



TOWN CLERK—TREASURER UPDATES!

I hope this finds you all safe and well. The office continues to be open to the public, although land records research requires an appointment. Facial coverings are required and please don't come in to the office if you are not feeling well.

GENERAL ELECTION INFORMATION!

As of the receipt of this newsletter, you should all have received a General Election ballot in the mail. I did receive about 50 ballots back as undeliverable and many of them I could resend to the correct address. Some of you may have been surprised to receive it, but the Secretary of State's office decided that sending a ballot to each active voter with return postage available would limit the number of people coming in to the polls to vote thus avoiding in person contact. You may return your voted ballot, sealed in the certificate envelope in the mail, in the drop box on the Town Hall porch or in person during my regular office hours. Once I have your returned ballot, I make sure that the ballot is in the certificate envelope and that the certificate is signed. I then mark it as returned in the Vermont Election Management System so you can check that it has been received through MyVoterPage at the Secretary of State's website. I would like to strongly encourage you to vote using the ballot you received in the mail and to return it when you have completed voting. There will be "in person" voting on Tuesday, November 3 from 7 AM—7 PM, but once again, only 2 or possibly 3 voters will be allowed in the building at any one time. You may have to wait outside until there is an opening in the building. If you do decide to vote in person, please bring the ballot that you received in the mail. The town only received ballots for 30% of our checklist total of 1019, so I would hate to run out of ballots. If you don't bring the ballot you received, you will have to fill out and sign an affidavit of no vote cast. Please bring the ballot. Another option will be to vote your ballot at home and bring it to the polls, check in, check out and then deposit it in the tabulator if that is something you would prefer to do. Do not hesitate to call me if you have questions or concerns.

PROPERTY TAXES DUE NOVEMBER 1!

Although the tax bills were a bit later than normal, due mostly to COVID-19, you should have the bill(s) by now. As November 1 falls on a Sunday this year, I will be collecting taxes on Monday, November 2 from 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM. These payments will be considered on time.

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MESSAGE FROM BEN MARKS, SELECTBOARD CHAIR

My fellow citizens: The last time I wrote to you it was of my pride in Cornwall's response to the early phase of the Covid-19 pandemic. While that sense of pride is undiminished, the Select Board has spent more time in the past three months on more "normal" aspects of town governance – a fact that shows the extent to which we have been adapting and coping in this unusual year.

The Select Board recently took advantage of the emergency powers granted to us to explore options for fiber optic Internet service by joining the Addison County Communications Union District. The ACCUD is a consortium of Addison County towns that intends to use a combination of grants, Vermont Economic Development Authority Bonds, and other potential forms of financing to increase the availability of fiber optic Internet service in Cornwall and other participating Addison County towns. The law governing the formation of the ACCUD prohibits participating towns from raising taxes to fund ACCUD operations. Using a model successfully pioneered by EC Fiber, the ACCUD is currently conducting a feasibility study for becoming a community owned and operated broadband provider. This is particularly important given the slow pace of improvement to Cornwall's rural broadband service. Select Board member Magna Dodge is Cornwall's representative to the ACCUD and Bill Johnson has stepped forward as first alternate. Many thanks

to Magna and Bill for spearheading this important initiative.

The scope of our zoning update has also changed. Recent resignations and additions to the Planning Commission will make the next twelve months a rebuilding year for the Planning Commission. In light of that, we are working with the Planning Commission for a minimalist set of changes to our current zoning regulations. These changes, such as setbacks from public roads, are based on issues identified by our former zoning administrator, Jim Duclos, during his tenure in that position.

On that note, the Select Board is seeking an Assistant Zoning Administrator to help evaluate applications during the times ZA Gary Barnett is out of town. The Select Board is also seeking a new Chair for the Lemon Fair Insect Control District to start in that position next year. Folks interested in helping in either capacity should contact Sue Johnson.

I continue to believe that the pandemic response of Cornwall's citizens has been exceptional. I recently learned that we are one of the few Vermont towns not to lay off any of our town employees this year, a fact that underscores the careful measures that both our Town Clerk and Highway Department have put in place to meet the needs of town residents while keeping themselves and their families safe.

WHAT IS YOUR OPINION ON LINE STRIPING THE ROADS???

At the September 1, 2020 Selectboard meeting, correspondence was received asking that Lemon Fair Road be line striped to enhance safety on the road. Mike Sunderland was asked to get pricing bids for the project. Additional discussion about striping all the paved roads ensued. The Board would like to hear from townspeople with their opinions about putting the one yellow line in the middle of the paved roads. Please get back to Ben Marks at bmarkscornwall@gmail.com or Sue Johnson at cornwallvt@shoreham.net or townofcornwall1761@gmail.com with your thoughts.

MESSAGE FROM CONOR STINSON, PLANNING COMMISSION CHAIR

The Cornwall Planning Commission warmly welcomed three new members to its ranks this fall. Marge Drexler, Chris Hodges, and Lauren Ringey were all appointed by the Select Board. We look forward to working together on a number of projects in the future. We also thank Josh Stearns and Al Thalen for their recently ended tenures on the Planning Commission in the past few years. The new additions bring us to six out of seven positions filled.

Recently, the Planning Commission submitted a Municipal Planning Grant application to the State Department of Housing and Community Development. The application proposes a novel way of introducing new members of the Planning Commission to rules and regulations the state sets out for members of planning commissions, as well as an introduction to some of the basic planning tools available to meet the desired goals of the Town Plan. If awarded, this training will be open and available to all Cornwall residents. Additionally, the application asks for the funding to review and update some sections of the Town Plan which we need to accomplish. Announcements of awards will be made in December.

The past few years have been ones of consistent change for the Planning Commission. Many personnel changes have made planning, our primary job, a bit of a challenge. Our most senior member has been on the commission for just three years. There is much to learn to help the town accomplish its goals and maintain the zoning regulations. Hopefully, with the help of the Municipal Planning Grant, we'll get a big boost of knowledge and training to help us do the work of a planning commission for Cornwall. There will be times in the coming months and years when we will call on the residents of Cornwall to come forward and constructively share their ideas and thoughts to help the Planning Commission make plans appropriate for Cornwall. Please keep your eyes out for opportunities to be part of the conversation in the future.

Update on the Covered Bridge Replacement by the State of Vermont.

At the October 6, 2020 Selectboard meeting, Brian Kemp reported that he had touched base with the State of Vermont in regard to progress on the replacement of the Covered Bridge on Swamp Road. The state contact that he spoke with indicated that the bridge is still in the scoping phase. They have completed some surveying and right of way work. They have completed some environmental studies. In the spring of 2021, the Agency of Transportation will present a proposal to Cornwall and Salisbury in regard to the bridge replacement. Bridge construction is in the state budget for 2025 construction. More information to follow as it becomes available.

CONSERVATION COMMISSION REPORT

By the time you read this newsletter, we hope to have finalized details for a late-October Zoom Meeting, Conservation Options for Landowners. The presentation will be an introduction to conserving private land and the various ways in which this can happen. Representatives from Vermont Land Trust and Middlebury Area Land Trust will speak briefly about their organization's role as a conservation partner, what happens when land is conserved, and the financial implications for landowners. A land appraiser who specializes in land conservation will describe options that are available to landowners. There will be ample time for you to ask questions. Our target audience is both small and large landowners.

At last year's town meeting, just days before the pandemic was to change our lives, voters approved an article supporting the creation of a Conservation Fund Planning Group "to study how towns in Vermont fund their conservation activities." It was to be the joint work of representatives from the Conservation Commission, the Planning Commission, and other interested community members. At this point, the CC has completed information gathering about the projects other towns have funded and how their funds are collected. We were impressed to hear about the variety of projects that Conservation Funds have supported: the purchase of conservation easements, public trail construction and maintenance, and erosion protection, to name just a few. Funds also gave towns the ability to leverage outside money for conservation purposes. The CC is eager to have interested townspeople join us in the next step: reviewing this information and making recommendations to the town on how best to proceed. If you can help, please contact us. We are planning to present the Study Group's work and its recommendations to the town at a mid-November Zoom meeting.

The Conservation Commission is beginning work on a family-oriented tree-planting project that would begin next year. We all can play a part in helping our town's forests grow, not just "in the woods," but in our own backyards. The Commission will help with age-appropriate resources for parents and children to explore and learn from in preparation for planting. Families with children of all ages are welcome. If you want to begin planning and possibly planting this fall and would like suggestions and guidance from the CC, contact Anna at **annaburnscornwall492@gmail.com**

CONSERVATION COMMISSION CONTINUED



Delfina, friends and family transplanting seedlings.

Wildlife pictures from the five trail cameras continue to roll in and tell their photographic stories. The following descriptions come from one of the camera sites. The raccoon kits described in the July Newsletter are now indistinguishable in size from their mother and there are only three left, two fewer in number. A young buck first appeared in June sporting short, stumpy antlers. In late August he passed through again. He had grown, and so had his antlers that were about a foot in length and covered in velvet. Now, I am not complaining (just reporting,) but reviewing camera pictures isn't consistently interesting. This same site has a resident squirrel whose daily antics have been amply recorded. And then, there was the flock of fourteen turkeys that came through one afternoon, and finally exited very s---l---o---w---l---y 200 photos later! But, this camera site is used by such a diversity of wildlife, and that makes it all worthwhile. We are continuing to move some of the cameras in search of transit areas, like the site just described, that are frequented by a variety of animals. Please contact us if you feel there may be a possible placement on your property.

The Trail Camera Project has prompted several residents to share their own sightings with us. If there is enough interest, the CC could set up an online Cornwall Wildlife Reporting Site to record observations from residents. While some information would be public, the exact location of reported sightings could be kept private. Creating a site like this would help us better understand and document town wildlife numbers and distribution. Please let us know if this is something you might contribute to and/or would support the CC in considering.

Mary Dodge mdodge@middlebury.edu, 462-2899

CORNWALL SCHOOL NEWS

Hello Cornwall community,

In thinking about the start of this school year, the word that continuously comes to mind is “thank you.” Thank you to families, teachers and staff, and the town of Cornwall for gathering around our students and school to help make this - the most unusual start to a school year that most of us have ever experienced - go as smoothly as possible. The old adage, “it takes a village” has never felt more true.

Thanks to the efforts of the community, students and teachers felt welcome and excited to return to school in the manner that they and their families determined was best for them. We recognize that it hasn't been without challenges or sacrifices, and we appreciate all of the work that has gone into readying the school - from the purchase of outdoor tents through the Gilligan Fund to the welcome sign and purchase of supplies for outdoor learning from Friends of Cornwall School (FOCS) to the completion of the outdoor playground and cleaning up of the grounds to the smiles we see in the mornings!

And the biggest news is that the elementary schools are returning to in-person learning five days a week!!!!

Beginning October 12, the kindergarten through 2nd grade students will return to Cornwall School five days a week, and beginning October 19, the 3rd-6th grade students will return five days a week. Health and safety guidelines will continue to be in place, and students will continue to learn both indoors and outdoors, taking advantage of the area around us.

We don't yet know what the rest of this school year will bring, but we do know that no matter what it brings, we will navigate it together.

Thank you again!
Heather Raabe, Principal, Cornwall School

FOCS Merchandise

The Friends of Cornwall School (FOCS) would like to remind the whole community that we have Cookbooks, EURO stickers, and magnets for sale at the town office. The proceeds from these sales help to enhance the Cornwall elementary school experience. If you would like to support these efforts and have something to show for it, stop by and pick up what suits you or reach out to Ian Ross (FOCS Treasurer) at addison.department.store@gmail.com. If you would like to just donate to our cause, you can do so at <https://donorbox.org/friends-of-cornwall-school>

We thank everyone who has supported us in the past and especially already this school year. We hope you all stay safe while you enjoy the wonderful colors of fall.

Covering the Garden by Gary Margolis

Strung from stalk to stalk.
Hung across sunflower heads.
Sheets and paint tarps.
Shrouds really. To keep

the frost off.
To make a hot house of.
To hold whatever's left
of September's chilly sun.

A string of finches, gold-
finches, seem to be trapped
under. Trying to peck
their way more out than in.

You can hear them,
sounding like rain on tin.
Or softer on the cloth.
Like snow, you're thinking,

early snow. That left
untended would freeze
the flowers in their summer
places. Would most likely

kill them. Earlier than
they're meant to die.
If you didn't care
how your garden appears

to someone other
than yourself.
Walking by your yard
of ghosts.

Halloween isn't here yet.
Even with the gourds
and pumpkins still
stretching on their vines.

Snakes who love to sun
themselves.
On and under stones.
Truth being so cold-blooded,

what it is.
Steam rising from inside
this morning's thrown-off

What The Leaf Isn't There To Tell You by Gary Margolis

Even the scarlet poison ivy leaf
leaves something to be desired.
Turning, overnight, away
from its former glossy self.

No one's advising you to stop,
for a moment, to touch it.
to feel if it still has all its power.
Some leaves fade brilliantly,

are jewel-like. Their stems
boiled into tea, the natives drank
to steel them for winter.
A few died, of course, more

than you can ever know.
A few became stronger
because of their desire.
You have to admit, you live

in between them.
Leaning over. Admiring
the invisible poison.
Wondering, if its courage

or foolishness to try
and touch one, to see
if there are any right
consequences.

How pleasure becomes
its own warning
and then some.
How even the slightest

touching sometimes
leaves scars.
And sometimes not.
What a leaf isn't there

to tell you.
No matter how hard
you're listening
to the wind's advice.

That voice, inside you,
saying think twice
about what you're feeling.
That voice that says nothing.

CORNWALL FREE PUBLIC LIBRARY NEWS

The Cornwall Library is still closed, but we are hoping to open sometime in the next few months – **HOORAY!** We will let you know as soon as we do reopen (and the safety protocols that will be in place), so keep your eyes and ears open! Just a reminder that we still have **curbside pickup** so that you can take advantage of all the books, audiobooks and DVDs that we have for you to enjoy. You can reserve items through the Web OPAC system, which is our Online Public Address Catalog. This allows you to sign in to the library digitally to reserve an item. All you need to do is search for the title or author, and you will see it if it's available. Call Sue Johnson if you have any questions or need help. **AND A BIG THANK YOU TO SUE** for organizing curbside pickup and keeping library materials in your hands!

The **SAD** news is that we won't be having a Used Book Sale this year. We are hoping to have one in the future so we're also hoping that you have space to store your donations until we're able to "take them off your hands" which hopefully will be soon. We appreciate your continued patience and support.

We are continuing to buy new books, audiobooks and DVDs for circulation so check out these new materials on the town website **cornwallvt.com** under the library section.

FICTION

Anxious People - Fredrik Backman, **The Lions of Fifth Avenue** - Fiona Davis, **The Lying Life of Adults** - Elena Ferrante, **The Transcendent Kingdom** - Yaa Gyasi, **Book of Lost Names** - Kristin Harmel, **Universe of Two** - Stephen Kiernan, **The Exiles** - Christina Baker Kline, **Fifty Words for Rain** - Asha Lemmie, **Mexican Gothic** - Silvia Moreno-Garcia, **Hamnett** - Maggie O'Farrell, **The Book of Two Ways** - Jodi Picoult, **The Daughters of Erietown** - Connie Schultz, **The Lost and Found Bookstore** - Susan Wiggs

MYSTERY/SUSPENSE

The Darkest Evening - Ann Cleeves, **Total Power** - Vince Flynn, **The Evening and the Morning** - Ken Follett, **The End of Her** - Shari Lapena, **A Silent Death** - Peter May, **The Shadow** - Alex North, **All the Devils are Here** - Louise Penny, **The Order** - Daniel Silva, **Near Dark** - Brad Thor, **One By One** - Ruth Ware

NONFICTION

Eat A Peach - David Chang, **Notes on a Silencing** - Lacy Crawford, **The Indigenous People's History of the US** - Roxane Dunbar-Ortiz, **The Beauty in Breaking** - Michele Harper, **Stamped from the Beginning** - Ibram X. Kendi, **Tiny Beautiful Things** - Cheryl Strayed, **Memorial Drive** - Natasha Trethewey, **Too Much and Not Enough** - Mary Trump, **Caste** - Isabel Wilkerson, **Rage** - Bob Woodward

YOUNG ADULT

Clap When You Land - Elizabeth Acevedo, **You Should See Me in My Crown** - Leah Johnson, **Stamped** - Jason Reynolds

CORNWALL FREE PUBLIC LIBRARY NEWS CONTINUED

CHILDREN

Our Favorite Day of the Year - A.E. Ali, **The Girl and the Ghost** - Hanna Alkaf, **The Ocean Calls** - Tina Cho, **One Time** - Sharon Creech, **Witches of Brooklyn** - Sophie Escabasse, **Finding Francois** - Gus Gordon, **The Amelia Six** - Kristin L. Gray, **The Silver Arrow** - Lev Grossman, **First Day Critter Jitters** - Jory John, **Danbi Leads the School Parade** - Anna Kim, **Dog Man: Grime and Punishment** - Jeff Kinney, **See the Cat** - David LaRochelle, **The Hidden Rainbow** - Christie Matheson, **Before the After Ever** - Jacqueline Woodson

AUDIO

Hello Summer – Mary Kay Andrews, **Becoming Mrs. Lewis** – Patti Callahan Henry

DVDs

Emma, **The Invisible Man**, **Irresistible**, **Knives Out**, **Last Full Measure**, **Little Women**, **Resistance**

HALF AUTUMN, HALF WINTER by Gary Margolis

Oh, bush bird walking out of the woods. Taking off your coat of camouflage.	A new series to watch. A hunting documentary? A murder mystery with an endless, not quite	he left. Not to smoke a cigarette. Not to pretend he loved you more
Strutting back and forth across the road. No fear apparently. No apparent wound.	unraveling plot? To compare to the unwinding rubber band you make whirring through the woods.	than instinct. Not because he was drawn to you, morning and night.
No induced delirium. Just the urge, like ours, to be outside. Having been in the house	Oh revelation. Half-air. Half-light. I'll sit here with my hand out. As long as you need me to.	A thought I'm happy to entertain. That lets me stay in sight of you.
too long. Grousing. Ruffing up our feathers. Getting on each other's frayed	Until I realize you're marching to keep me away. Most likely from your	Looking like myself for as long as I can. Half-autumn. Half-winter.
and feathered nerves. Hunting for another book to read. To read again.	nest of leaves. Down, one of your mates pulled off himself. Before the moment	

Ethics 101 at the Breakfast Table

By Cheryl Cesario, Meeting Place Pastures

What happens when you cross a handful of college kids with a 175-horsepower self-propelled hay mower late at night? You may think I am setting you up for the punchline of a joke, and it probably would be a funny one, if it hadn't actually happened here in town. The result is that the mower ends up crashed into a telephone pole with thousands of dollars' worth of damage inflicted, the embarrassed parents clear up the bill, and no one's permanent record is tarnished. Of course, the farmer is now down a mower in the height of hay season, delaying his ability to get his crops done. One can only hope that the lessons of a tragedy averted and a newfound respect for personal property rights were the takeaway messages. Oh, and also that these rigs are actually hard to drive.

Just two months earlier, a slightly similar incident happened on our farm, albeit at much lower horsepower. We hired a young college student to help on our farm for the month of June. His internship with an investment bank had been postponed due to COVID-19. This particular student had worked for us a couple summers prior, and we were happy to have him come for short term employment to help with various projects, and he was happy to escape the boredom of his at-home quarantine. We must not have been providing enough excitement though, as one night he, unbeknownst to us, ventured back to one of the farm properties after dark. A neighboring family of this particular property was coming home late from a day of adventure and saw headlights in one of the pastures. It was 10pm, well past the time any of us would be out moving sheep or cattle. They thought something must be wrong, so they slowed to a stop before approaching their driveway. Then, the lights in the field were killed. Hmm, something was up. After they went inside, they saw our young college friend pull the ATV, lights off, back into the barn's garage, with a girl riding on the back with him. ATV's are notoriously dangerous, especially for inexperienced operators IN THE DARK. What would have happened if he had hit uneven ground and it rolled over? Serious injuries could have resulted. What did result was a minor inconvenience. One of the interior gates was left open, so the next morning 250 sheep and 40 cows were in the totally wrong place, resulting in a couple hours of extra work. Unfortunately, the college employee was off that day, so he didn't have to contend with the immediate consequences of his actions.

The 2nd and 6th graders living in this neighboring house had an interesting lesson in ethics at the breakfast table the next morning. Their parents said they really wrestled with the question of telling us about this incident. Was this considered tattletaling? Would he get in trouble? Would they be responsible for him losing his job? In the end, their conclusion was to tell us. After all, they realized, they weren't the ones who had done something wrong. They felt we should know that someone was abusing our trust and not respecting property that did not belong to them.

Perhaps this is the upside of the quarantine during the pandemic. More time at home, means more conversation around the table. Personally, I have found we have had a lot more interesting discussions with our 6-year-old daughter, going deeper than the standard 'what did you do today?' As a fun sort of game, we keep a mason jar on the dining room table full of slips of paper with open-ended questions written on them. During a meal, we pull out one of the question slips, read it out loud and share our answers.

ETHICS CONTINUED

The questions include things like:

What are the 3 most important qualities in a friend?

What is something that is hard for you?

What are you most proud of?

This little thing sets us up for discussion at the table, which might morph into some sort of life lesson, which is its own form of homeschooling. I guess we hope that by having open discussions with our daughter, we can grow a decent human being with a strong moral compass, so that someday if she comes across a vehicle with the keys in the ignition, she won't think, 'Hey, let's take this for a spin.'

Fire Safety Reminders

from the

Cornwall Volunteer Fire Department

E911 Signage - In an emergency, clearly marked house numbers are *critically important* to First Responders. If you need assistance in obtaining and installing a standard green and white E911 sign at your home, do not hesitate to contact the CVFD for assistance. Captain Ken Manchester can help! Give him a call at 462-2136 or talk to any member of the department!

Alarm Systems - Do you have an alarm system at your house? If you do, please consider investing in a Knox Box to ensure timely access to your home. This device, which can only be opened by the CVFD & you, holds keys and important information about accessing your home in an emergency.

Brush Burning - If you have questions about burning brush or obtaining a burn permit, please contact Forest Fire Warden Tom Frankovic at 802-462-3137 or 989-4473.

Alarm batteries - Do your smoke and CO detectors need fresh batteries? If so, please change them twice a year. Consider doing so on solstices or time changes, it's an easy way to remember!

