



CORNWALL CHRONICLE

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RIP Pearly's Farmhouse Café

Sean and Justina Aylmer, the now former proprietors of Pearly's Farmhouse Café in West Cornwall, say they were "disheartened" after closing their restaurant on October 13, just days after its first anniversary. "In many ways, we built a successful business, for the community and for our family. It just didn't work out financially," Sean explained.

A dispute over a costly and necessary electrical repair on top of facing a high rent through the slow winter months finally brought the end.

Justina said even though she felt "shock" at the closing, she looks forward to spending more time with Sean as he leaves behind the 16-hour days. Sean added he is eager to be more involved with their two young children, Essence, 2, and Eliana, 9 months.

"Our dream was to build a great team and become an integral part of the community, and we were successful from that perspective," Sean said. He added, "A lot of passion went into what we did, and we felt it come right back in return."

Justina's sadness was tempered by the knowledge that they "did the right thing all the way, trained the staff, and treated them well. We feel good about what we did," she said.

Pearly's closing means RSVP is once again the only restaurant in West Cornwall. In its current location for 17 years and for four years before that across the street, RSVP can rightly claim it is the longest-tenured dining establishment in Cornwall. Founders and owners Guy Birster and Charles Ciona describe it as prix fixe French cuisine in a casual BYOB setting. "No one else does what we do, French food with little bit of everything, in a festive atmosphere," Birster explained. Ciona added, "We've built a reputation around a consistently good dining experience. We also have no employees, low rent, and are closed during the traditionally slow winter months."

And for Sean and Justina's next move, they will "absolutely" stick around as they decide what is next. Cornwall Consolidated School is a big draw for them, as well as the many friends they have made.

—Bob Meyers



New Life for Old Bridgeboards

A short letter by Joanne Wojtusiak in the August *Chronicle* put out the call: to own a piece of Cornwall history, one of the planks from the West Cornwall covered bridge, just ask. Sixty requests later and all 209 boards were snapped up.

It was Richard Griggs's idea for the Cornwall Association to do something with the old boards being replaced as part of the state's \$1.4 million rehabilitation project. Richard first asked local state Rep. Brian Ohler to intercede on the town's behalf with the Connecticut Department of Transportation. Then, ConnDOT asked the contractor, Mohawk Northeast, Inc., to set the boards aside.

Then, the requests starting coming in, along with the memories:

"My late husband traveled through that bridge more than once a day, for over 20 years delivering the daily newspapers. I think it would be exciting to create something that we as a family can remember his years of dedicated service." (Joanie Thitchener)

"Even if I won't be able to hear that wonderful clickity-clack as I drive over it anymore, I will remember it fondly every time I look at the board!" (Dawn Sherman)

NOVEMBER 2018

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| SUNDAY | MONDAY | TUESDAY | WEDNESDAY | THURSDAY | FRIDAY | SATURDAY |
|---|--|--|---|---|---|---|
| Every Week This Month: Mondays: Yoga, 8:30–10 am Library; Mat Squad, 6:30 pm UCC ♦ Tuesdays: Pilates, 8:30–9:30 am Library; Zumba, 5:30–6:30 pm Library ♦ Wednesdays: Tai Chi, 5–7 pm Town Hall call 672-0064; Tai-Chi, 5:30 pm and Qui-Gong, 6 pm UCC; Stitch 'n Spin, 7:15–8:30 pm UCC ♦ Thursdays: Pilates, 8:30–9:30 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 ♦ Fridays: Yoga, 8:30–10 am Library; Toddler Play Group, 10:30–11:30 am Library ♦ Sundays: Yoga, 9–10:30 am Library; Meditation, 1 pm call Debra 672-0229 | | | | 1 | 2 | 3 |
| 4 DAYLIGHT SAVINGS TIME ENDS | 5 ♦ Region One Bd. of Ed 6:30 pm HVRHS Library ♦ Agricultural Advisory Committee 7:30 pm Town Office Bldg | 6 ♦ Election Day Voting 6 am–8 pm Town Hall ♦ Election Day Luncheon 11 am–2 pm UCC Parish House ♦ Inland Wetlands Agency 7 pm Town Hall ♦ Board of Selectmen 7:30 pm Library | 7 ♦ Women's New Moon Drum Circle 6–8 pm Local Farm ♦ Deb Devins Writing Workshop 6:30–8:30 pm Library | 8 | 9 | 10 ♦ A Farmer's Life Panel Discussions 9 am–Noon Town Hall ♦ CC Trust Annual Meeting 4–6 pm Olds' Barn Jewell St. ♦ Historian Deron Bayer WWI Talk 5 pm Library |
| 11 VETERANS DAY ♦ "Over There..." Richard Schlessinger 2 pm Town Hall | 12 VETERANS DAY (OBS.) ♦ Diabetes Course with Anne Hummel 10 am–Noon Library ♦ Free Blood Pressure Clinic Noon–1 pm UCC Day Room | 13 ♦ Econ. Dev. Comm. 9 am Town Hall ♦ Monthly Senior Luncheon Noon UCC Parish House ♦ West Cornwall Septic Comm. 5 pm WC Library ♦ P&Z 7 pm Library ♦ Housatonic River Commission 7:30 pm CCS | 14 ♦ CCS Board of Education 4:15 pm CCS | 15 ♦ Deadline: 1st Q December Chronicle Copy ♦ Cornwall Conservation Commission 7 pm Library ♦ Board of Finance 7:30 pm Town Hall | 16 ♦ Paint, Palette and Punch 9:30 am, 3:30 & 7 pm UCC Parish House ♦ 8th-Grade Dinner For Veterans 6:30 pm CCS ♦ Annual Town Meeting 7:30 pm Town Hall | 17 ♦ Indoor Coop Farm Market 9 am–12:30 pm Town Hall ♦ Mike Redmond Artist's Reception 5 pm Library |
| 18 ♦ Community Thanksgiving Dinner Noon UCC | 19 ♦ Diabetes Course with Anne Hummel 10 am–Noon Library | 20 ♦ Board of Selectmen 7:30 pm Town Hall | 21 ♦ Pre-Thanksgiving Ecumenical Service 7 pm St. Peter's | 22 THANKSGIVING DAY | 23 | 24 |
| 25 | 26 ♦ Diabetes Course with Anne Hummel 10 am–Noon Library ♦ ZBA* 7 pm Library | 27 ♦ Coffee, Confections, Conversations 9 am Parish House | 28 ♦ Beginner Tai Chi 5–6 pm Town Hall ♦ Region One ABC Committee 7 pm HVRHS Central Office | 29 | 30 | |

*Check with Zoning Office—672-4957

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"Oh my!!! I would love a piece of the bridge. I started going over that bridge in 1968 until my mother moved in 1998, but Cornwall is NEVER far away from my heart. Truly." (Liz Harrison)

"My sister Darcie Giuseffi was married on both sides of the bridge 21 years ago!" (Cara Mia Bacchiochi)

"We are THRILLED to have a piece of the bridge. I lived for several years on River Road and the "kachunk kachunk kachunk" of cars going over the bridge is a sound of my childhood." (Polly Goddard)

While the old boards lack historic significance, having been installed during the last renovation some three or four decades ago, the solid white planks are sturdy and substantial.

This being Cornwall, some of the proposed plans involved turning the boards into art. Art needing a showcase led to Brenda Singer proposing the Cornwall Association turn its annual Newcomers' Tea into a gallery event, even if it meant moving it from the usual mid-September to late October to allow more time to create. The local artists got to work, including Tim Prentice, Richard Griggs, and Zejke Herman, plus Steve Sperduto of Housatonic Art & Frame in Cornwall Bridge made frames for photos from Lazlo Gyorsok. There were also photos of works in progress including the Trinity Center's repair of the River Road trail bridge.

In what many regard as a minor miracle, the bridge work finished early. As drivers resumed the familiar route, one thing was missing; the rhythmic clickity-clack of the wooden bridgeboards. The new laminate compound planks are designed to carry traffic seamlessly over the river. However, many in Cornwall don't care for seamless. For those longing to hear that familiar sound, Richard Griggs and Zejke Herman have recordings. —Kerry Donahue

Department of Motor Vehicles

According to a memoir written by the late Frank Calhoun, the first car owner in Cornwall was Edward Cartwright, who purchased a pre-1908 Cadillac. Cartwright had a Detroit connection and later owned a Nash dealership in town.

Fast forward 100+ years to the computers of our friendly assessors, who inform us that there are now more than 1,700 motor vehicles registered to the town's 1,336 residents.

The table below lists some of the more popular and interesting makes of cars. The number on the right indicates *Consumer Reports'* ranking of the quality of 33 brands, based on their vehicle tests plus surveys of reliability and owner satisfaction.

202 Subarus (6)
200 Toyotas (9)
195 Fords (19)
121 Hondas (8)
113 Chevrolets (22)
65 VWs (15)
61 Jeeps (32)
Luxury Cars
51 Audis (1)
47 BMWs (2)
41 Volvos (17)
32 Mercedes (14)
15 Porsches (4)
11 Lexus (3)
8 Land Rovers (31)
2 Teslas (7)

The 202 Subarus confirm your hunch that every other car you see in town is this well-made Japanese brand. *CR* rates its Forester and Outback models as the best SUV and wagon in snow.

Toyota follows closely with by far the most models, including 18 Priuses (or Prii, Toyota's official plural for more than one of its hybrid cars).

The Ford numbers are owed to the popularity of its F-Series pickup trucks, which have been the best-selling vehicles in the United States for many years. The F-Series brand is said to be more valuable than Coca Cola or Nike. Two of the oldest cars in town are a 1941 Ford pickup and a 1939 Ford Deluxe, both owned by Jeff Jacobson.

The luxury German cars and some Japanese models lead *Consumer Reports'* quality ranking. *CR* doesn't think much of Jeeps and Land Rovers, but they remain fairly popular, perhaps because of their off-road capability and the distinctive look.

Both Teslas are the Model X, which is its SUV with the gullwing doors. The often-predicted flying car never made it out of science fiction films, but Elon Musk's vehicles are the closest things we have so far.

Ed Cartwright's Cadillac was probably a Model S Runabout, an open two-seater with a dickey seat and two brass lanterns, powered by a 10hp, single cylinder engine. The first Tesla was also a Model S, and you wonder what Ed would think as one of these all-electric 600hp cars flew by him with no more noise than the tires and the wind. —Ed Ferman

Cornwall Conservation Trust Walk

In late August, 30 lucky Cornwallers gathered at the Cooley Land Trust. We were there for a walk with Peter Del Tredici, an expert on all things botanical. The day was overcast, with rain possible and gnats probable. There were a lot of hats. The champion supported an upright mosquito coil pinned to the brim, lit and pungent.

Good-bye to Friends

Richard S. Ford
Gustav Haller, Jr.
Marie J. Zaino

Congratulations

Laura E. Fox and Peter D. Brazee

Land Transfers

Anne A. Hubbard to Cynthia A. Foote, land with buildings and improvements thereon at 1 School Street, for \$370,400.

Milton Northrup Buechner, Trustee to Susan E. Edholm, .185 acres of land with a building thereon at 9 River Road South, for \$180,000.

Peter Del Tredici is lean, graying and amiable, and he closes his eyes when he talks. He's a retired senior research scientist at Harvard's Arnold Arboretum, and an expert on native and non-native plants. He can tell you exactly when a plant arrived here, and how, and why. Humans are always in the mix, always complicit. The broad-leaf plantain, for example, that pesky, ubiquitous, low-growing plant you can't get out of your lawn, was brought by the Pilgrims; its Indian name was "White Man's Footprint." (As to lawns, Peter says there are two kinds: the "Industrial Lawn," which is strictly controlled with herbicides and pesticides, and the "Freedom Lawn," which welcomes whoever is short and green and shows up.)

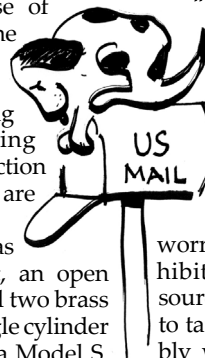
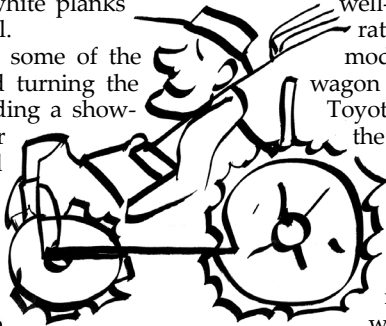
Along an old tractor trail, lined with trees and stonewalls, Del Tredici pauses by a big black cherry muffled by a tangle of vines. "*Celastrus orbicularis*," he says. "Bittersweet." It was brought here in the 1870s as an ornamental, highly prized for those bright red berries and orange petals. By the 1950s it was problematic, and now it's a nightmare.

We also introduced the multiflora rose, for erosion control. And kudzu! 13 million plants were subsidized by the government. Peter tells us not to worry: in the natural world, these uninhibited invaders are "underutilized resources." Some bug or disease will emerge to target them, and in 50 years they probably won't be a problem. And not all the non-natives are problematic: beautiful Queen Anne's Lace was brought here for medicinal purposes. It inhibits ovulation, a fact shared only among women and the midwife culture.

We pass tall stalks of native golden-rod, which Peter says does not cause allergies. Only wind-pollinated plants do this, and ragwort is the worst offender. It blooms inconspicuously at the same time, and goldenrod gets the blame.

We pass a huge red oak. "That's a boundary tree," Peter tells us, "left to show the edge of the property."

Vines are everywhere—bittersweet, wild grape, and bearded poison ivy. "Vines,"



says Peter, “are in the ascendancy now. They don’t invest energy in making a trunk, and they love CO₂. Trees don’t really know what to do with extra CO₂, they’ll be losers during climate change. Vines will be winners. Invest in vines!” he says, and laughs, closing his eyes.

All this change is human-driven. Now that we trade with China, pathogens from Asia arrive constantly in pallets of untreated wood. “Plants are symptomatic of the degradation of the environment that we have created,” he says, “but it’s not the end of the world. It’s just a different world. We have to learn to manage and live with it.”

By the end of the afternoon we’re better informed about natives, non-natives, and the smoldering hat-brim method of fending off native Cornwall gnats.

—Roxana Robinson

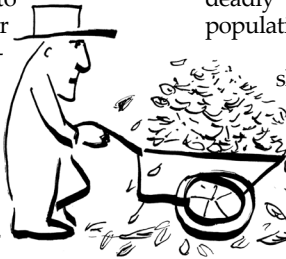
Rattlesnakes in Cornwall?

No. There are no rattlesnakes in Cornwall. You can stop reading now, if you prefer. These native reptiles are found in Canaan, Salisbury, Sharon, and Kent, but not in our fair town. What do they have against Cornwall? Is it high real estate prices? Perhaps the tendency to keep Cornwall a secret gem hidden from outsiders has gone a bit too far?

There was one sighting in modern times, recorded for posterity in the *Cornwall Chronicle* in 2010. That, however, is the only confirmed sighting in over 100 years. No one thought they were on “this” side of the Housatonic. A known den on Canaan Mountain suggests that at least one family makes its home nearby. Snakes imprint on their den location, and after spending their summers roaming among familiar basking sites and having babies, they return to the family den for the winter months following pheromone trails that crisscross the forests. It is rare for off-spring to strike out on their own. In other words, those snakes will remain Canaan voters.

Encounters with timber rattlesnakes in nearby towns include a couple of sightings on Calkinstown Road in Sharon this year. In May 2017, Kent firefighters were containing a forest fire in upland areas along the Appalachian Trail, the same area in which a den is located. The snakes—over 100—had emerged from their dens and were also seeking safety.

While timber rattlers have a bad reputation, it is undeserved. They generally stick to their own kind, high in rocky outcrops and protected areas. Other than to kill prey, their venom is used as a last resort when threatened, and there are many cases of the snakes being passive or using motion and their rattle to alert dangerous animals (cough...humans) of their presence. The venom takes a long time to act, so in the unlikely case of a bite, one has time to get to



Letters to the Chronicle

LIBRARY SALES:

Where but the Cornwall Library Labor Day Art Sale could a 12-year-old walk away with a \$20 Lime Rock poster, a botanical aficionado pick up a pair of vintage prints in funky Victorian frames (\$100), or a collector discover a beautifully painted 19th-century still life (\$1,500)? And where else would Ruth Gannett steal the show, with not one, but five of her iconic images of Cornwall on view? From Warren Nutting to Arlington Yutzler to Peter Max, this year’s sale offered something for everyone. Donors pared down their attics, buyers freshened up their walls, and volunteers had a blast installing a 200-work-strong exhibition.

The sale provided a nice boost to the library’s coffers—almost doubling 2017’s total! Add to that the proceeds from the Columbus Day Book Sale, and we can confidently offer a full calendar of events including art shows by Joelle Sander and Mike Redmond and a book talk by artist Duncan Hannah about coming of age in New York City in the 1970s.

We look forward to celebrating the library’s 150th anniversary next year with an all-town celebration at the Trinity Retreat Center on Saturday, February 16. Mark your



calendars and stay tuned!

—Anne Coffin for the Cornwall Library

BALLOT MEASURE TO PROTECT STATE LANDS

Each year, Connecticut state parks and forests attract 8 million visitors, generate more than \$1 billion in revenue for the state, and support more than 9,000 jobs. According to one study, more jobs in Connecticut depend on outdoor recreation (69,000) than on the aerospace and defense industry (60,000).

In spite of its importance, the General Assembly’s annual conveyance bill can contain deals in which public state lands can be sold, swapped, or given away without public input. Can you imagine Mohawk State Forest sold without having a say? This last-minute shuffling can be avoided if you vote “YES” on Question 2 this November 6.

If passed, this ballot measure would require a public hearing and the General Assembly to attain a 2/3 vote in each chamber before state parks, forests, and state-owned farmlands are sold, swapped, or given away to private companies or local governments. This initiative is an effort to ensure transparency and to give the voting public a right to decide.

—Debby Bennett

the local hospitals, all of which carry the antidote.

Perhaps they should be afraid of us. In addition to cars and loss of habitat, the snakes are victims of hunting for resale and of killing due to their perceived danger. In eastern Massachusetts they are also suffering from a deadly fungus that could spread to other populations.

Predictably, their numbers have shrunk. In Vermont, only six known dens are left out of 46 a century ago. However, the resilient rattlesnake has survived where other animals have become threatened and then extinct. Since they tend to stay close to their families and dens, it might take a long time to repopulate the hills of Cornwall. Scientists are unsure how a new den could get established; our rivers and roads create formidable barriers.

But something to consider: communities that host rattlers have less reported Lyme disease. So shouldn’t we hope for more residents that eat white-footed mice and chipmunks, those carriers of Lyme (and rattlesnakes’ primary dinner)? —Jennifer Dorsen

Cornwall Briefs

• **Good news** about Cornwall’s bridges, covered and uncovered, rumbles on. On October 10, well before the expected finish date, the bridge over Mill Brook from the post office to Smith Place was declared open and ready for traffic. The covered bridge was also open about 10 days before it was contracted to be complete.

Turns out it’s a lot easier to replace bridges than it used to be. Anyone who’s been following the painful renovation of the Mixmaster in Waterbury knows that huge sections of bridge deck are manufactured far away, trucked to the site, and craned into place. Something like that, on a smaller scale, happened with the Smith Place span. This must have been a great relief to the residents of Smith Place who had been penned up on the far shore of Mill Brook for some weeks with only a temporary exit to Railroad Plaza.

• **Annual Town Meeting.** This gathering, to be held on Friday, November 16, at 7:30 p.m. at the town hall, is intended to encourage townspeople to read the Town Report for the fiscal year, which ended June 30, and to get a look at the financial condition of the town. The capital plan for the next five years will also be rolled out and voted up or down. Some additional bits of business are on the agenda. This meeting is usually held before the end of October. It had to be delayed this year because the

(continued on page 4)

CVFD Count

- 4 false alarms
- 2 power lines down
- 2 motor vehicle accidents
- 3 mutual aid calls to neighboring towns
- 27 emergency medical calls

(continued from page 3)

state of Connecticut could not get its act together to provide some necessary numbers to the town's auditor.

• **Emergency Management Director.** Diane Beebe has stepped into the role to help us prepare for nature's worst.

• **Get out and vote.** You hear this everywhere and it's true: We all need to vote our opinions so our voice is heard, however small it may seem. A friend of mine says that if you don't vote, you don't get to complain. There's some truth in that! If you vote at lunchtime, head over to the UCC Parish House for soup, bread, and desserts at the 14th annual Election Day Luncheon. All proceeds will benefit the Cornwall Food and Fuel Program. —Lisa Lansing Simont

Events & Announcements

Also: check our Facebook page for event reminders and Cornwall updates

At the Library

Celebrate 21 years of Harry Potter with a pizza party and viewing of *Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone*, Friday, November 2, at 6 P.M. Costumes welcome! Reservations required. \$5/adults, \$2/children. Children under 10 must be accompanied by an adult.

On Saturday, November 10, at 5 P.M., HVRHS teacher and historian Deron Bayer will talk about WWI.

Anne Hummel will offer her six-session course on diabetes self-care and management Mondays, November 12 through December 17, from 10 A.M. to noon. Register with the library (672-6874) or Anne (672-2325).

Daylight Saving: Time to "fall back" as Daylight Saving Time ends at 2 A.M. Sunday, November 4.

Motherhouse Events

New England Country Dance: 7 P.M. Saturday, November 3, at the town hall. Jacqueline Laufman calling. Suggested donation: \$5-8/child, \$10-15/adult. For more info, call Jane Prentice at 672-6101.

Women's Drum Circle and New Moon Gathering: Wednesday, November 7, 6 to 8 P.M. RSVP at Debra@Motherhouse.us or 671-7945.

Give Thanks

And write a generous check to the *Chronicle* —one of the things that holds our great community together.

Cornwall Conservation Trust: Saturday, November 10, 9 A.M. to noon at the town hall, hear two panel discussions, "A Farmer's Life" moderated by Bill Dinneen, Jr. and "Farm Resources Needed to Make a Living" moderated by Sam Waterston. Panel members will include local farmers and farm resource professionals. Later that day, the CCT will hold its Annual Meeting and a "Celebration of Farming in Cornwall," 4 to 6 P.M. at the Olds' barn, 39 Jewell Street. Please RSVP to events@cornwallconservationtrust.org.

Cornwall Historical Society: To commemorate 100 years since the end of WWI, Richard Schlesinger hosts "Over There... And Here at Home" on Sunday, November 11, at 2 P.M. at town hall.

Senior Events

Blood Pressure Clinic: Monday, November 12, noon to 1 P.M. in the UCC Day Room. Contact VNA Northwest at 860-567-6000 or vnanw.org.

Monthly Luncheon: Tuesday, November 13, 12 P.M. at the UCC Parish House. Cost is \$8/person for a buffet lunch. RSVP at 672-4071 or prcornwall@gmail.com.

Coffee, Confections, Conversations at the UCC Parish House, 9 A.M. Tuesday, November 27.

Town of Cornwall Social Services

Applications are available to help offset the costs of winter heating. Deliveries start November 15.

The Cornwall Food Pantry is running low on key items like flour, sugar, vegetable oil, soup, laundry detergent, and juice. Donations can be left in the Day

Room at UCC from 9 A.M. to 1 P.M. weekdays.

Need help getting holiday gifts for your children? Contact Heather Dinneen at Cornwall Social Services by November 15. Call 672-2603 or cornwallsocialservices@gmail.com.

Cornwall Park and Recreation

Do you want to paint a snowman? On Friday, November 16, at the UCC Parish House, join the Paint Palette and Punch. There will be three painting times: 9:30 A.M., 3:30 P.M., or 7 P.M. Cost is \$20/person. This event is for ages Kindergarten and up.

Cornwall Tai Chi, Wednesdays, 5 to 6 P.M. Starting November 28, David Colbert is offering a beginners' class in the town hall. \$10/class. Contact David at 672-0064 or davidcolbert7@gmail.com.

Indoor Co-op Farmers' Market: The Farmers' Market is November 17 from 9 A.M. to 12:30 P.M. at town hall.

Art in Cornwall

The Cornwall Library presents "Visions of New England," Mike Redmond's landscapes and portraits. The opening reception is November 17 at 5 P.M.

At the UCC Parish House, the exhibit of Susan Hellmann's paintings and fiber arts, "Mindful of Cornwall," will continue until November 25.

The Toll House Gallery showcases paintings by Lennart Swede Ahrstrom, landscape photographs by Ian Ingersoll, and newly added work by Don Bracken.

At the Souterrain Gallery, "The Magic Corner Captured and Other Fantastic Imagery" featuring photography by Lazlo Gyorsok, Joan Hinchman, and the Housatonic Camera Club continues through December.

A Community Thanksgiving Dinner will be served at the UCC Parish House on November 18 at noon. This traditional meal is free and all are invited, though seating is limited. RSVP at 672-6840 or by email to office@uccincornwall.org.

St. Peter's Lutheran Church will host a pre-Thanksgiving ecumenical prayer service on Wednesday, November 21, at 7 P.M.

Annual Christmas Fair at UCC, Saturday, December 1, 9:30 A.M. to 3 P.M. Local holiday decorations, bake sale, luncheon, children's shopping, raffle, and take your holiday photos. Pre-order wreaths at 672-6742 or CornwallChristmasFair@gmail.com.

CORNWALL CHRONICLE

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THIS MONTH

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Kerry Donahue and Meg Tansey, Editors
Jacque Schiller and Caroline Kosciusko, Facebook Posts

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