



CORNWALL CHRONICLE

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Town Budget to Help People First

Times like these send us back to the old stories—like the one about the three pigs and their housing issues. The tale about making bricks without straw also comes to mind as the budget season gets under way in Cornwall.

In meetings during February, the Boards of Selectmen and Education combed through their budgets looking not just for lines to cut but also for programs it makes sense to increase.

The selectmen arrived at an operating budget for next year of \$1.577 million, up only \$20,000, or 1.29 percent, over the current year. Capital expenditures were cut back 20 percent to \$390,000. Discussions among the selectmen targeted programs that would help people. The Cornwall Child Center, which supports tuitions, will receive an increase. The town's Social Service Department, which has experienced strong demand for assistance in recent months, will also receive more funds. Other departments sustained minor cuts except for the always-hungry snow-and-ice removal budget.

The 800-pound gorilla this year is the proposed 24.26 percent increase in health insurance provided through Region One by Anthem Blue Cross. The selectmen plan to temper the damage by doubling the employee contribution and offering Health Savings Accounts; both actions will lower the premium

cost to the town.

On the revenue side, the effects of the state's struggle to meet its mandated balanced budget will trickle down to the town. Cornwall paired with Warren as the top losers of state aid for the coming year. First Selectman Gordon Ridgway pointed out that state grants to our small towns are dominated by road aid, which the state has slashed.

Board of Education Chair Barbara Gold said her board faces similar challenges. One bright light is that the number of students at the high school has decreased significantly, so that Cornwall's assessment will go down. But the health insurance issue will shape the education budget, too.

"The whole point of this is educating kids," Gold said. "That's the bottom line."

—Lisa Lansing Simont

Digital No-Snow

After months of warnings of the impending digital TV blackout (or snowout), Cornwall's procrastinators have been given a stay of execution.

The federally mandated switch to all-digital broadcasting has been put off until June 12. The Nielsen Company estimates that there are 6.5 million U.S. households that were not ready in time and therefore would have lost television reception if Con-

gress had not acted to postpone the original February 17 deadline.

Although most folks in Cornwall have satellite or cable as their means of TV reception and don't have to do anything to keep viewing, there are still some who use the old-style aerials or rabbit ears to get a picture on the tube. If you are a TV minimalist or are just confused by the whole thing and have yet to get a new digital TV or converter box, there are a few things you should know.

First, digital and high definition (HD) are not synonymous. While all HD is digital, not all digital is HD. Digital broadcasting uses much less bandwidth, which allows broadcasters to send out not only a high definition channel but usually a couple of others in standard definition (SD) as well. The HD format gives a picture that is twice as sharp as SD, so when you have a large screen of 26 inches or more, it still looks great. Even though most new flat-panel TVs are HD, there is a lot of programming out there that is still in SD. To see what you could get, visit whereishd.com to compare HD options.

Next, the digital converter boxes that are eligible to be purchased with the \$40 government discount coupons are not the ticket to HD's better picture. For this you need to upgrade from your old analog TV set to a new digital HD one.

Most of the new TVs will get better recep-

(continued on page 2)

MARCH 2009

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
1	2 Region One Bd. of Ed. 6 P.M. HVRHS Bd. of Selectmen 7:30 P.M. Town Hall	3 Red Cross Blood Drive 1:30-6:15 P.M. Parish House † Park & Rec. 7 P.M. CCS Library Inland Wetlands 7:30 P.M. Town Office	4 Hot Chocolate Hour Library †	5 Grumbling Gryphons Theater First Session †	6 Connecticare Presentation 10:30 A.M. Library †	7 Energy Workshop 1-3 P.M. Library † Family Contra Dance 7-9:30 P.M. Town Hall †
8 DAYLIGHT SAVING BEGINS Art Opening Reception 4 P.M. Library †	9 Blood Pressure Screening Noon-1 P.M. UCC	10 US Census Bureau Testing 10:30 A.M. Library † Housatonic River Comm. 7:30 P.M. CCS Library P&Z 7:30 P.M. Town Hall	11 Hot Chocolate Hour Library †	12	13	14 8 th Grade Chili Chow CCS Gathering Room (See Insert) Wool Gathering Workshop 10:30 A.M.-1:30 P.M. Town Hall †
15 Deadline: April Chronicle Copy	16	17 ST. PATRICK'S DAY Bd. of Selectmen 7:30 P.M. Town Hall	18 	19 Bd. of Ed. 5 P.M. CCS Library Bd. of Finance 7:30 P.M. CCS Library	20 FIRST DAY OF SPRING 6 th Anniversary of the Invasion of Iraq 7 P.M. Library †	21 Honey Bee Workshop 10:30 A.M.-1:30 P.M. Town Hall † Family Round Sing 7:30 P.M. Town Hall †
22 Genealogy Talk 3:30 P.M. Library	23	24 ZBA 7:30 P.M. Town Hall* P&Z 7:30 P.M. Town Hall	25	26 	27	28 Book Talk Dr. Richard O'Connor 3 P.M. Library
29	30	31	Every Week This Month: Mondays: Jam Session, 7:30 P.M. Call 672-0229 for Location; Men's Adult Basketball, 7 P.M. CCS Gym Tuesdays: Adult Volleyball, 7 P.M. CCS Gym Wednesdays: Stretch Class, 5 P.M. Town Hall; Women's Adult Basketball, 7:30 P.M. CCS; Tai Chi, 6 P.M. CCS Gathering Room Thursdays: Meditation for Mothers, 1:15 P.M. St. Peter's Sundays: Meditation Group, 1-2 P.M. 672-0229 to confirm			

* Check with Zoning Office—672-4957

† Details in Events and Announcements

(continued from page 1)

tion than most of the converter boxes do, but be forewarned that with a somewhat snowy picture on your old set, not even the best TV or box will guarantee a picture in the digital format. Digital reception is all or nothing. Often, you are likely to get a picture that breaks up or freeze-frames if the signal is not strong enough. Sometimes adding an amplifier to the antenna will be enough of a boost to lock in a good picture, but often not. You might want to visit the website antennaweb.org to help you choose the right antenna for your location.

If over-the-air reception still doesn't work, there are two other choices. One is cable. Although most of Cornwall's roads were strung with cable years ago, it may be very costly to get cable installed, particularly with a long driveway. The other option is satellite. DIRECTV and Dish Network are available everywhere in the United States regardless of population density or access to "the grid," and both offer free installation. One thing that might rule this out would be a poor line of sight to the southwestern sky, as satellite requires a clear opening to get reception. Hilltop and valley dwellers have the same chance of a great picture if they have the line of sight to the orbiting "birds."

Both cable and satellite offer local channels in addition to a myriad of others, and both have fairly low-cost options as well as the ability to suspend the service if you are away for extended periods of time.

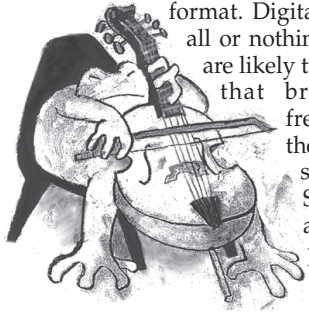
Of course, if you do not watch TV, please disregard this.

—John Bevans

Gift Beyond Price

For purity of purpose it's hard to conceive of a simple act of good will that beats donating blood for the benefit of someone the donor doesn't even know or most likely won't ever know. And once again, on March 3 we have the chance to be one of those anonymous givers, an unknown enhancer of a stranger's health—even a saver of life itself. The Red Cross bloodmobile is coming to town.

If you are a donor, though, don't take credit for being the whole story here. The blood collectors do not just happen to show up at the UCC Parish House or the Library to tap into Cornwall veins. In fact, before 1996 the Red Cross spurned Cornwall as being too small to bother with at all. It was not until Pat Blakey, Joan Edler, and Don Kenniston from UCC gathered a significant number of promised donors from town that the Red Cross consented to send out one of its units to us. It was not until Jerry Blakey engineered the Parish House set-up to accommodate the blood-taking process that the trial run went smoothly.



How things change! Today we are one of the bloodmobile's favorite stops. Our small-town turnout, estimated at 40 pints a day, is consistent, and the Parish Hall is set up to accommodate the blood harvesting team comfortably. Further, the workers as well as the donors are offered home-made cookies and sandwiches along with soft drinks during work breaks and after blood letting. Even the conversation around the food table is Cornwall-friendly and warm.

Recently two of Cornwall's most formidable blood donors were lured away to a Farmington facility by the Red Cross itself, which is in constant need of platelets, an essential clotting component in ever-shortening supply in cancer patients. Platelets are harvested by taking blood from one arm in the normal way, whereupon they are centrifuged in the lab and the balance of the blood returned to the donor's other arm. This procedure, which takes considerable time, has the advantage of allowing blood to be drawn from a donor more often (every two weeks) than does the whole blood procedure (every two months). The disadvantage to the donor is that he has to use his own wheels to get to the lab in Farmington; the bonus: movies during the lengthy immobilization period. The principal satisfaction, of course, is the realization that one's platelets are to be used on patients whose needs are extreme.

For the rest of us, the Red Cross bloodmobile will be waiting on Tuesday, March 3, from 1:30 to 6:15 P.M. Walk-ins are welcome, but those who make appointments earn a special greeting at the door with an extra-warm smile from longtime gatekeepers Ursula Dinneen or Amy Whitcomb.

—Scoville Soule

Welcome

Cali Cate to Jill and Leonard Ciccarelli

Carl Patrick to Sarah and Jason Allen

Darwin Anna Wolfe to Rachel Gall and Jay Wolfe

Beatrice Schultz Martin

to Katie Schultz and Daniel Martin

Good-Bye to Friends

Glory Jones

Margot S. Pierzga

Angelo J. Zaino

Land Transfers

Louise M. Graham Revocable Living Trust to Roger Gonzales and Wendy C. Summer, 4.55 acres and buildings and improvements thereon at 99 Warren Hill Road for \$275,000.

The Stream in Coltsfoot Valley

Hidden well up in the pines on the west slope of Mohawk Mountain, across from our place on Valley Road, is a building. It is a small building, just six-foot square, and sits in the rough, off any trail. Well preserved with a pitched roof, it has a log leaning against its plank door, keeping it shut. At first the building is interesting only because it is startling to find it so out of place. Move the log, swing open the door, and there lies the essence of Coltsfoot Valley and Coltsfoot Stream.

The only thing in this tiny shed is water:

cool, clear water in a deep, mini pond, covering the entire floor. This building is a springhouse. Through a long run of metal pipe, the springhouse had supplied all of the water needed by the "Middle Barn" in Coltsfoot Valley, the barn that 13 years ago we converted to a home. In fact, the cement cistern that acted as a holding tank is still in place between our mailbox and the apple tree a few yards south.

Coltsfoot Stream runs the two-mile length of Coltsfoot Valley from Castle Road at the south to the Cheneys' property on Jewell Street at the north, where it feeds into Furnace Brook. It twists and turns and moves its banks constantly, depending on the rains, droughts, and beaver dams. Nothing special here, except that Coltsfoot Stream has no primary source. Although it does pick up substantial volume from Birdseye Brook, which runs under Valley Road by what will be forever known as "Ann Peterson's House," this is no lake-fed stream.

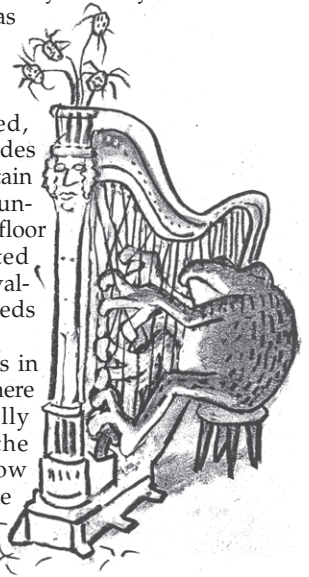
No lake is needed, since the valley sides of Mohawk Mountain and Coltsfoot Mountain and the valley floor itself are saturated with springs. This valley absolutely breeds water.

There are places in Coltsfoot Valley where the springs actually bubble out of the ground. They flow over rocks lining the west side of the road, they percolate from the middle of grassy areas in the fields, and they flow or trickle down the mountainsides themselves. Sometimes walking in the valley is like walking in a rice paddy. Squish, squish, squish...even in the summer. Since the valley is so small and the aquifer so close to the surface, Coltsfoot Stream is constantly supplied and refreshed by hundreds of faucets that are always left on.

In the wet months, the flow from the springs increases, and the runoff from the valley sides becomes intense, causing Coltsfoot Stream to overflow. Behind our barn/home a one-foot-deep stream becomes six and bloats itself from a width of six feet to a 200-foot lake. In July and August the stream does slow down. It does get shallow. However, it absolutely never stops.

I never tire of the view from the end of Pine Street overlooking the head of Coltsfoot Valley. It is so exquisite, so elegant. Looking at this wonderful sight I am always alert to what a living thing this valley is with its water pumping, leaking, dripping, and gushing to fill Coltsfoot Stream, freshen the valley's forests and grasses, and provide a bit of Eden to so many creatures. It's good for the soul.

—Jeffrey Jacobson



Watt's New

Walk tall, Cornwallians! The town has been selected by the Connecticut Clean Energy Fund to receive a 2009 Clean Energy Award in a ceremony at the New Haven Lawn Club on March 3.

According to the fund's head, Bob Wall, our little hamlet, where over 30 percent of households have agreed to pay the small premium for clean energy, tops the green list of Connecticut towns. So far, no other town in the state has signed up a percentage beyond the teens. In fact, according to Wall's information, we may be numero uno in the nation, with Palo Alto, California, eating our dust.

Furthermore, our grass-roots campaign to sign up homes for clean, renewable energy has borne tangible fruit. The town has earned an 8-kilowatt solar generating system for CCS, which should provide \$2,000 worth of electricity every year. The school has also been relamped with more efficient, longer-lasting, fluorescent lights, providing a savings of around \$8,000 per annum. Connecticut Light & Power has advanced the cost of the conversion and will pay itself back from the first two years' savings.

In other energy news, Highway Foreman Rick Stone has installed a waste-oil heater in the Town Garage. The unit filters and burns the crankcase oil deposited at the Recycling Center and should reduce the building's fuel bill by half. Formerly, the town's waste oil was given to Warren, which operates a similar plant. The garage has also installed the efficient lighting system.

Lastly, don't head for the optometrist if you can no longer make out the occupants of the Selectmen's Office as you drive by. New translucent window quilts are helping to conserve heat in the uninsulated building.

—Matt Collins

Meanwhile, at CCS

Notwithstanding the perennial Board of Education wrestling match with the budget bottom line, the school and community can look ahead to an orderly array of activities and programs at CCS, where enrollment has jumped to 124 with the arrival of three new students in grades one, three, and four, all girls. Thus the enrollment at CCS, the second smallest in Region One, holds steady.

Spring sports begin in March with practices for interschool boys' baseball and girls' softball for grades six through eight. Mrs. Simonetti-Shpur will conduct a spring concert for grades K-4 at 7 P.M. on March 25 in the CCS gym. Science teacher Erica Foster's Environmental Science Club will travel to Unity College in Maine from March 31 to April 2. The CCS students will sit in on classes dealing with current environmental issues. This club is also involved with green initiatives at CCS, including the arrival of solar voltaic panels and relevant technology. They will also begin a study of trees in the CCS arboretum. Technology coordinator Vicki Nelson and librarian Terri Kirkland have written a Unified Studies Program. This

Letters to the Chronicle

LOCAL ELECTIONS

There will be local elections this year and if you are interested in running I suggest you check with the town clerk, Vera Dinneen (672-2709), to find out what offices are up for election. Vera is at her office Monday through Thursday. Democrats and Republicans should let a member of their town committees know of their interest in a particular office well in advance of nominating caucuses, which are held in July. The point of this letter is to let people know if you want to run for an office, don't wait until the last minute.

Contact a member of the Republican or Democratic Town Committees now.

—John Miller

REAL ESTATE ASSESSMENTS

As your town property assessor, I am sensitive to concerns that you may have at this time regarding local property values. According to Connecticut state law, property is reappraised by my office just once every 5 years. Our last revaluation was for October 2006. At that time the market was studied, valuation tables were formulated based upon current sales, and values were assigned to individual properties based upon those tables. The tables and pricing criteria set in 2006 must stay in place for 5 years unless a mistake needs to be corrected or changes are made to a property. It does not matter if the real estate market increases or decreases during those 5 years. Our next revaluation is scheduled for October 2011. At

is a collaboration of library and technology skills, basically interdisciplinary units related to specific areas of study in other classes for grades six through eight. The development of this program was funded by a grant from Cornwall's Fund for Excellence.

Students in the art department under the direction of teacher Diane Dupuis have mailed President Barack Obama the results of their Hope Project. Each student at CCS wrote three wishes on a segmented piece of paper. Examples: save the polar bears, stop going to war, lower taxes. Perhaps the president will share the sincere wishes of Cornwall students with his family.

Dr. Fitz is eyeball to eyeball with another (dare I say) state mandate known as RTI (Response to Intervention). Presently, Cornwall and Salisbury are piloting a program of "probes" into the reading, math, and spelling skills of all K-8 students. Each student is "probed" in fall, winter, and spring using a web-based tool that reveals strengths and weaknesses. This will be conducted every year and become part of a student's record. This is information collection, not a test, and the results will be used to direct instruction.

A visit to CCS always reveals a cheerful and orderly atmosphere of disciplined freedom. Many other activities not mentioned here contribute to an interesting and innova-

that time property values will be adjusted to reflect current market conditions.

I hope that this answers some of your questions. I am always available if you would like to contact me at cwlassessor@optonline.net or 672-2703.

—Barbara Bigos, Assessor

WHO'S WHO

A few days after my birthday I heaved myself out of a warm chair to answer the phone wondering who I hadn't already heard from. A female voice asked for Lynn Cheney and I answered, "This is she." She launched into a spiel saying she was calling from the president's office of Colorado College and they were hoping I would consider speaking to their faculty and students. After a few seconds of stunned silence on my part I asked if she thought she was speaking to the ex-vice president's wife. There were three sorrys and the click of the phone hanging up. Next time I'm not letting on.

—Lynn Cheney

SWITCH OFF THE GLOBE

Earth Hour is a public-awareness-raising campaign on Climate Change. The lights-out initiative, which began in Sydney in 2007 as a one-city environmental campaign, has evolved into a grassroots action that has captured the attention of the citizens of the world. Now, 377 cities across 74 countries are committed to turning off their lights for one hour at 8:30 P.M. on March 28. Please mark your calendar and let Cornwall be counted.

—Katie Freygang

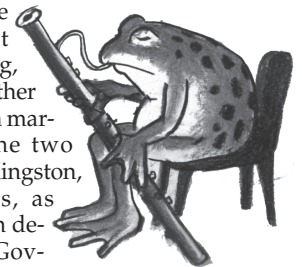
tive CCS. Still, everyone will be glad for spring break, which runs from April 6 to April 10.

—Phil Hart

Annals of Cornwall

Hannah (Bradford) Sherwood Croner Baldwin (1748–c. 1832) surely had one of the most eventful lives of Cornwall's early settlers. She came here in about 1770 as a young, single adult, either with or to join a married sister. The two were born in Kingston, Massachusetts, as fifth-generation descendants of Governor William Bradford. In 1758 they were orphaned in Maine, where their parents were murdered and scalped by Indians. The children were then sent back to Massachusetts to live with an aunt not much older than themselves, who already had a sizeable family.

In 1772, Hannah was married in Cornwall to a widower, Ebenezer Sherwood. He died in 1785, leaving her with seven children and a farm. Their home was on or near the site of the new Cornwall Free Library building. She married again in Cornwall to a German ex-soldier who had deserted from the British



Army near the end of the American Revolution. She had a child by him, but she shortly divorced him for deserting her. She was probably our town's first divorcee.

For a time, Hannah boarded "town charges," i.e., indigents, including the last member of our Dudleystown Dudleys. She later married her third husband, a widower of Brookfield, Connecticut, who died in 1815. Hannah was back in Cornwall by 1819 and was re-admitted to the First Congregational Church. But shortly afterward, she was dismissed from the church by letter. She then moved to Nelson, Ohio, where Cornwall church records show that 40 persons from perhaps 15 Cornwall families had resettled in the period 1812 to 1823. They included her son Joshua (who had moved to Nelson in 1812). Hannah, together with Joshua and his wife and her mother, was among the 50 members listed in the Nelson church's 1825 roster. When and where Hannah died is not known. She was probably the woman between ages 80 and 90 who was recorded in Nelson by the 1830 census as a member of Joshua's household.

What a life!

—Michael Gannett



Events & Announcements

Art in Cornwall: Beginning March 3, the Cornwall Library will exhibit mixed-media works by Amelia de Neergaard in a show entitled *The Language of Trees*. An opening reception will be held on Sunday, March 8, from 4 to 6 P.M.

Blood Drive will be held March 3 from 1:30 to 6:15 P.M. at the UCC Parish House. Donors must be at least 17 years old, weigh at least 110 pounds, and be in good health. There is no upper age limit for donors. To register, please call Pat Blakey at 672-6516 or 1-800-GIVE LIFE. Walk-in donors are always welcome. Giving blood takes approximately one hour, which includes social time and good food. (See article on giving blood in this month's *Chronicle*.)

Economics 101

The *Chronicle's* bailout bid didn't make it out of the House and Senate Committees, so we must ask our loyal readers to send a check. Our economy is modest, but ink and paper cost, and the talents of our layout and press people must be rewarded every month. We'd love to get a bit of stimulus from you next time your checkbook is out. Thanks!

Chili Chow: The CCS eighth grade will be hosting a chili dinner fundraiser on Saturday, March 14, at CCS. (See insert.)

Grumbling Gryphons Theater will lead *Drama and the Magic of Stories* for nine Thursdays, March 5 to May 7, from 3 to 4:30 P.M. at CCS. The program is open to all students in the area in grades 1-4. Children will study the art of theater from improvisation to performance. Guest artist Tom Hanford will make masks and music with the children. The cost is \$75 for the nine sessions, with discounts for siblings and scholarships available. Call 672-0268 for further information or contact Leslie at grumblinggryphons@yahoo.com to register with this non-profit.

Our Kilowatts: Getting Control of Our Energy Consumption. On Saturday, March 7, from 1 to 3 P.M. at the Library, the Cornwall Energy Task Force will promote Ideas for Energy-Efficient Living that help citizens explore all phases of their energy consumption and elucidate steps to live a less energy-intensive life. A discussion and demonstration will take place of kilowatts as a limited resource, conservation at home, usage as measured on your bill, and the politics of kilowatts. Refreshments will be served. For more information, check out www.cornwallct.org or call Katherine Freygang at 672-6010.

Donations are being accepted for the 18th Annual Cornwall Child Center Auction at the Mohawk Ski Lodge on Saturday, May 2, at 5:30 P.M. To download a donation form, please go to www.CornwallChildCenter.org or call Cara Weigold at 672-6183.

At the Library:

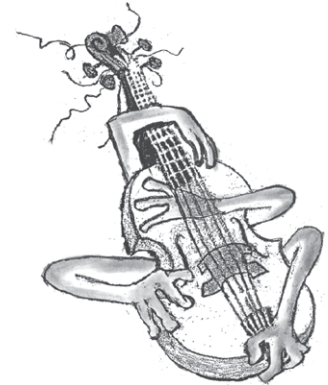
- Hot Chocolate Hour, the after-school, read-aloud program for third to fifth graders, will be held Wednesdays March 4 and 11. For information call 672-6874.
- Connecticut, Inc.: Friday, March 6, at 10:30 A.M. Presentation and questions answered about seniors, insurance, and health care.
- U.S. Census Bureau Testing, Tuesday, March 10, 10:30 A.M. to 1 P.M. Bring passport or two other types of photo ID or Social Security card. Come at 10:30 only.

Iraq Moratorium: Sixth anniversary of the Invasion of Iraq, third Friday, March 20, 7 P.M. at the Cornwall Library.

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

- March 7, 7 to 9:30 P.M. Family Contra Dance at the Town Hall. Suggested donation: \$5 adults, \$3 children. Contact Kathy and Bill at 672-0550 for more information.
- March 14, 10:30 A.M. to 1:30 P.M. Old Style Life Skills Series workshop, *Wool Gathering*, at the Town Hall. SPACE IS LIMITED, so please pre-register.
- March 21, 10:30 A.M. to 1:30 P.M. Old Style Life Skills Workshop on Honey Bee Mine at the Town Hall. Learn about life in the hive of a honey bee and share in a pot-luck lunch. \$35/family. PLEASE SIGN UP IN ADVANCE!
- March 21, 7:30 P.M. Family Round Sing at the Town Hall.
- March 28. Tentative Mother/Daughter Retreat. Contact Helen at 435-9839 for details.
- April 7, 7 to 9:30 P.M. Family Contra Dance at the Town Hall. Suggested donation: \$5 adults, \$3 children. For information call Jane at 672-6101.

With My Back to the Future: The Cornwall Historical Society will present a talk by Catherine Noren in which she considers her family genealogy and objects that are a tangible legacy at the Library on Sunday, March 22, at 3:30 P.M.



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