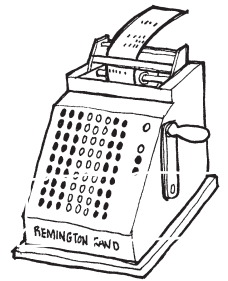


CORNWALL CHRONICLE

VOLUME 20 : NUMBER 3 MARCH 2010



The Fine Art of Making Budgets

Budgets are all about uncertainty. The idea is to present the taxpayers with a spending plan for the coming year supported by a revenue estimate that makes sense. Rarely is this exercise more difficult for Cornwall's Board of Selectmen than it has been this year.

On the spending side as of mid-February, the selectmen foresee a decrease; the 1989 school bond has finally been retired. Although the town still owes \$196,281 next year on the 2003 school bond, total debt service is down \$179,800.

Town capital projects are set to increase \$50,000 because of road rebuilding costs and an intensified bridge and culvert repair program.

The Town Office departments are level funded for the most part except for health insurance. The selectmen successfully reduced this benefit cost last year only to have the bill for nine employees increase by 30.2 percent. The selectmen are looking for other options.

Town Office salaries will increase 2 percent in the FY 2011 budget; otherwise department costs should be about level.

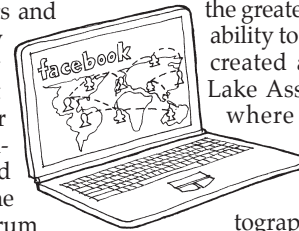
The education side of the budget was still being prepared as this article was being written. The Region One administration met with the Cornwall Board of Finance and made it clear that Region One feels our pain.

Revenue projections in mid-February were muddy because of the State of Connecticut's endless budget wars. The only estimates were that state revenues would be down almost 25 percent, or about \$60,000. Town Aid road improvement funds, the largest chunk of aid the town receives from the state, will be level funded. Revenues town-wide are down because of reduced activity. The Grand List of property, which includes motor vehicles, showed a slight decline in October 2009 for the first time in many years.

"We're not expecting any miracles," said Ralph Gold, chairman of the Board of Finance. The budget for 2010-2011 at the time of this writing doesn't seem capable of providing any. —Lisa L. Simont

Not Just a Pretty Facebook

It could be said that Cornwall doesn't need another place to discuss its politics and news. From Baird's to the Library to CCN (Cornwall Community Network, a free subscriber chat room), we bump into each other everywhere and are all chatty communicators with much to sing and kvetch about. So why would anyone bother promoting yet another forum for storytelling and griping? I won't. But I



will tell you about it.

Facebook can be equated to a Tuesday visit to the transfer station. At any given time people are standing around schmoozing or showing pictures from their latest vacation or sharing Cornwall stories: "Did you hear Devon Root was in Haiti during the earthquake?" Designed to mirror these interactions, Facebook combines the most common online means of communication—e-mail, blogging, discussion boards—into one place. When you first open your Facebook page you'll find that Devon Root has written, "Thank you dear friends and family. I am alive and well tonight." From the horse's mouth, as they say.

A few efforts have been made to create a place for Cornwallians to come together on Facebook. "Cornwall born and raised" is one group; "NWC of CT" is another. Potentially the greatest attribute of Facebook is the ability to share photographs. Someone created a group for the Cream Hill Lake Association (dubbed C.H.L.A.) where photographs were added of local families running around barefoot dating back to the 1930s. The photograph of John, Peter, and Charlie Van Doren with the high-dive in the background is too priceless to be missed.

(continued on page 2)

MARCH 2010

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
	1 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 Dem. Town Comm. 7:30 P.M. Lib. †	2 Red Cross Blood Drive 1:30-6:15 P.M. UCC Parish House † Inland Wetlands 7:30 P.M. Town Hall	3 Hot Chocolate Hour 3-4 P.M. Library US Census Bureau Testing 5-7 P.M. Library †	4	5 Story Hour 1:15-2:30 P.M. Library	6 Community Contra Dance 7-9:30 P.M. Town Hall †
7	8 Blood Pressure Screening Noon-1 P.M. UCC	9 P&Z 7 P.M. Town Hall Housatonic River Comm. 7:30 P.M. CCS Library	10 Hot Chocolate Hour 3-4 P.M. Library US Census Bureau Testing 5-7 P.M. Library †	11	12 Town Hall Players: <i>Jeeves and the Stolen Venus</i> 7:30 P.M. †	13 Chess for Kids 10 A.M. Library † Motherhouse Beekeeping Workshop 10:30 A.M.-1:30 P.M. UCC † Town Hall Players: <i>Jeeves and the Stolen Venus</i> 7:30 P.M. †
14 DAYLIGHT SAVING TIME BEGINS Pancake Breakfast for Haiti 8-11 A.M. CCS † Town Hall Players: <i>Jeeves and the Stolen Venus</i> 2 P.M. †	15 Deadline: April Chronicle Copy	16 Bd. of Selectmen 7:30 P.M. Town Hall	17 ST. PATRICK'S DAY	18 Bd. of Ed. 5 P.M. CCS Library Bd. of Finance 7:30 P.M. CCS Library	19	20 FIRST DAY OF SPRING Motherhouse Mother/Daughter Retreat † Film: <i>A Tree Grows in Brooklyn</i> 7:30 P.M. Library †
21 St. Bridget's Exhibit Opening 4-6 P.M. Historical Society †	22 ZBA 7:30 P.M. Town Hall*	23	24	25	26	27 Chess for Kids 10 A.M. Library † Open Poetry Reading and Refreshments 4-6 P.M. Library †
28	29	30 PASSOVER	31	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.		

*Check with Zoning Office—672-4957
† Details in Events and Announcements

BRUCKNER 7, BEARS 0

For over a year now, we've been not so quietly tolerating annoying visits from our hilltop family of bears. Finally, Jim figured out a foolproof, environmentally friendly solution. Open windows facing visitation site, turn on the Hi-Fi set close to those open windows, turn volume to loudest level, begin first movement of Bruckner's Symphony Number 7. While the initial double-bass sounds are practically inaudible to aging ears such as ours, the bears have no trouble detecting that there is a new presence in their range, loud, large, and unfamiliar. The bears will stop, look, and listen and, if they react as ours have, will make a fast retreat. We've never met a bear yet that liked Bruckner. —Carol Goodfriend

For the 12 issues of Vol. 20, the Chronicle will reprise memorable stories and letters from its first 20 years of publication. This letter originally appeared in 2000.



(continued from page 1)

It's not all good. It's excruciating to be forced to read that someone is bored at work or angry at the Yankees. (Not to be a hypocrite; I've been cursing Punxsutawney Phil for days now.) The things people choose to complain about are not always the riveting political and social debates one might hope. Having reservations about your privacy being violated is a legitimate concern, and the fact that it is a glorified gossip column can't go unmentioned. Nevertheless, if used carefully, Facebook might prove an invaluable tool designed to keep our Cornwall folks, both near and far, in close proximity.

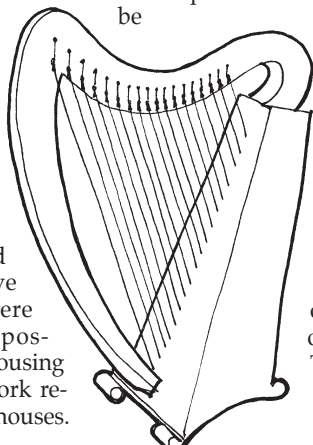
—Maggie Tauranac

Incentive Housing II

Town residents got the opportunity on February 11 to be on the ground floor of commenting on a new tool in the State of Connecticut's kit to promote the development of housing for low/middle income homeowners. This basically enables a town to designate higher housing density in a particular spot than is currently permitted. (See the January 2010 *Chronicle* for background.) The end result should be smaller, lower-priced homes, with 20 percent of the homes designated as "affordable."

Finding a possible site in this hilly town with lots of wetlands has been a challenge. But thanks to a grant from the State of Connecticut, a tremendous amount of work has already been done to locate a potential building site. Three were looked at seriously, and only one eventually made the cut, 18 acres off Route 7 in Cornwall Bridge. On this site, a total of 15 units could be built, three designated as "affordable housing."

About 20 residents came to listen to a presentation on the Incentive Housing Zone, the progress made to date in Cornwall, and the next steps, which will involve the town applying for this parcel of land to be designated an Incentive Housing Zone. Concerns were raised about the location, possible impact on neighboring housing values, and the amount of work required to get three affordable houses.



What many came away with was a sense that this is a lengthy process with a lot of "what ifs." What if the landowner does not want to proceed? What if no developer wants to build? What if no one wants this housing?

Yet all also came away with a greater understanding of how the processes of government work—one step at a time—and thankful that someone asked our opinion at the beginning.

—Louise Dunn

You Turkey

Recently, in a fit of worldiness, I had the car washed.

I'm not sure why I did this. It goes against my Puritan grain, and besides, it means rain within 24 hours. Still, I did it, and at home, I parked in the driveway, feeling satisfied. The black car looked gleaming and handsome against the autumnal landscape.

The next morning, from inside the house, I heard a series of drumming thrums outside. I listened, puzzled: they were loud bellicose thuds, syncopated and irregular. I looked out the window: the polished black car was under attack.

Our land is owned by a flock of six big wild turkeys who stalk back and forth across it at all hours. They move in lordly fashion, pausing to peck up tidbits from the lawn, the driveway, the rocks. The flock is all toms, and I think of them as rejects from a group of adults, rebellious adolescents who were kicked out. It's easy to see why: they have poor social skills. They're big and awkward and foolish-looking, with their gawky carriage, their slow, jerky walks. They are deeply disdainful of us, and when they see us they jerk their necks in outrage, trading exasperated comments. There they are again, they say to each other. What are they doing here?

That day, when I looked outside, the flock was spread out raggedly across the hillside. They were walking that weird turkey walk—head low, body crouching and gliding, long

neck jerking spasmodically.

But one of the toms had stopped on the driveway: he'd seen an enemy. Passing alongside the polished black car, he'd suddenly spied another turkey walking right beside him. When he stopped and turned, the other tom did too. When he raised his head and lengthened his neck in a threatening manner, the other tom did too. When he swelled himself up, puffing his feathers, weaving his head and leaning forward, the other tom did exactly the same thing. It was an outrage: a complete newcomer, challenging this big tom on his own territory. The tom darted his head out and struck hard. Bam! Bam-bam! Bam! Bam!

The other tom did just the same, hitting our tom bang on his own beak. It was uncanny, how perfectly coordinated they were, how precisely one tom mimicked the other. It was like the famous scene in *Duck Soup*. The two toms seemed magically joined at the cerebral cortex.

When I couldn't stand it anymore I went down and opened the front door.

"You idiot!" I shouted. "That's you! You're attacking yourself!"

The tom gave himself one more warning look and turned back to me.

There she is again, he muttered. What's she doing here? He hunched over crossly and began stalking up the hill in a threatening way, headed for the woods, talking under his breath.

My car still has the dents from the fight, a little battered ring near the fuel cap. It will be awhile before I get it washed again.

—Roxana Robinson

Good-Bye to Friends

Richard Dakin
Kathleen Wojan

Cornwall Briefs

- **Making Census:** 2010 is a year that we count ourselves, and so we sat down with our own Matt Collins, who is currently recruiting census-takers for the towns of Cornwall, Sharon, and Goshen. How crucial is an accurate census? Matt said the last census in 2000 missed approximately 50,000 people in Connecticut, likely resulting in our loss of a congressional seat and millions of dollars in a wide variety of federally funded programs.

This month a ten-question census form will be mailed to all households in town, and the census recruits we mentioned will begin visiting those who fail to return their questionnaires. Nursing homes and group-living households will automatically be on their lists for a drop-in. The U.S. Constitution requires that a census be taken every ten years.

- **Moose Makeover:** The West Cornwall eatery, just starting its tenth year, is in the midst of some serious and handsome interior work. There are "new" bathrooms with new fixtures and floors. The smaller side room has a new floor, as will the main room, along

with new windows, curtains, and a paint job. Co-owner Russ Sawicki, who admitted to doing most of the work himself, said that he had also revised his menu, with more salads and appetizers offered.

• **Utility Truck:** If you spot a new fire department vehicle around town, let us identify it for you: It is a Ford F-350 pickup truck, carrying a pump and water tank for use at small brush fires. Other uses include traffic control and hauling equipment from the firehouses to the scene of a fire or accident. The truck was paid for out of department funds rather than Cornwall's capital budget.

• **CCS Girls Champs:** Kudos to Cornwall's undefeated (12-0) girls' basketball team for winning the league championship with a victory in the final over Kent. Eighth-graders on the team were Autumn Classey, Anna Geyselaers, Heather and Katelyn Kearns, and Jenna Vanicky. They were coached by Bonnie Burdick and Patty Rovezzi.

• **Hughes Library:** The West Cornwall library has reopened with a new paint job and a new librarian, Clea Fowler. The hours are 9 A.M. to 12:30 P.M. on Saturdays.

—John Miller

125 Years Plus Two

Tucked nearly under the great expanse of concrete that is the not-particularly-scenic bridge of Cornwall Bridge (although Bridge #560, built in 1930, has been placed on the Connecticut Historic Register), down the hill on River Road, on the Sharon side of the intersection of Routes 4 and 7, sits the appealing white Carpenter Gothic Roman Catholic church of St. Bridget.

Named after the revered fifth-century Irish saint, Brigid, the original Catholic Mission Church was built in 1854 in West Cornwall—what is now the Bain Real Estate office. Needing more land, it later relocated to its present home along the banks of the Housatonic.

The Cornwall Bridge church parishioners celebrated its 125th anniversary in 2008. (The building's cornerstone was laid in 1882, and the building was finished in 1883.) Now, two years later, with support from the Connecticut Humanities Council and Housatonic Heritage, the continuing efforts of some dedicated parishioners, working with the Cornwall Historical Society (CHS), have resulted in an exhibition to go on display later this month at the CHS, 7 Pine Street in Cornwall Village.

"Iron Faith: Celebrating the History of St. Bridget Church" opens March 21 and runs through May 31. The exhibit covers such topics as the Irish who came to the area because of jobs in the iron industry and easy access due to the railroad; the founding of the parish; the construction of the Cornwall Bridge church and the institution of one of the very few round cemeteries to be found in the northeast; early patrons; the architecture and furnishings. Photos, both historic and new, early documents and deeds, and even an old pew will enliven the exhibition.

Carpenter Gothic, the style of St. Bridget

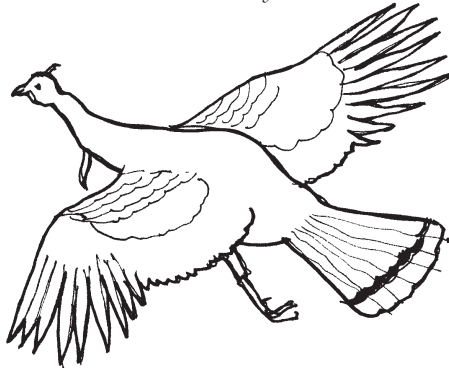
Letters to the Chronicle

STIMULUS FUNDS THE LOCAL WAY

Are any Cornwall projects percolating on the back burner for want of a little monetary boost to see them through? The Sydney Kaye Fund, established to "forward the well being of Cornwall residents," has an Advisory Committee that meets in April to recommend to the selectmen ways in which to spend accumulated interest.

Applications may be made by letter to the Advisory Committee via Barbara Herbst in the Finance Office, P.O. Box 68, Cornwall, CT 06753.

—Cheryl Evans, Chairman



and other buildings in the area, refers to such characteristics as the steeply pitched roof, lancet windows, and decorated vergeboard, also known as bargeboard (scrolled ornaments and lacy "gingerbread" trim on the front, projecting roof). Think wood craftsman translating gothic stone cathedral, and this is what you might get.

The public is invited to an opening reception at CHS on Sunday, March 21, from 4 to 6 P.M. Exhibition hours will be on Saturdays from 11 A.M. to 3 P.M. For further information about the reception and related events, contact Pat Conroy (860) 868-7138 or Ellen Paul (860) 868-6724.

—Honora Horan

Venus Observed

One evening early in February this reporter joined a group of enthusiasts who were rehearsing a light-hearted drama in the chilly off-hours ambiance of the Town Hall's theater. Parked in the empty room on a couple of folding chairs, we followed the action of *Jeeves and the Stolen Venus*, a new play created for the Cornwall Town Hall Players (THP). It is based on a 1959 short story by British comic writer P. G. Wodehouse, which has never before been dramatized. Its adapter, Joe Harnett from Goshen, is also the director.

Waiting in the wings for their entrances were the cast of seven: established Cornwall talents familiar from other THP productions, plus some gifted newcomers from neighboring towns. The play promotes the bizarre entanglements of Bertie Wooster, his Aunt Dahlia, and assorted other upper-class characters from the roster of Who's Who in Wodehouse. It offers snappy dialog, with plenty of offstage

YOU HAD TO BE THERE

I would call it a slice of Americana. Young and old, so many Cornwallians and friends. They told us between three and four hundred were there at "our" potluck and auction fundraiser. The Ag Commission, spearheaded by Bill Dinneen, brought us together after the disastrous loss of the Scovilles' large barn. Gordon Ridgway and Dave Cadwell were the auctioneers. Most of the Scoville family were on hand and represented the enduring spirit of all our hard-working and contributing citizens who pull together in a crisis.

A small sample of the items offered included bales of hay, cords of wood, home-baked pies, a weekend in a New York City apartment, gift-certificates from businesses and farms, etc.

Our Regional High School deserves thanks for loaning us their spacious cafeteria for this great communal event.

—Betty Silbert

squawks and onstage highjinks, delivered in the country house setting that was once indispensable to British dramas, and featuring that supreme butler Jeeves, who is indispensable to this one.

—Ann Schillinger

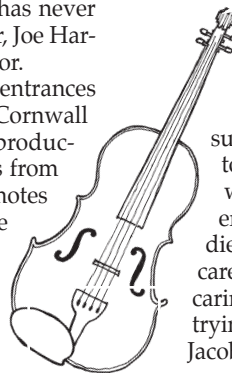
Cornwall Characters

The year 2009 may be remembered for its string of unfortunate local events. Let us hope 2010 allows our town to turn a positive page. Before we move on, it should be noted that several characteristics were consistently displayed at these times of crisis, showing Cornwall at its best. Helping neighbors, hardiness in adversity, and rebuilding are virtues firmly rooted here, as they have been since the town's beginning.

The story of Jacob Scoville, a Cornwall Revolutionary War volunteer soldier, illustrates some of these characteristics. Gold's and Starr's histories of Cornwall, available at local libraries, tell the story better than I could. Jacob, along with most other Cornwall men of the day, knew the hardships of the War for Independence. He was captured during the Battle of Long Island. He was then imprisoned over winter with other Cornwall soldiers below decks on a British prison ship in New York Harbor. Many

Americans died there of disease and starvation (one ounce of pork and a teaspoon of rice was a good day).

Jacob was one of the few who survived, after which he walked home to Cornwall. He eventually married widow Ruhamath (known as Hamer) Emmons, whose husband Samuel died of smallpox below decks in the care of Jacob. Hamer had spent the war caring for her three young children and trying to keep her family's farm going. Jacob and Hamer lived happily together



for many years farming near the present Scoville Farm.

Currently we can see the reconstruction of the Dzenutis house in Cornwall Bridge, and a new Scoville barn will eventually arise from the ashes. People in Cornwall are still looking after their comrades, volunteering and rebuilding. Jacob and Hamer may be smiling.

—Gordon Ridgway

Events & Announcements

Art in Cornwall: *Spring Fever* is the theme of Lady Audrey's Gallery's next juried art competition. Closing date for artists to enter is March 17. For more details go to ladyaudreysgallery.com.

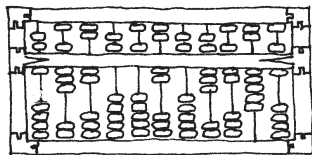
At the Cornwall Library, the show of CCS students' work will continue through March 27. Beginning March 30, Matt Clements will show photographs from his travels in Mongolia.

David Bailey will exhibit his artwork at the National Iron Bank during March.

Blood Drive will be held on March 2 from 1:30 to 6:15 P.M. at the UCC Parish House. To schedule an appointment call 1-800-GIVE LIFE. Walk-ins are welcome and will be taken as time permits.

Homeowner's Tax Relief: Homeowners who were 65 or older by December 31, 2009, or those receiving Social Security disability payments can apply to receive a credit on their property tax. To qualify for the credit, applicants must live in the home and must make no more than \$32,300 if single or \$39,500 if married. Applicants are required to submit proof of their 2009 income and their Social Security Form 1099 for the year 2009 and must show proof of their permanent disability status. Cornwall residents who qualify may apply at the Assessor's Office before May 14, 2010, on Tuesdays, Wednesdays, and Thursdays from 9 A.M. to noon. Call (860) 672-2703 with any questions.

Kindergarten Registration will be held at CCS on March 22, 23, and 24. For more information call Patty Rovezzi at (860) 672-6617.



Just a Reminder

If you haven't had a chance yet to contribute to the *Chronicle's* health and welfare, please use the coupon below. Thank you!

At the Library

Hot Chocolate Hour, the after-school, read-aloud program for third- to fifth-graders, meets Wednesdays March 3 and 10, at 3 P.M. For further information call (860) 672-6874.

Story Hour, last day in series, Friday, March 5, at 1:15 P.M.

Chess Club, for ages 7 and up, Saturdays, March 13 and 27, at 10 A.M.

U.S. Census Bureau Testing, Wednesdays, March 3 and 10, from 5 to 7 P.M. Bring passport or two other types of picture identification or Social Security card.

Open Poetry Reading and Refreshments, Saturday, March 27, from 4 to 6 P.M. If you will be reading, let us know ahead and bring an extra copy for the Library. Call Katherine Freygang at (860) 672-6010.

Motherhouse Activities. For more information, ticket prices, and to reserve places, contact Debra Tyler at (860) 672-0229. See www.motherhouse.us.

March 6, 7 to 9:30 P.M., Cornwall Community Contra Dance at the Town Hall, with Bill Fischer calling and Still, the Homegrown Band playing, children welcome. \$3/child. \$5/adult.

March 13, 10:30 A.M. to 1:30 P.M.: Old Life Styles Skills workshop on bees, UCC Parish House. Pot-luck lunch. Pre-registration is required. \$35/family.

March 15: New Moon Gathering in NW CT. Contact Rachel for more information: (860) 824-8404.

March 20, Woolly Spring Equinox Mother-Daughter Retreat. \$35/mother-daughter pair.

The Cornwall Library invites all to celebrate St. Patrick's Day and the first day of spring with the movie *A Tree Grows in Brooklyn*, about an Irish-American family living in Brooklyn at the turn of the 20th century. The movie was adapted from Betty Smith's celebrated coming-of-age novel and was Elia Kazan's directorial debut. The film, which earned two Academy Awards (James Dunn and Peggy Ann Garner), will be introduced by Joy O'Boym. That's Saturday evening, March 20, at 7:30 P.M. (St. Patrick's plus three).

Student Grants for Environmental Work:

The Cornwall Conservation Trust (CCT) is offering student grants again for those pursuing environmentally related college degrees or special programs (internships, etc.). The deadline is May 1, and the application is on CCT's website: cornwallconservationtrust.org. Questions? Call Emilie Pryor at (860) 672-4226.

The Cornwall Child Center will be open this summer daily from 8 A.M. to 4 P.M. Additionally, there will be seven sessions of weeklong camp offered from 9 A.M. to 1:30 P.M. Call the Center for information or to enroll: (860) 672-6989.

Cornwall Town Hall Players are giving you three chances to see *Jeeves and the Stolen Venus*, a comedy written by J. W. Harnett of Goshen, CT, based on a story by P. G. Wodehouse: Friday, March 12, at 7:30 P.M.; Saturday, March 13, 7:30 P.M.; and Sunday, March 14, 2 P.M. Tickets are \$10. For information call (860) 672-6762.

Pancake Breakfast for Haiti: Here's your chance to help earthquake-stricken Haiti and enjoy a delicious breakfast, too. Pancakes, flapjacks, griddlecakes, whatever you want to call them, CCS's third, fourth and fifth grade Roots & Shoots has got 'em and they are serving them up with real Cornwall maple syrup, scrambled eggs, and sausage. This delectable fundraiser will take place on Sunday, March 14, from 8 to 11 A.M. in the school's Gathering Room. \$5 per adult; \$3 per child ten years and under. Generous local merchants have donated a whole host of brilliant prizes that lucky pancake-munchers may be taking home. CCS alumna Devon Root was on the spot in Jeremie, Haiti, even before the earthquake. The proceeds from this breakfast will be donated to the Connecticut-based group Haitian Health Foundation, for which Devon works.

Ned Lamont, who recently announced his candidacy for governor of Connecticut, will address the Cornwall Democratic Town Committee and Democratic Coalition on Monday, March 1, at 7:30 P.M. at the Library. Everyone is invited.

Daylight Comes Early This Year. Set your clocks ahead at 2 A.M. on Sunday, March 14, for Daylight Saving Time.

CORNWALL CHRONICLE

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