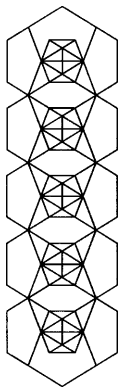


CORNWALL CHRONICLE

VOLUME 16 : NUMBER 1 FEBRUARY 2006



Heating with Yankee Crude

With oil prices peaking at nearly three dollars a gallon and no relief in sight, it seems only a matter of time before your fuel delivery will arrive in a Brinks truck. Sinking your own oil well is unlikely to help Connecticut homeowners. Pennsylvania has a lot. Even New York has a little, but the oil fairy seems to have flown past Connecticut without leaving a drop.

Several Cornwall residents, however, are fighting back with that renewable natural resource we have in abundance. Fred Scoville and Ted Larson, among others, have recently installed new, high-tech wood-burning furnaces behind their homes.

So why put your new woodburner in your backyard? It's nearer the woodpile. No soot or ashes to coat your upholstery, and most important: no worries about chimney fires turning your nest into charred embers. Also, interior space will be at a premium, since you'll want to hang onto your oil furnace in case you care to absent yourself for more than a couple of days.

If these units had a door with a half-moon cutout, they would pass for outhouses, were it not for the stainless chimneys protruding from the roof. They are little, peak-roofed metal cabins built around a combustion chamber which will handle logs up to four feet long and more than a foot in diameter.

That means you can probably kiss your log splitter goodbye. According to Fred, you can throw in almost anything you can lift, seasoned or green, hardwood or soft. The boiler heats water to around 170 degrees (indicated by an LED gauge), and a pump circulates it through insulated pipes to a heat exchanger in your basement. The system is compatible with radiators or forced-air heating and will provide your hot tap water as well. Depending on the size of your pieces, you may only need to add wood two or three times a day. Maintenance is minimal.

The do-it-yourselfer should plan on spending at least six or seven thousand for the unit and a few weekends of work to install it. Then, if you have your own wood lot and don't object to wielding a chainsaw, you'll be sitting pretty, watching the oil truck roll past your house toward your neighbor's.

Fred keeps his thermostat at a sizzling 72 degrees. Ted, who sets his at 66, figures to go through about seven cords a year. An average cord of wood contains as many BTUs as 170 gallons of fuel oil, so even if you have to have your wood delivered at the current rate of \$200 or more per cord, you'll be saving 50 percent over the cost of oil. That means it will only take around six years to make up the outlay for your woodburner.

—Matt Collins

CHC Survey

In 1986 the first selectwoman of Cornwall, Patsy Van Doren, appointed a Housing Task Force to assess housing needs and to make recommendations to the town. Subsequent surveys revealed there was a clear need for more affordable housing, particularly for young families and the elderly. In 1988 the Cornwall Housing Corporation (CHC) was created, a non-profit corporation authorized by the state to be the official Town Community Development Housing Corporation. Today, some 20 years since the task force was appointed, Cornwall residents can look back with pride at the results—results obtained by the continued work of dedicated community members with the cooperation and assistance of town officials. Kugeman Village, an 18-unit rental complex, was built to house individuals and families. The Parcel Program was started and offers home ownership. This program boasts ten affordable single-family homes owned by Cornwall residents, with another two under construction. Further, CHC established the Clifton Read Fund in memory of an original CHC board member. The fund provides short-term rental assistance and is administered in confidence by a committee of volunteers.

(continued on page 2)

FEBRUARY 2006

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
Every Week This Month: Mondays: Jam Session, 7:30 P.M. Village Meeting House; Adult Basketball, 8 P.M. CCS Gym Tuesdays: Adult Volleyball, 7-9 P.M. CCS Gym Wednesdays: Play Group, 10 A.M. Playscape/UCC; Hot Chocolate Hour, 3:15 P.M. Library† Stretch Class, 5 P.M. Town Hall; Mother/Daughter Workshop, 6:30 P.M. Library†			1	2	3	4
5	6 Park & Rec. 7:30 P.M. W. C. Firehouse & Bd. of Selectmen 7:30 P.M. Town Hall Agricultural Comm. 7:30 P.M. Town Hall	7 Inland Wetlands* 7:30 P.M. Town Hall	8	9	10	11 Cornwall Association 9 A.M. UCC Day Room Bread Making 10:30 A.M. UCC Parish House † Read-A-Thon 7 P.M. Library †
12 LINCOLN'S BIRTHDAY	13 Legal Holiday- Town Offices Closed Blood Pressure Screening 3-4 P.M. UCC Parish House ABC Meeting 5:30 P.M. Cornwall Inn	14 VALENTINE'S DAY Region One Bd. of Ed. 7 P.M. HVRHS Housatonic River Comm. 7:30 P.M. CCS Library P&Z 7:30 P.M. Town Hall	15 Deadline: March Chronicle Copy	16 Bd. of Ed. 5 P.M. CCS Lib. Bd. of Fin. 7:30 P.M. CCS Lib. VFW Post 9856 8 P.M. W. C. Firehouse	17	18
19 Chris Webber Reading 3 P.M. Library †	20 PRESIDENTS' DAY Legal Holiday- CCS & Town Offices Closed	21 CCS Closed Eighth Grade Fundraising Dinner 5:30 & 7:30 P.M. Wandering Moose † & Bd. of Selectmen 7:30 P.M. Town Hall	22 WASHINGTON'S BIRTHDAY Eighth Grade Fundraising Dinner 5:30 & 7:30 P.M. Wandering Moose † Cornwall Vol. Fire Dept. 8 P.M. W. C. Firehouse	23	24	25
26 Thomas Jefferson Comes to Cornwall 3 P.M. CCS Gym †	27 ZBA 7:30 P.M. Town Hall*	28	Every Week This Month: Thursdays: Toddler Time, 1:15 P.M. Library; Meditation for Mothers, 1:15 P.M. UCC Day Room; Tai Chi, 7-9 P.M. CCS Gathering Room Fridays: Story Hour, 1:15 P.M. Library; Game Night, 7-9 P.M. W. Cornwall Firehouse† Saturdays: Cornwall Community Ice Skating, 7 P.M. Hotchkiss Sundays: Kids' Basketball, 1-3 P.M. CCS Gym; Meditation Group, 1-2 P.M. Debra Tyler 672-0229 for location			

* Check with Zoning Office—672-4957

† Details in Events and Announcements

(continued from page 1)

This month, a housing-needs survey will be conducted by mail. *Responses to the survey are very important.* They give direction to the work of CHC and are required to support applications for private and government funding. The CHC would also like to hear about land suitable for senior housing and Parcel Program sites. Please contact Jim Levy at 672-6377 or j.levy@snet.net.

—Jim Levy

Be Mine

Roses? Chocolate? Exquisite or poetic cards? Decorated shoeboxes? When winter is dragging, thank goodness for the spark of Valentine's Day. Once an opportunity to profess love, it is now also a chance to celebrate at school. Even 60 years ago, Madeline Lape said, students made valentines to give to each other and hopefully receive at school. There were no Valentine parties in her youth, Thalia Scoville reports, but children did bring cards to school, sometimes trudging in the snow "because there were no snow days then."

Maureen Prentice remembers beautiful cupcakes, a mailbox all students decorated with crepe paper and glitter, as well as decorated walls and windows of the classroom. Sally Hart recalls when Miss Morrissey was principal/teacher at CCS. A classmate who rarely finished his work diligently completed it on February 14 so he could serve as postman. Ten to fifteen cents at Woolworth's would get a book of cards and envelopes to cut out and paste. During World War II, one could even send away for a kit from Sears and Roebuck. When Liz Rainville taught at CCS, she filled the showcases with lovely antique valentines.

For some, the unfairness and hurt feelings of those exchanges piqued a budding sense of sympathy for children whose pile of cards was smaller. Today all students prepare a card for each of their classmates at CCS. But some recall gathering matchmaking information by putting two check-off boxes on the back: "Do you like Debby? ___Yes ___No."

The date is also memorable for birthdays, like Fred Scoville's and David Williams's. That might have produced a special red meal of lasagna or Addie Pollard's heart cookies filled with raspberry or currant jelly. Barb Gold remembers both titles of a movie double feature, hoping her baby would not be born that day. Tracy Elizabeth obliged and came on February 15, 1972. That date in 1968 was memorable to Ralph Gold, who went to Vietnam and shaved his upper lip for the last time.

Cornwall held a Senior Citizens Valentine's Dance, and high schools sometimes celebrate the holiday that way. Phill West was the only interviewee to divulge a romantic memory. Shortly after meeting Kathy Martin, he sent a Valentine bouquet to her class in Brattleboro High School. A week later he took a dozen red roses and one white to the annual Dance Flurry they both at-

tended, along with a copy of James Whitcomb Riley's *Roses*. Romance worked wonders—she is now Kathy West.

Hope everyone finds a way to celebrate this rite of winter. —Ann Gold

Dunn Deal

The Dunns, who live on Route 7 in Cornwall Bridge, have been living with a lien on their property. The lien was affixed by a contractor who had removed soil from the site of a former gas station on the property for a bill of over \$190,000, over four times his original estimate.

In December, under the watchful eye of a Litchfield Superior Court judge, the contractor agreed to remove the lien; the Dunns will make an escrow payment of \$65,000 on top of their initial payment of \$50,000. The balance will be settled by a future court proceeding. Neighbors have offered statements indicating that the bill may be excessive.

Meanwhile, at the request of the Town of Cornwall, the Torrington Area Health District has tested four neighboring wells and found them all clear of any trace of gasoline byproducts. So at least the Dunns's problems are now limited to above ground, where their support in the community also remains clear. —Gordon Ridgway

Local Lobbyists

Cornwall has long been a member of the Northwestern Connecticut Council of Governments (NWCCOG), a little-publicized but highly effective alliance among our nine neighboring town governments and a means for presenting a united regional voice to state government. These days it's hard to remember that lobbying is not a bad word, but is, ideally, a useful and necessary conveyance of information and public sentiment to legislators studying the issues before them. As first selectman, Gordon Ridgway is our Cornwall representative on the legislative committee of the NWCCOG. Recently, Gordon, NWCCOG members, and other regional town officials spoke with Secretary of State Susan Bysiewicz against the mandated conversion from mechanical voting machines to not-ready-for-prime-time electronic ones.

The legislative committee of the NWCCOG meets frequently in working session at our town hall and almost as often with Representatives Willis, Wilber, and Miner and Senator Roraback at the Wandering Moose during state legislative session. The committee is currently polishing up a Legislative Priority paper for year 2006. Among the position statements they are advancing are the prohibition of "any new unfunded mandates"; increases in state funding for the preservation of open space and farmland; insuring volunteerism in small towns by freeing them from certain unnecessary and inappropriate "urban standards";

and establishing more effective affordable-housing measures.

Aside from giving our group of small towns in the area a clearer collective voice in state government, the NWCCOG affords each of its member's citizens the opportunity to have his or her individual views considered. And the Cornwall selectmen urge Cornwallians to make these views known at the Town Hall, Baird's Two, or Bramley's Package Store Boutique. Democracy is a two-way street. —Scoville D. Soule

Welcome

Georgia Stryker Sperry Horan
to Julie Béglin and Daniel Horan

Mary Genevieve to Melissa and Sumner Ireland

Good-Bye to a Friend

Desmond Nicholson

Land Transfers

Everett A. Van Dorn to Henry M. Blodget and Amy P. Zilliox, 31.636 acres on Dibble Hill Road for \$832,400.

William C. Gawel, Jr., to Mark E. and Susan Kent, property at 16 Burlwood Lane for \$106,500.

Lawrence van Valkenburgh to Cornwall Conservation Trust Inc., a gift of 9.027 acres off Town Street.

Lawrence van Valkenburgh to Gregory and Ulla Sephton, property at 193 Town Street for \$940,000.

Joseph C. Gemeyel and Gary S. Guilman to Jeannean Raymond, property at 378 Kent Road for \$442,036.

Marion Blake, Hugh D. Blake, Eliza B. Smith, Amy Whitcomb, Carol H. Knapp, Carl R. Hermann, Cathy R. Casey, and Carol McDermott to Cornwall Conservation Trust Inc., a gift of 25.3 acres off Great Hill Road.

Dermot P. and Darilyn F. Woods to Michael J. and Victoria Santini, property at 368 Kent Road for \$425,000.

Ethel B. Jamgotchian to Brian and Kristen Bedell, property at 15 Popple Swamp Road for \$285,000.

Gregory V. and Pamela R. Frisoli to Stephan and Victoria Montifiore, property at 63 Popple Swamp Road for \$790,000.

Vivian Ditisheim and Tommie Thompson to Sebastian D. Beckwith, property at 2 River Road South for \$362,000.

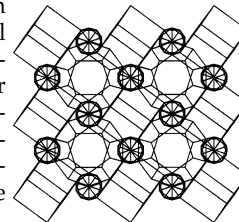
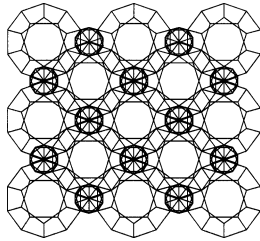
Joshua E. Perlstein to Vivian H. Ditisheim, property at 20 Jewell Street for \$227,500.

The Bard Snow Bound

An enthusiastic audience of thespians and Shakespeare devotees from Cornwall and neighboring towns gathered in the Town

Hall on January 7 for "The Awesome Bard," first of a four-part series of workshops and discussions, *Speaking with Shakespeare*. The workshops, created by Cornwall's Town Hall Players and sponsored and underwritten by Park and Rec., were offered on Saturday afternoons in January. Late in June, the players will perform *A Midsummer Night's Dream* on the Green, with Cornwall's Fred Thaler as director. Auditions for the play are set to begin in April.

The idea of publicly performing Shakespeare, with his heightened 16th-century language, poetic meter, and often-styl-



ized stage movements, can be pretty intimidating to community theater. Looking forward to casting *Dream* this summer, Fred, along with Nick Jacobs, designed these four January workshops to encourage local people of all ages to put aside awe of The Bard, get excited about the fun of performing Shakespeare, and try out for roles in the coming production. Potential Town Hall Players in the audience get experience with speech and movement in an Elizabethan drama, as well as an understanding of the remarkable historical period it came from.

On January 7 Nick gave an introduction to what we know about the playwright (1564-1616), a description of his times and the risky position of the theater in the tense religious politics of the day (topics for plays were restricted by law), and his amazing use of language. Thirty-six histories, comedies, and tragedies were authored by Shakespeare alone (the audience could not come up with all the titles), and 2,000 new words have been recorded in his writings. Nick recited some revealing personal speeches that pushed the action in the tragedies and explained their wrenching images.

According to Fred, today's stagecraft and the structure of the play itself offer a good deal of freedom in production, and many skills will be needed in casting it. Besides 21 speaking parts, *A Midsummer Night's Dream* has three songs and a number of dances—even a chance for swordplay. That news should call forth a number of talents from among us. The Cornwall Library, by the way, contains Shakespeare's complete works and at least 24 volumes of commentary and studies of his times, his language, plots, and plays, and finally films.

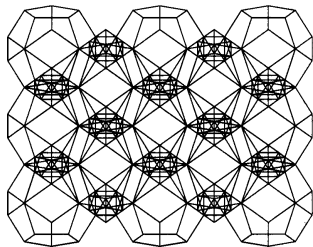
Was William Shakespeare, a glover's son from rural Warwickshire, really the author of these poems and plays? Yes, says Nick: he was well known in the London theater, and it would have been hard to carry off a successful fraud, given the strong currents of gossip in that world. Fred agrees, pointing out that during Elizabethan times, several men of artistic genius emerged from obscure backgrounds. Among them all, Shakespeare was supreme.

—Anne Schillinger

CCS Music Department

A lot of things are going on this year in the music department at Cornwall Consolidated School. Many of the upper-grade band and chorus students have joined the regional band and chorus groups this season. They participate with other students enrolled in the program from all over Region One. It is a great way for the children to learn, make friends, get to know their way around the high school that they will be attending in a few years, and meet some of the staff at the high school.

A few students from Cornwall are taking part in the solo festival, which is a competition among students in band and chorus, all



Letters to the Chronicle

ABC UPDATE

The Association of Businesses in Cornwall (ABC) meets on the second Monday of the month at the Cornwall Inn from 5:30 to 7:30 P.M. The February 13 meeting topic is "Tax Tips for Small Businesses" by member and CPA Walter Malone, who has been treasurer for the past two years. Election of new officers will be held at this meeting. Ira Shapiro has served as vice president and Priscilla Miller as president. We have been minus a secretary. The new Cornwall Book is about to go to press...waiting on a few last-minute ads. In 2006 ABC members will have a wonderful new benefit. Mark and Stacy, proprietors of the Cornwall Inn, are offering a discount to all ABC members.

Our meetings are open to the public.
—Priscilla Miller

KEEP ON TRUCKIN'

I would like to thank everyone who has expressed concern about my truck hijacking and my personal well-being. Thanks also to friends and neighbors for the use of their trucks for our home and business. At this writing, four weeks later, the truck has not been recovered, and now my insurance has compensated me for the loss. In fact, I've just purchased a burgundy-colored plow truck as a replacement.

CREDIT IS DUE

Ed Ferman must have been overwhelmed by the number of people involved in this fall's "perfect storm" of qualified candidates for the Planning and Zoning Commission. He neglected to mention that the commission also lost the talents of a very capable sitting member: Heidi Kearns. Heidi was a quick learner, a hard worker, and showed excellent judgment. The town will miss her services.
—Doc Simont

from Connecticut. The kids will be performing a piece in front of a judge. The categories for the competition are jazz band, band, and chorus. There are even a couple of students from CCS learning all three pieces and being judged on them.

Sometime later in the year, all of the music department may be going into a competition. It will be tough because the size of band/chorus groups they are competing against can reach 700 people. Though it is a challenge, the students are trying to raise about \$1,000 to be able to pay the sign-up fee of around \$40 per person. All in all, I would say that Mrs. Simonetti-Shpur ("Mrs. S.") and her students have a very busy year ahead of them.

—Apryl Classey

Budget Season Kicks Off

As February starts, the Town of Cornwall begins the annual budget process in earnest.

What is the Town Budget? It is an estimate of spending to provide the necessary and desired services for the coming year. It is the sum of projected costs (wages, benefits, insurance, contracted services, and materials) for operating the Town Office, the highway department, the school, and a variety of additional programs.

Who creates the budget? The Board of Selectmen and the Board of Education do the initial work. The Board of Finance reviews it,

and changes are suggested. Once all parties agree on the final amounts of the expenses, the Board of Finance determines a funding plan. This is primarily property tax revenue with a dash of state funding and a pinch of miscellaneous income. The budget is then presented to the voters at a public hearing and then finally, in late May, it is acted on.

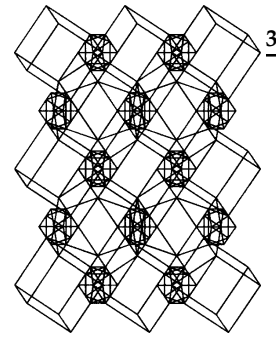
Why should we care? This single document ultimately determines what the town is going to do for the coming year: what services will be provided, what programs will be funded, what major purchases will occur, and what will have to wait. For most taxpayers the first thought is, how much is this going to cost me? The second thought is often, how am I going to benefit? The third, yet perhaps most important, reflection is, does the budget provide too little or too much?

Now is the time to make your wishes and concerns known. Communicate (talk, write, email, or phone) with your elected officials and participate at meetings.

—Ralph Gold

Events & Announcements

Board of Assessment Appeals: Any property owner who wants to appeal their October 1, 2005, Grand List assessment *must* file an appeal on a prescribed form. This appeal form is available from the Town Clerk's Office and must be delivered to the Town Clerk's Office or postmarked by February 21, 2006. Call 672-2703 for information. Appeals to be heard in March.



Art in Cornwall: From February 1 to March 18, the Cornwall Library will host a Poetry/Tapestry Wall featuring rugs by Margarito Hendon and poetry by various Cornwall-connected writers. Submissions of short poems are welcome. Contact Ellen Moon at ourmaridog@yahoo.com. In the case, the Cornwall Historical Society will exhibit photographs from its collection.

At the Outsiders Gallery, the rotating show of Connecticut artists will continue through March.

Donate Old Cell Phones to Women's Support Services. The phones are sent to a company to be cleaned and then distributed in Third World countries. WSS gets a donation for every cell phone that they send. Please bring your discarded cell phones to either the Cornwall Consolidated School main office or the Cornwall Free Library. They will be collected through February. Sponsored by CCS grades three, four, and five Roots and Shoots program.

Park & Rec. Will Sponsor:

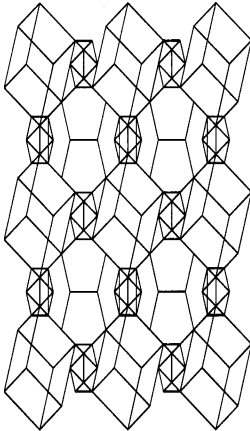
- Adult basketball at the CCS gym, Mondays at 8 P.M.

- Adult volleyball at the CCS gym, Tuesdays at 7 P.M.

- Ice skating at the Hotchkiss School Schmidt Rink, Saturdays from 7 to 8 P.M. All skaters must wear a hat.

- Kids' basketball at the CCS gym, Sundays 1 to 3 P.M.

- Family Game Night from 7 to 9 P.M. at the West Cornwall Firehouse every Friday in February. All families are invited to bring board games and play. Pizza will be provided. Children must be accompanied by an adult.



Sweet Sixteen?

With this issue, the *Chronicle* closes Volume 15 and moves into its 16th year. That means a total of 185 issues have chronicled our town's journey to today, the easy riding and the bumps in the road. This trip could never have happened without your generous support. Any checks we receive to sweeten the start of our 16th year will be put to good use. Our thanks.

At the Library:

- The Cornwall Free Library is planning a special **Book Sale** on Memorial Day weekend at the Library. The sale will feature rare and out-of-print books, first editions, books by Cornwall authors, and other special collectibles. If you have books in your collection that you think are appropriate for the sale, and that you would like to donate, please contact Louise Dunn at the Library, 672-6874.

- The Rev. Chris Webber will read from his new book *Beyond Beowulf* at the Library on Sunday, February 19, at 3 P.M. Webber, an Episcopal priest at All Saints Chapel in Cornwall, is the author of many books. In *Beyond Beowulf*, which Webber calls the first-ever sequel to *Beowulf*, the oldest narrative in the English language, the reader learns the fate of Beowulf's people following his death. The book is written for readers of all ages, and Webber will have books available at the Library for purchase and signing.

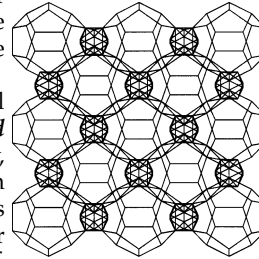
- The Friends of the Library will host the first **Readathon Sleepover** at the Library from 7 P.M. on Saturday, February 11, to 8 A.M. on Sunday, February 12. This event is open to fourth- through sixth-graders who find three people to sponsor them (\$5 per sponsor recommended). Sponsor sheets/parental permission forms will go home through CCS and be available at the Library. So shake out your sleeping bag, grab your toothbrush and favorite board game, and, of course, a good book (or borrow one), and come read for fun and for a good cause. A head count is needed, so please call Bridget Lynch at 672-0176 or Deirdre Fischer at 672-1123 to sign up.

- **Hot Chocolate Hour** will be held at the Library for third-, fourth-, and fifth-graders beginning Wednesday, February 8, at 3:15 P.M. for six weeks. After snacks, Amy Buck will read *Finn Family Moomintroll*, the classic fantasy by Tove Jansson. Students from CCS may take the bus to the Library after school; pick-up is at 4:15 P.M. Please call the Library to register: 672-6874.

- **Mother/Daughter Workshops on Self-Esteem:** On each of the four Wednesday nights in February, at 6:30 P.M. in the Library Meeting Room, the Housatonic Youth Service Bureau and Women's Support Services, in collaboration with the Library, will offer films on media advertising, mask-making, and discussion of issues relating to teenage girls' self-esteem. The series is open to girls with their mothers in grades six to eight from Region One schools. \$10 per pair for materials.

Old-Style Life Skills Series: On Saturday, February 11, from 10:30 A.M. to 1:30 P.M., Debra Tyler, of Cornwall's Local Farm, will be demonstrating how to make a family-sized batch of bread from scratch. She'll teach participants to grind wheat, mix and knead different doughs, and form loaves.

This and future Motherhouse events will take place on the second Saturday of every month at the UCC Parish House on Bolton Hill Road. The per-family fee, including a theme-appropriate lunch, is \$35. For information on additional events scheduled for March and April, or to volunteer, contact Debra Tyler at localfrm@yahoo.com.



Grant Money to Support Cornwall Programs is available through the Cornwall Foundation. The foundation announces that, through the support of the Community Foundation of Northwest Connecticut, it has received a 1-to-4 matching grant from the Edwards Community Endowment Project (ECEP). Donations from the community will be supplemented with an additional 25 percent contribution from the ECEP. For information on where to give or to obtain grant applications (which are due April 15, July 15, October 15, or January 15), contact David Ott at 672-6040, or visit the website at cornwallfoundation.org.

Thomas Jefferson Performance in Cornwall, sponsored by the Cornwall Consolidated School Fund for Excellence, will take place on Sunday, February 26, at 3 P.M. at CCS. (See insert in this issue.)

Annual Italian Dinner to support the CCS eighth-grade trip to Washington, DC, will take place at the Wandering Moose on Tuesday, February 21, and Wednesday, February 22. Seatings at 5:30 and 7:30 P.M. Adults \$12, children \$6. Call 318-0107 for reservations.

CORNWALL CHRONICLE

FEBRUARY ISSUE

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MARCH ISSUE

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