

CORNWALL CHRONICLE

VOLUME 20 : NUMBER 3 APRIL 2010



Freeze and Thaw

The raw reality of New England winter makes us reach for the down jackets and the wool socks. The glacial remains beneath our feet have no such protection. The ground expands when it freezes and contracts when the thaw softens the earth. Proof of this basic science is in the state of Cornwall's roads.

"The roads?" said Highway Foreman Rick Stone, who was with a town dump truck full of sand. "They're terrible, terrible, the worst I've ever seen them. [Rick grew up in Cornwall.] Ask any of the boys on the crew they'll tell you."

The unique combination of the freeze and thaw physics this winter has severely crumpled Cornwall's roads. The trip to Litchfield, the back way through Milton, takes a good ten lurching minutes longer than usual. Cracks yawn and water streams out, making a potential ice rink come the next freeze.

It doesn't help that, except for less than ten miles of former state highway, none of the town's roads were built on dug-out, honest-to-God foundations. Our roads followed animal tracks, wagon ruts and went with the terrain. Dirt surfaces were hardened in the early 20th century with old crankcase oil and other materials to keep the dust down. When it became available, asphalt was spread right on top.

"Over on College Street, they built the

road right over a stone wall. We go up there now and then, open up the road, pull out some more stones, and close it up again," Rick said. "The town's been thrifty with the roads right from the start. You can see the results."

Speaking of thrift, the town is currently under budget for its winter road activity, mostly because of fewer plowable storms. The Highway Department's sand recycling program has helped too. —Lisa L. Simont

Chronicle Staff Change

With this issue of the *Chronicle*, Ruth Epstein succeeds Tom Bechtle as Managing Editor. The *Chronicle* regrets Tom's resignation, and will ever be grateful for his five years of devoted service. He is a true professional, as is Ruth. Her name should be familiar: recent First Selectman in Kent, veteran local reporter, and currently area correspondent for the *Republican-American*. Her articles have appeared in *The New York Times*, and she edited *The Lakeville Journal* for eight years. Enough said. Your *Chronicle* remains in good hands.

—Bob Potter

Peace and Security

The agenda for the March Board of Education meeting clearly reflected the complexity of modern society. Discussion ranged from

the cost of composting the student peace garden to the cost of implementing the security system approved at last month's meeting. The peace garden cost is minimal. The security system cost is not. Both peace and security are deemed essential.

Cornwall Consolidated School parents are in complete support of the ongoing efforts of faculty and staff to establish a peaceful and supportive school environment by eliminating bullying and establishing predictable patterns of conflict resolution.

Parental support for the proposed security system is not as united. In fact, the parent community is quite split on the issue. Some believe that installing a security system that essentially locks the school from 8:30 A.M. until dismissal does more to establish a sense of fear than to eliminate it. Others believe that, in light of today's society, not installing a security system is irresponsible and places Cornwall students at inordinate risk. In fact, the controversial topic has been discussed and examined at every Board of Education meeting since October. Finally, on March 1, a revised version of Principal Robert Vaughan's original proposal was accepted in a 5 to 1 vote by the Board of Education. Principal Vaughan agreed to seek the information required to move forward.

Three separate bids were garnered for the camera, monitors, buzzers and wiring

(continued on page 2)

APRIL 2010

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
Every Week This Month: Mondays: Jam Session, 7:30 P.M. Call 672-0229 for location. Tuesdays: Adult Volleyball, 7:30 P.M. CCS Gym. Wednesdays: Stretch Class, 5 P.M. Town Hall; Tai Chi, 6 P.M. CCS. Call 672-0064, Women's Basketball 7:30 P.M. CCS. Sundays: Meditation, 1-2 P.M. Call Debra for location, 672-0229.				1 Town Meeting 7:30 P.M. CCS Gathering Room †	2 GOOD FRIDAY CCS & Library Closed Artist's Reception 4-7 P.M. Lady Audrey's Gallery †	3 Community Contra Dance 7-9:30 P.M. Town Hall †
4 EASTER Transfer Station Closed	5 Region One Bd. of Ed. 6 P.M. HVRHS Park & Rec. 7 P.M. CCS Lib. Bd. of Selectmen 7:30 P.M. Town Hall Agricultural Comm. 7:30 P.M. Town Hall	6 Inland Wetlands 7:30 P.M. Town Hall	7	8	9 Story Hour 1:15 P.M. Library	10 Chess for Kids 10 A.M. Library Motherhouse Stitchin' Time Workshop 10:30 A.M.- 1:30 P.M. UCC Book Talk, <i>Cheerful Money</i> 4 P.M. Library †
11	12 School Spring Break Begins Blood Pressure Screening Noon-1 P.M. UCC	13 P&Z 7 P.M. Town Hall Housatonic River Comm. 7:30 P.M. CCS Library	14	15 Deadline: May Chronicle Copy Democratic Town Committee 7 P.M. Library VFW Post 9856 8 P.M. W. C. Firehouse	16	17 Family Round Sing 7:30 P.M. Local Farm Barn †
18	19 School Reopens	20 Solar Power Ceremony 1 P.M. CCS † Bd. of Selectmen 7:30 P.M. Town Hall	21 Senior Reception and Welcome to the Library 10 A.M.	22 CCS Early Dismissal 1 P.M. Parent/Teacher Conference Bd. of Ed. 5 P.M. CCS Library Bd. of Finance 7:30 P.M. CCS Library	23 CCS Early Dismissal 1 P.M. Parent/Teacher Conference Story Hour 1:15 P.M. Library	24 Chess for Kids 10 A.M. Library Art at the Dump 10 A.M.-4 P.M. † Book Talk, <i>Poetry in Person</i> 4 P.M. Library
25 Art at the Dump 10 A.M.-2 P.M. †	26 Democratic Town Committee 7:30 P.M. Library ZBA 8 P.M. Town Hall*	27	28 Cornwall Volunteer Fire Department 8 P.M. W. C. Firehouse	29 Red Cross Blood Drive 1:30-6:15 P.M. UCC Parish House †	30 Story Hour 1:15 P.M. Library	May 1: Child Center Auction 5 P.M. Mohawk

*Check with Zoning Office—672-4957

† Details in Events and Announcements

Some Cornwall Numbers

2040 Census population peak (1850)
 1031 Panes of glass in North Cornwall Church
 1002 Number of registered voters in Cornwall
 842 Cows milked in 1925
 834 Census population low (1920)
 600 Miles of stone walls (est.)
 119 Miles now driven daily by U.S. Mail carriers
 77 Persons who voted in a recent Region One referendum
 44 More women than men (2000 census)
 15 Dollars per acre paid for land in 1920
 8 Inches of ice needed to drive across Cream Hill Lake
 -26 Lowest "official" temperature recorded (1934)



— Bob Potter, 2005

(continued from page 1)

needed for the proposed security system. The projected dollar amounts range from \$4,500 to \$6,500. Mr. Vaughan will review all three bids carefully, making certain "to compare apples to apples," before making his final recommendation.

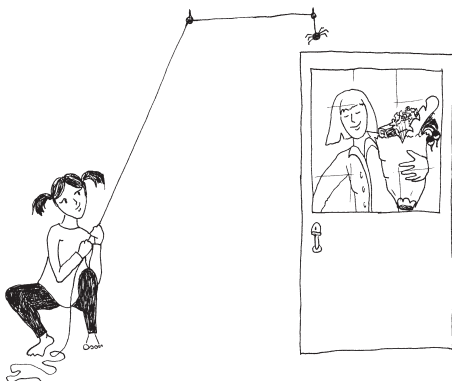
Cornwall Rescue Captain, Skip Kosciusko, asked that Emergency Medical Services and Fire Department members be allowed to peruse the selected bid specs before the final form is presented for board approval. They would like to be certain that all modifications needed to avoid anything possibly cumbersome for emergency responders have been included. How will the system be decoded to permit entrance? Who will decode the system? Will there be enough time to bring in the backboards, oxygen, defibrillators or any other necessary emergency equipment? Will the system be able to accommodate emergency responders who arrive at different times from various locations? Principal Vaughan assured Skip that "all needed protocols will be developed" and all of his questions answered before final submission to the board.

While on the topic of security, the existing key entrance procedures were reviewed and found in need of upgrading.

Region One School Superintendent, Patricia Chamberlain, told the Cornwall Board that the Sharon Central School is investigating the same issue and could be contacted for any helpful information they might have discovered in their research process.

These issues and others will continue to be investigated at the next regular meeting presently scheduled for Thursday, April 22 at 5 P.M.

— Sharon Dietzel



Rumsey Raffle

The Cornwall Association has decided to hold a raffle much like the town of Kent does when people guess when the "ice-out" will occur on the Housatonic River. Association President Dave Cadwell said there has been some debate on the subject of a proposed raffle but that a clear majority of his board settled on guessing a date when the Rumsey Hall building in the village might finally collapse.

Cadwell said his organization would begin selling raffle tickets on May 1. The price will be two dollars a ticket. "The winner will be declared," he said, "when the Rumsey roof hits the ground either on its own or by the possible work of a demolition crew."

The owner has applied for a permit to tear it down but as Fats Waller used to say, "one never knows, do one?" The Association board will take up the matter of prize money at its next regularly scheduled meeting this month, but Cadwell indicated the board seemed to favor a 50-50 split between the raffle winner (or winners) and a Cornwall institution such as the Library or the Child Center.

— John Miller

Hoops Season "Awesome"

How did the Cornwall Park & Rec. basketball seasons go? Very well!

Let's start with the Northwest tournament trophy-winning fifth and sixth grade boys who ended up with an awesome 18-1 record and a seriously improved team. Coach Rick Kearns said, "Right from the beginning there was a team mentality. Even with varying levels of talent there was sharing and teamwork. The boys were unselfish and that was exciting."

Next there was the near-trophy-winning fifth and sixth grade girls who had a 13-2 record and a very strong team as well. Team coordinator Jean Kearns says, "The girls had a great season and played hard every game." They came extremely close to winning the Northwest tournament final game—a real nail-biter for the crowd.

Beth Saccardi coached the high-energy second to fourth grade girls and says, "I'm proud of the girls and I learned lots about teamwork, patience and understanding." She was thankful for the opportunity to coach the team, who had a winning season, but more importantly they learned the fundamentals

of basketball. Many of their games were coed with the second and third grade boys, adding, as their coach Stephen Saccardi says, "A great team with lots of energy!"

And last there was the "U-80" Wednesday Women who challenged the undefeated CCS Girls' team—the Region 1 Champions! The "baby" Girls beat the Women soundly, with speed and teamwork. The event was a successful fundraiser for The Cornwall Food Pantry, heightening awareness for the program which helps Cornwall families.

— Becky Hurlburt

Good-bye to Friends

Edward James Beers

Welcome

Reid Harwood Wilson
 to Seth Wilson and Jenny Ellis
 Szilvi Kathleen Nash
 to Julie Schillinger and Denis Nash
 Travis Charles Barber
 to Valerie and Steven Barber

Congratulations

Patricia Valentim and James Vanicky

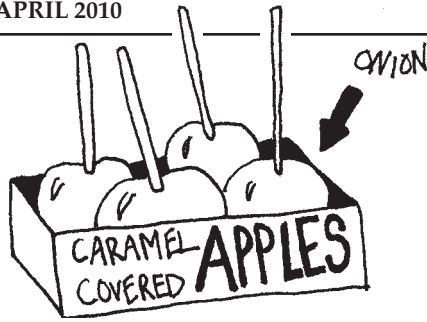
Dances, Dogs and Delicacies

Haiti's 7.0 earthquake in January had an epicenter somewhere near Port au Prince. Cornwall's response had an epicenter at the Cornwall Consolidated School. Led by School Nurse Martha Bruehl and Teaching Assistant Tricia Collins, plans for fundraisers to support the work of CCS alumna Devon Root—a nurse in Jeremie, Haiti—were galvanized early on.

The kick-off affair in February was the "Love & Haiti" (say it fast) dance for middle school students of Region 1. Chaperones were all volunteers; drawing in CCS teachers and staff, parents, and contemporaries of Devon's who had come to help and maybe relive a little bit of their own middle school experience.

DJ Charlie Yohe's music rocked the gym while in the front hall Patty Rovezzi sold tickets for donated kid-friendly prizes, such as pizza certificates from local restaurants, iTunes cards, and passes to Fusion Zone. Chaperone Mapped Matsudaira, who not only bought his prodigious height in a strip of tickets for \$5, also experienced daughter Marina's first dance. At 9:30, the school magically emptied and the organizers were left counting up the \$1,200 that was raised for Devon's group, Haitian Health Foundation.

With one event down, the "Committee of Two" expanded rapidly as a community breakfast was planned for March. Cornwall Inn's Stacey Marcin stepped forward with an offer of all the pancake "fixings," oj and hot chocolate. Dunkin' Donuts pledged as much high-powered coffee as needed and local businesses continued to hop on board with more prizes. The breakfast raffle was taking shape as The Wish House, Terston's, and Harney & Sons Tea, donated beautiful gift bags; though not to be outdone by Wynne Kavanagh's huge basket, spilling over with every ingredient needed for an



Italian dinner.

But where to find a grill to top the industrial-size stove in the school kitchen? Calls were made and things were getting frantic, until Dave Cadwell unearthed the old CVFD griddle stored since the Bridge Dance days. Breakfast volunteer Head Cook CCS custodian, Pete Selino, cleaned and seasoned the griddle and quickly called for a "Hot Dog for Haiti" lunch to test the grill before the big breakfast day. Fliers went out, dollar bills flew back in, and Pete lined up the hot dogs to grill. "Success" was called as another \$100 was raised for the Haiti project.

Fingers were crossed when a nor'easter was forecasted for the weekend of the community breakfast. In the meantime, with Susan Saccardi volunteering her extraordinary planning and cooking skills, plus help from her hard-working daughter, Beth, the kitchen staff was set. Roots & Shoots "kid and parent" teams rounded out the Sunday morning servers. Saturday night, Cornwall hunkered down for the big blow. Trees went down, power went out, and wild weather descended.

Besides the precipitation, Daylight Saving Time was a force to be reckoned with as sleepyheads were all "losing" an hour. Would the town show up for the breakfast? The Dinneens came in at 8:00 and the steady trickle turned into a deluge of families by 9:00 (or was it 10:00...the Gathering Room's clock was still on EST.) Food was running out, workers' family members were dispatched to local stores to buy extra. Hungry diners kept their cool. After all, this was Cornwall and this was for a good cause. By midday the rumbling tummies were full, the kitchen cleaned until it sparkled, garbage was gone and so were the people (some into the gym for a championship basketball game) and \$2,400 had been raised for Cornwall's native daughter Devon, and the people of Haiti. When all proceeds and donations were tallied, a grand total of 4,000 Cornwall dollars was on its way to the help the people of Haiti. —Tricia Collins

A Cornwall Collection

When this *Chronicle* reporter heard that there was a man in Cornwall who owned about 50 violins, his ears pricked up at the news. But could it be true? A good violinist would probably own one good instrument and perhaps a spare, but why 50?

The rumor turned out to be true. One more than true: Bill Beeman actually owns 51 violins.

Bill is an affable middle-aged man with an easy smile and a passion for violins. He collects violins. He repairs violins. He talks

LETTERS TO THE CHRONICLE

CONVENTIONAL WISDOM QUESTIONED

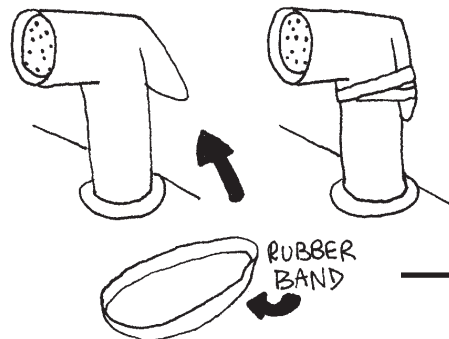
For years I bought into the conventional wisdom that the Plan of Conservation & Development was simply a state mandate that didn't mean much and that it typically gathers dust after it is approved. Serving as the Chair of the ZBA during the Sweet Peet appeal I learned how wrong that conventional wisdom is. The fact is that the Plan of Conservation & Development does not matter — until it does matter — and then it can be too late!

The Planning & Zoning Board recently completed a new ten-year plan for Cornwall. While P&Z offered several opportunities for public input, fewer than two dozen people actually wrote the report. For example, in the Housing section it is clear that those writing it had a very clear agenda. The Plan includes a seven-point strategy to encourage the building of "affordable" housing and includes strong support for "cluster" housing developments. Any developer reading this Plan will see that Cornwall has placed the welcome mat out for them.

My concern is that a concentration of power between P&Z and the Cornwall Housing Corporation has eroded any semblance of transparency or accountability to the broad Cornwall community. We need to engage in a town-wide discussion that will bring the concerns and desires of ALL the people into the decision-making about Cornwall's future. —Joanne Wojtusiak

SUBSIDIZED HOUSING?

It surprises and saddens me to see the phrase "subsidized housing" being used like a four-letter word. A great many of us live in this kind of housing, but apparently only that offered to people earning less than 80% of area median income is the scary kind. If you have the good fortune to rent from one of Cornwall's righteous landlords who charge lower than market rates, your living arrangements are "subsidized." The



violin—all this in whatever time is left over after earning a living.

Bill's collection started over four years ago, when he had a chance to buy a violin that had been repaired and restored by his great-great-grandfather, Henry Ward Beeman. Research revealed that H. W. Beeman, a versatile New Preston craftsman, had made "60 violins, 8 cellos, and one viola...as a hobby in his leisure time during the winter months" (J. H. Fairfield, *Known Violin Makers*). Although an amateur, H. W. Beeman's production could

same applies if your family, like mine, gave or left you a house, a lot, some money or a trust fund. These unearned bonuses work as "housing subsidies" as well. If you didn't have such luck, isn't it nice that the Cornwall Housing Corp can help close the unfairness gap with affordable rentals at Kugeman Village and home ownership options on Parcel Program lots all over town? —Maggie Cooley

HOPE AND SECURITY

I had an epiphany last night with regards to the CCS surveillance and lockdown measure. While I believe that Fear can only defeat us when we do what it tells us—I grasped that is not true for my neighbors seeking to lock down our country schoolhouse. I gained compassion for the people who carry deep, stark Fear. Fear—of being sued, or weak or wrong, or hurt. In my heart I pray all our hearts and classroom doors will be flung open again one fine day and Fear, ladies and gentlemen, will have left the building. —Lib Tobin, CCS mom '07, '08, '18

NEW FACES IN THE FIRE DEPARTMENT

Last year was an abundant one for the Cornwall Volunteer Fire Department. In 2009, nine recruits were added to our ranks: one Fire Police, Ed Olsen; two Emergency Medical Technicians, Danielle Meenan and Beckie Seney; one Emergency Medical Technician Intermediate, Brian O'Neil; five Emergency Medical Responders, Will Russ, Rocco Botto, Iris Hermann, Jason Elliott, and Jayne Ridgway.

This year is off to a good start with three new recruits—Diane Beebe as Fire Police, Ted Larson as Exterior Firefighter, and Mark Hamilton who will pursue Emergency Medical Technician certification.

Among our ranks we have EMRs studying to advance to the EMT level: Jason Elliott, Iris Hermann, and Jayne Ridgway. Annie Kosciusko, Rocco Botto, Ed Olsen, and Lauren Kosciusko have added Exterior Firefighter to their credentials.

Give them all a "well done" should you pass them on the street. They are a part of your fire department. If you have the interest and time to become a firefighter or Emergency Medical Service responder, speak to your local fire department member and ask how to join the fire department. We welcome new recruits. —Joyce Hart

be of top quality. Another reference work states that the famous Fritz Kreisler had two favorite violins. One he called his "Beeman." The other was a Stradivarius.

Then Margaret Beeman, a cousin, gave Bill three large wooden crates of "violin stuff" that had been passed down in the family for years. These included Henry Ward Beeman's shaping molds and a variety of other equipment and materials. Soon Bill Beeman was hooked. He started buying violins at auctions and on the Internet, paying between \$19 and \$250. Most were constructed in Europe, but some as far away

as China. Several of his acquisitions seem to have interesting stories. For instance, a viola shipped to Bill from Georgia contained an interior label stating that it had been repaired in 1898 in Winsted, Connecticut.

"It's been a learning process," Bill told me. Each new violin is a boxed mystery. First comes a look through the left curved hole in the "belly" (top) to see if there is some sort of a label. "You never really know what's inside," Bill said. He often removes the belly to learn more. One violin, strangely heavy, had evidently been housing mud wasps for years. Many old violins contain interior labels concerning origin or repair. Some have the presumption to state "Antonio Stradivari" without the word "copy" attached. Others boast of reworking: "Repaired and rebuilt by L.M. Morris/1939/Oskaloosa, Iowa."

I left Bill's small house crowded with violins and my head crowded with terms like "base bar," "sound post," "hide glue" and "tailpiece." One last question: Does Bill Beeman play the violin himself? "I'm learning," he said. "A violin really should be played, not just sit on a shelf. It's good for the wood, keeps it moving. The trouble is, every hour I spend practicing, is an hour I can't spend working on these things."

That's probably a choice Bill Beeman rather enjoys making. —Bob Potter

Events & Announcements

A Town Meeting to authorize the selectmen to move ahead on a pair of federal grants will be held on Thursday, April 1, at 7:30 P.M. in the Gathering Room at CCS. The grants are a Housatonic Heritage Partnership grant for tourist services in town; Cornwall's share is \$4,150. The second is a proposal to spend \$29,285 from the Municipal Reserve so the Town Office building can be 100 percent solar; the funds will be fully repaid by federal stimulus finds.

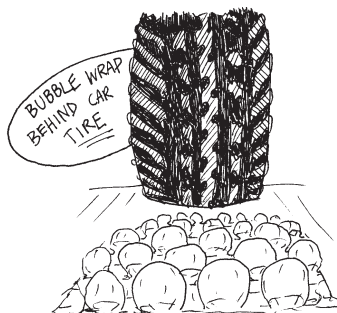
Fencing Lessons: Interested in learning the art of fencing? Park & Rec. has the opportunity to bring a fencing instructor to Cornwall. It would be an eight-week session, meeting once a week for an hour on Thursday evenings. Equipment is provided. Cost is \$25 per class per student. If you are interested, call Park & Rec. at 672-4070 or send an email to cornwallparkandrecreation@yahoo.com.

Maybe Spring

The gift of early spring lifts our hearts especially when two 70-degree days coincide with the vernal equinox. What could be better? Celebrate with a nice check to keep spring eternal at the *Chronicle*. Thank you.

A Red Cross Blood Drive will be held on Thursday, April 29 from 1:30 to 6:15 P.M. at the UCC Parish House. To schedule an appointment call 1-800-RED CROSS. Note that this number has just recently changed. Walk-ins are welcome; however, those with appointments are always taken first. Walk-ins are taken as time and space permits.

A Reception for Seniors at the Library will introduce a program to be offered by Friendly Visitors whereby volunteers will bring books and other library materials to homebound elderly and disabled residents. Please come to the Library April 21 at 10 A.M. to talk about how this program might work. Transportation is available. For more information and to RSVP, call Amy Cady at 672-6874 or acady@biblio.org.



Friend at the Library: Tad Friend, the author of *Cheerful Money*, will speak at the Library on Saturday, April 10 at 4 P.M. His subtitle—Me, My Family, and the Last Days of Wasp Splendor—suggests the range of Mr. Friend's subject. Part "family memoir," part sociological investigation, part novel of growing up, *Cheerful Money* is a work of steely wit and beguiling honesty.

Tad Friend, a staff writer at the *New Yorker*, is married to the food writer Amanda Hesser, who chronicled their courtship in *Cooking for Mr. Latte*. They live in Brooklyn with their three-year-old twins.

Cornwall Child Center Auction, Fiesta de Cornwall, begins at 5 P.M. May 1 at Mohawk Ski Area. See insert.

Bend and Stretch: Free exercise clinics for older adults will begin at the UCC Parish House. The "Bend and Stretch" classes offered by VNA Northwest, Inc. aim to help senior citizens reduce the possibility of falls, which are the leading cause of injury and death in people over age 65. Instructor Ruth Ellen Griffin is a dance therapist.

The six-week clinics will be on Tuesdays, April 13–May 10, 10 to 11 A.M. Please call VNA Northwest at (860) 567-6000 or (800) 752-0215 to register, or to request more information. You may also visit www.vnanw.org.

Motherhouse Activities: For more information, ticket prices and to reserve places, contact Debra Tyler at 672-0229 or www.motherhouse.us.

- April 3, 7 to 9:30 P.M.: Cornwall Community Contra Dance at the Town Hall with David Kaynor calling and music by Still the Homegrown Band.

- April 17 at 7:30 P.M.: Free Family Round Sing at Local Farm. If it is raining, the sing will be at the Town Hall.

Art in Cornwall:

- Lady Audrey's Gallery will host an opening reception for the art competition, "Spring Fever," on Friday, April 2, 4 to 7 P.M.

- At the Cornwall Library, the show of CCS students' artwork will continue through April 3. From April 6 through 24, Matt Clements will show photographs from his travels in Mongolia. Starting April 27, Swede Ahrstrom will exhibit landscape paintings.

- Sybil M. Perry will show her landscapes in pastels at the National Iron Bank for the month of April.

Solar Power Party: The Ribbon Cutting Ceremony at CCS to celebrate the solar energy system awarded by the CT Clean Energy Fund will take place Tuesday, April 20 at 1 P.M.

The Fat Spaniel Program, which monitors our energy production, will be shown. Speakers will include CT politicians and local administrators. Explanations of the landscaping and the pole-mounted system will be shared as well as refreshments and a surprise or two.

Woman's Society Scholarship. To all Cornwall high school seniors: Applications for assistance from the Woman's Society Educational Fund are available at the HVRHS guidance office or from Thalia Scoville, 672-6288. Deadline for their return is May 15.

Art at the Dump will be on display April 24 and 25. See insert.

CORNWALL CHRONICLE

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MAY ISSUE

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