

CORNWALL CHRONICLE

VOLUME 26 : NUMBER 9 OCTOBER 2016

Hughes Library Revisited

If you've toured West Cornwall lately, you've seen some construction at the Hughes Library on Lower River Road, just below the covered bridge. There's a new outside door for the north wing of the building, a ramp leading up to it, and a handsome bluestone path connecting old and new entrances.

This activity is the outward sign of some changes of purpose and program at the venerable Hughes. First Selectman Gordon Ridgway noted that this building, formerly the West Cornwall schoolhouse, is the oldest Cornwall civic building in continuous use—since the mid-19th century. Frederick G. Hughes, the major donor when the building was purchased to house the library in 1940, also contributed his family's name.

Since then, the library has had dedicated librarians, faithful boards, and a collection that has served its patrons' interests. Barbara Farnsworth affectionately described it as "really a village enterprise—intensely local." But the number of patrons has slowly declined. It's not clear whether the growth of the Cornwall Library, four miles north in Cornwall Village, has cramped the style of the Hughes, which in recent years has been open only for a few hours on Saturdays.

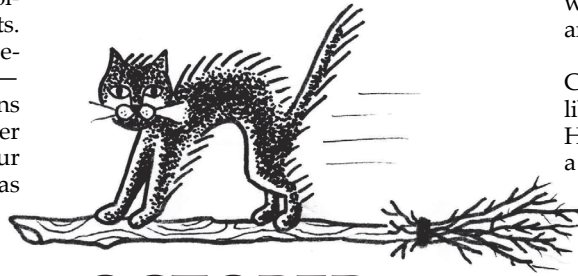
The lack of running water has been a long-standing Hughes concern. Just south of the building is the place for a septic field, but those three acres are owned by Eversource (formerly CL&P). Now the town has a \$200,000 grant from the state to buy or lease that land and address this old familiar problem. At the same time, HVA has received a commitment for funds from the General Electric PCB settlement for a project in the woods just beyond the field. It's known as Housatonic River Access Improvement at the Bend, and it includes better boat access; attention to erosion; an improved parking lot; and portable toilets. HVA has agreed to maintain the completed project for two years, after which the town will be asked to be responsible for maintenance.

At the Hughes Library, a new board envisions a new program. As Libby Mitchell, the board president, explains it, the Hughes

hopes to become a center for environmental study and exploration—a natural partner for HVA activities or for CCS and Housy science projects. The newly renovated north wing, which formerly housed stacks, has now been opened up to become a large, light-filled room where all sorts of community gatherings could take place: movie nights, clubs, parent groups. There's even been talk of moving the farmers' market there during the winter months. The Hughes location makes it a likely visitor center for the Cornwalls.

Converting the Hughes Library to new uses requires some serious rearrangement. Certain sections of the collection remain: nature and the environment are solidly represented, as are books about Cornwall and the area. In other categories, there has been major de-accessioning. The Hughes is sharing its lending collection—notably fiction and mysteries—with the Cornwall Library, whose director, Margaret Haske, says, "We are thrilled."

There's some wistfulness on the part of Cornwallites with long memories of bygone library days. For others, the Hughes Library, HVA, and the town are part of the vision of a collaborative future. In this scenario, these institutions share resources: Eversource would lease the three acres to HVA and



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OCTOBER 2016

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 ♦ Tuesdays: Zumba, 5:30–6:30 pm Library ♦ Wednesdays: Tai Chi, 5–7 pm Town Hall call 672-0064 Introduction to Fiction , 6:30–8:30 pm Library Stitch 'n Spin , 7:15–8:30 pm UCC ♦ 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 Zumba , 5:30–6:30 pm Library Mah Jongg , 7–9 pm Library call 672-6874 Adult Volleyball , 7:30 pm CCS gym ♦ Fridays: Yoga 8:30–10 am Library ♦ Sundays: Yoga 9–10:30 am Library Meditation , 1 pm call Debra 672-0229						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
♦ Feral Cat Shelter Building Noon–3 pm WC Firehouse	♦ Region 1 Board of Ed 6:30 pm HVRHS Rm. 133 ♦ Agricultural Advisory Committee 7:30 pm Town Office	♦ Voter Registration 9–11 am Town Hall ♦ Inland Wetlands 7 pm Town Hall ♦ Board of Selectmen 7:30 pm Town Hall		♦ Woman's Society Hiking the AT 10 am UCC Parish House		♦ Cornwall Days Library Book Sale 9 am–2 pm ♦ Last Day of the Farm Market 9 am–12:30 pm Wish House ♦ West Cornwall Riversiders Trail Walk 10 am ♦ Susan Hellman Artist's Reception 4:30–6:30 pm Library
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
♦ Library Book Sale 11 am–2 pm ♦ Connie Steuerwalt Artist's Reception 11:30 am UCC ♦ Cornwall Days Noon–5 pm Country Market ♦ Cornwall Conversations 5 pm	COLUMBUS DAY ♦ Library Book Sale 10 am–2 pm ♦ Free Blood Pressure Clinic Noon–1 pm UCC Day Room	♦ Eco. Dev. Comm. 9 am Town Hall ♦ Senior Luncheon 11:30 am–1 pm Wandering Moose ♦ P & Z 7 pm Library ♦ Park and Rec 7:30 pm Town Hall ♦ Housatonic R. Comm. 7:30 pm CCS	♦ Senior Outing Maritime Museum/Beach 8:30 am ♦ Writing Class 3–5 pm Deb Devins		♦ CCS Walk-a-Thon 1:15 pm	♦ Deadline: November Chronicle Copy ♦ Hazardous Waste Day 9 am–2 pm Torrington ♦ 5K Run/Walk - Little Guild 10:30 am Town Green ♦ MEATING Rabbits & Chickens 10:30 am–1:30 pm Local Farm
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
♦ Muslims in America Speaker 11:30 am UCC Parish House ♦ Telling Stories Richard Schlessinger 2 pm Town Hall	♦ Diabetes Class with Anne Hummel 10:30 am–12:30 pm Library	♦ Board of Selectmen 7:30 pm Town Hall	♦ Writing Class 3–5 pm Deb Devins ♦ Board of Education 4:15 pm CCS Library ♦ Board of Finance 7:30 pm Town Hall	♦ Knitting Group/Hats/ Cancer Patients 10 am Library ♦ Cornwall Conservation Comm. 7 pm Library		♦ Jamie Sheffield Author Talk 5 pm Library ♦ Pasta Bonanza 5–7 pm UCC Parish House
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
♦ Bluebird Building Workshop 1–4 pm UCC Parish House	♦ Diabetes Class 10:30 am–12:30 pm Library ♦ ZBA 7 pm Library		♦ Writing Class 3–5 pm Deb Devins	♦ Cornwall Business Assoc. Mtg. 9:30–10:30 am Souterrain Gallery ♦ Annual Town Meeting 7:30 pm CCS		♦ Going Green Fair 11 am–3 pm CCS
30	31					
	HALLOWEEN ♦ Diabetes Class 10:30 am–12:30 pm Library ♦ Annual Halloween Gathering 5–8 pm Town Hall					

(continued from page 1)

the town, which (it is hoped) would allow the Hughes to install a septic system. The West Cornwall business district would benefit from the presence of HVA river access, toilets, and parking, in addition to whatever activities would draw people to the Hughes building.

The time seems to be right; Gordon Ridgway says, "It looks like things are about to pop." They began to do so at a P&Z hearing on September 13. The next step is a town meeting on October 27, where voters will be asked for permission to execute a lease of the three acres from Eversource.

—Franny Taliaferro

Fire on the Mountain

Saturday, September 17, a disembodied voice on the phone told Cornwallians, "There's a brush fire in the state forest off Flat Rocks Road in South Cornwall. The DEEP is monitoring [it]." Many had already seen smoke pouring down from the hills over the valley. Our summer is dry; Connecticut overall has had eight-and-a-half fewer inches of rain this year than usual. The fire was and is no danger to houses or people, but is a reminder that climate issues are real here as elsewhere.

—Jill Cutler

Big Cat Saves Big Bucks

The yellow 950M Caterpillar pay loader at the town garage had tires five feet tall with two-foot treads, and a bucket ten feet across that held 4.12 yards. It was at least three times the size of the town's machines. "It has processed hundreds and hundreds of yards of gravel and road sand, and piles of topsoil," town crew member Buddy Hurlburt told me. "It kept us busy as ants."

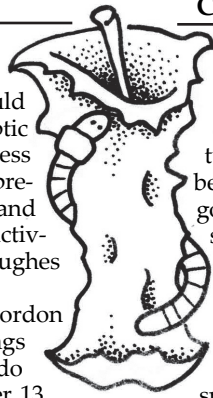
Cornwall rented the giant (list price \$315,000) at a cost of \$2,200 per week, according to foreman Jim Vanicky. "We covered the cost in less than a day," he added, "and made dollar value in sand of roughly \$50,000, processed gravel another \$10,000–\$15,000. We are the only town in

Litchfield County that has rented this machine, and that's because we have our own gravel bank."

—Ella Clark

Donkeys, Doe Eyes, and Cow Chips

The world's oldest profession is alive and well in Cornwall. And I'm not just talking about melons and tarts. The annual Cornwall Agricultural Fair, held on the green in Cornwall Village, featured farm animals everywhere. Wendy Kennedy, who takes care of show-quality cows, was there with Brook, a chocolate-coated Brown



Swiss, and Cinderella, a doe-eyed Jersey.

Beth Dinneen showed off her ducks and Dana Saccardi had her two donkeys on view. Debbie Labbe's two lovely llamas watched the goings on with less than real enthusiasm. Tim Lacy made the rounds with Sherlock, his steer who is being trained as a beast of burden.

Garden products, herbs, amazing baked goods, health and beauty items, and jewelry exhibitions were spread out over the green.

Taking a moment to reflect on past fairs, Gordon Ridgway said, "I remember one year when the hay toss went a little off, and the bale of hay landed on the jewelry table."

Then there was the year the State Department of Something decided to investigate the legitimacy of the cow chip contest. "They weren't quite sure what to do if the chip landed in two different squares," said Gordon. "I think they're still in committee about that and will get back to us."

Vendors showed their work, with everything from spun-felt dryer balls to lovely hand-painted cards on view. The men running the wood saws and making planks out of huge logs rounded out the field.

Alicia North of North Star Botanicals explained a procedure called tapping. "It was developed by a chiropractor, and sort of involves acupressure and massage." It's often used with veterans, and has recently been used in Newtown for teachers, parents, and children after the horrors of the mass killings there.

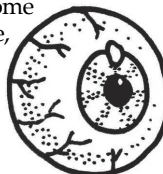
Finally we had the jams and jellies made by the people of the Chapel of All Saints, famous for their consistently wonderful flavors (how about pear and chocolate?), their chutneys, and sauces. "All the profits from the sale of our jams go to charity," commented Mary Gates, priest and jam maker of the chapel.

For 25 years the fair has intrigued and delighted all of us in Cornwall, and this year was no exception. Even without the much-needed rain, the day was a smashing success.

—Jane Bean

The Sticky Fingers Gang

"We might hand you a spoon," warned Joanne Wojtusiak when I asked her if I could spend some time with a crew from the Chapel of All Saints making jams and preserves to sell at the Ag Fair last month. So one morning in early August, I joined a group of women who came and went in Joanne's sunny kitchen: Mary Lee and Nancy Kalmes peeling watermelon rind for a pickle, Roxana Laughlin picking up some black currants to cook at home, and Mary Gates, Ann Gold, and Franny Taliaferro working with Joanne to finish a blueberry jam with gin and cinnamon.



Despite the lack of local peaches, nectarines, and apricots due to the February frost, the fair had a record number of pre-orders from people who couldn't attend, and still brought in around \$4,000, all of which will be donated to the Cornwall Food Bank and the Torrington Soup Kitchen.

My first task that August morn was to mash a huge pot of black currants. As a novice jammer, I came away with a sore shoulder and a carnal knowledge of why colonial women didn't have to go to the gym. Joanne assured me that "jam is forgiving" and I didn't have to press that hard. In fact the entire morning was a very pleasant throw-back to the days when women's social interactions were centered around household activities, with chitchat and laughter, made easier with modern appliances and gadgets like a magnetic tool for fishing hot lids out of the sterilizing water. (It should be noted that there are men who participate in the jam-making as well.)

What the volunteers make each year is driven by what crops have flourished, and this year raspberries were more plentiful than usual. Lest a feeling of peachlessness wash over the fair, "foreign" (i.e. Pennsylvania) peaches were donated and used to make several peach jams including a peach and ginger jam and a peach and Pignot Noir jam. Jams that include a touch of liquor are always popular; one of the more unusual was a rhubarb jam with Mezcal (a smoky tequila), lime, and black pepper.

Local farmers and gardeners have been generous in their contributions for this fundraiser. In most years, Starberry Farm in Washington donates the very fruits that were assailed by the frost. Cornwall gardens have provided black currants, rhubarb, Concord grapes, raspberries, tomatoes, apples, even dandelions; and blueberries are purchased from the UCC in Goshen. Whatever was left over from the Ag Fair will still be available at the Farmers' Market and the UCC Christmas Fair.

—Carol Schneider

Good-bye to a Friend

George Labalme, Jr.

Congratulations

Alicia Bower and Charles Russ II

Land Transfers

Litchfield Hills Master Craftsmen, LLC to Oscar Kelley Anderson and Gillian Blake, land with improvements thereon at 101 Dibble Hill Road, for \$875,000.

Diane and Clive Lodge to Henry P. Quezada-Rivas, property at 355 Kent Road, for \$300,000.

Beal and Raine, LLC to Scott and Lynn Wilcox, land with all buildings and improvements thereon at 142 Great Hill Road, for \$555,000.

Bravo CCT

The Cornwall Conservation Trust (CCT) has achieved national recognition with accreditation from the Land Trust Accreditation Commission whose director, in her congratulations, cited the land trust's "fiscal accountability, strong organizational leadership, and lasting stewardship of conservation land."

Founded almost 30 years ago, CCT owns over 1,000 acres and protects another 600 privately. Its most recent purchases include the 85-acre Cooley Preserve and the 317-acre Trinity Forest Preserve. "[This] is an honor for our community," said CCT president Barton Jones. —Ella Clark

Cornwall Briefs

- **Annual Town Meeting:** Voting on the 5-year plan which deals with capital expenses involving such things as bridge repair, highway equipment, fire trucks, school repair, and energy conservation, etc. The meeting will be held Thursday, October 27, in the gathering room at CCS beginning at 7:30 p.m. and will seek permission from voters to negotiate a lease with Eversource for three acres of land on the river that would be used for a parking lot, boat ramp, and information kiosk, all in conjunction with the Housatonic Valley Association.

- **Hazardous Waste Day** takes place Saturday, October 15, from 9 a.m. until 2 p.m. Bring waste to the Torrington Water Pollution Control plant on Bogue Road.

- **Reminder:** The bridge on Valley Road that connects with Dark Entry Forest will be closed for repair for one week sometime between mid- and late October.

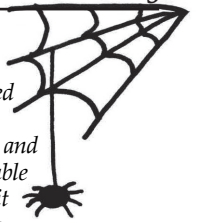
- **Rumor is Fact:** We heard that the Cornwall Library was going solar. A check found it already has 63 panels in place facing south and east on the roof, paid for by an anonymous donor. The system awaits being hooked up by Eversource. Librarian Margaret Haske said it could save the library as much as \$200,000 over the life of the panels.

- **Algrant Show Update:** This year's art show had a record 57 exhibitors, record sales totaling \$39,620, and a record opening-night attendance of 319. The resulting contribution to the Cornwall Food and Fuel Bank came to \$5,300. (Last month we mistakenly reported the number of exhibitors in 2015 was 33. In fact there were 37. We humbly apologize for the error.)

- **Going Green Fair** takes place Saturday, October 29 at CCS (see insert) and is a wonderful opportunity to learn about and experience how Cornwall is using its resources to sustain its future with lots of fun and interesting things to see and do for all the family.



Letters to the Chronicle



GOING POSTAL

I stopped in at 06753 headquarters toward the end of August to mail a letter and was bowled over by furious bird sounds coming from the inner office. On the desk was a box of baby chicks cheeping their heads off.

"Wow", I said to Scott Salmon, the postmaster. "That's seriously LOUD!"

"You should have heard them before I started playing music to them to calm them down," he said.

I'm always amazed that chicks travel through the mails to their new homes. But then back in the day you could buy a pony from Sears & Roebuck and pick it up at the railroad station nearest you. No more ponies, but the chicks are still in the mail. —Lisa L. Simont

We photographed it, noted that it was larger than the watermelon on the counter, and then proceeded to check and double check the important signs: Was it white through and through? Yes. Was it without gills? Yes. Was the texture even? Yes. Did we have garlic and oil handy? Yes.

As we peeled it, crumbs stuck to all the kitchen surfaces like bits of styrofoam. We sauteed it with garlic and then baked it with tomato sauce and a bit of cheese. It acted like mushrooms always do—absorbing flavors and then giving off the special mushroomy umami flavor that makes their fans drool. We were rewarded with a light mushroom flavor, texture like tofu. My father politely and silently nibbled a bit and returned to the fried chicken.

The next night we brought the other hemisphere to a potluck where it was grilled to similar result. Skeptics and adventuresome eaters were evenly balanced, and the fungus was declared "Yumgus" by one taster.

Alas, it grows unpredictably, so look in your lawn before mowing as well as along roads or in forests. If you find one, try pickling it like they do in northern Germany, and keep a list of adventuresome eaters handy. You will need their help to consume it all. —Jennifer Dorsen

THE PUFFBALL STORY

Truth be told I am not much of a forager. But when I saw the bright white orb across from Lynn Scoville's house, I was mesmerized. "That is a giant puffball," I said to my daughter, even though I had never seen one. After a quick consultation with Google, I went back to pluck it from the earth where it grew next to a maple tree. While it looked like a model of the cratered moon, it weighed only feathers in my hands, and I had to check my urge to start playing toss with it.

- **New Ambulance:** It was due for delivery as we write and could still make it by the time you read this. However, there was a delay over several unauthorized expenditures that put the overall cost of the vehicle a bit over budget. A CVFD meeting took place late in September to resolve the issue. —John Miller

referendum official at a polling place other than your own during all hours of voting; 6. Physical disability. Town clerk hours are Monday through Thursday from 9 a.m. to noon and 1 to 4 p.m. Please don't wait until the last minute to apply for your absentee ballot, especially if there is mailing involved. They must be returned by 8 p.m. Election Day, November 8.

Events & Announcements

Cornwall Old-Time Dance: Saturday, October 1, 7 p.m. at the town hall. Music by Still, the Homegrown Band and special guest caller David Kaynor. All ages welcome. Donation requested to pay the caller. For information: Jane Prentice, 672-6101.

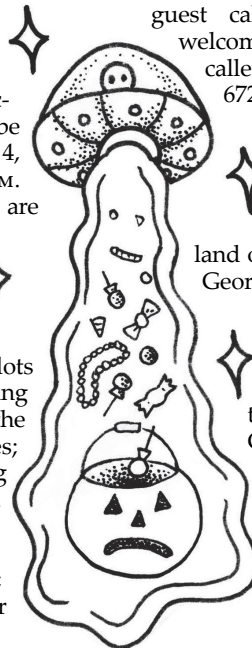
✧ **Cornwall Woman's Society:** Thursday, October 6, 10 a.m. in the UCC Parish House. Charlie Milligan and Henry Westmoreland on "Hiking the AT from Maine to Georgia."

✧ **Cornwall Days:** October 8, Tent Sale at Northeast Building Supply in Cornwall Bridge, 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. Farmers' Market in West Cornwall, 9 a.m. to 12 p.m. Pottery by Todd Piker, Cornwall Bridge Pottery, 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. October 9, music and vendors at the Cornwall Country Market in Cornwall Bridge, noon to 5 p.m.

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Voter Registration and Absentee Ballots

The deadline for voter registration is November 1 in order to vote in the November federal election. Registration sessions will be held at the town hall on October 4, 9 to 11 a.m. and November 1, 9 a.m. to 8 p.m. Registration applications are available at the town hall and library. Absentee ballot applications are available now at the town clerk's office. Absentee ballots will be available starting October 7. Absentee ballots can only be issued for the following reasons: 1. Active service in the Armed Forces of the United States; 2. Absence from the town during all hours of voting; 3. Illness; 4. Religious tenets forbidding secular activity on the day of the election, primary or referendum; 5. Duties as a primary, election, or



Cornwall Child Center: Blooms for Babes fundraiser. Purchase a variety of planting bulbs online until October 15 at their website cornwallchildcenter.org/blooms or visit our table at the National Iron Bank in Cornwall Bridge.

At the Cornwall Library

Book Sale: Columbus Day weekend, October 8 to 10 (see insert).

Writing the Stories of Your Life with Deb Devins. Begins Wednesday, October 12, for four consecutive Wednesdays, 3 to 5 P.M. Minimum class size six, maximum, eight. \$40.

Diabetes Class with Anne Hummel: Begins Monday, October 17, from 10:30 A.M. to 12:30 P.M. for six weeks. No charge. Call library at 672-6874 for details.

Author talk: Jamie Sheffield, who writes the Tyler Cunningham Adirondack Mysteries, will speak at the library on October 22 at 5 P.M.

Art in Cornwall

At the Souterrain Gallery Ken Krug's exhibit will be on display through the end of October.

The Toll House Gallery at Ian Ingersoll's continues to showcase works by Curtis Hansen and a newly added collection by Don Bracken.

At the Cornwall Library, a reception for artist Susan Hellmann will be held on Saturday, October 8, from 4:30 to 6:30 P.M. Her show "Idyllic Cornwall" will run from October 1 through November 13.

The UCC Parish House will host an art opening on Sunday, October 9, at 11 A.M. for Connie Steuerwalt's "Images on Paper: Watercolor-Ink-Pencil."

West Cornwall Riverside Trail Walk: Saturday, October 8 at 10 A.M. A fall foliage walk on the Riverside Trail. Donuts and cider served at the turnaround, 1.25 miles south of the start. Meet at the parking lot at the south end of the Trinity Retreat Center. Sponsored by Housatonic Heritage and the HouBike Committee.

Out of the Pumpkin Patch

Got a few bills stashed away for safekeeping? Don't hide your funny money in a mattress or hollowed-out pumpkin while the *Chronicle* can make good use of it. (Personal checks also most welcome.)

Free Blood Pressure Clinic: Monday, October 10, noon to 1 P.M. at the UCC Day Room. VNA Northwest at 860-567-6000 or vnanw.org.



Senior Luncheon: Tuesday, October 11, 11:30 A.M. to 1 P.M. at the Wandering Moose. No reservations necessary.

Park & Rec

Senior Outing: October 12, Norwalk Maritime Museum. Leave from the UCC Parish House at 8:30 A.M. (wheelchair space available). Call Jen Hurlburt-Markow at 672-4071 or email prcornwall@gmail.com.

Starting October 3, please contribute Halloween candy at CCS or at the Park & Rec office. The annual Halloween gathering is at the town hall on Monday, October 31, from 5 to 8 P.M. To donate a homemade pot of soup or stew, contact Jen Hurlburt-Markow at 672-4071 or email prcornwall@gmail.com.

14th Annual CCS Walk-a-thon: Friday, October 14, 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. For more information call 672-6617. Rain date is October 21.

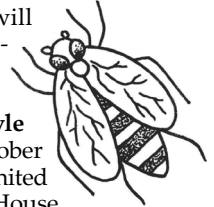
Motherhouse Event: Saturday, October 15, 10:30 A.M. to 1:30 P.M. at Local Farm. Old-Style Life Skills Series workshop: MEATing Rabbits and Chickens. Sample our favorite recipes as part of a potluck lunch. \$35/family. Must preregister with Debra@Motherhouse.us or at 860-671-7945.

Little Guild of St. Francis 5K Run & Wag: Saturday, October 15, 10:30 A.M. (see insert).

"Muslims in America": Dr. Jane Smith, a noted expert on Christian-Muslim relations, will answer our questions on Sunday, October 16, 11:30 A.M., in the UCC Parish House.

Cornwall Historical Society presents Telling Stories, to celebrate the exhibit "Artists and Authors," Sunday, October 16, at 2 P.M. at the town hall. Richard Schlesinger, CBS

News correspondent, will host. Free, with refreshments.



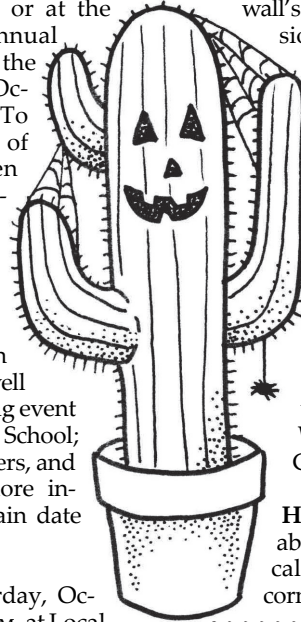
Pasta Bonanza Buffet-Style

Dinner: Saturday, October 22, 5 to 7 P.M. at the United Church of Christ Parish House. The cost of the dinner is a free-will donation towards a church school mission project. The menu includes pasta with a variety of sauces, salad, bread, desserts, and beverages. Information: 672-6840.

Build an Eastern Bluebird Box: Sunday, October 23, four sessions: 1 P.M., 2 P.M., 3 P.M., and 4 P.M. at UCC Parish House. Suggested donation: \$12. Suitable for kids 8 and up accompanied by an adult. To support Cornwall's Agricultural Advisory Commission and UCC's service trip to Pine Ridge Indian Reservation. Joe Brien is donating his time, tools, and instruction. Co-sponsored by Dark Entry Forest and the Housatonic Environmental Action League (HEAL). Call 672-6867 to register.

(New) Cornwall Business Association meets on Thursday, October 27, from 9:30 to 10:30 A.M. in the Souterrain Gallery (below the Wish House). The meeting will include updates about the West Cornwall septic project and Cornwall Bridge traffic issues.

Home Heating Assistance is available. Contact Jane Muir Sellery by calling 672-2603 or email her at cornwallsocialservices@gmail.com.



CORNWALL CHRONICLE

cornwallchronicle.org

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