

ORNWALL CHRONICL

VOLUME 26: NUMBER 4 MAY 2016



Had Your Fiber Today?

Not bran muffins, it's cyber fiber that may be on your menu.

Last month, Cornwall's Brian Savin arranged a meeting between Frontier Communications' government liaison Michael Cicchetti and a scattering of town representatives and interested parties. The aim was to discuss the possibility of bringing fiber-optic cable into every home in Cornwall. Frontier became our land-line telephone provider after buying SNET from AT&T back in 2014. Its new proposal would equip the town with universal fiber-optic Internet connection at download/upload speeds up to one gig per second. This compares to dial-up, like a cheetah to a sedated snail, and is even a hefty 55 times faster than the 18 megs p/s I usually get from Optimum. (If you want to check your own current speed, you can use the online test at Speedtest.com.)

This state-of-the-art technology would be a terrific boon to Cornwall businesses, telecommuters, and any household that uses the Internet for surfing, skyping, streaming video, etc.

The plan envisions universal service for the town. Every home or business would

receive a fiber-optic connection providing 18 megs p/s service up and downstream as a Cornwallian's birthright; the way city dwellers receive garbage collection. One is tempted to use the monetary term "free," but that belongs only in the vocabulary of children (and politicians). Of course, it would have to be paid for by the town, i.e. you and me. Ay, there's the rub.

But as rubs go, not a huge one. Frontier is offering a public/private partnership whereby it will install and maintain the service at a cost (billed to the town) of \$20 per month for each of Cornwall's 900-odd households and businesses. This adds up to something over a \$200,000 per annum contribution from the town's coffers. After five years, this would drop to \$10 per month for the next ten years, whereupon we would have to renegotiate. Individual users would have the ability to purchase faster service. The optional one-gig p/s upgrade would cost their household around \$100. Telephone and TV programming would also be available at additional cost. For those of us currently paying \$50 or \$60 for cable Internet this plan certainly seems a bargain.

Speed is not the only advantage of fiberoptic over traditional "copper" cable. There is greater reliability, reduced interference, and reduced maintenance.

Mr. Cicchetti has come back to Cornwall several times, and Frontier has also made similar proposals to a number of other towns in Connecticut. None has yet signed up, perhaps because, over and above the financing, there are a whole host of thorny issues. Will Frontier pick up the tab for trenching a 1,000-foot driveway? Is it fair to tallage households who are indifferent or even hostile to computers? Furthermore, fiber-optic is clearly the wave of the future and in the natural course of things Frontier will surely bring it to Cornwall before too long. The switch to the new technology may even be mandated by the government. Doubtless, our large area, challenging terrain, and small population will banish us to the bottom of its list (although perhaps ahead of Mashantucket with a population of 299). The 15-year window of this proposal may also be a concern, since technology changes so quickly.

The bottom line is this: will Cornwall opt to move to the head of the queue and enjoy the benefits of a fiber-optic network starting a year from now (the time Frontier predicts to get it up and running); will we

grab the fairly modest per-household cost offered, or < sit and wait it out and hope for a better deal down the road?

-Matt Collins

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|---|--|---|--|--|---|---|
| SUNDAY | MONDAY | TUESDAY | WEDNESDAY | THURSDAY | FRIDAY | SATURDAY |
| 1 | Region 1 BOE Annual and Boad Meeting 6:30 pm HVRHS Rm. 133 Agricultural Advisory Committee 7:30 pm Town Office | *Region 1 Bd of Ed Budget Referendum Noon-8 pm Town Hall Park & Rec Home Baseball Game 6 pm Inland Wetlands 7 pm Town Hall Board of Selectmen 7:30 pm Town Hall | 4 | 5 | Historical Society Annual Meeting 8:30 am | 7 |
| Artist's Reception Duke Besozzi 11:30 am UCC | 9 • Republican Caucus to Elect Delegates Hartford • Free Blood Pressure Clinic Noon-1 pm UCC Day Room • Park and Rec 7:30 pm Town Hall | 10 | ◆ Republican Caucus 30th Senate District Kent ◆ Writer's Workshop 6:30–8:30 pm Deb Devins | ◆ WC-Water-Septic Committee 5 pm Ingersoll's Shop | Park & Rec Home Baseball Game 6 pm | Farmers' lstQ Market Season Opening 9am-12:30 Wish House • Bat Program 10:30 am-1:30 pm Local Farm |
| 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20 | 21 • Park & Rec O |
| ◆ Application Deadline Woman's Society Scholarships ◆ Deadline: June Chronicle Copy | ◆ Drug Prevention Presentation 6:30 pm CCS | ◆ Board of Selectmen 7:30 pmTown Hall | Board of Education 4:15 pm CCS Library Writer's Workshop 6:30–8:30 pm Deb Devins Board of Finance 7:30 pm Town Hall | Knitting Group/Hats for Cancer Patients 10 am Library Cornwall Conservation Comm. 7 pm Library | ◆ Town Meeting with Budget Vote 7:30 pm CCS | Farm Team FUL Baseball Game 10 am Aging Smart Program Jap m UCC Parish House Cornwall Child Center Auction 5–8 pm Foote Field Artist's Reception—Krista Narciso 6–8 pm Library |
| 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 • Lib. Book Sale 10 am–2 pm |
| Daniel Saed Home Concert for Seniors 3 pm Democratic Party Caucus 4 pm Library | ◆ ZBA* 7 pm Library | | Opening Recep Reg. 1 Middle Schools Souterrain Writer's Workshop Deb Devins 6:30–8:30 pm | | ◆ Park & Rec Home Baseball Game 6 pm | *Keeping a Family Cow 10 am-1 pm Local Farm Park & Rec Farm Team BB Game 10 am * Little Guild Open House and BBQ Noon-3 pm * Gay Schempp Art Reception 3 pm Pottery Store |
| 29 | 30 MEMORIAL DAY Comm. Service No. | 31 | Every Week This Month: | | | |
| 4thQ ◆ Library Book Sale 11 am–2 pm | Commall Cemetery 9 am • Seamen's Memorial 10 am Covered Bridge • Library Book Sale 10 am-2 pm • Parade, Ceremony and Carnival 11 am | ◆ Park & Rec Home Baseball Game 6 pm ◆ Committee for Seniors 7 pm Library | Mondays: Yoga, 8:30–10 am Library; Karate, 6:30–7:30 pm Town Hall ◆ Wednesdays: Tai Chi, 5–7 pm Town Hall 672-0064; Stitch 'n Spin, 7:15–8:30 UCC ◆ Thursdays: Pilates, 8:30–9:30 am Library; Toddler Play Group, 10:30–11:30 am Library ◆ Thursdays: Meditation, 4–5 pm call Debra 672-0229; Mah Jongg, 7–9 pm Library call 672-6874; Adult Volleyball, 7:30 pm CCS gym ◆ Saturdays: Farmers' Market starting May 14, 9 am–12:30 pm Wish House ◆ Sundays: Yoga 9–10:30 am Library; Meditation, 1 pm call Debra 672-0229 | | | |

SILENT CORNWALL

In what must be viewed as a painful irony, a Cornwall town meeting was called to vote on appropriating funds for aerial spraying of DDT to control gypsy moths. This occurred in the same year that Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring* was published with its condemnation of the use of hazardous pesticides. The meeting was on February 26, according to the 1962 diary of Whit Hart. He had observed the long-lasting effects of toxic DDT in his own barn and was an early, active opponent. The issue was postponed.

One cannot overstate the devastation caused by the gypsy moth invasion: hill-sides denuded, shrubs and small trees killed, worms crawling up the sides of buildings, on sidewalks and paths, and even falling from roofs into people's hair. There was an audible rain of frass onto dead leaves and forest floors—too many worms to hand pick, too many for predators. There was disagreement about control strategies, and many opposed spraying. Arguments were heated and numerous.

On April 10 of 1964, a town meeting was again held to vote on appropriations for spraying. This time the motion passed by a vote of 84 to 62. From the May 19, 1964 diary: "The planes were spraying last night into the late evening and again early this morning."

Many were concerned about overspray from the designated spray areas onto their property. Working with a Dr. Carrol, several people contributed funds to purchase residue collection plates which were then placed strategically around town. On May 18, numerous plates were collected and analyzed for overspray residue. The lab analysis clearly showed heavy contamination outside the designated spray zones, including both the Scoville and Calhoun farms. On July 4, those opposed sponsored a meeting at town hall to release the results of the tests. Many attended to hear Dr. Carrol speak.

That was a long time ago, and the work of a few, including Nancy Day, Whit Hart, May and Monty Hare, Frank Calhoun, Joan Terrall, and many others who raised funds and helped with the plates, were part of the effort to stop DDT spraying.

The spraying in Cornwall ended, the scourge of the gypsy moths eventually abated, and DDT was added to the list of pesticides banned for domestic and commercial use in the U.S. — Phil Hart

Lettuce and Parsley and Squash Ooh My

When spring finally arrives, the yard surrounding the Wish House in West Cornwall starts to fill up with long tables groaning under bushels of fresh produce, yummy baked goods, and all kinds of locally made products. The Farmers' Market is back, and ready to supply us with much of our food needs for several months.

Market master Bianca Griggs anticipates great things this year, and believes problems from previous years have been resolved for the most part. Beginning with the grand opening on May 14 and running through

October, the market is one of the best things happening in Cornwall. The local meats, the sweets, the organically grown produce all call out to winter weary folks. Chances are you will run into everyone you know and make some new friends too.

A theme of the market this year is parking and safety. People are encouraged to park behind the Wish House or in the Railroad Square area, but not beside the old depot, which is a private home.

Many of the towns in the area have their own farm markets, which often run at the same time as Cornwall's, but with help from a number of business-friendly organizations, the word is getting out that the Cornwall market is as good as any and better than most. The Cornwall Foundation supplies a grant that helps pay for advertising and insurance costs. Also, all vendors contribute \$100 annually for their spot at the market.

Local vendors include Bill and Becky Hurlburt of Hurlburt Farm and Forestry, who sell grass-fed beef, as does Mark Orth, manager of Birds Eye Tanner Brook Farm, and Tom Levine of Long Meadow Farm. Gordon and Jayne Ridgway sell produce all summer long. Patty Bramley, owner and operator of Buck Mountain Herbs, brings organically grown herbs to her table under the tent. Susan Saccardi sells treats for the sweet tooth, and Carol Bonchi provides her pizzas, salt rolls, and other baked products. CJ Burke from Housatonic Hair Works offers homemade soap, and Lost Ruby Farm sells goat cheeses.

This year, others who wish to sell their wares will be asked to remain the full season and not sell only seasonal produce leaving stalls vacant the rest of the time.

Also, in the past, not all vendors have been familiar with Torrington Area Health District rules about what is allowed to be sold. The Farmers' Market cannot pay fines that may be leveled against vendors for breaking or ignoring TAHD rules. For the most part, anyone who wants to have a spot at the market for the full season will run into very little opposition. The more the merrier. The Farmers' Market website is cornwallfarmarket.org.

—Jane Bean

Benefit for the Dolan Family

When Cornwall residents come together to help out a neighbor they do it with energy and spirit. On Saturday, April 2, over 300

Goodbye to Friends

Rev. Dr. Charles T. Russ John Alden (Denny) Frost

Land Transfers

David Craig Boyle to Thomas Y. Chen, two parcels of land with buildings and improvements thereon, at 19 Warren Hill Road, for \$135,000

Nicholas and Martha Bruehl to Scott D. Dragoo and Amy B. Cupp, 3.22 acres of land at 15 Stone Hill Road, for \$145,000.

Estate of Mary Blair Sams to Jennifer Ann Barb, land with buildings and improvements thereon at 16 Furnace Brook Road, and five other parcels of vacant land on Ballyhack Road, Grange Hall Road, and Furnace Brook Road, for \$810,000.

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people gathered at the Cornwall Consolidated School (CCS) for a potluck dinner to raise money to help Gail and Richard Dolan of Maple Hill Farm on Cherry Hill Road recover from a devastating fire in their historic barn. Neighbors and friends from Cornwall, Goshen, and surrounding towns, and as far away as Ohio and Maine, joined forces to put on an event that brought tears to the eyes of the Dolans and many others besides.

Organized by the Cornwall Agricultural Commission headed by Bill Dinneen, the dinner had many people willingly provide manpower and muscle to set up the CCS gym with long lines of tables and chairs for the family-style meal. Dozens of special baskets and goods were donated by friends and businesses for the raffles.

The Dolans' Amish friends drove 11 hours from Ohio with a trailer load of baskets brimming with Amish cheeses, sausages, dandelion wine, and Amish crafts and toys. There were also gift certificates to restaurants and stores, baskets of pansies

and bare root trees ready for spring planting, and an American flag that had flown on a mission to Iraq.

The potluck dinner was a ver-

itable groaning board of barbequed chicken, salads and pasta, tarts, pies, and pastries, provided with love by members of the community. "We are so overwhelmed," said Gail. "The outpouring of kindness is beyond words."

In a speech to those assembled, Richard Dolan tearfully told of those pre-dawn hours on a bitterly cold and icy February morning when he looked out of his bedroom window to see flames leaping from the barn. He spoke of the great gathering of support from the community as he and Gail mobilized forces and raced to the barn. "You don't know what a beautiful sound a fire siren is until your barn is on fire," he said.

Their son Richie echoed these sentiments. "When I arrived at the barn a few minutes after 3 A.M. there were so many people I knew. These were people I saw around town every day, people I went to

high school with; it was truly amazing. They were the EMTs and firemen."

Although this has been a tough time for all the Dolans, "seeing the compassion and the friendship of those around us has made it that much easier. The new barn will be that much more special because of our friends."

—Brenda Underwood

About Budgets and Bated Breath

At mid-April the proposed town budget for 2016–17 is well established, although finance board meetings, a public hearing, and a Region One vote are still to come. The final step is the town meeting on May 20.

Here is the overall picture: Selectmen's budget up 2.39 percent (an increase of \$43,362); Board of Education down 2.70 percent (a decrease of \$112,827); debt service on bonds up 3.13 percent (an increase of \$5,500). Net result: A reduction of \$63,965 before capital spending. The Board of Education total reflects no increase in the CCS budget (as per the Board of Finance recommendation) and a decrease of \$112,827 (7.7 percent) in Cornwall's share of the Region One budget.

The capital budget would increase by \$102,000, from \$500,000 to \$602,000, to help fund the new town backhoe, seniors' van, and road improvements. The increase will be covered mostly by the savings noted, leaving a 0.57 percent shortfall (\$38,035) of the total budget to be made up.

All of this does not take into account the governor's recent proposal to reduce state education grants to towns. Cornwall's share currently is about \$85,000. Stay tuned and watch the fur fly.

— Tom Barrett

Knock Knock, Who's There?

This is a good time to remind everyone that it's been five years since the last statemandated property revaluation, so this year it will happen again. Starting in June our assessor Barbara Bigos will be visiting each parcel of property in town, a process that will continue at least into July and August.

While every one of the 1,435 parcels in town must be visited, this figure includes vacant land, but it does not mean that physical entry into each house, barn, or outbuilding is necessary. Only in a small number of cases would such access be needed. That would be, for example, where she might notice something—perhaps a new outbuilding or footprint expansion not noted on the field cards for the property—or when she'd have another question. In such cases her preferred method is to knock on the door and if you are out, she may drop you a note to set up a convenient time.

At the end of the process we are notified, usually around November, of any changes in our assessed valuations, and have a period to ask questions and correct discrepancies. It is generally considered that the last two revaluations and any attendant issues were handled very smoothly.

Be sure to say hello if you see Barbara, as she hopes finally to really retire at the end of the year. We have been fortunate to have someone who is not only very good at what she does, but who clearly appreciates the uniqueness of our town. —*Tom Barrett*

CCS Science Fair

In her guidelines for the annual science project competition, instructor Kathy West required her students to choose an idea, form a hypothesis, and find empirical evidence to prove it true or false. They were then judged on the rationale behind their findings along with the quality of display and presentation to an independent panel.

Natalie Nestler took first place with her investigation of the time it takes for the flour of various breads to rise. Second place went to Will Taaffe, who identified the correlation between a paper airplane's wingspan and the time it remains aloft. In third, Ian Tyson constructed windmill blades to find which size generated the most electricity. Micah Matsudaira received an honorable mention for studying various conditions in the progression of bread mold.

–Bill Goulet

Cornwall Briefs

- •Applications for tax abatement are due at the selectmen's office on June 1. If your tax bill exceeds 10 percent of your income you are entitled to a \$200 abatement.
- •Super-seniors: Cornwall lost its oldest citizen last month with the passing of Charles Russ at the age of 101. Marion Blake now holds that title at 97. Not far behind her are Byron Hall, 95 in August, Kitty Ridgway, 94 in November, and Millicent Matland, 93 in October. Seven others have turned or will soon be 92 this year.
- •The Seniors' Van, which will be shared by Cornwall and Goshen, has been ordered and is scheduled to be in service by September. The money has been allocated, with the state picking up 80 percent of the cost.
- A New Ambulance has been ordered and, like the current ambulance, will be powered by diesel fuel. It was purchased with donations to the fire department. The cost was \$215,000, nearly \$100,000 more than the last vehicle acquired in 2005
- •Memorial Day: Monday, May 30, begins at 9 A.M. with a com-

memorative service led by Virginia Gold at the North Cornwall Cemetery (flowers requested to decorate graves). The Seamen's Memorial Service begins at 10 A.M. at the Covered Bridge. The village parade, followed by the ceremony on the green, starts at 11 A.M. and then comes the carnival, featuring the popular cake walk.

• Crosswalk: Funds left over from the West Cornwall sidewalk construction will be used to create a crosswalk on Route 7 between the hardware store and the country market.

— John Miller

Cream Hill Lake Health Studied

Last year the Cream Hill Lake Task Force, funded by the town of Cornwall, the Cream Hill Lake Club, and the Yelping Hill Association, did a follow-up study of the lake to see whether its health had improved since the study undertaken by George Knoecklein and Northeast Aquatics in 2013.

This year Knoecklein trained task force volunteers to do the measuring themselves. Their samples and readings reveal that the health of the lake is not significantly worse than it was in 2013. Lake depth and clarity are about the same as in 2013, and the total amount of phosphorus in the water actually declined (a sign of health). There are some invasive aquatic plants, especially milfoil, but the amounts are not very different from those found in the first lake study done in 1986. The task force observed only small surface amounts of blue green algae in the late summer, another sign of health.

A finding of concern is that the amount of nitrogen in the water had actually increased since 2013, and these higher levels could lead to larger growths of aquatic plants. The task force will seek funds to do more sophisticated measurements of the lake's depth and nitrogen levels, and also to remove the phragmites around the edge of the lake. Meanwhile, friends of Cream Hill Lake can breathe a sigh of relief!

—Jill Cutler

Events & Announcements

Region One Budget Referendum will be held at town hall on Tuesday, May 3, from noon until 8 P.M. Absentee ballots are available in the town clerk's office.

The Cornwall Historical Society annual membership meeting is May 6, 8:30 a.m. at 7 Pine Street, to elect directors and transact other appropriate business.

The Annual Spring Bird Walk, led by Art Gingert and Jean Bouteiller, is on

(continued on page 4)

(continued from page 3)

Saturday, May 7, from 7 to 9:30 A.M. Limited space; first-time birders welcome. Call Art at 672-0077 to register.

Motherhouse Events

New England Country Dance, May 7, 7 p.m. at town hall with caller Eric Hollman and music by Still, the Homegrown Band. Suggested donation: \$3–5/child, \$10–15/adult. Call Jane Prentice at 672-6101 for more info

Bring Back the Bats! May 14 from 10:30 A.M. to 1:30 P.M. at the Local Farm Barn. Make a simple bat house with Joe Brien. He and DEEP wildlife rehabilitator Linda Bowen will lead discussion on the species. Suggested donation: \$35/family. Space limited. Preregistration and \$25 deposit required. Contact Debra@Motherhouse.us or phone 671-7945.

Art in Cornwall

"Wood Carving of North American Waterfowl" by Duke Besozzi will open Sunday, May 8, at the Parish House with a reception at 11:30 A.M. and run through June 26.

At Covered Bridge Gallery in the Cornwall Bridge Pottery Store, the encaustic works of Gay Schempp, "Migration Series and Beyond," will be exhibited May 21 to July 31. Reception on Saturday, May 28, at 3

Works by Richard Griggs will continue at the National Iron Bank.

The Toll House Gallery in West Cornwall will showcase Curtis Hansen's paintings along with sculpture by Dan Murray and photography by Birgitt Pajarola through May.

May.

"Enchanted Trails" will continue at the Souterrain Gallery in the Wish House through May 22, followed by "Region One Middle School Student Art" from May 25 to 30.

Krista Narciso will exhibit her prints and drawings at the Cornwall Library in a show titled "Moments in Flora," which opens May 17 with a reception for the artist May 21 from 6 to 8 P.M.

Senior Events

A free Blood Pressure Clinic will be held

Let Joy be Unconfined

Getting into May every year holds out delightful promise. The earth warms and ripens seed, flowers bud, and the trees put on their summer dresses. So vote for May by sending a check to the *Chronicle*. Thank you!

Monday, May 9, from noon to 1 P.M. in the UCC Day Room. For info contact VNA Northwest at 860-567-6000 or vnanw.org.

The monthly Senior Luncheon will be held Tuesday, May 10, from 11:30 A.M. to 1 P.M. at the Wandering Moose Cafe. No reservations necessary.

At the Cornwall Library

Deb Devins will be conducting a writing class May 11, 18, 25, and June 1, 15, 22, from 6:30 to 8:30 P.M. Previous writing experience required. Space limited. \$50 fee per person.

The annual book sale (see insert) begins Saturday, May 28, from 10 A.M. to 2 P.M. (for \$10, early birds will be admitted at 9 A.M.) and continues Sunday from 11 A.M. to 2 P.M. with all items half price. Fill a bag with books for \$5 on Monday from 10 A.M. to 2 P.M. (closed 11 A.M. to noon for the parade.)

Cornwall Consolidated School: Ginger Katz, CEO and founder of the Courage to Speak Foundation and author of *Sunny's Story*, a drug prevention book, will make a presentation to sixth-, seventh-, and eighth-graders on Monday, May 16. The adult public is invited to a presentation that evening at 6:30 P.M.

The Cornwall Child Center will hold an auction at Foote Field on May 21 from 5 to 8 p.m., rain or shine. Contact number for preordering tickets: 672-6989. (See insert.)

The Cornwall Association will sponsor "Aging Smart," Saturday, May 21, from 1 to 3 P.M. at UCC Parish House. (See insert.)

The Democratic Party Caucus will nominate its candidate for registrar of voters on Sunday, May 22, 4 P.M. at the library.

"A Kinder's Gift to the Elders," Daniel Saed's concert for seniors and their families, will take place on Sunday, May 22, at 3 P.M. Contact Leslie Elias at 672-0286 or grumblinggryphons@gmail.com for info and reservations.

The Little Guild will host an open house and barbecue on Saturday, May 28, from noon to 3 P.M. Free food, face painting, kids' activities, tours of the shelter, and many dogs and cats available for adoption!

Cornwall Woman's Society

College scholarships up to \$2,000 will be awarded to graduating high school seniors who complete the application process, which includes an interview. Applications available

at town hall, Cornwall Library, HVRHS, and the HVRHS website. May 15, 2016 deadline. For more info, call Nita Colgate, committee chair, 672-6797.

Big plans are afoot for the 90th Rummage Sale, July 16 to 18 at Mohawk Mountain Ski Area. Donations will be accepted beginning July 5. Details in next month's issue. To volunteer, call Anne Hummel at 672-2325.

Connecticut Forest and Park Trails Day: Join Ron Hummel for an educational walk on June 4. Learn about the tornado damage and restoration at Cathedral Pines. Visit an unusual black spruce bog in Mohawk State Park. Enjoy birds and wildflowers along the way. Meet at Cathedral Pines parking lot on Essex Hill Road at 9 A.M. and finish by noon.

The Cornwall Conservation Commission will soon be mailing a pamphlet aimed at Cornwall homeowners, describing ideas and resources for low-impact development (LID).

Kids'Camps

Register for Camp Eureka at campeureka. us/register-for-camp-eureka/. Offering three sessions for children at various farms in Cornwall: Farmhouse Week, June 27 to July 1. Forestry Week, July 11 to 15. Food and Field Week, August 1 to 5.

Grumbling Gryphons Theater Arts Camp will be held at town hall for children ages 6 to 16 from June 27 to July 4. Scholarships available. Register at grumblinggryphons.org or call 672-0286.

CORNWALL CHRONICLE

The *Chronicle* regrets the passing of editor and former director Hendon Chubb, whose work appeared in the first and many subsequent issues; and of Denny Frost, our recent circulation manager.

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THIS MONTE

Erica Prud'homme, Illustrations Tom Barrett and Bill Goulet, Editors

NEXT MONTH

Tom Bechtle and Maggie Cooley, Editors tbechtle@optonline.net or magcooley@optonline.net

MANAGING EDITOR Ruth Epstein CALENDAR EDITOR Chris Gyorsok calendar@cornwallchronicle.org

CIRCULATION Nan and John Bevans

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