



# CORNWALL CHRONICLE



VOLUME 24 : NUMBER 2 MARCH 2014

## A Memorable Winter?

Just how memorable are our New England winters and what makes them so? The blizzard of 1978 set a benchmark for memorable storms. The state shut down for an unprecedented three days. Denny Frost recalled that to plow out fellow residents he first needed a bulldozer to break up the snowdrifts. Anyone living in Connecticut in 1978 will likely recall where they were, where they may have been stranded, and the stranger who may have reached out to help. The storm moved fast, dropping 16 inches of snow in such a short period of time that many were stuck between work and home. The wind made matters worse by piling up snowdrifts four feet high.

Surprisingly, 1978 doesn't even rank in the top ten of winter storms. Our number one was 24 inches in January 2011, and just last February we had 24 inches. Yet they seem rather forgettable. October 2011 hardly qualifies as winter but then again, ten inches from Storm Alfred wreaked havoc across the region. Our own CCS became a shelter for travelers and residents. Roads in all directions were blocked by downed trees and wires. It took many days to clear debris and restore power. Alfred is now as memorable as the blizzard of '78.

This winter has brought snow and wildly fluctuating temperatures, from the 50s to -20.

Due to wind chills there were places in this country colder than the surface of Mars. I asked Jerry Blakey if this winter is the coldest winter he recalls, and he replied that they are all cold. There was the one winter in the '60s when explosives were used to blow the ice from the Housatonic to save the bridge in West Cornwall.

The difference this year is that the bitter cold was the result of something most had never heard of before, the polar vortex. Besides being extremely cold, what really is that? Back to the '60s and '70s; imagine a beehive hairo sitting atop the earth over the North Pole. The polar winds are analogous to the wrapped hair creating an internal vortex holding the polar cold within. A bit of a bump from a high-pressure system, possibly due to warmer arctic waters, and the vortex was no longer confined. Fortunately this straying is temporary and the vortex returned to the North Pole, returning our temperatures to the cold we New Englanders have learned to endure.

Deep snow, bitter cold, and intermittent power issues aren't what make storms memorable events. Nor is it new and technical terms for the behaviors of cold air. Instead, our memorable winter storms are those that disrupt our lives in unprecedented ways, but also bring out the best in our citizens as we rally to help one another. —Diane Beebe

## Cell Tower for West Cornwall

On January 27 community members attended a special Board of Selectmen meeting to hear about AT&T's proposed options for the next cell tower. Two sites have been identified in the town gravel bank off Route 128. Both are consistent with the cell company's desire to close gaps in cell coverage, a safety need seconded by the Cornwall Volunteer Fire Department; with the technical requirements for radio frequency propagation, and with the town's own standards. At an earlier P&Z meeting on this issue, First Selectman Gordon Ridgway noted the town's desire to find a spot that is not near houses, not highly visible, not on ridgelines, not near village centers, preferably near an established road, and not everywhere in order to avoid having "porcupines all over town."

Lucia Chiochio, attorney for AT&T, explained that a fenced compound at either site would be 50 feet by 50 feet, hold a 130-foot monopole tower as well as an equipment shelter, and have a back-up generator. There is also space for other cell providers to lease, which is a requirement of state statutes. One site has an existing access driveway on town property, while the other site would require a right-of-way through private property on Dibble Hill. Site

(continued on page 2)

## MARCH 2014

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
<b>Every Week This Month:</b> <b>Mondays:</b> Yoga, 8:30–10 am Library; <b>Karate</b> , 6:30–7:30 pm Town Hall ♦ <b>Wednesdays:</b> Tai Chi, 6–9 pm Town Hall; <b>Women's Basketball</b> , 7:30 pm CCS gym ♦ <b>Thursdays:</b> Pilates, 8:30–9:30 am Library; <b>Toddler Play Group</b> , 10:30–11:30 am Library; <b>Adult Volleyball</b> , 7:30 pm CCS gym ♦ <b>Fridays:</b> Yoga, 8:30–10 am Library ♦ <b>Saturdays:</b> Skating, 7–8 pm Hotchkiss Schmidt Rink ♦ <b>Sundays:</b> Yoga 9–10:30 am Library; <b>Meditation</b> , 1–2 pm, call Debra for location, 672–0229						<b>1</b> ♦ Carnival in Cornwall 6–9 pm Library ♦ Community Contra Dance 7 pm Town Hall
<b>2</b> ♦ Richard Griggs: Artist's Reception 11:30 am UCC	<b>3</b> ♦ Region 1 Board of Ed 6 pm HVRHS Room #133 ♦ Park and Rec 7:30 pm Town Hall	<b>4</b> ♦ Economic Development 8:30 am Town Hall ♦ Blood Drive 1–5:45 pm UCC ♦ Board of Selectmen 7:30 pm Town Hall ♦ Inland Wetlands 7:30 pm Town Hall	<b>5</b> ♦ Board of Finance 7:30 pm CCS Library	<b>6</b> ♦ Woman's Society 10 am UCC Parish House	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b> ♦ Woolsworth 10:30 am–1:30 pm Taghannuck Grange Hall, Sharon ♦ Film: <i>Green for Danger</i> 7:30 pm Library
<b>9</b>	<b>10</b> ♦ Free Blood Pressure Clinic Noon–1 pm UCC Parish House	<b>11</b> ♦ Seniors' Luncheon 11:30 am–1 pm Wandering Moose ♦ P&Z 7 pm Library ♦ Housatonic River Commission 7:30 pm CCS	<b>12</b> ♦ Bd. of Finance Special Meeting 7:30 pm CCS Library	<b>13</b>	<b>14</b> ♦ Memoir Writing Class 10:30 am–Noon Library	<b>15</b> ♦ Ping Pong & Badminton 1–4 pm CCS ♦ <b>Deadline:</b> <b>April Chronicle Copy</b>
<b>16</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>18</b> ♦ Board of Selectmen 7:30 pm Town Hall	<b>19</b> ♦ Board of Education 4 pm CCS Library ♦ Dance Movie 7 pm Library ♦ Board of Finance 7:30 pm CCS Library	<b>20</b> ♦ Cornwall Conservation Comm. 6:30 pm Town Hall	<b>21</b> ♦ Family Film: <i>101 Dalmations</i> 7 pm Library ♦ <i>The Wizard of Oz</i> 7 pm CCS	<b>22</b> ♦ Beekeeping Bee 10 am–2 pm Taghannuck Grange Hall, Sharon ♦ <i>The Wizard of Oz</i> 1 pm CCS ♦ Film: <i>On the Avenue</i> 7:30 pm Library
<b>23</b>	<b>24</b> ♦ ZBA* 7:30 pm Library	<b>25</b> ♦ Committee for Seniors 7 pm Library	<b>26</b>	<b>27</b>	<b>28</b>	<b>29</b> ♦ Rudi Wolf: Artist's Reception 4–6 pm Library
<b>30</b>	<b>31</b>					

\*Check with Zoning Office—672-4957

For additions and updating, visit [www.cornwallchronicle.org](http://www.cornwallchronicle.org)

(continued from page 1)

information provided to everyone included maps of service gaps in town, plans of the proposed compounds, and photo simulations of the visibility of each site from Cherry Hill and from Cornwall Consolidated School. Dependent on the weather, another balloon test assessing visibility will take place March 15 between 9 A.M. and 1 P.M.

Since both potential sites are on town property, there is more opportunity for citizen input. Once the preferred site is chosen, it will go to P&Z and then to a town meeting for a vote. Ultimately it is the Connecticut Siting Council which makes the final decision, and it will hold a public hearing.

Having the cell tower on town property will provide the town with monthly lease income. The town attorney is examining the proposed lease from AT&T and has recommended that Cornwall hire its own radio frequency engineer. The final lease will eventually be available on the town website.

AT&T representatives and the selectmen answered several questions from the audience. When the proximity to the school was mentioned, they said an earlier option was tabled as it was even closer to CCS. By federal law, any wireless tower must comply with FCC guidelines for exposure and both potential sites comply. One person ended by thanking AT&T representatives and the selectmen for giving townspeople the chance to express concerns and become more informed. Stay tuned for the next opportunity. —Ann Gold

## Cornwall Volunteer Fire Department: Old and New

In his account of the Cornwall Volunteer Fire Department (CVFD), "A 50-Year History, 1932-1982," Ed Brecher recounted the quick and effective response by our then fledgling volunteer fire department to the numerous chimney fires. "They were the first fires to be extinguished by the newly organized Cornwall Volunteer Fire Department," he wrote, especially noteworthy since it was formed during the Great Depression. We now look at the accomplishments of the CVFD 82 years later with great celebration and immense gratitude.

Just looking at the wonderful pictures available from the newly designed [cornwallfire.org](http://cornwallfire.org) website, gives one a feeling of the ongoing commitment to safeguarding our community that has always been the mission of the CVFD. We see several familiar names among the charter members: Calhoun, Bate, Richter, and some lesser known figures; Mrs. Ed Cartwright, known as "Birdy" to all of us on River Road. It is great fun to see Lorraine Malahan as the only woman among the

many active members in earlier times, and Asa Goddard, then and now, ever ready!

All of these pictures, and many other aspects of the important work of this organization, are now instantly accessible, thanks to the newly designed website by Rocco Botto, webmaster for the CVFD. Rocco, a CVFD member, is an information science graduate from Hartwick College. In designing the website, he employed the latest website standard, responsive design, which detects and adapts to each individual screen size for maximum clarity and high quality viewing.

The site is organized into useful categories for simply perusing or for specific information about the services of the CVFD. "About Us" includes the history of the department. The "Apparatus" portion includes lists and pictures of the many types of vehicles, machinery, and gear that allow for state-of-the-art rescue and emergency responses. Of great interest is the "Join" section, which lays out the options that might appeal to community members: the Cornwall Fire Department, the Emergency Medical Squad, the Community Emergency Response Team (CERT), and the Junior Department. The CERT team was formed in response to our recent storms and offers a training program in the area of disaster preparedness and disaster response skills.

The "Gallery" is where wonderful pictures are posted to complement the history section. Turning to more specific needs, we find out how to get a burn permit in the "Burn Permit" section. A "Calendar" keeps track of important events relevant to the work and services of the CVFD. "Storms" leads to other storm links and emergency management information. "Contact Information" and how to "Donate" are other areas clearly spelled out. The final section is the "Members Area" where minutes and other business matters are recorded in a protected status.

While still evolving, the website gives us a picture of the many fire and emergency services, as well as the many opportunities for community service offered by the CVFD. It encompasses a "then" and "now" perspective of one of the most valuable institutions in Cornwall and is well worth exploring! —Pamela Wilson

## Extracurricular at HVRHS

There are a wide variety of extracurricular activities at Housatonic Valley Regional High School. Activities come in many categories; from nature to sports, and robotics to career development events. The Envirothon Club studies many environmental fields and competes with teams at the State Field Day where they partake in events in forestry, aquatics, soils,

wildlife, and a "current issue" every year. The members have won at the state level five times and have placed at the national level in the top ten four times!

Winter sports teams are all doing well. Hockey has a record of 11-2-2 and has made it into the state tournament. The girls have a record of 11-5 in basketball and the boys have a record of 5-9. The very small wrestling team has had both wins and losses. Students also have the option of participating in swimming, skiing, or indoor track and conditioning.

The Robotics Club creates some very cool and complex robots, competing all over the state. This year members have six weeks to build a robot that can shoot a ball through a goal.

Future Farmers of America compete in career development events throughout the state and on the national level. This includes competition in forestry, dairy cattle judging, landscaping, public speaking, and parliamentary procedure. So there are plenty of interesting and exciting activities going on at Housy!

—Jacob Hurlburt, HVRHS sophomore

## Goodbye to Friends

Walter Douglas Carlson  
Margaret A. Tagliarino

## Land Transfers

Jaime G. Longhi to Thomas Nathan and Julie Drake, property with improvements thereon at 110 Cornwall Hollow Road, for \$390,000.

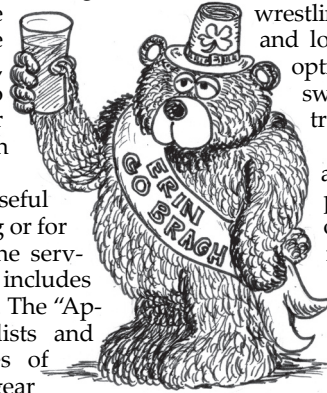
Estate of Halbert Cliff to Paul and Dawn Burrachio, land with buildings and improvements thereon at 96 Dibble Hill Road, for \$300,000.

## Public Projects and Plans

A special January 25 meeting of the Planning and Zoning Commission was held prior to its review of the town's Plan of Conservation and Development. Members listened as town boards and commissions presented updates of their work.

Opening the session, P&Z Chairman David Colbert noted the board's revisions to the accessory apartment regulations have been effective; in the last six months six apartments have been granted as opposed to one over the previous 12-year period. In planning workshop meetings the board is working on three areas: village districts, the Housatonic River overlay zone, and regulations for cell towers.

First Selectman Gordon Ridgway listed the many activities of the Board of Selectmen, particularly with newly formed groups concerned with Cream Hill Lake, the rising senior population, and economic needs. He also noted the board's involvement with such emerging issues as



cell tower placement, more affordable housing, and revitalization of our town centers.

Chairman Todd Piker shared his view that the Economic Development Commission's work is not "development per se, but more a study of vitality. The economy is vital to the health of the town."

Maggie Cooley represented the housing boards and highlighted the opening of Bonney Brook's senior affordable apartments. Application for grants for repair of 20-year-old Kugeman Village is ongoing. She noted that rental requests have increased while applications for the parcel program have decreased.

Phil Hart, Cornwall's representative on the Housatonic River Commission, informed the assembly of that group's desire to apply for the national Wild and Scenic River designation.

The news of the Conservation Commission was presented by Patrick Mulberry. This advisory group plans to inventory, map, and prioritize the town's natural resources.

Hector Prud'homme of the Cornwall Conservation Trust, a private entity, spoke of its preservation goals. The trust is working with Trinity Wall Street concerning the future of about 350 acres of steep and wooded land above the Trinity Conference Center.

Bob Potter, representing the Committee for Seniors, said that a Cornwall Library bookshelf holds information on the many resources for seniors. Seniors are enjoying meeting for lunch and conversation at the Wandering Moose on the second Tuesday of the month.

Brian Thomas reported that the Cream Hill Lake Task Force is reviewing information from a previous lake study. Overall, the health of the lake is good.

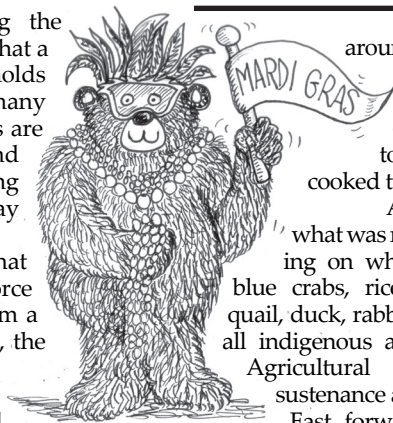
Questions asked from the floor focused on the Wild and Scenic designation and cell towers. Concerning the river, Tom McGowan, planner for P&Z, emphasized the benefits of the designation: maintenance of local control, legal support for local regulations, potential for grants, and national protection from other agencies. Ridgway added that the designation would add "teeth" to local regulations, but his board is weighing the pros and cons.

After two hours P&Z member Steve Saccardi concluded, "I learned a lot about the town and am glad to hear what is happening."  
—Jayne Ridgway

## Southern Food for Thought

Before and leading up to the Civil War, the North was industrial and the South was agricultural.

EVERYTHING in the South centered



around food. You cooked for your family and/or you cooked for someone else's family. You cooked to celebrate life and you cooked to celebrate death.

And you cooked with what was readily available depending on where you lived—oysters, blue crabs, rice, peanuts, hogs, corn, quail, duck, rabbit, sugar cane, chicory—all indigenous and regionally plentiful. Agricultural products were your sustenance and your livelihood.

Fast forward to the 21<sup>st</sup> century where everything old is new again and nationally recognized. What for ages was viewed as "soul food" is now "good food" with a twist; and it's from the South. It's about collard greens cooked with fatback and deglazed with balsamic vinegar; fried local oysters with wasabi vinaigrette (almost extinct 20 years ago in the Chesapeake Bay, the estuaries are chock full again); chicken fried in truffle oil with a panko crust; a grits soufflé with local chevre and minced baby arugula; Surryano ham (Virginia-based Edwards' award-winning ham that rivals prosciutto and serrano ham) and poached quail eggs with a parmesan tuille; key lime pie with lavender and Sichuan pepper crème.

The Old/New South is into spirits (the drinking kind!). Micro breweries are old hat; now it's "small batch" spirits. Even whiskey is becoming regionalized. A whiskey from Waco is distilled from heirloom blue

# Letters to the Chronicle

## HELP FROM MR. AND MRS. KAYE

*A modest grant is available from the Sydney M. Kaye Fund. Established by the Kayes' donation in 1981 "to forward the well-being of Cornwall residents," the fund has an advisory committee that recommends to the selectmen a worthy project. Proposals by letter should be submitted by April 30 so that the committee can make a review and recommendation by June. Contact the Advisory Committee via Barbara Herbst in the finance office, P.O. Box 97, Cornwall, CT 06753.*

—Ginny Potter, Chair, Advisory Committee

## MEETING HOUSE PRESERVATION UPDATE

*As a lot of you already know, the Friends of the North Cornwall Meeting House and the United Church of Christ—which owns the building—have begun fundraising for the reconstruction of the meeting house's steeple and other necessary repairs. The structural drawings for the steeple have been prepared, estimates secured for the work, and money is starting to come in. The Friends are in the process of applying for grants to help fund the project. There will not, most likely, be any major construction this year, but keep an eye out for events this summer. Donations to the*

*UCC for the meeting house and the Friends are tax deductible.*

—Jim Longwell, Chair, Friends of the North Cornwall Meeting House

## WATCH YOUR STEP

*VNA Northwest, Inc. has launched a fall prevention campaign that will include a series of fall risk assessment clinics in area towns beginning this spring. The campaign and the clinics are being funded by a grant.*

*The "Watch Your Step" clinics will feature a presentation by Gail Atkinson, one of VNA Northwest's occupational therapists. She'll describe the various risk factors that can lead to a fall and will explain and demonstrate some safety measures and tools that individuals can use to protect themselves from accident or injury. This will be followed by the opportunity for participants to receive personal reviews of their medications and blood pressure checks by a VNA Northwest nurse, as well as the opportunity for individual fall risk assessments by a VNA Northwest physical therapist.*

*There is no charge to attend the clinics, but preregistration is strongly encouraged. Multiple dates are available. Please call VNA Northwest at 860-567-6000 to register.*

—Joyce Dunn

corn and smoked over Texas scrub oak; there's a Confederate jasmine bitters that hails from Charleston; a sweet potato vodka from Snow Hill, NC, and Jefferson's Reserve from Louisville, created by a master distiller and a chef. Rumor has it that "weak drinks and hospitality don't mix;" the South is aiming to do cocktails right.

By now you're thinking "Southern;" so think Carnival in Cornwall on March 1. Go find your beads, think Preservation Hall, gumbo, oysters Rockefeller, Café du Monde, sazeracs, King cake and *laissez les bons temps rouler, y'all!*  
—Malou Rawls

## What's Up at CCS?

Lately Cornwall's school has been bubbling over with activity. During the month of January the sixth- and seventh-graders presented their pollution projects to the townspeople at CCS. There was an amazing turnout and many people learned new things about pollution. For example, did you know that smoke detectors should not be thrown in the trash? Instead you should contact the company using the phone number on the back and mail it the detectors so they can be disposed of properly.

Recently the CCS girls won their championship basketball game making them number one in Region One! Thanks to their coach Miss Watson, they had a successful season, coming in strong and sweeping their competition all the way to the end. The boys, too, with the help of their coach, Liam O'Reilly, worked hard and

improved their skills greatly.

CCS has some interesting events coming up! Soon the sixth- and seventh-graders will be presenting their science fair projects. On a more musical note, the fifth-, sixth-, seventh-, and eighth-grade musical cast will be performing the junior version of the wonderful classic *The Wizard of Oz* with the guidance of Mrs. Sphur, Miss Kruger, and Miss Parmuka. Wonderful props from Mrs. Collins will be used. Come and join us for the magical production March 21 and 22.

—Dean Saccardi, CCS seventh-grader

## Cornwall Briefs

•**Cornwall added** to its string of recycling successes in 2013. The town led the 63 municipal members of Connecticut Resource Recovery Agency (CRRRA) by recycling almost 26 percent of its waste stream. We've got the message, it appears, but what would you expect from Connecticut's greenest town?

•**TransformCT**, the state's transportation planning effort, held a public session at the high school February 11 to get feedback on a number of infrastructure improvements proposed for our region. The Housatonic Railroad's passenger service plan was not popular among the Cornwall residents who spoke up. Ron Hummel suggested that more thought be given to bus service between towns. The TransformCT roadshow is holding regional meetings all over the state to hear from local citizens.

•**Hats off to Todd Piker**, potter and newly named "elite professional" in the U.S. Tennis Association (USTA). Todd has kept tennis instruction for grown-ups and kids alive and bouncing in Cornwall through Park and Rec and also the Cream Hill Lake Association. He also has taken a seat on the board of directors of the state division of USTA.

•**In more sports news**, the CCS girls basketball team won the Region One championship by handily beating Salisbury: another in a series of b-ball triumphs by Cornwall's boys or girls teams representing one of the smaller schools in the region.

•**Eighty percent** of the town's snow removal budget for salt and sand had been spent by mid-February. That amounts to

## March Metaphors

Few months have more language in the bank than March. Think of it: strong winds, lions, lambs, Julius Caesar on the ides, poor guy, and NCAA basketball. Go UConn Women! Send the *Chronicle* a check if you get a moment. Thanks!

about \$1,000 per mile of road in Cornwall to clear 19 separate storms. "The highway crew is thinking spring," First Selectman Gordon Ridgway said.

•**With spring** will come more work on bridge repairs. Roger Kane is preparing an inventory of the spans which need the most attention. No aid from the state for this work, so Cornwall will be digging into its capital reserves to fund the projects.

—Lisa L. Simont

## Events & Announcements

**At the Cornwall Library:** Carnival in Cornwall on March 1 from 6 to 9 P.M. with Jive by Five Band; Winter Film Series continues on March 8 with *Green for Danger* and on March 22 with *On the Avenue*, both at 7:30 P.M.; the *Dance Movie* will be shown on March 19 at 7 P.M.; Family Film Night with *101 Dalmations* is scheduled for March 21 at 7 P.M.; Betty Krasne's memoir writing class starts March 14 and runs for eight consecutive Friday mornings.

**Cornwall Community Contra Dance** on Saturday, March 1, at 7 P.M. at the town hall. Calling by Patricia Campbell and music by Still, the Homegrown Band. No partner necessary; all ages and left feet welcome. Donation for the caller. For information call Jane at 672-6101.

**A Blood Drive** will be held on March 4 from 1 to 5:45 P.M. at the UCC Parish House. For an appointment please call 1-800-733-2767 or visit [redcrossblood.org](http://redcrossblood.org).

**Motherhouse Events:** Woolsworth, a chance to try your hand at carding, spinning, knitting, weaving, crocheting, or felting demonstrated by crafty area "spinners" will be held March 8 from 10:30 A.M. to 1:30 P.M. at the Taghannuck Grange Hall in Sharon. Register at 672-0229 or at [Debra@Motherhouse.us](mailto:Debra@Motherhouse.us).

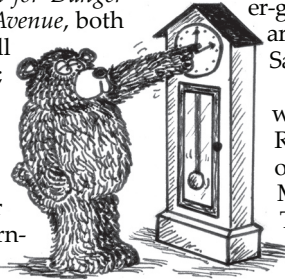
Beekeeping Bee will be held on Saturday, March 22, from 10 A.M. to 2 P.M. at the Taghannuck Grange in Sharon. Complete details at the [Motherhouse.us](http://Motherhouse.us) website or call 672-0229.

**Park & Rec will host** an afternoon of ping pong and badminton to entertain families during mud season! It will be held from 1 to 4 P.M. at CCS on Saturday, March 15, for all ages. Let Becky know if you are interested at [prcornwall@gmail.com](mailto:prcornwall@gmail.com) or 860-672-4071.

**Senior Luncheon** on Tuesday, March 11, from 11:30 A.M. to 1 P.M. at The Wandering Moose. Do not beware the Ides of March, but have good victuals and fine company at a fair price. Call Jane at 672-6101 for information.

**Redeemable bottles** at the transfer station are seeking a non-profit organization to haul them away for profit. Contact Steve O'Neil at 672-4079.

**Art in Cornwall:** In the Field exhibit of Ellen Moon's featuring watercolors and some fiber art will continue at the library until March 22. Immediately following will be a show of Rudi Wolff's work titled *Tulipmania*, magnificently colorful computer-generated images for which an artist's reception is scheduled for Saturday, March 29, 4 to 6 P.M.



The UCC Parish House will be featuring an exhibit of Richard Griggs' mobiles and other works, Recycling Works for Me, through March and April. The opening will be March 2 at 11:30 A.M.

The exhibit, *Art Among Friends*, continues at the Souterrain Gallery through March.

The National Iron Bank is currently hosting an exhibit of photos and collages by Rita Vitalis through March and April.

The **Bend and Stretch** program will begin a six-week exercise clinic for older adults at the UCC Parish House on April 28. The free classes will run from 11:15 A.M. to 12:15 P.M. every Monday until June 9. Please call VNA Northwest at 860-567-6000 to register or to request more information. You may also visit [vnanw.org](http://vnanw.org).

## CORNWALL CHRONICLE [cornwallchronicle.org](http://cornwallchronicle.org)

### THIS MONTH

Zejke Hermann, Illustrations  
Ann Gold and Jayne Ridgway, Editors

### NEXT MONTH

Annie Kosciusko and John Miller, Editors  
[townhill@optonline.org](mailto:townhill@optonline.org) or [jlm6493@gmail.com](mailto:jlm6493@gmail.com)

MANAGING EDITOR Ruth Epstein

CALENDAR EDITOR Louise Riley  
[calendar@cornwallchronicle.org](mailto:calendar@cornwallchronicle.org)

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