



# CORNWALL CHRONICLE



VOLUME 3: NUMBER 5 JUNE 1993

## No-Wynn Situation

In postponing a vote on casino gambling for at least a year — and thereby dashing the hopes of promoter Stephen Wynn — Connecticut's legislature was clearly yielding to an unusual show of unity by Cornwall's two major political parties.

At their regular May meetings, the Democratic and Republican town Committees both took positions against gambling casinos in Connecticut — though one of two resolutions voted by the Democrats left the door open a crack for gambling under state, rather than private, auspices.

— Spencer Klaw

## Beneficent Budget Breezes By

Thirty-five people attended the May 7 budget hearing which was relatively uneventful. First Selectman Ridgway, School Board Chairman Lynn Cheney, and Board of Finance Chairman Ralph Gold presented the budget. Maureen Schulz questioned what she called an "escalating" school budget; Denton Butler suggested that the town spend down its surplus in order to avoid tax increases; and Ben Gray questioned the adequacy of a line item of \$5000 for municipal planning. Chairman Gold said he was "pleased to present a budget that has

a decrease in total spending, yet does not reduce services."

Apparently the forty people who came to the Town Meeting on May 21 were also pleased, for within five minutes they unquestioningly and unanimously approved the 1993-94 budget of \$3,465,309, nearly \$85,000 lower than the current budget.

Selectman Ridgway expressed satisfaction with the spirit of cooperation and good will that characterized the entire process.

— Ed Ferman and Ken Keskinen

## A Tale of Town Offices

Two recent studies have concluded that Cornwall needs 6000 square feet of office/meeting space to accommodate present and future needs. To some, this is a reasonable estimate made by forward-looking people. To others, however, the estimate invites fulfillment of a civic Parkinson's Law: Government services (and taxes) will inevitably expand to fit whatever space is made available.

Throw in the symbolism of the six Rumsey columns, and the situation is even more complex. Is the "spirit of Cornwall" best exemplified in Jefferson's love of Greek Revival architecture? . . . or in Jefferson's belief in limited government economically

run by the countrymen concerned?

Starr's *History of Cornwall* and the memories of older residents suggest that the recent lopsided vote trouncing Rumsey was strictly in accordance with town tradition. Indeed, the town has often provided too little too late, always in response to current exigencies with scant concern for the future.

On August 18, 1740, at the second town meeting of the newly created Town of Cornwall, the citizens voted to build a "Meeting House," 48 feet by 35 feet, in Cornwall Center. As was the custom at the time, the building was to combine social and civic functions, with taxes levied for both "ministerial charges" and "town expenses." The meeting house was still unfinished at its dedication in 1748. "Meanwhile," writes Starr, "meetings were generally conducted in the house of Samuel Messenger" (at the present junction of Town Street and Route 128 near the site of the Michael J. Fox home). It is clear that whatever meager records officials kept were stored in private homes.

This practice continued for years. Starr notes that even after completion of the primitive meeting house, winter town meetings often adjourned to the warmth

(continued on page 2)

# JUNE 1993

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
<p>The deadline for notices on the Calendar is June 16. Even earlier would be helpful.</p>	<p>FM 4 LQ 12 NM 20 FQ 26</p>	<p><b>1</b> Park &amp; Rec. 7:30pm Town Off.  Inland Wetlands* 8pm Town Hall</p>	<p><b>2</b> West Cornwall Merchants Ass'n. 10am Cadwell's Corner</p>	<p><b>3</b> Every Thursday: Sr. Citizen lunch &amp; shopping trip</p>	<p><b>4</b></p>	<p><b>5</b></p>
<p><b>6</b> Seminar 10am-4pm UCC† (p.4)  Paper doll exhibit Corn. Hist. Society 2-4pm</p>	<p><b>7</b> ↑↑↑ Bd. of Selectmen 8pm Town Hall</p>	<p><b>8</b> Hous. Riv. Comm. 7:30pm CCS Lib. Agri. Adv. Comm. 7:30pm CCS Dem. Town Comm. 7:30pm Town Hall Computer Open House 6-9pm CCS (p.4)</p>	<p><b>9</b> Rep. Town Comm. 7:30pm Town Hall</p>	<p><b>10</b> Cornwall Housing Corp. 7:30pm UCC†  Board of Ed. 4pm CCS Library</p>	<p><b>11</b></p>	<p><b>12</b> Poetry Reading 8pm Cadwell's Corner</p>
<p><b>13</b> Paper doll exhibit Corn. Hist. Society 2-4pm</p>	<p><b>14</b> FLAG DAY P&amp;Z 8pm Town Hall  Cornwall Lib. Show Robert Parker's paintings  HVRHS Bd. of Ed. 7:30pm HS Library</p>	<p><b>15</b></p>	<p><b>16</b> Deadline for notices on the calendar and inside the paper.</p>	<p><b>17</b> Board of Finance 7:30pm CCS Library</p>	<p><b>18</b> Deadline for reservations, "Extras for Kids" theater fund-raiser (p.4)  CCS Graduation 7:30pm</p>	<p><b>19</b> Hammond Beach opens (p.4) Paint-the-Town Day and Auction (p.4)  Deadline for Soccer Camp applications (p.4)</p>
<p><b>20</b> FATHERS DAY  Paper doll exhibit Corn. Hist. Society 2-4pm</p>	<p><b>21</b> ↑↑↑ Bd. of Selectmen 8pm Town Hall</p>	<p><b>22</b> Swimming registration begins (p.4)  HVRHS Graduation 6:00 pm  Road crew paving Great Hill Rd. (p.4)</p>	<p><b>23</b></p>	<p><b>24</b></p>	<p><b>25</b></p>	<p><b>26</b> Family potluck supper UCC† 6-8pm (Last Sat. every month.)  Hazardous Waste Collection 9am-2pm HVRHS (p.4)</p>
<p><b>27</b></p>	<p><b>28</b> Z.B. of Appeals* 8pm Town Hall</p>	<p><b>29</b> CCC Summer Session begins. CCS art room (p.4)</p>	<p><b>30</b></p>	<p>The Republican Town Committee will sponsor a <b>Symposium on Health Care</b> sometime in June at the Town Hall. It will explore national health care reform from various perspectives. Watch for announcements in newspapers and around town, and put it on your calendar.</p>		

\*Check time and place at Town Office. † United Church of Christ

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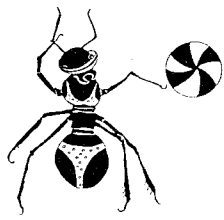
of a nearby home (an indulgence, he observed, not granted to the devout on the Sabbath). Town meetings in this era regularly voted money for such things as schools and cemetery fences, but the records are silent when it comes to town offices — not because of a sparse population or inactive government, for by 1789 Cornwall had more people than it has today, with 54 town positions (including committees) to be filled at annual meetings.

In 1819, a new state constitution ended public taxation for religious purposes, but town meetings were still held into the 1830's in the Cornwall Plain, or "South," Church. A compromise was reached in 1841 when a town meeting voted an expense of \$300 to help finish off the basement of the First Church for town purposes. This space (the present Day Room) soon became known as the Town Hall. In 1878, in response to a state regulation on the maintenance of official records, the town voted to purchase a safe and to keep its records "within a half mile of the Town Hall." Town officials' offices were still in their homes.

During much of the period from the 1770s to the 1860s, three generations of Kellogg men served successively as town clerks, so the Town Office was located in an outbuilding of the Kelloggs (the McLean House that still abuts the Town Green on the south). Their contribution evidently included office space as well as service to the town in nearly all elective offices.

A solution to office needs was provided in 1908, not by the taxpayers, but by John E. Calhoun, who designed, built, and then gave the Library Building to the town. This structure contained two vaults, and a small town office on the second floor (see the single raised window facing Pine Street). This tiny room — now declared off-limits by the fire marshal — served the town's needs until 1942.

Kay Fenn became town clerk in 1945, and she went to work in a one-room structure (with an adjacent vault) located behind the Library Building. Her first duties included sweeping and scrubbing the wood floor, mastering a crude oil burner in one corner when heat was necessary, and keeping the place open nine hours a week. Kay remembers when long-time treasurer Ed Cartwright could keep a "Town of Cornwall" safe on private property, and Dr. Brad Walker could legally have a Judge of Probate desk in his home. Most town boards and committees had to arrange their schedules to share a small oak table in the corner of that one-room office.



Town responsibilities (and officials, boards, and committees) steadily increased, necessitating a small addition on the east side of the building. The space crunch continued, and in the 1970s (in the administration of First Selectman Bill Walker) what was supposed to be a comfortable meeting room was added to the west side. But every year there came even more town responsibilities, more workers, more desks ... In the early 1980s, First Selectmen Bob Beers found it necessary to egg-carton the meeting room to its present state. Finally, in the early '90s, the trailer brought in to accommodate First Selectman Dick Dakin was removed when First Selectman Gordon Ridgway had the stage of the Library Building meeting room converted into an office — about the same size as the trailer.

That is the history. What does that tale mean for us today? In the first place, perhaps, in Cornwall, tradition by tradition has always been TRADITION. Then again, perhaps a tradition established in the 18th century by penny-pinching homesteaders need not be continued into the 21st. Perhaps now the voters, when they come to decide about office space, will do so with both foresight and frugality. — *Bob Potter*

### Any Suggestions?

The Board of Selectmen is looking for "serious" suggestions for the use of Rumsey and the gym. A "successful proposal" should have "outstanding public benefit." Please submit proposals in writing to the Board of Selectmen by Labor Day.

— *Gordon Ridgway*



### Marvelwood Update

About a year ago the Marvelwood School alarmed Cornwall Plain by actively looking into moving, perhaps to Kent. Recently Headmaster Mark Johnson and Business Manager Susan Smith met with Selectman Gordon Ridgway and P&Z Chairwoman Virginia Potter to talk and share issues.

The case is that Marvelwood needs to increase enrollment by 25 students to make ends meet. Additional tuition income is necessary since more students are requiring scholarships and operation costs are increasing. However, growth in the village is limited by space. The school has contracted an engineer to assess the septic situation, existing and potential, which is severely restricted by nearby wetlands and dwellings. Johnson said that "the most logical option is to remain in Cornwall."

Ridgway stated that the town budget would benefit if the school would pay for services such as trash disposal. Potter said Marvelwood was a better neighbor than an unknown and hoped that the school could find a way to house students without overwhelming the village. — *Ginny Potter*

### Rabies Reminders

Lisa Lansing prepared the rabies insert. Copies are available at the Town Office. She suggests that you post it in an accessible place and that you have the phone numbers of the Animal Control Officers and your doctor and veterinary near your phones. — *The Editors*

### Welcome

Ryan Christopher Gawel to Suzanne Marie and Darwin Michael Gawel

### Congratulations

Russell Edward Guerin to Mary Mitchell Hinchman

John Edward Shull to Leah Cadwallader

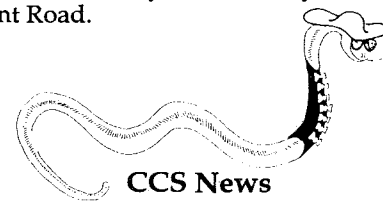
### Good-bye to Friends

Lori Laredo Beecher  
Dorothea Pearson  
Gurdon T. Scoville  
Jean Gazagnaire  
Margaret Hurlburt

### Land Transfers

Gary and Christine Guilman to Christine Rappoport, house on Woodruff Lane.  
Andrew M. and Ruth Miller Forge to Ahna E.C. Hogeland, house on Lower River Road.

Cornwall Housing Corp. to Jonathan M. and Kimberly A. Beardsley, house on Kent Road.



### CCS News

**Graduation** — Graduation ceremonies for the class of 1993 have been scheduled for Friday, June 18, at 7:30 p.m. at the school. All are invited. Those graduating are Sarah Calhoun, Julie Cavanaugh, Natasha Cole, Jonathan Daley, Benjamin Gerhards, Amy Griggs, Katherine Heiny, Steven Hurn, Christopher Kestl, Nigel Laurer, Kara Lugar, Juliet Lyon, Cynthia Matthews, Nathan Quesnel, Heather Ramos, Scott Reeve, Sven Roepcke, Heather Tyler, and Wendi Thitchener.

**Achievements** — Adam Augustyn's piece of writing, entitled "My Dad," is one of 30 selections chosen (from 1600 submitted) for publication in the statewide literary magazine, "Connecticut Student Writers."

The fourth-grade's curriculum project "Snowball Express" has been selected for recognition in the 1993 Connecticut "Celebration of Excellence" program. The project is a two-year exchange program with the Pomperaug School of Southbury. The project was selected from among 147 submitted, and was the first in which two schools were recognized for the same project. CCS representatives have been invited to attend the awardees' reception in the fall. — *Cathy Pfeffer*

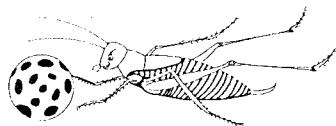
## Cornwall HVRHS Graduates

On June 22, four of the 99 students receiving diplomas will be from Cornwall: Jim Batterton, who plans on further study at Western Connecticut State College; Jennifer Hurlburt, who will enroll at SUNY in Cobleskill, N.Y.; Nicola Migliacci, who will attend a Bible institute for a year before going on to Liberty University in Lynchburg, Va.; and Dean Potter, who will attend Williams College.

On May 2, Dean Potter was honored as the male scholar-athlete of his HVRHS class at a statewide gathering of scholar-athletes, sponsored by the Connecticut Interscholastic Athletic Conference.

Congratulations to our graduates.

— Ken Keskinen



## P&Z Problem Solving

The Planning and Zoning Commission encountered some hard-to-resolve problems at its regular May meeting. A last-minute addition to the agenda by the Fire Department requesting a permit for their off-premises Covered Bridge dance put the commission in the position of having to determine the time for the event, which was contested by some West Cornwall merchants. After discussion, a compromise outlined by Ken Keskinen was approved, with hope that cooperative and timely planning will take place next year.

Hearings on the Dutton subdivision with a private road, and on the Cornwall Child Center site plan, were concluded, and both applications were approved. However, some members felt that the Dutton road running parallel to Indian Lane reflected awkward planning. The application for the Rocky River gravel mine received public hearing, but the issue was tabled until next June.

— Ginny Potter

## Prud'homme Paintings at Library

Erica Prud'homme is exhibiting small oil and acrylic paintings at the Cornwall Free Library. Working mostly on wood rather than canvas, Prud'homme has carried out a series of vivid abstract studies of shape, color, and texture.

Here's a preview of what you'll see: *Brainstorm* — curling, twisting tubes painted in an interesting light, sketchy texture; *Leaves* — a striking use of bright, contrasting colors, orange, red, and blue; *Egg* — a view down a corridor of curving tendrils painted in muted reds, blues, and greens; *Bone* — swirling shapes with sky-blue centers create a sense of movement and vibration next to the quiet shapes of smooth bones. Be sure to come see this collection of paintings designed to evoke emotion, imagination, and introspection.

— Alfred Bredenberg

## Letters to the Chronicle

DEAR NEIGHBORS:

As I drove home on May 10 from the P&Z meeting (concerning the Fire Department's request for a permit for the Covered Bridge dance), I had a feeling of dread. I feared that I was losing many friends because of a minor disagreement with the planners of the Bridge dance regarding a change in the starting time of the dance activities. When I got home, I started this letter right away to help explain my position.

I think the idea of the Bridge dance is terrific! I always have. I never, not for one second, wanted it cancelled. The notion that a town might come together to revel and make merry inside a cherished hall that crossed a mighty stream is a wonderful vision of a harmonious community.

I admire the Volunteer Fire Department of this town. I always have, always will. I recognize the signs of devotion and sacrifice every time the siren blows while I carry on my train of thought or change the TV channel; or at night when I roll over in bed, pull up the covers around my ears and drift back to sleep. I know what the firemen are doing then — jumping out of bed, groping for the light switch, and getting dressed so they can serve the town in yet another emergency.

I take the Bill of Rights and the Constitution very seriously. It applies to everyone, regardless of the depth of their volunteer service. We are all entitled to our beliefs. We are all entitled to vote. We are all entitled to equal protection under the law. We are all entitled to request that our elected officials represent our individual interests in the same way they represent the interests of others. And if such fair-handedness is not evident, we are all entitled to seek a forum that more closely reflects the diversity of the whole community, in this case, the P&Z Commission.

My fervent hope is that this conflict will help clarify the concerns of all parties involved. Next year we can meet again as friends to plan an event that will meet everyone's needs in a harmonious community-minded way.

— Todd Piker

## HIGH SCHOOL OFFERINGS

Thanks to Cornwall voters for your part in helping to pass the new high school budget. The high school will be offering its regular summer school program as well as the Kaleidoscope program for the arts. Call the superintendent's office for further information. — Becky Williams

## NOISY TRAINS

It seems there are still a few misinformed come-latelies around. How would they like to have ten trains a day with mechanically noisy steam engines that really blew whistles — not mild horns like the present-day diesels? Diesel horns sound only forward and backward, and never simultaneously; whereas steam whistles sound full blast in all directions. Engineers are required by law to sound a horn — or

whistle — at all unprotected grade crossings. It's a safety measure.

The railroad tracks were laid through the valley 150 years ago, and the towns grew up around them. People who didn't want to live near the trains built or bought homes in other locations. Those who are upset about the night runs might take their complaints to Conrail, which brings in freight from Canada and the West to terminals connecting with the Housatonic Railroad. It would be quite something to have Conrail shipments changed to suit a few diehards who happen to live along the tracks and who don't like train horns at night!

— Bill Clarke

## CORNWALL'S SIGNS

My first impression of Cornwall Village was of a place so quietly self-confident that it needed no sign or passerby notice at all, a remarkable and wonderful trait in this Era of Nonstop Proclamation, of Talking T-shirts, and Boasting Bumper Stickers. A place of dignity and rootedness, I said, true to its New England history.

Then up went the one-eighth-of-a-billboard-sized sign proclaiming "Cornwall Plain." This struck me as if the village a little vainly, a little prissily, was simultaneously demanding to be noticed while deliberately trying to confuse non-residents. Cornwall Plain? Do I stop here or turn right at Cornwall Strawberry?

Now up pops a sign saying that this Cornwall Plain is actually a "nuclear free zone." This puzzles me. In pounding the Housatonic with my fly line I have never seen even the most minuscule nuclear submarine heading to Furnace Brook, and no nuke-on-wheels could ever get through West Cornwall without a letter to the Lakeville Journal.

Nuclear free zone? The Strategic Air Command knows there is no underground silo in the Plain. So is the sign meant to be expressing outrage? Why then the muted, tasteful forest green coloring like a Block Island bumper sticker? If the sign is a cry of alarm, why is it not big and bold in bloody red or abysmal black?

Presumably, most Cornwallians (Plainians?) are aware of the former Soviet Union's collapse, unprecedented nuclear disarmament, and, also, that there's not enough new nuclear power in the U.S. to burn Dave Cadwell's toast?

Perhaps such a sign is meant to make its backers feel virtuous, like those thousands of schoolyard "Drug Free Zone" signs suddenly bumper-sticker-speaking away at the obvious. Next thing you know, to solve this need, we'll have to have signs in front of every church saying "Hate Free Zone," beside health clubs saying "Fat Free Zone," or maybe around LA saying "Thought Free Zone."

Personally, I think the combination of "Cornwall Plain" and "Nuclear Free Zone" looks a mite pretentious, self-serious, and out-of-touch with reality.

— David Monagan

Events & Announcements

Independence Day: Park and Rec is busy planning for the annual Fourth of July picnic which will be held on Saturday, July 3, with July 4 as the rain date. A road race at 10:30 a.m. (see below) will start the day's festivities, with a "kids' race" to follow. A parade led by the Grumbling Gryphons will form by Marvelwood School and circle the town green. Everyone is invited to join the fun. To add to the excitement, the planners would like everyone to create a crazy hat; it can be big or small, wide or tall, anything at all. Let your imaginations run wild. There will be games, music, and plenty of food. Save the day: July 3, 10:30 a.m.-4 p.m. Call Joan Thitchener (672-6531) for further information.

"Extras for Kids" Runs Road Race: Extras for Kids, Cornwall's enrichment scholarship fund for children, will be sponsoring a five-mile road race to be held on July 3 at 10:30 a.m. Prizes will be awarded for different categories. The pre-registration fee will be \$10 for entries postmarked by June 15. The first fifty entrants will receive a free Extra for Kids Road Race T-shirt. Entries received after June 15 will be accepted up until 10 a.m. on the morning of the race for \$12. Registration forms may be obtained at Cadwell's, The Wish House, and Housatonic Valley Rug Shop, or by calling Lisa Lansing at 672-2659.

Computer Open House: June 8, 6 to 9 p.m., a Computer Open House will be held at CCS. Everyone is invited to come and learn. From 7 to 8 p.m. the 7th graders will demonstrate their skills.



Putting the Bite on You: It's 3 a.m. You hear a scratching noise, turn on your bed lamp and see a slaving raccoon tugging at your sheets. Do you panic? No. You stay calm and do all the right things because you've read this month's rabies report. And where else can you get the unique blend of trivia and life-saving information about Cornwall that is in the Chronicle.

We've been pretty bashful about asking for contributions, but we're almost broke, and it's time for a change of tactics. We need you to go right now to your checkbook and send us money. A lot or a little, but please send something. Today. We want to continue to amuse and inform you, but we can't do it without your support. Don't wait until you're cornered.

Yes, I want the Chronicle to continue. Here's my tax deductible contribution of \$ \_\_\_\_\_

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY/ST/ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

\$10 will get the Chronicle mailed out of town.

Wholeness Seminar: Everyone is invited to attend a seminar on "Discovering Wholeness: the Mind-Body-Spirit Connection" on Sunday, June 6 at the United Church of Christ from 10 a.m. until 4 p.m. (come for all or part). Speakers will be Ruth McCarty, director of Ingraham House Renewal Center in Bristol, and Henry Millan, pastoral counselor with Affiliates for Well-Being in Hartford and associate minister at First Church of Christ in West Hartford. Register for child care by calling 672-6486. For more information, call 672-6840.

Road Paving: On Tuesday, June 22, the highway crew will be paving Great Hill Road, from College Street to the Goshen line. Through traffic will be detoured over College Street, and local traffic should expect some delays. The Board of Selectmen is confident that by the day's end this worst section of the town's roads will be significantly improved.



Hammond Beach: Cornwall residents and summer renters may buy beach permits at the Town Office for \$10 (individual) or \$20 (family). Guests pay \$1 a day and must be accompanied by the host-resident. The beach opens June 19 and will be open every day, 11-7, until September 6, weather permitting. (No swimming when the gate is locked.) Swim lesson registration opens June 22.

Soccer Camp: The Soccer School of Excellence '93 will be held July 19-23, 9 a.m. until noon, at the CCS playing field. Registration forms are available at the CCS office and the Town Office. June 19 is the deadline for applications. Questions may be directed to Joan Thitchener, 672-6531.

Fund-Raising Theater Trip: Extras for Kids will sponsor a New York theater party Wednesday evening, July 7, to see Bill Irwin and David Shiner in "Fool Moon," produced by Jim Freydberg of Town Street. Tickets cost \$75 apiece and include the show, a bus (not the yellow kind) trip, and a buffet meal en route. The bus trippers will be joined by other Cornwallites who still live in the city for the gala evening. The deadline for reservations and payment is

June 18. Call Robin Freydberg mornings at 672-6635 to reserve.

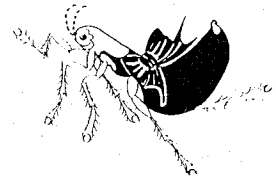
The fund-raiser will support Extra's purpose — to enrich and supplement cultural and academic experiences for Cornwall's children.

Paint-the-Town Day: The West Cornwall Merchants Association has scheduled the second annual Paint-the-Town event for Saturday, June 19, from daybreak until 3:00 p.m. Artists of all ages are invited to come out and paint their pictures of Cornwall. The paintings will be auctioned in the evening, with profits of the sale to go to the Cornwall Child Center and Extras for Kids. For more information, artists should call 672-6545.

Hazardous Waste Day: On June 26, 9 a.m. to 2 p.m. you can take household hazardous waste to HVRHS. Be sure to take proof of residence. Preregistration at the Cornwall landfill or selectman's office (672-4959) is required. You can get a list of acceptables and unacceptables, and tell them what you plan to dispose of. Donations are accepted to help with expenses.

Cornwall Child Center: The six-week summer session of the CCC will be held Tuesdays through Fridays, 8:30-1:00, June 29-August 6, in the Cornwall Consolidated School art room. Contact Director Pam Brehm to register, 672-6989.

Theater Arts for Children: The second annual Grumbling Gryphons Summer Theater Arts Camp will be held July 26-30 and August 2-6 at CCS. Director Leslie Elias will conduct the camp for children ages 6-15, with a special series of workshops for ages 3-5. Children may attend for one or both weeks. Guest artists include mask-maker Ellen Moon, instrument-maker Giovanni Ciarlo, dancer Alice Cadwell, folksinger Lui Collins, and others. For further details call Leslie at 672-0286.



CORNWALL CHRONICLE

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