



CORNWALL CHRONICLE

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Depression-Era Cornwall

As the leaves lose their color and fall, and autumn chill sets in, we approach the anniversary of one of the bleakest moments in American history, the great stock market crash of October 29, 1929. "Black Tuesday" ushered in the Great Depression, with its bankruptcies, job losses, and breadlines.

How did Cornwall fare? On the one hand, Marion Blake—the doyenne of Cornwall memorykeepers—pointed out that being in a farming community, many Cornwall residents had the advantage of growing, raising, and preserving most of their own food. "We never had very much money," she said. "But we were never hungry."

Pat Blakey's mother told her that chores used to come by the house and trade chops for a meal, marking the fences of those houses that were hospitable. And curiously enough, Andy Pikosky's rambling and gossipy sketches of life in Cornwall in the 1930s mention the Depression only twice, and then only in passing.

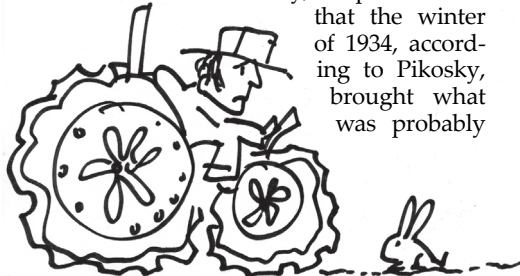
But of course there were hardships and tragedies. An especially sad story comes from Marion, whose uncle lost his job in a Torrington factory when it closed. Desperate to feed his family, he held up a gas station and was sent to prison. His family broke up

and Marion's cousin Virginia came to live with the Blakes. The family never reunited.

Everyone made do, as Cornwall folks have always done. Ann Schillinger remembers her neighbors cutting fresh shoots of milkweed and cooking it like a vegetable. Jill Bryant's family, used to spending only school vacations here with her grandparents, came to live in Cornwall for three years during the Depression when the New Jersey boarding school where her father taught shut its doors.

"You had to be creative without money," Jill said. One Christmas when she was 4, her parents woke her when it was still dark and took her down to the cellar where they had arranged wooden blocks like a fence around the Christmas tree. Cranky from being roused so early, she refused to play with her gifts, but they became among her favorite playthings during her childhood.

And there was levity, despite the fact that the winter of 1934, according to Pikosky, brought what was probably



the all-time low temperature of 42 degrees below, surely still a record today. Jill's father, Alfred Bacon, made a bet with the then Congregational minister Wilbur Simmons to see whose family could last without heat when the inside temperature went as low as 18 degrees. Though her dad couldn't remember who won, he did recall that both lasted from the first chill into November.

—Carol Schneider

Giants Grapple Over Guests

Homeowners who rent out rooms are engaged in unfair and potentially unsafe competition, motel managers claim. In addition, homeowners who rent rooms to travelers don't pay any local taxes for running a business—unlike motels.

Homeowners who offer rooms for rent quickly respond that there's no law forbidding what they're doing. They cite the classic doctrine: "My home is my castle!" Moreover, it's clear that their visitors bring valuable customers to local restaurants and other attractions.

Sound familiar?

Comparable charges are being exchanged here in Cornwall. Just see the letter in this issue and what's being claimed on

(continued on page 2)

OCTOBER 2015

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
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: Pilates, 8:30–9:30 am Library; 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 ♦ Saturdays: Farm Market, 9 am–12:30 pm Wish House ♦ Sundays: Yoga 9–10:30 am Library; Meditation , 1 pm call Debra 672-0229				1	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

*Check with Zoning Office—672-4957

the local "chat" sites on the web. Normally, the *Chronicle* focuses on what's happening here in Cornwall, not elsewhere. But since quite similar-sounding allegations are rousing homeowners and motel proprietors across the nation, the editors asked me to see if and how our local squabble was working out elsewhere. With the aid of a trusty bloodhound—*aka* the Internet—I identified what seems to be a reliable source: the Center for Public Integrity. You can find it at publicintegrity.org.

The center reports that many complaints about homeowners who rent out their spare rooms emanate from a group called Neighbors for Overnight Oversight (NOO). Among its activities, NOO stimulates "letters to the editor," mostly about the unfair competition with motels and hotels by room-renting homeowners. NOO, it should be noted, is part of the American Hotel & Lodging Association, a trade organization that includes major chains like Hilton and Marriott, as well as smaller motels.

Taking on the battle on behalf of homeowners' renting rights is Airbnb, an organization that has worked to substantially expand the number of homeowners who want to rent out their spare space. Airbnb provides a website to attract people seeking informal accommodations. In exchange, Airbnb takes a share of the rental money earned by the homeowners. Based on the sharp rise in the valuation placed on Airbnb by the stock market, this has turned out to be a very good business for both Airbnb and its participants. Unsurprisingly, Airbnb also carries on a vigorous advertising battle with NOO.

Much this same type of competition is taking place in other fields too. For example, a fierce fight is under way in many cities between the licensed taxi industry and Uber, an organization that collects requests from people seeking rides. Uber delivers these requests and shares the receipts with volunteer drivers who drive the passengers in their own cars.

These new battles shouldn't really be a surprise. There's a lot of history of the competitions between different means of meeting a social need. Horse-drawn carriages fought fiercely but futilely against the rise of the "horseless" carriage now known as the automobile. Early America saw a deadly battle between the rifle and the bow and arrow. And so it goes...

How will the competition between the motel industry and Airbnb's legion of roomrenters work out? It's probably too early to say, but to this observer it looks like they will share an expanding market of would-be lodgers. These travelers will be the real winners. They get to choose where they want to stay and what they want to

pay. Stay tuned for the fight.

—David A. Grossman

Update on Airbnb Meetings

In June, Cornwall's zoning enforcement officer investigated a complaint from the owners of the Cornwall Inn about Airbnb properties in Cornwall. She found that the properties in question were in compliance with zoning regulations. Cornwall Inn appealed this decision at a hearing on August 24. The matter has been continued to a meeting on September 28, too late to cover in this issue.

—Ella Clark

Fun At the Fair

This year the Cornwall Agricultural Fair honored Hedgerows Farm, from which apple cider was brought for all. The farmers' market set up at 9, offering meat, produce, baked goods, herbs, crafts, jams and jellies, and more.

The animal tent was filled with quacking ducks, ponies, donkeys, llamas, and goats—the newest addition. Of course cows were present for the annual fire department cow chip raffle. After an agonizing 33 minutes, the cow chip dropped and Jim Young won with number 850.

The craft fair was in full swing with St. Bridget's church selling pottery, locally crafted birdhouses, and wood boxes. St. Peter's did its annual bake sale along with a delicious addition: grilled corn. Members had many compliments on "the best corn ever," "so sweet and tasty." Fifty nifty baskets for collecting produce, or trugs, were made on the spot, in Joe Brien's Lost Art Workshop. The Little Guild was represented with pups everywhere, along with an awesome collection of T-shirts.

The Cornwall Child Center was present, fundraising for its students. Local residents sold their crafts and the Heddens' ice cream was a success with a variety of flavors.

The Cornwall Agricultural Commission set up the traditional events, including the egg toss, whipped cream bubble gum, and potato sack race. The newest addition, the frying pan toss, was a favorite. The longest throw in the adult division at 66 feet 6 inches was tossed expertly by Bill Lyon. In the youth division Micah Danforth threw at 55 feet 7 inches, and Ian Danforth-Gold threw 61 feet. —Beth Dinneen

Cornwall Briefs

•**West Cornwall Sidewalk:** According to our first selectman, work on the 240-foot stretch from the Moose to the Cornwall Bridge Pottery Store will get started and be

Goodbye to a friend

Haddie N. Madeux

Land Transfers

Joseph C. Fuller to US Bank, NA, Trustee, premises at 15 Burlwood Lane.

Mary Ann Wilbur, Co-Administrator, et al. to OneWest Bank, NA, land with buildings and improvements thereon at 111 College Street, for \$117,000. (This property was later transferred to Federal National Mortgage Association AKA Fannie Mae)

ARC, LLC to James M. and Margery W. Garnett, 5.051 acres and real estate at 233 Warren Hill Road, for \$2,134,000.

233 Warren Hill Road, LLC to James M. and Margery W. Garnett, 86.989 acres on Warren Hill Road, for \$1,066,000.

Newton and Louise Dunn to Susan M. Beauregard and Kerry F. Nowaskey, land with all buildings and improvements thereon at 19 Todd Hill Road, for \$615,288.15

Lydia L. Lewis to James F. Longwell, half interest in land with buildings thereon at 69 Scoville Road, for \$60,000. (This property was later transferred to James F. and Pamela F. Longwell).

Purple Rooster Holdings, LLC to Charles R. Ebersol, Jr., Trustee, land with improvements thereon at 159 Kent Road, for \$160,000.

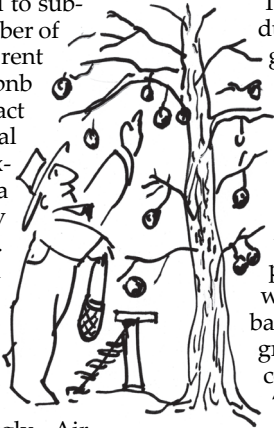
Fannie Mae AKA Federal National Mortgage Association to Diane McCarthy, 2.22 acres with improvements thereon at 9 Frederick Drive, for \$50,000.

Wakabayashi Fund, LLC to Joseph Capone, 2.374 acres at 70 Kent Road, for \$32,000.

finished this month. The contractor is our own Josh Tyson of Frost Construction. The walkway will be done in concrete with a rough finish for traction during the ice season. And (get this), it will have some sort of special design when it passes in front of the former Pink House. Oh we are one artsy town, we are!

•**Explore Cornwall:** That's the title of a two-day event coming to town the weekend of October 10/11, hosted by the Cornwall Economic Development Commission.

Here's what members are telling us: Saturday, October 10, from noon to 3 p.m. at CCS, local employers, real estate agents, and school staff will be on hand to talk about possible jobs, homes for sale, and our great little school; then on Sunday, October 11, Cornwall Bridge will be the venue from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. for a BBQ, tent sales, farmers' market, arts & crafts, and something called a "Turtle Derby" with several thousand live turtles on



display in a tank sponsored by the Little Guild of St. Francis. The effort is to attract families, particularly those with school-age children, to move to Cornwall.

•Annual Town Meeting: It's at 7:30 P.M. on Friday, October 30, in the Gathering Room at CCS to receive reports of officers, boards, and commissions having reports to make (makes sense) and to adopt the five-year plan for the town of Cornwall as recommended by the boards of finance and selectmen. No live turtles. No BBQ. No tent sales. Just reports!
—John Miller

Two Horse Power

About four years ago Ralph and Charlie Gold realized the need for a forest management plan at Cream Hill Farm, which has traditionally focused on agriculture. The farming activities diversified after the milk shed fire and demise of the dairy operation; woodland management would also require creative and forward thinking. Initial plans include management of invasives, accessibility, and improving health of the timber stands. Clearing of one old access road by Josh Tyson will help to resurrect a maple sugar grove. Ginia Gold carries the charge forward saying, "We had to figure out a variety of economic options to keep the farm going, including forestry, and wanted to do this with a view toward long-term health of the forest lands. Part of that is removing unwanted choking plants to encourage stronger hardwoods. Essentially weeding the forest without clear cutting."

Enter Sherman Palmer and his partners, two impressive Belgian draft horses, aptly named Elm and Ash. The 14-year-old horses, though not related, look very much alike with thick golden coats, blond manes and tails, and weighing 2,000 pounds each. Sherman acquired them from an Amish farm where they were field workers. In the beginning it was hard to train them for forest work as they would break into a skittish trot upon entering the woods. "It was a challenge," says Sherman. "You had to hold them back without hurting their mouths. But every day was a better day with this team. You just have to be careful."

Key to the operation is Sherman's logging cart. It has a bright red metal seat and attaches to the horses with long poles and harnesses, and has a wheel mechanism behind that turns a chain and lifts the logs up to drag them. The lift enables larger logs to be hauled—one at a time with the two horsepower—up to 18 inches in diameter and 38 feet long, and minimizes furrowing on the trails. As Sherman works in the woods, clearing trails and felling trees, the horses wait in a small



TO THE EDITOR:

In the September issue, Ed Ferman related the plight that a local innkeeper and motel operator face in light of the growth of Airbnb.

Over the years, my wife and I have over-nighted in resorts, hotels, motels, inns, bed-and-breakfasts, Airbnb properties, and a hostel. Each one offers different accommodations at varying price points...and the experiences vary across the spectrum.

I own over 100 rental units in New Jersey. In addition to the traditional, legitimate competitors in my market, I go head-to-head with illegal basement and attic apartments, as well as homes that are converted into "rent-a-rooms." Those properties are not subject to the inspections and fees that I incur.

Airbnb and like-kind services are here to stay and do help the local economy by attracting visitors who were otherwise unlikely to stay over.

Communities need a process whereby property owners who offer rooms register their homes, carry adequate insurance, and undergo an annual inspection to ensure that minimum health and safety standards are met.

—Len Rosenberg

THE END OF THE GUEST ERA:

One of the wonderful things about Cornwall is our long history, and for the past five years, the Cornwall Historical Society has been lucky to have Raechel Guest as the chief guardian and celebrant of that history. Not surprisingly, given her talent and the society's vibrant

clearing, tethered and cool under a huge tarp that he configured. The team works in the morning to move logs because heat is hard on the horses, and then Sherman uses the afternoon to cut logs to specifications for his firewood business. He gets about two cord a day, and truly enjoys working with the horses.

Sherman says, "The real difference is the way it impacts the woods. The paths are beautiful, about five feet wide, and make for nice walking. Most mornings I see turkey and deer and they don't get spooked or run away." Watching him ride out on the cart behind Elm and Ash across a dirt farm road created by their movements—and into the east woods off Cream Hill—is also quite beautiful.

—Emilie Pryor

Don't Miss Your Chance To Vote

Elections will be held on Tuesday, November 3, at the town hall, 24 Pine Street from 6 A.M. to 8 P.M. to cast votes for First Selectman, Selectman, Town Clerk, Treas-

Letters to the Chronicle

exhibits, her stature has grown within Connecticut. She was offered a full-time position running the Silas Bronson Library, a mile from her home, and shamelessly we at the society take this as a feather in our cap. We understandingly accepted her resignation as the society's curator/executive director, and her last day in Cornwall will be October 9. We have formed a search committee for her successor and look forward to a new chapter in the society's history. Many thanks, Raechel, and very best luck!

—Karen Doebelin, board president, Cornwall Historical Society

LIVING LEGACY

For the past few years, daffodil bulbs have been donated and planted along town roadsides as a living memorial. The result of the fall's effort is a blaze of yellow each May. Please join us on Saturday, October 10, starting at 10 A.M. for as long as you wish, at the corner of Cogswell and Rattlesnake roads to continue the tradition. Bring gloves, a digging implement, and memories of those you wish to honor with this living legacy.

—Julia Scott



SEEKING A RELATIVE

Seeking any information about Lyn Niebergall, daughter of Henry and Elsie Niebergall of Kent Road, Cornwall Bridge. Seeking family history info and the location of family photographs! I'm 17, live in Australia, and am trying to build my family tree. Thanks for any help. Contact Finn: fapmm18@gmail.com.

—Finnian Mullally-Muschinsky

urer, Tax Collector, Board of Finance, Board of Education, Board of Assessment Appeals, Planning & Zoning Commission, Zoning Board of Appeals, and Park & Recreation Commission. Absentee ballots will be available after October 2 in the town clerk's office, Monday through Thursday from 9 A.M. to noon and 1 to 4 P.M. Electors may use an absentee ballot only if they will be unable to appear at the polling place on the day of the election for one of the following reasons: active service in the armed forces, absence from town during all the hours of voting, illness, physical disability, or religious tenets.

Events & Announcements

Community Contra Dance Saturday, October 3, 7 P.M. at town hall. Music by *Still, The Homegrown Band*, caller/instructor David Kaynor. Suggested donation: \$3-5/child, \$8-10/adult. Info: Jane Prentice, 672-6101.

Art in Cornwall:

At the Covered Bridge Gallery, (continued on page 4)

(continued from page 3)

Cornwall Bridge Pottery Shop in West Cornwall: "For Love of the Land," new works by Sybil Perry. Opening October 3; artist's reception, 3 P.M., October 10, artist's talk, October 24, 3 P.M.

At the Parish House, an exhibit of Lori Welles's photography, "The Intrinsic Beauty of Nature," Sunday, October 11, 11:30 A.M. Runs through November 27.

"Tangled up in Blue" by Kim Sobel continues at the Cornwall Library through October.

"Paint the Town" at the Souterrain Gallery has been extended through October.

Motherhouse Events

Saturday, October 10, 10:30 A.M. to 1:30 P.M. at Local Farm. Making a Pie from Scratch: milk a cow, churn butter, gather eggs, pick a squash, grind wheat into flour, and learn to make a fabulous "pumpkin" pie! Share a potluck lunch. \$35/family. Must preregister with Debra@Motherhouse.us or 672-0229.

Columbus Day wreath making workshop, Monday, October 12, 1:30 to 3:30 P.M. Braid used baling twine into a beautiful wreath for your door or wall. This is a free workshop, but please call 672-0229.

At the Cornwall Library:

Columbus Day Book Sale begins on Saturday October 10, at 9 A.M. for early birds (\$10 fee), continues from 10 A.M. until 3 P.M. on Saturday, and reopens Monday, October 12, with half prices from 10 A.M. until noon and \$5 bagful from noon until 2 P.M.

Flu shot clinic offered by the Salisbury VNA at the library on October 21 at 3 P.M.

Writer's workshop taught by Deb Devins at the library beginning October 28 at 6:30 P.M. The workshops will run for four or six weeks, to be determined. \$50 fee.

Free diabetes class taught by Anne Hummel at the library beginning October 27 at 10 A.M. The class will run for six weeks.

Vote Chronicle!

When you cast your ballot next month for town officials, why not offer a vote of confidence in your local paper as well? (We're tax deductible too.)

Come take a look at Cornwall CT, October 10 from noon to 3 P.M. and October 11 from noon to 4 P.M.; see Cornwall Briefs.

Book Signing Saturday, October 10, 3 to 5 P.M. at the Wish House. Jill Cutler reads from and signs her new book, *A History of My Clothing*.

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

Senior Luncheon Tuesday, October 13, 11:30 A.M. to 1 P.M. at the Wandering Moose. No reservations necessary. Questions? Bob Potter at 672-6191.

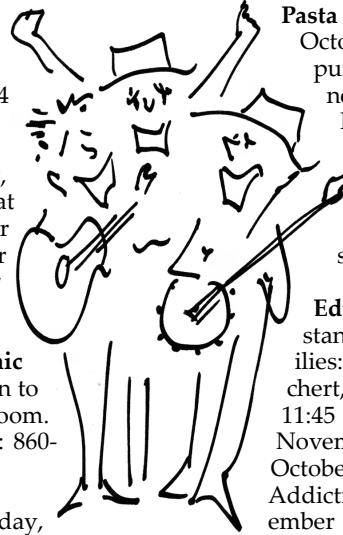
Namoli Brennet Concert Thursday, October 15, 7:30 P.M., UCC. Brennet, transgender folksinger/songwriter, performs her own brand of moody and inspiring folk. Dubbed "among the best folk-rock artists in the country" by the *Tucson Weekly*. All are welcome. \$20 donation at door.

CCS Walkathon Friday, October 16, 1:15 P.M. at the intersection of Cream Hill and Cogswell roads. An annual fundraising event for Cornwall Consolidated School; parents, community members, and pets are welcome too. Half the proceeds will go to the Cornwall Housing Corporation and half to each class's eighth-grade trip. More information: 672-6617.

Little Guild of St. Francis Saturday, October 17, 10:30 A.M. Run & Wag event; see insert.

Cornwall Conservation Trust Family Picnic Saturday, October 17, noon to 4 P.M.; see insert.

Cow Tales: Sharing Memories Cornwall Historical Society talk on Sunday, October 18, 2 P.M. Richard Schlesinger of CBS will moderate an afternoon of shared memories of Cornwall's dairy farms. Your stories of Cornwall's dairy farming past are welcome, or come just to listen at town hall, 26 Pine Street. Refreshments, free.



Pasta Bonanza Dinner, Saturday, October 24, 5 to 7 P.M. to help purchase a fresh water well for a needy community, UCC Parish House at 8 Bolton Hill Road. One hundred percent of the donated proceeds goes towards our goal of raising \$1,000. For information or reservations: 672-6840.

Education on Addiction: Substance Abuse, Addiction, and Families: Conversations with Bruce Dechert, at the UCC Parish House, 11:45 A.M. on Sundays October 25, November 1, and November 15. October 25, Medical Aspects of Addiction: Ending the Stigma; November 1, Recovery: Individuals and Families; and November 15, Painkillers and Heroin: A Growing Epidemic. Bruce Dechert is the family wellness senior clinician at Mountainside Treatment Center in Canaan. All are welcome to attend single sessions or the whole series. Questions? 672-6840.

Park & Rec Halloween Celebration: Starting October 5, please contribute candy either at CCS or the Park & Rec office. There will be a Halloween event Saturday, October 31; check the online calendar for time and place.



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