The community's support has been the most important thing of all to us."

We went outside into the spring air. "Yes," said Kate, "we plan to rebuild, keeping the look and feel of the old place. No one was hurt. It's just a house. Look at the dogwoods in bloom! We'll be staying."

—Ella Clark

Onward and Upward

It's June and time for changes for 33 students in Cornwall. Graduation ceremonies will be held at CCS on June 22 and at Housatonic Valley Regional High School on June 24.

Graduating from CCS and entering HVRHS next fall are: Kaitlyn Buckley, Amelia Budny, Caroline Hurlburt, Mitch Kosciusko, Manuella Matsudaira, Donovan McCray, Nicholas O'Neil, Lancelot Oyanadel, Jasper Randall, Dean Saccardi, Caleb Shpur, Olivia Woods, and Sophia Woods. Hope Carlson will be attending Indian Mountain School and Kit Fitch will go to Oliver Wolcott.

Off to college and other pursuits are the following HVRHS graduates, listed with their chosen destinations: Madison Caruso, Southern Connecticut State University; Madeleine Longwell, Simmons College; Lydia MacDavid, Middle Tennessee State University; Savannah Martin, University of Rhode Island; Fiona Ocain, Connecticut College; Madeline Ovit, Bay Path College; William Santoro, Lafayette University; and Nicholas Winsser, SUNY Cobleskill. Brianna Thompson graduated in December and is working and attending Paul Mitchell the School; Christian Logue, Eamon Murphy-Saunders, and Helena Waldron will be pursuing different adventures.

Other area schools will also be holding late May and June graduations. Getting their diplomas from Kent School are: Emma Fischer, Furman College; Sophie Randall, Syracuse University; and Ian Ridgway, Dickinson College. Bryce Laigle leaves Berkshire School for Rollins College; Emma Nance graduates from Miss Porter's to head overseas to the University of Edinburgh in Scotland; Sam Hurlburt will graduate from South Kent School and return in the fall as a post graduate.

The *Chronicle* sends congratulations and best wishes for success in their new endeavors to all the graduates.

—Susan Francisco

What's With These Ladybugs?

By the time this issue of the *Chronicle* appears, the recent invasion of Cornwall

homes by dizzying swarms of ladybugs will most likely be over. Though there's no scientific way to measure it, this year's attack—at least from an anecdotal perspective—seems to have surpassed all previous ones.

In early April, at the peak (or nadir, if you like) of this year's deluge, I went online in search of answers to the questions I was hearing over lunches and dinners with friends, at the post office, and other places where Cornwallians meet and commiserate. Here are the answers to some of those questions.

Are these things breeding in my house? No, they're not. They came in as adults last fall when the weather began to turn cool, searching for a place to hibernate for the winter. There's no breeding going on in the house; all romantic pleasures take place outdoors in warmer weather.

Why am I only seeing them now? As the hibernation period comes to a close, their activity brings them further into the warm interior of the house. But they're thinking "outside," which is why they're usually seen crawling on windows and on walls that are the palest colors in the house. And, as the weeks go on and the sunlight intensifies, they tend to become even more active.

They give off an unpleasant odor. What is that? What you're smelling is their blood, a tiny bit of which they secrete anytime they're disturbed. This repellent characteristic—along with their orange color which, in nature, is a sign of danger to predators—works to limit the number of natural enemies that might otherwise threaten them.

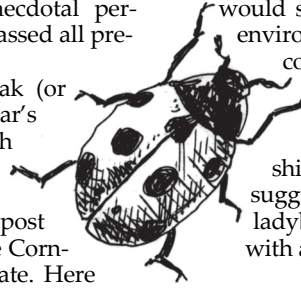
Nursery rhymes and popular folklore tend to describe ladybugs as peaceful, beneficial creatures. Is there anything to that? Actually, their food of choice is aphids, and in keeping gardens and houseplants free of that scourge, they do us a huge favor. As for peaceful, they don't bite or transmit disease (think: ticks).

Ok, so is there anything I can do to prevent this from happening again next year? You can start by making sure that your home is properly sealed: fill in cracks and repair carpentry joints, especially around doors and windows. If any ladybugs still get in (and they most likely will), take advantage of a warm spring day by opening a window near where they gather. Most of them will seize the opportunity to fly out. If all else fails, they can be vacuumed up without injury by

placing a paper towel over the opening of the bag and then disposing of them outside. (Full disclosure: After finding one of them swimming in my coffee for the umpteenth time, I reached for the Electrolux.)

In 1999 four ladybugs were launched into space on NASA's shuttle as part of an experiment to determine whether they would still be able to eat aphids in an environment of microgravity. (They could and did.) While the experiment's purpose was to determine the effect of gravity on certain biological relationships, the results would seem to suggest a possible solution to our ladybug problem: send them, along with all the aphids, into space.

—Tom Bechtle



Welcome

Hailey May Lizana
to Nikolle and Ronnie Lizana

Goodbye to a Friend

William Vitalis

Land Transfers

Corinne J. and James A. Levy to Eric Moore and Gretchen Grace, 9.505 acres, with improvements thereon, on Cream Hill Road, for \$310,000.

Federal Home Loan Mortgage Corp. to Purple Rooster Holdings, LLC, one acre of land and buildings thereon at 159 Kent Road, for \$94,295.

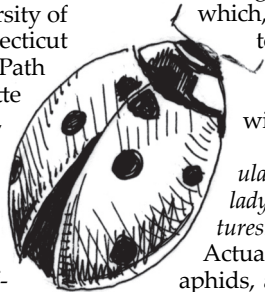
William Paley and Elaine Beun to Alexandra Browne, 5.0067 acres on Poughkeepsie Road, for \$165,000.

Paul Biondino to Federal National Mortgage Association, 2.222 acres with improvements thereon at 9 Frederick Drive.

Judge for Yourself: Is Necessity Their Mother?

Challenged to invent a new, useful product or to improve an existing one, sixth- and seventh-graders at CCS responded with obvious enthusiasm, intensity, and yes, ingenuity, at the latest Invention Convention, which took place in April. Display boards accompanying each entry told viewers about the process of considering possibilities, testing materials, and finally settling on an idea worth pursuing to completion. Then came building and further testing, substitution of materials, and the other trial-and-error problems leading to a satisfactory result.

Mailbox ideas were big this year. Ian Tyson devised a light bulb inside the house, connected to a three-way switch allowing the mail carrier to turn it on to announce the delivery and to be turned off by the homeowner not then disposed to retrieve the mail. Danielle Gorat attached her mailbox to a large, strong spring so it could bounce back after being struck by a snow plow or its payload. Not willing to take even that chance, Micah Matsudaira's entry was a mailbox on a pulley, like a clothesline, which could be sent out when necessary and retracted from

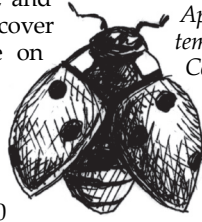


danger after that, all without leaving the comforts of home.

Enhancements to sporting pleasures included Keaton Terrall's ski attachment to hold your Smartphone, allowing you to video your trip down the slopes, and Trevor Hampson's swim cap to cover goggles so that they don't take on water when you dive.

In May, Micah, Keaton, Trevor, and Danielle, first- and second-place winners in their classes, travelled to the Invention Convention at Storrs, joining over 1,000 other elementary school champs to present their inventions at the state level. Both Danielle and Trevor were distinguished as "Recognized Inventors," while Trevor also carried away the ESPN award.

—Tom Barrett and Maggie Cooley



Cornwall Briefs

•**Chronicle Scoop:** Well, sort of. It's political, so guess what? Gordon Ridgway, Cornwall's 12-term first selectman, is hoping to run for another term and maybe another after that. That was his word at town hall when we dropped in. His expectation for running again will be up to a Democratic party caucus in July, but we hear of no party challenger at the moment. Also, Richard Bramley has stated that, if nominated by the Democratic party, he will run for another term as selectman. No word yet from the Cornwall Republicans, but if anyone wants to run for office on their line, including first selectman, contact chairman Brian Savin at siwanoy@aol.com. (Though state law requires that party caucuses be held during the week of July 21 to 28, neither the Repubs nor the Dems have picked a date for their caucuses. However, the *Chronicle* will list those dates in the July issue.) The contact for Democrats is party chair Rick Wolkowitz at Richard_wolkowitz@yahoo.com. Or you can just show up at the caucus and get a friend or neighbor to nominate you. And another thing to keep in mind: both parties have on occasion nominated unaffiliated voters for office.

•**The 275th Celebration:** The list of goodies taking place on the big day—Saturday, August 1—keeps growing. You already know about the parade, the pig roast dinner, and the flag contest. Add to those a concert on the green by the Salisbury Band, local historians Jeremy Brecher and Dody Clarke-Wolfe recording your personal stories about Cornwall at a historical society story booth, a concert by fiddler/dance caller Rachel Gall, dancing to the music of the Homegrown Band, and a talk by John Calhoun on town cemeteries and some of the famous citizens who lie quietly beneath the turf. Plus lots more in the days that follow: fairs, a bridge dance, big-time



ART@THE DUMP 2015

It was hard to believe that May was just around the corner on Saturday and Sunday, April 25 and 26. The brisk breeze and cool temperatures proved to be a challenge. The Cornwall road crew, who worked overtime to clear out the road sand from the sand shed just in the nick of time, met the most important challenge of all. Their herculean effort was greatly appreciated by both the artists and art lovers alike.

Claudia Duhamel from Watertown won first place with her cast iron birdbath. Susan Mullins from Gaylordsville took second with her King Tut necklace, and Cornwall's Connie Steuerwalt was the third-place winner with her imaginative bench. The fun trophies were provided by Spencer Albano (Goshen), who also crafted the popular metal garden ornaments.

In spite of the weather, we sold over \$3,800 worth of recycled art, our best year yet. Thirty percent of the total will be donated to the art department of CCS. Again we thank the Cornwall Association for its generous patronage. See you next year on April 23 and 24. Warm weather and sunshine would be nice.

—Gail Jacobson



MORE ON ENROLLMENT

To follow up on the article published in last month's *Chronicle* entitled "Enrollment Con-

activities on the mighty Housatonic, an all-day paint-the-town, art shows and openings. You name it, baby. If it exists, we'll be doing it for the 275th.

•**Lake Study:** That would be Cream Hill Lake, also sometimes known as Cream Hill Pond. There's a committee assigned to make a study of its waters by way of some mapping and testing, and said committee has been voted \$2,500 in the town budget toward the project.

•**Finally,** save a little cash for a 275th anniversary T-shirt, which will soon be available at \$20 at various local outlets, such as the Cornwall Country Market and the Berkshire Store.

—John Miller

Straight from the Kitchen

Those lucky enough to have spent time around CCS since the Saccardis hit town in 2007 have benefited from Susan's inability to stay very far from an oven. A passion for baking born of her wish to avoid filling her four children with unhealthy ingredients has meant that every function at school is apt to boast a wide array of sweet delights. PTA attendance has never been so high.

Susan's offerings began appearing at the Farmers' Market a few years ago, and they are back again after a brief time off, now under the official business name of "Suzie's Sweets & Farm." Everything is

Letters to the Chronicle

undrum," we wanted to assure *Chronicle* readers that Cornwall is taking very deliberate steps to remedy the erosion in enrollment. We are approaching this challenge in a holistic fashion by bringing together three elements: economic development, the school, and tourism. We are taking a triangulated approach to attract small businesses, families with children, and tourists to our town. We are working together to create a cohesive marketing plan with very specific goals for each of the areas of focus. The process has been extremely collaborative and very exciting... We will keep you posted on our progress!

—Janet Carlson, Chair,

Economic Development Commission
—Michael Croft, Principal, CCS

HABITAT SEEKS MORE LAND

It has been over 20 years since Habitat was able to build a house in Cornwall on land donated by a local family. Habitat is now looking for land to build another house. As one of the founders of our local Habitat for Humanity of Northwestern CT, I urge individuals and organizations in town that can spare as little as one acre to consider donating or offering land to Habitat. An affordable Habitat house will have an interest-free mortgage. Donations of land may have tax benefits for the donor. For information call me at 672-6637.

—Paul Baren

currently prepared in a certified baker's kitchen, which must be approved by the FDA and licensed by the Connecticut Department of Consumer Protection. When delicacies are sold off site, as at the Berkshire Country Store, that facility is also subject to regulation by the Torrington Area Health District. You should feel pretty safe taking a bite.

This special kitchen was built by Steven Saccardi and adjoins a large screened porch; the whole addition feeling rather like a tree house perched over Pritchard Brook. The room has stainless steel counters, a tile floor, a three-bay dish washing sink as well as the hand-washing sink, a special waste disposal to protect the septic from fats and food particles, and—oh yes—a commercial oven.

Should you be among the 1 percent of town residents unfamiliar with either the Farmers' Market or the Berkshire Country Store, Susan will also entertain requests for special orders.

—Maggie Cooley

Correction

In last month's *Chronicle*, it was noted of Mark Van Doren that Cornwall was his part-time home, "where many relatives, including his son Charles, continue to live." Our apologies to Mark's other son John Van Doren for failing to mention him as a longstanding Cornwall resident.

Events & Announcements

A Red Cross Blood Drive will be held in the bus parked in the UCC parking lot from 1 to 6 P.M. on June 2. Refreshments served to revitalize donors. Call 1-800-give-life or log on to bloodct.org to make an appointment. All are welcome.

Art in Cornwall

The Cornwall Library presents Joan Morosani, whose paintings depict pattern, color, and movement in still life and landscape, June 2 to July 18. An artist's reception will be held on Saturday, June 6, from 4 to 6 P.M.

Sari Goodfriend's photography exhibit will open at the Souterrain Gallery on June 6, with a reception for the artist on July 4, from 3 to 6 P.M.

Zejke Hermann's show of paintings titled "Surf, Turf, Sunsets, and Sunflowers" continues at the UCC Parish House mornings, except Saturdays, until June 20.

Household Hazardous Waste Collection Day at the Falls Village public works garage, Saturday, June 6, from 9 A.M. to noon. Pick up a required free entry ticket from Joyce Hart at town hall.

The Tenth Annual Artists' Open Studio will be held on Saturday, June 6, from noon to 5 P.M. To get a map, go to cornwallct.org, click "links," then Artists & Writers. Maps and a list of artists will also be available around town a week before the event.

Motherhouse Events

Saturday, June 6, 10:30 A.M. to 1:30 P.M. at Local Farm: The WHEY of Cheese-Making. An Old Style Life-Skills Series workshop on home cheese making. \$35 per family. Must preregister with Debra@Motherhouse.us or 672-0229.

Saturday, June 20, 10 A.M. to 1 P.M. at Local Farm: Workshop on Keeping a Family Cow. Learn to milk, feed, and fence a cow, and udder necessary skills. \$35 per person or \$50 per family of up to four. Must preregister with Debra@Motherhouse.us or 672-0229.

Your Horoscope

A good period for risky outdoor activities. Stroll through a tick-infested meadow with your kids and pets. Climb into an inner tube and float down the river over Kent Falls. Avoid activities with elastics, such as bungee jumping and rubber band workouts. Get finances in order. Sell Hedge Funds. Donate generously to local charities, especially non-profit newspapers...

Contra Dance at 7 P.M. at the town hall on Saturday, June 6. Rachel Gall will be calling to music by Still, the Homegrown Band. Donation: \$3-5/child, \$5-10/adult. For more info call Jane Prentice, 672-6101. All ages and all levels of experience welcome!

Free Blood Pressure Clinic on Monday, June 8, from noon to 1 P.M., at the UCC Parish House. For information contact VNA Northwest at 860-567-6000 or vnanw.org.

The Wandering Moose will host the monthly Senior Luncheon on June 9 from 11:30 A.M. to 1 P.M. Good food for a reasonable price and priceless friendship. Questions, call Bob Potter at 672-6191.

Music Mountain invites Cornwall residents to a free concert on Saturday, June 13, at 4 P.M. Peter Askim, noted composer and conductor, and his graduate music students will be holding demonstrations for CCS students at the school the week before the concert.

You're Invited to a Mystery Dinner Theater Play and the class of 2016's fundraiser held at CCS, written by CCS students under the guidance of writer Steve Krasner, and performed by CCS students, Thursday, June 18, at 5:30 P.M. The pasta dinner will be served in courses as the play progresses. Suggested donation is \$15 per person, or \$40 maximum per family. A raffle will be held after the show.

At the Cornwall Library

Books & Blooms is a two-day fundraising event benefiting the Cornwall Library. On Friday, June 19, at 6 P.M., there will be a talk and book signing by Page Dickey, acclaimed garden designer and author. On Saturday, June 20, there will be a tour of six Cornwall gardens, sale of new and used garden books, and a cocktail party. (See insert this issue.)

Summer camp at the library. Four weeks of full-day activities: June 29 to July 3, July 6 to 10, August 17 to 21, and August 24 to 28; \$50 per child per week. Call the library for details.

Hendon Chubb will read from his new book, *The Curious Magpie*, on June 27 at 5 P.M. at the library. The book will be available for sale.

Hammond Beach opens on Saturday, June 20, again managed by Tammy Decker. Contact Tammy at decker012@aol.com to sign up for swim lessons.

The Cornwall Historical Society opens its show "Moo! Then and Now," with a reception on Friday, June 26, from 5 to 7 P.M. The exhibit focuses on Cornwall's rich history as a dairy producer. Open Saturdays 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. and Sundays and holiday

Mondays from 1 to 4 p.m. Admission is free. (See insert this issue.)

[Editors' Note: Karen Doebelin is the new historical society president, replacing Barbara Gold. Welcome!]

Annual Community Beach Party, hosted by Park & Rec, will be held at the Cream Hill Lake Association on Friday, June 26, from 5 to 8 P.M. Bring a salad or side dish to add to the burgers, hot dogs, chips, and beverages provided. The Cornwall Ag Commission will dish out ice cream. Life-guards will be on duty.

June is for the Dogs: The state of Connecticut requires that all dogs six months of age or older be licensed annually on or before June 30 in the town clerk's office in the town where the dog is owned or kept. Licenses will become available on June 1. A current rabies vaccination certificate must be submitted or be on file. Neutered or spayed dogs cost \$8 and male or female dogs cost \$19. For a neutered or spayed dog being licensed for the first time, a certificate from a licensed veterinarian must be presented. Penalties apply for late registration. If you register by mail, enclose a SASE for return of tag and license. Otherwise the town clerk's office is open Monday through Thursday from 9 A.M. to noon and from 1 to 4 P.M.

Effective May 1, the New Big Brown Bin at the transfer station awaits your deposit of traditional mattresses and box springs. Steve O'Neil wants you to know that the free price of drop off is courtesy of the Mattress Recycling Council. Due to recent legislation, mattress retailers must tack \$9 onto your purchase, which then goes to the council to pay for the disposal of old goods. Before, Cornwall citizens had to pay \$30 for the privilege of dumping an old mattress.

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