



CORNWALL CHRONICLE

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Coming to Grips with the Future

Cornwall wants to preserve its rural character and find a way to be economically viable at the same time. That's the task of the Planning and Zoning Commission (P&Z) as it tackles a new Plan of Conservation and Development (POCD). The last plan was forged in 2010.

P&Z met on January 26 at CCS for what it called a community assessment of what needs to be included in the 2020 POCD. A vocal group of about 50 people reported on the work of subcommittees—housing, natural resources, community development and cultural resources, and economic development—and the interests of Cornwall non-profit organizations.

P&Z chairman David Colbert opened the session with the news that the commission has not been idle since 2010; revisions to the regulations governing agricultural activity in Cornwall are headed to a public hearing in March. Consulting planner Jocelyn Ayer invited people to write their best hopes for the town on sticky notes and post them in the hallway. She urged everyone to complete the planning survey which can be found at cornwallct.org.

Reports from subcommittees sounded a common alarm: Cornwall needs more young people and their families in order to thrive.

• **Housing:** Chair Jill Cutler urged change in the types and sizes of living quarters. Large, old homes might be permitted to become multi-unit condos, for example. New construction might include smaller homes for young families on land carved from larger lots. Financing such activity is an abiding problem and thought is being given to establishing a community fund to grant or loan down payments to buyers.

• **Economic Development:** Anna Timell filled in some background on the trend of constant change in Cornwall. In the 1940s there were 21 active dairy farms in town; now there is one. Farming continues, of course, evolved into new forms, such as growing organic vegetables and raising stock for meat. Anna also pointed out that new technology opens up options for "sensible economic activity," including light manufacturing. Fiber-optic cable will be necessary to "bring Cornwall into the 21st century."

• **Natural Resources:** Dave Colbert said discussions in his subcommittee have centered on maintaining a rural quality of life. De-

velopment ought to be low-impact and the ridgelines of Cornwall's hills protected from unsightly development. At the same time, modern technology allows infrastructure improvements like a septic system in West Cornwall Village. Dave echoed Anna Timell's call for fiber-optic cable.

• **Community Development, Cultural Resources:** Ben Gray, Jr. said his subcommittee was looking at strategies to attract younger families such as making volunteering rewarding and keeping social services available to young people.

Representatives from town boards and commissions were joined by non-profit leaders in outlining plans and hopes for change in Cornwall's declining demographics. From the Board of Education to the Agricultural Commission, everyone is open to smart growth and more flexibility in P&Z regulations to permit this growth.

Katy Freygang endorsed SustainableCT—add dot org to that and you'll find it online—an effort to share local solutions to common problems faced across the state. The Cornwall Conservation Commission has joined this effort.

Recommendations from the subcommittees will be formally presented to P&Z during the spring. Jocelyn Ayer is helping the commission craft the final Plan of

(continued on page 2)



MARCH 2019

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
Every Week This Month: Mondays: Yoga, 8:30–10 am Library; Pickleball, 6–8 pm CCS; Mat Squad, 6:30 pm UCC ♦ Tuesdays: Pilates, 8:30–9:30 am Library; Zumba, 5:30–6:30 pm Library ♦ Wednesdays: Tai Chi, 5–7 pm Town Hall call 672-0064; Stitch 'n Spin, 7:15–8:30 pm UCC ♦ Thursdays: Pilates, 8:30–9:30 am Library; Meditation, 4–5 pm call Debra 672-0229; Zumba, 5:30–6:30 pm Library; Mah Jongg, 7–9 pm Library call 672-6874 ♦ Fridays: Yoga, 8:30–10 am Library; Toddler Play Group, 10:30–11:30 am Library ♦ Sundays: Yoga, 9–10:30 am Library; Meditation, 1 pm call Debra 672-0229; ASW Method Mat Class, 1–3 pm Library					1	2 ♦ Community Country Dance 7 pm Town Hall
3 ♦ Don Bracken Artist's Reception 3 pm Library	4 ♦ What's the Word?! Group 11 am Library ♦ Region One Board of Education 6:30 pm HVRHS Library ♦ Cornwall Agricultural Advisory Comm. 7:30 pm Town Office	5 ♦ Inlands Wetlands Agency 7 pm Town Office Bldg. Education ♦ Board of Selectmen 7:30 pm Town Hall	6 ♦ Evan Jeans 3D Printer Class 3:30–4:30 pm Library	7 NEW	8	9 ♦ Collette Hurst Pastel Painting 10 am–Noon Library ♦ Winter Film Series <i>The Best Man</i> 4 pm Library
10	11 ♦ Free Blood Pressure Clinic Noon–1 pm UCC Day Room ♦ Park and Recreation Commission 7:30 pm Town Hall	12 ♦ Econ.Dev. Comm. 9 am Town Hall ♦ Senior Lunch Noon UCC Parish House ♦ West Cornwall Septic Comm. 5 pm Town Hall ♦ Planning & Zoning Comm. 7 pm Cornwall Library ♦ Housatonic River Commission 7:30 pm CCS	13 ♦ Evan Jeans 3D Printer Class 3:30–4:30 pm Library	14 ♦ Blood Drive 1–6 pm UCC Parish House	15 1st Q ♦ Deadline: April Chronicle Copy	16 ♦ Collette Hurst Pastel Painting 10 am–Noon Library
17	18	19 ♦ Board of Selectmen 7:30 pm Town Hall	20 ♦ Evan Jeans 3D Printer Class 3:30–4:30 pm Library ♦ Board of Education 4:15 pm CCS Library	21 FULL ♦ Cornwall Conservation Commission 6 pm Cornwall Library ♦ Board of Finance 7 pm Town Hall	22 ♦ Town Hall Players <i>Vintage Hitchcock</i> 7:30 pm Town Hall	23 ♦ Collette Hurst Pastel Painting 10 am–Noon Library ♦ Winter Film Series: <i>The Ox Bow Incident</i> 4 pm Library ♦ Town Hall Players <i>Vintage Hitchcock</i> 7:30 pm Town Hall
24 ♦ Scott Zuckerman Opening Reception 11:30 am UCC Parish House ♦ Town Hall Players <i>Vintage Hitchcock</i> 3 pm Town Hall	25 ♦ ZBA* 7 pm Cornwall Library	26 ♦ Coffee, Confections, and Conversations 9 am Parish House	27 ♦ Region One ABC Committee 7 pm HVRHS Central Office	28 4th Q	29	30 ♦ Collette Hurst Pastel Painting 10 am–Noon Library
31						

*Check with Zoning Office—672-4957

(continued from page 1)

Conservation and Development, version 2020.
—Lisa L. Simont

Environmental Legacy of the Departed

On the extensive list of environmental ills attributable to humans, one that does not garner much attention is human burial practices. The environmental consequences of burial was the subject of a well-attended presentation on “Green Burial” at the Trinity Retreat Center February 3 by representatives of the Connecticut Green Burial Grounds.

At the outset of the presentation burial practices were given historical context. Prior to the mid-1800s, the deceased were interred and natural processes of decomposition returned the nutrient remains back to the soil. Embalming evolved primarily to accommodate the purpose of transporting remains. Embalming fluids were readily available to the public, and many families did this task on their own. (No doubt these are now available on Amazon.) Cabinet makers began making caskets, and some in that profession morphed into the early morticians. In addition, alternative burial methods such as cremation, concrete vaults, and use of metal caskets became common.

The overarching theme of the presentation was to pose an alternative to current burial practices that will reduce demand for natural resources as well as harmful environmental effects of current burial methods. Green burial involves a return to the burial practices of the early 1800s where remains placed in the ground are left to the natural processes of decomposition, releasing nutrients back to the soil. Substantial amounts of hardwood, embalming fluid, fossil fuels, metals, and concrete are consumed by current burial methods. Toxins such as formaldehyde from embalming fluids are released into soils and watersheds with deleterious consequences to water quality and to aquatic and terrestrial organisms. Green burial seeks to mitigate these consequences.

Currently, there are no green burial cemeteries in Connecticut, and the onus is on the families who wish to practice green burial to communicate with the funeral homes and cemetery associations to work out arrangements for green burial. (According to Phill West, the North Cornwall Cemetery Association has carried out one green burial and is open to the concept.) Interestingly, the presenters drew parallels between their objectives and that of conservation trusts. Both hold the basic tenets for the acquisition of land to preserve and protect the environment. As is the case with a conservation trust, green burial associations are actively seeking lands to put in trust, but the conservation trust doesn't seek land for burial. In this regard, there was an understated pitch by the presenters to get local land

trusts to modify their regulations to make space available for conservation burial on conserved land. There are predictable concerns that might be voiced by conservation trusts with regard to disrupted soils, marred esthetics, and the traffic of those visiting loved ones interred on the conservation land.

All told, the presenters tried to convey the important environmental considerations of green burial. By returning to early, historic burial practices, the old adage of “pushing up daisies” has a valid place in the decisions we make for the end of life.

Refer to: ctgreenburialgrounds.org or greenburialcouncil.org.
—Hugh Cheney

West Cornwall Sewer Project Update

A letter from the Board of Selectmen is to be mailed in March to residents of the central village in West Cornwall to determine their support of the wastewater project so the town can calculate the potential number interested in hooking up to the proposed central sewer system.

On February 11, the Water Septic Committee met at town hall with the public in attendance to iron out the contents of the letter. Also under discussion was how best to determine if the people of Cornwall are willing to pay for a central sewer system in West Cornwall and whether a second letter or some other form of community outreach was necessary to do that.

Since the site initially proposed for a treatment facility on the bank near the river bend has been rejected by the residents, Steve McDonnell of WMC Consulting Engineers has come up with other possibilities in the village, including the Toll House, the Lush residence, the Hellman residence, Farnsworth Bookstore, the Griggs/Costello properties, and the Connecticut Light and Power property a mile north on River Road. If the owner of the site chosen is willing to sell, the town would build the facility and possibly hide it in a barn-like structure to make it as unobtrusive as possible. Invariably, due to the village topography, the newly proposed site would require pumping the sewage uphill, making it somewhat more expensive to operate.

WMC and the town of Cornwall have a renewed contract, part of which funds a study to assess the expense associated with each potential site. If the town picks up the whole tab, the annualized cost would result in an increase of .5 mill to its budget for the next 30 or 40 years, according to McDonnell. He concluded the cost variable from the WMC final report of November 2017 for the river bend site was negligible for any of the new potential locations except for the CL&P property north of town, which would be more expensive due to the distance.

On his recent trip to Washington, DC, First Selectman Gordon Ridgway met with Representative Jahana Hayes and Senators

Welcome

Cole Draven Wloch
to Stephanie Jeski and David Wloch

Good-bye to a Friend

John Van Doren

Land Transfers

Estate of Lois K. Redington to Amy B. Cupp and Scott D. Dragoo, land with all buildings thereon at 327 Cream Hill Road for \$499,000.

Alphonse Fletcher, Jr., FCCP, LLP, JPMorgan Chase Bank, NA, Dudleytown Triangle, LLC, CVA Valley, LLC, Ruth Turner Estate LLC, CVA Everest, LLC, West Hogback, LLC, South Everest, LLC, Hill Stream, LLC, and Woodbury Mountain, LLC to JPMorgan Chase Bank, NA, properties on Everest Hill Road, Valley Road, Cook Road, Dudleytown Road, Great Hollow Road, and Crooked Esses Road.

Chris Murphy and Richard Blumenthal to discuss the project. Senator Blumenthal assured him that Cornwall could get 45 percent funding for the project through the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Rural Development Program.

Ultimately, the question will be put to a vote by the whole town in a referendum. If passed, the selectmen would finalize the site of the treatment facility and come up with a final plan to finance the project.

—Bill Goulet

CCS Examines Climate Change

Science teacher Kathy West and social studies teacher Will Vincent recently teamed up to present 28 CCS middle school students with an imaginative learning experience involving climate change. The project started around Thanksgiving, concluded in early February, and offered an opportunity for the students to explore the scientific data underlying the climate issue, while also learning how governments seek remedies that adequately take into account the disparate needs of its citizens.

The setup was rich with learning opportunities for both disciplines: a congressional hearing would be held at the conclusion of the project on a bill aimed at reducing CO2 output that contributes to global warming. The mock bill was modeled on an actual bill voted on in 2018 in Connecticut, but with the addition of fictional regulations to carry out its goals.

Lots of roles were taken on to engage in the presentation: some students acted as senators, bill sponsors and presenters, while others posed as members of the public who would be affected for better or worse by the bill's enactment: fifth- and sixth-graders were the farmers, coal miners, homeowners, car owners, business owners, concerned construction workers, animal rights advocates, and scientists, presenting



for or against the proposal and its effects on their lives and livelihoods.

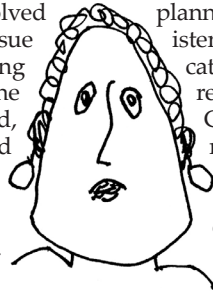
The science part involved researching the data around the issue and its possible causes, and making a presentation for or against the proposal based on the role assumed, complete with graphs, charts, and slides—the need for scientific data to support a position was stressed.

The neat part was that after December, the roles were reversed, with students required to adopt the opposite position.

In preparation for the finale, the seventh- and eighth-graders were assigned as senators, and researched the position of the actual state senator whose role they assumed.

NASA scientists presented for, coal miners against. The panel heard from low-income homeowners protesting the need for expensive solar panels, or electric cars versus cheaper gas cars, farmers for (tax breaks) and against (expensive windmills), paper factory owners, car dealers, coastal and island dwellers worried about flooding; there was even a “grandmother” stressed out about the future for her grandchildren.

In the end, the bill passed, but that was perhaps secondary to the acquired appreciation for the need for evidence and data, and of the relevance of gaining perspective by hearing all sides. —Tom Barrett



Scholarship, which is \$1,000 per year awarded on a four-year basis to a student planning to attend UConn. It is administered by the Cornwall Board of Education and is limited to Region One residents, with preference given to Cornwall residents. When the current recipient, now a sophomore, graduates, this award will again become available, so it pays to keep in contact with CCS.

The Cornwall selectmen’s office administers the **Baum Scholarship Fund**—established in 1999 by former CCS teacher Marie Baum. This award is \$500 and goes to a graduating HVRHS student who attended CCS for at least four years. Preference is given to those showing enthusiasm for, and achievement in, music. Applications are at HVRHS or the selectmen’s office. The deadline is May 1.

The **Gary Heprich Memorial Scholarship**, established in memory of former CVFD Chief Gary Heprich, awards \$3,000 scholarships each year to active members and dependents of active members pursuing post-secondary educational or vocational training. Applications are at the selectmen’s office and June 15 is the deadline.

The **Cornwall Agricultural Commission** offers two \$500 grants yearly to Cornwall residents. One is awardable to a student interested in pursuing an agricultural program, and the other is available to any resident looking to attend courses or advance their agricultural knowledge or skills. The selectmen’s office has applications.

Along similar lines, the **Cornwall Conservation Trust** has two grant programs. One is a grant of \$3,000 available to divide among one to four collegians or college-bound high school seniors residing in Region One (with preference given to Cornwallians). Applicants should demonstrate more than average concern for the environment, including any farming, forestry, ecological, or biological studies or activities undertaken. The second grant is \$2,000, available to students graduating from the ag programs at HVRHS, Wamogo or Nonnewaug high schools and going on to college or graduate work in agriculture. This grant is thanks to a contribution from Partners for Sustainable Healthy Communities, the Farmers Table. Application deadline for both of these grants is May 1.

Finally, at the other end of the educational spectrum, the **Cornwall Child Center** has two sources for providing tuition help to those needing it. One is the Stephen Frost Memorial Scholarship Fund, established by his parents Denny and Charlotte Frost. The other is a grant awarded annually to the center by United Way, which it makes available to parents needing assistance. Those interested should contact director Amy Martinez at the center (672-6989). —Tom Barrett

Following Fiber Optic

The path to super-fast fiber-optic broadband service developed a few bumps last year, but planners have been quick to suggest some detours they expect will avoid them.

To provide background, the telephone poles needed for this project are owned by the electric and telecommunications companies (think Eversource and Frontier). State law, however, allows municipalities the right to use the poles “for any purpose.” The original planning for fiber optic involved municipalities using this right in partnership with service providers to construct, own, and manage fiber service to residences and businesses.

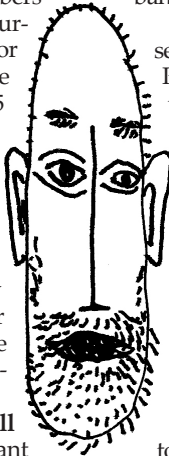
A second plan component envisioned local towns agreeing in advance on a common structure and program to address all the issues of providing the service: construction costs, maintenance, management, and also partnering issues and pricing with the broadband providers.

The first aspect of the plan received a setback last May when Connecticut’s Public Utility Regulatory Agency ruled that the municipal right to construct and own broadband applied only for its municipal uses, not as part of a commercial business serving residences and businesses. While this decision is being challenged in court, Northwest ConneCT, the non-profit formed to promote fiber—as well as better mobile coverage—in our region, sought alternative solutions, and that required some plan changes.

To bypass the legal issue, Northwest ConneCT is encouraging individual towns to form their own municipal electric utility to finance, build, and own the fiber wiring on the poles, while private partners would install and own the wiring to the individual customer. In this area, Norfolk has apparently taken a lead role in exploring this option.

Rather than consuming time seeking an up-front common plan among the region’s towns, a town-by-town approach is recommended, with the expectation that once a number of separate municipal utilities are in place, they would be combined to achieve operational efficiencies.

There is always the possibility that the state would undertake installing the infrastructure, as with roads and highways. This is the position that proponents believe offers the best solution. Stay tuned. —Tom Barrett



Free Money Available

The job of assembling funds to pay for higher education has become almost as labor intensive as the admissions process itself. Fortunately, there are some convenient resources here in town to take into account.

For example, each year the **Cornwall Woman’s Society** gives \$2,000 to graduating high school students who live in Cornwall. The only requirement is that the student complete the simple application and agree to apply the award to their next year’s educational plans (broadly considered as much more than only tuition, books, and such). The money is a gift—not a scholarship—and yet has gone begging some years for lack of applications. It doesn’t matter where the students went to high school (local, distant, public or private) they just need to be a resident of Cornwall. Pick up an application at the library or your school, or email Nita Colgate for one at nitacolgate@outlook.com (or call 672-6797).

Another source of aid for those pursuing educational goals includes the **Bradford**

CVFD Count for February

- 18 emergency medical calls
- 4 mutual aid calls
- 1 wire down
- 2 false alarms

Cornwall Briefs

• **Batter Up:** By the time you read this, local sugar houses will be bubbling away with the sweet stuff. Why not visit one of them, learn about the process, and enjoy the smell? Call first to be sure of convenient timing: Phil Hart, Bill Hurlburt, Steve Hedden, or Ridgeway Farms.

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• **Paint the Dump:** Calling all paints—latex, alkyd, oil—and also stains, wet or dried out, all sizes. Free drop off at dump for recycling any time it's open. No more trips to Torrington on hazmat days. Criteria: Cans must be original with readable labels (no buckets, paint-filled jars, or coffee cans), free of leaks, and with secure lids. Some exclusions: paint thinners, mineral spirits, spray cans, deck cleaners. Also, remember that the dump recycles clean plastic bags so bring those too.

• **Cornwall Needs You!** There are still vacancies on the Board of Zoning Appeals, Park & Rec, and Planning and Zoning Commission. Interested parties should email the selectmen and include a brief description of their connection to the field. If you might be interested, check the town report for current information on each, along with the minutes of these organizations on the town website. See if you can find a fit and contribute.

• **Don't Yield. Stop:** After about eight years of hassle, our town fathers have succeeded in getting the DOT to change the "Yield" sign to a "Stop" sign at the Route 45 & 7 intersection. You know the one: on the right as you head east up 45 from southbound 7.

• **Two years ago,** the Board of Ed tested the idea of reduced CCS tuition for non-Cornwall students, reducing it to \$6,000, and the student body increased by two. Subsequently, out-of-town tuition was reduced further to \$2,000, resulting in 11 new students. The policy continues to be evaluated for the coming year. —Tom Barrett

Events & Announcements

Also: check our Facebook page for event reminders and Cornwall updates

The Cornwall Community Country Dance will be held Saturday, March 2, at the town hall with teaching caller Dudley Laufman and live music by Betsy's Band. Music with an Irish flair. Warm up with waltzes starting at 6:45 P.M. Square, circle, and contra dancing to start at 7 P.M. All ages welcome. Suggested donation: adults, \$10 to \$15; children, \$5 to \$8. For more information email Debra@Motherhouse.us or call 671-7945.

The State of the Press

Jill Lepore in *The New Yorker* commenting on the news business: "It's faster than it used to be...it's also edgier, and angrier. It wants and it wants and it wants. But what does it need?" *The Chronicle* has the answer: a nice check made out to us. Thank you!

At the Cornwall Library

"What's the Word?!" Monday, March 4, at 11 A.M. Contact Connie Steurewalt at 672-2861.

Pastel Painting with Collette Hurst will be held on Saturdays, March 9, 16, 23, and 30 from 10 A.M. to noon. Beginner and intermediate techniques in creating pastel landscape paintings, including presentation of materials and different types of pastels, scene composition, atmospheric perspective, use of color, shading, and textures to achieve a variety of effects. A supply list will be available at the first class. \$100 for all four lessons. Contact the library to register at 672-6874 or cornwalllibrary@biblio.org.

The Winter Film Series continues on Saturday, March 9, at 4 P.M. with *The Best Man* (1964), centered on a political convention featuring two presidential candidates, a liberal (Henry Fonda) and an arch-conservative (Cliff Robertson). The series concludes on Saturday, March 23, at 4 P.M. with *The Ox Bow Incident* (1943), which brilliantly dramatizes the terror of mob rule. Starring Henry Fonda. \$5 suggested donation.

3D Printer Classes. Evan Jeans, an eighth-grader at CCS, is offering a series of classes on using the 3D printer in the library. Wednesdays, March 6, 13, and 20 from 3:30 to 4:30 P.M. Free. Limited class size.

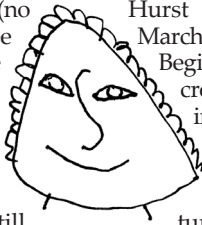
ASW Method Mat Class with Alice Wolf. Sundays from 1 to 3 P.M. Free. This class is designed for anyone wanting a healthy, safe, and simple way to exercise. The goal in ASW Method is to increase and improve agility, flexibility, and range of motion. Classes focus on strengthening and increasing mobilization of the spine. Contact the library for more information.

Cornwall Park and Recreation

Monthly Luncheon, March 12, noon, at the Parish House. \$8 per person. RSVP to Jen Markow, email prcornwall@gmail.com or call 672-4071.

Morning Coffee, Confections, and Conversations, March 26, 9 A.M. at the Parish House. Free. No RSVP required.

The Red Cross Blood Drive will be held March 14 from 1 to 6 P.M. at the UCC Parish House, 8 Bolton Hill Road. The need for blood donations is never ending and it is hoped for a large turnout. Sandwiches, fruit, and goodies are served to the Red Cross workers and to all who donate blood at the drive.



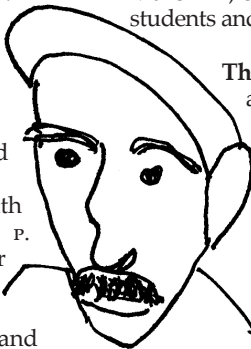
Art in Cornwall

Art reception for Don Bracken at the Cornwall Library. Sunday, March 3, at 3 P.M. "Now and Then from the 21st Century, from Perspective to Ashes," some personal favorites.

At the Parish House, Lazlo Gyorsok's photographs will continue until March 10. Scott Zuckerman's paintings and drawings, from March 24 (with an opening reception at 11:30 A.M.) through April 30. Viewing appointments available with the artist Monday to Friday, from 9 A.M. to 1 P.M., Sunday, from 10 A.M. to noon. Email oldfox153@yahoo.com or call 672-6032.

The Toll House Gallery in West Cornwall will continue to showcase the paintings of Lennart Swede Ahlstrom, landscape photographs by Ian Ingersoll, and new work by Don Bracken. Monday to Friday from 9 A.M. to 5 P.M., Saturday from 10 A.M. to 4 P.M.

Town Hall Players present *Vintage Hitchcock*, two one-act radio plays: *The 39 Steps* and *The Lodger*. March 22 and 23, 7:30 P.M.; March 24, 3 P.M. at town hall. Tickets \$15, students and seniors, \$10. (See insert.)



The Cornwall Child Center invites all children ages 3 to 6 (who will not enter first grade until the fall at the earliest) to join "Expressions," the summer camp experience, which begins Monday, June 24, through Friday, August 16. Hours are 8 A.M. to 4:45 P.M. daily. Please call Amy at 672-6989 for further details.

CORNWALL CHRONICLE
cornwallchronicle.org

THIS MONTH

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Ben Gray, Jr. and Cara Weigold, Facebook Posts

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