



Cornwall Newsletter

Cornwall, Vermont

Volume 10, Issue 4

Green Up Day—May 3, 2014

Please join us for our 44th Annual Green Up Day on Saturday, May 3 at the Cornwall School. Volunteers will be at the School from 9 AM – 1 PM to assist you. Coffee and donuts also will be available. See the separate article for the Plant Exchange Program that also will be taking place.

We strongly encourage all volunteers to drop by the Town Hall before Green Up Day (anytime from Tuesday, April 15 on) to pick up their materials.

While there, please indicate on the map with a magic marker those sections of road your group wishes to clean. Routes 125, 30 & 74 will be done by the Highway Department. The remaining 32 miles of roads need to be cleaned by us!

All paper, cans, bottles etc. should be put into the official Green Up bags. The Transfer Station may charge the Town for any materials in regular black bags. Once your bags are full, bring

them to the School together with any tires, scrap metal or other man-made materials you find on the roadside. Leave natural materials where they lie.

We strongly encourage everyone to wear old clothes, gloves and waterproof boots. Reflecting vests also are available. Any questions can be directed to “T” Tall at ahmic@shoreham.net or by calling him at 462-2003.

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Special points of interest:

- *A Golden Age of Fraud, Watch out for Medicare Fraud*
- *CPR and First Aid Classes Coming.*
- *Public Service Board Hearing and Workshop Information*
- *Herbicide Spraying Notice*
- *Poems by Gary Margolis*

As a part of Vermont Green Up Day activities on Saturday, May 3th, the Conservation Commission will sponsor a **Perennials Plant Swap** at the school from 8:00 AM-12:00 PM. Residents are invited to share extra perennials from their gardens with friends and neighbors. Empty pots and sticks for labels will be available at the Town Hall from Tuesday, April 29th on.

Plants can be left off at the school on Friday afternoon, early Saturday morning, or when you drop-off your green-up bags. For more information or to lend a hand with the exchange, contact Shari Johnson adinsgj@aol.com
Anne Collins annecollins1@att.net or Mary Dodge mdodge@middlebury.edu.

Perennials Plant Swap, Second Annual

The CC is again sponsoring a **Perennials Plant Swap** as a part of **Green Up Day** activities this year. Since it is a swap, there is no exchange of

money. Perennials are sought, but houseplants are also welcome. For additional information about the exchange, including where extra pots can be

picked up, or where plants can be left off, see the information box in this newsletter. This is a great “Reduce, Resuse, Recycle” opportunity!

A Golden Age For Fraud - Joe Sherman

Fraudsters have no pity for the elderly, or remedies for the needy or lonely. But they usually come bearing gifts and talk with the sweetness of long lost friends flouting sincerity. In recent years those who commit fraud have only gotten better at befriending and then deceiving the elderly—on foot, in the mail, over the phone, and now, via the newest and easiest route of all, the Web. Meanwhile, few Vermonters nor Americans as a group care to hear that they are living in a predatory era, with the elderly as prey. But that's the truth. One we must repeat, albeit with tact and compassion so as not to turn off our listeners.

This column will stand on that truth. It will focus on Vermont stories. It will emphasize successful ones that boost our hopes and a few that will make you angry or want to cry. Data, reports, and cultural trends that widen our understanding of fraud will be the back story. We want to help clarify where Vermont fits in the regional and national pictures of medical fraud. How are we doing, where are we going, who's ahead of us and can teach us? To answer such tough questions, inputs and insights from COVE's partners in aging and medicine, in insurance and banking, in the judiciary and enforcement, will be sought out. Along with the stories of the elderly themselves, their caregivers and families.

Ultimately, the goal is to put in your hands or on your screen a meaningful and readable column that helps Vermont elders from being victims of fraud. And when it happens, how to respond. The primary focus is medical fraud, but other scams of the month, including investment and real estate fraud, are also in our sights. Links to info and help will be a reminder that no one is alone in the anti-fraud fight, and that a network of support is available and eager to help. A longer-term goal is to forge a network of knowledge and response. To do that the embarrassment from getting taken, being scammed, or being defrauded must be overcome. The old Yankee refrigerator magnet, *Don't*

Complain, should be replaced by *Complain your Head Off!*

Fraud, of course, is anything but new. The word "fraud" comes to us from the Latin *fraus*. In medieval French, it was *fraude*, and in English evolved to "fraudulent," meaning "to cheat, especially of money." Entomologically, fraudulent is akin to "frustrate." For the purposes of this column fraud will refer to cheating of money, and of rights, accompanied by frustration.

What's new today in fraud is its scale and means of execution, often the Web. As crime, fraud has a long-established and rather colorful role in medical care. Back in the 19th century, for instance, a quack chemist might have appeared at your door, flouting the miracle ingredients of "Uncle Winston's Vegetable Syrup," an antiscorbutic that promised to prevent scurvy. Up until he died in the 1980s, my dad's doctor kept him wearing a truss for a hernia because the doc himself sold the belted contraptions. Frauds? Well, the useless syrup cost little, didn't make folks sick, and the bottle was reusable. The truss was an alternative to low-risk surgery and my father was terrified of the hospital; it was a judgment call.

In comparison, today's cheats rarely reveal their true selves. More likely, they find you on the Web, or with a call and follow-up on the Web, then work to gain confidence. Many Vermonters over 60 (for the record, I'm 68) still think more of strangers than many deserve. Remember the line at the start of *The Great Gatsby*, the one that says, "Reserving judgments is a matter of infinite hope." A sentiment worth pondering, for sure, but in the Internet age, delaying judgment may give a cheat just long enough to clean your clock, download your bank accounts, scour your medical records for invaluable data that flips your life upside down.

Heal thyself was, for ages, a mantra of medicine. Protect thyself is now one for dealing with fraud. Once it happens, the culprits, who may be out of state or even out of the country, are hard to apprehend. Pursuit of digital trails is costly. Sophisticated scammers, overburdened judicial

and enforcement branches of our government, and a tight squeeze on funding to change laws and train cops in cyber sleuthing are all elements contributing to a golden age of fraud. Protect yourself: easy to say. But when the victims are the elderly, the roles of SMP and COVE are crucial.

What appeals to me as a writer and reporter are the scale and the complexities of medical fraud in our culture as the number of seniors spirals upward. Spending on Medicare will about double over the next decade. Tax increases of almost any kind will not keep pace with the costs, and as we know tax increases now are the stuff of government stoppages. New revenues? Don't hold your breath. The pressures on health care spending, which seniors support and rely on, will only increase. Again, a good reason to focus on ways to mitigate fraud, slow it at the key junction: where the fraudsters meet their intended victims.

To make gains here we must bring seniors into our confidence, and listen to their stories, then collaborate and exchange what we learn with our neighboring states and their agencies facing similar situations. In cooperation is the most practical path to justice and change. By working cooperatively maybe we can cut through the fog and confusion besetting a health care system going through monumental change while constantly under attack.

Can a column in quarterly newsletter help? We certainly hope so. But we need your help. As the writer shaping the column, I bring a deep knowledge of Vermonters and our state's recent history to the party. I'm skilled at synthesizing ideas, at writing short profiles, at weaving opinion with fact. And the column will contain plenty of opinion: mine, that of my colleagues at the newsletter, insights from a variety of contributors, from policy makers to elders who have been scammed.

This article taken from the VT Senior Medicare Patrol (SMP) Newsletter.

Support the Library! Donate your books!

Do you have books you are never going to read again? Books that you would like to donate so that they can be shared with others? Great! The Cornwall Library is always looking for book donations so clean off those bookshelves, end tables, night tables, or wherever else you keep the books that

you've read and bring them over to Town Hall during regular business hours (Tues - Fri, 9 - 5).

Our book sale will be held in October, and we accept donations all through the year. We accept most books, CDs, and DVDs. However, we cannot accept textbooks, encyclopedias,

magazines, or books with torn and/or defaced pages, and mold or mildew. Please recycle them instead.

Thanks (in advance) for donating!

Cornwall Conservation Commission Information

The conservation commission's main activity continues to be coordinating the town-wide natural resources inventory. As we reported at Town Meeting, ecologist Brett Engstrom will be conducting site visits this year. He has prioritized the sites with ranks of low, medium or high, based on likelihood of containing resources of regional, state or local significance. Visits will be made only to sites for which we have received landowner permission for Mr. Engstrom to walk on the lands. Site visits will in-

clude observation of plants, soils and animal habitats; photos will be taken for documentation, and plant specimens may be collected if needed for accurate species identification. Landowners of high and medium priority sites will be receiving permission requests in the mail later this spring.

Wildlife observations documentation— We have hung a large aerial photo of the town in the Town Hall and are requesting that residents record wildlife

observations on this map. Documenting the town's wildlife is part of the natural resources inventory and the records on the map will be of great value to future generations as they continue the work of conserving the nature we cherish.

Protect

Protect yourself from Medicare errors, fraud, and abuse.

Protecting your personal information is the best line of defense in the fight against healthcare fraud and abuse. Every day, consumers get ripped off by scam artists. Medicare and Medicaid lose billions of dollars each year. You can make a difference!

Here are some ways to take an active role in protecting your healthcare benefits:

- 1 Treat your Medicare, Medicaid and Social Security numbers like a credit card number. Never give these numbers to a stranger.
- 2 Remember, Medicare doesn't call or visit to sell you anything.
- 3 Don't carry your Medicare or Medicaid card unless you will need it. Only take it to doctor's appointments, visits to your hospital or clinic, or trips to the pharmacy.
- 4 Record doctor visits, tests and procedures in your personal health care journal or calendar.
- 5 Save Medicare Summary Notices and Part D Explanation of Benefits. Shred the documents when they are no longer useful.

Detect

Learn to detect potential errors, fraud, and abuse.

Even when you do everything right, there is a chance that you could be a target of healthcare fraud. There are a lot of ways that your personal information can be used without your permission.

Here are some steps you can take to detect potential errors, fraud and abuse:

- 1 Always review your Medicare Summary Notice (MSN) and Part D Explanation of Benefits (EOB) for mistakes. Access to your current Medicare account is available 24 hours a day, simply visit www.MyMedicare.gov.
- 2 Compare your MSN and EOB to your personal health care journal and prescription drug receipts to make sure they are correct.
- 3 Look for three things on your billing statement:
 1. Charges for something you didn't get
 2. Billing for the same thing twice
 3. Services that were not ordered by your doctor

Report

If you suspect that you have been a target of errors, fraud, and abuse, report it.

If you suspect errors, fraud or abuse, report it immediately! You will protect other people from becoming victims and help to save your Medicare benefits.

Here are the steps you should take to report your concerns and abuse:

- 1 If you have questions about information on your Medicare Summary Notice or Part D Explanation of Benefits, call your provider or plan first.
- 2 If you are not comfortable calling your provider or plan or you are not satisfied with the response you get, call the Vermont SMP at the Community of Vermont Elders toll free: **1-888-865-2683**



What's New at the Library

New books, audio books, and DVDs are continually being added to our collection at the library. Come over to the library and look them over OR check out the Library Section of the town website, **cornwallvt.com** under the drop down box to see the complete listing. New materials are put into circulation and added to the site as they arrive, so check us out!

Below, is a sampling of the new books that were added this winter.

FICTION

Ripper - Isabel Allende, **Command Authority** - Tom Clancy, **Officer and a Spy** - Robert Harris, **The Violet Hour** - Katherine Hill, **The Museum of Extraordinary Things** - Alice Hoffman, **Killer** - Jonathan Kellerman, **The Invention of Wings** - Sue Monk Kidd, **The Weight of Blood** - Laura McHugh, **The Winter People** - Jennifer McMahon, **Private L. A.** - James Patterson and Mark Sullivan, **Ordinary Magic** - Ruth Porter, **Still Life with Bread Crumbs** - Anna Quindlen, **Saints of the Shadow Bible** - Ian Rankin, and **The Martian** - Andy Weir

NON FICTION

Glitter and Glue - Kelly Corrigan, **Duty** - Robert M. Gates, **George Washington's Secret Six** - Brian Gilmeade and Don Yaeger, **Double Down** - Mark Halperin and John Heilemann, **The Sixth Extinction** - Elizabeth Kolbert, **Everything I Needed to Know I Learned from a Little Golden Book** - Diane Muldrow, and **The Sugar Season** - Douglas Whynott

YOUNG ADULT

Cress - Marissa Meyer, **Miss Peregrine's Home for Peculiar Children** and **Hollow City: The Second Novel of Miss Peregrine's Peculiar Children** - Ransom Riggs, and **Eleanor and Park** - Rainbow Rowell

CHILDREN

Journey - Aaron Becker, **Doll Bones** - Holly Black, **Pete the Cat: Valentine's Day Is Cool** - Kimberly and James Dean, **Frozen: Junior Novelization** - RH Disney, **Some Bugs** - Angela DiTerlizzi, **Locomotive** - Brian Floca, **Ophelia and the Marvelous Boy** - Karen Foxlee, **The Boy on the Wooden Box** - Leon Leyson, **Baby Bear** - Kadir Nelson and **What Does the Fox Say** - Ylvis

AUDIOBOOKS

The Gods of Guilt - Michael Connelly, **The Signature of All Things** - Elizabeth Gilbert, **Concealed in Death** - J. D. Robb, and **Tatiana** - Martin Cruz Smith

DVDS

2 Guns, **12 Years a Slave**, **American Hustle**, **The Book Thief**, **The Butler**, **Captain Phillips**, **Catching Fire (The Hunger Games)**, **Despicable Me 2**, **Doc Martin: Series 5**, **Downton Abbey - Season 4**, **Frozen**, **Game of Thrones - Season 3**, **Gravity**, **Percy Jackson: Sea of Monsters**, **Pitch Perfect**, and **Snow White and the Huntsman**

Cornwall Volunteer Fire Department, Looking for New Members!

We are looking for people to volunteer for your Fire Department and especially the First Response Unit. Yes at first it's time consuming, but the rewards are priceless to help out your neighbors. There is no cost to you. The department will pay for all training costs. You may contact any member of the Fire Department or Sue at the town hall and she will contact one of us.

Cornwall Emergency Management Network Winter/Spring 2014

About the time you get this newsletter, the Cornwall Emergency Management Network (EMN) will have hosted an ICS-402 course. ICS is the Incident Command System, under which first responders and support personnel are to conduct emergency response and restoration efforts. ICS is part of the National Incident Management System, or NIMS. Since "9-11," states have been pushed to implement "NIMS Compliance," and the states, in turn, are pushing towns to follow suit.

Annually, the State conducts "NIMS Compliance" surveys for both municipalities and first response agencies. NIMS Compliance measures include: the annual update of the local Emergency Operations Plan, personnel obtaining appropriate levels of "ICS" training, and by the adoption and implementation of "NIMS Protocols" in emergency and ongoing operations.

The "stick" behind the compliance is in the distribution of grant funds, and the rate at which the state reimburses towns following a Federal declared disaster. We received the Town Hall Generator under one of these types of grants, and if we were not "in compliance" with these various regulations we would not have qualified to apply for the generator grant.

I have another grant application in to the Department of Public Safety right now, for additional equipment for use by "secondary" responders (Emergency Operations Center, Shelter Staff, Damage Assessors, etc.). This application also specifically required that we be in compliance, including the "formal adoption of NIMS compliance" (Selectboard, 2007), and that the online Compliance Survey has been completed.

I don't necessarily buy into all the standards and protocols, but I don't think they are so onerous that the loss of potential funds is worth dismissing them.

So we hosted an "ICS-402, Incident Command for Executives/Local Officials." This is part of an effort that came out of the Addison County Emergency Planning Committee (ACEPC), based on the new requirement that the Chair of the Selectboard or Municipal Manger have, at minimum, the ICS-402 or ICS-100 course (ICS-100 being available online) prior to signing the local Plan. The other new requirement this year is that Plans be signed by May 1st. So all towns are faced with the requirement that the SB chair take an additional training, and do so before May 1. The ACEPC discussed, and is now offering, the ICS-402 in any town interested in hosting it, and it's open to members of any town.

Upcoming courses of, perhaps, broader interest... the following courses will both be held on Thursdays, 6-9pm, at Cornwall Town Hall. The fee for each class is \$25.00, but the EMN will cover \$5.00 for Cornwall residents. Classes are:

-- **CPR/AED:** May 8th (hands-only CPR, adult/youth, infant, and basic Defibrillator)

-- **Basic First Aid:** May 29th

Official registration will be posted over Cornwall Connection Email and on Front Porch Forum. You can let me know at any time that you're interested and I'll get details to you closer to the events.

The Emergency Management Network meets, as needed, on the third Thursday of the month. Meetings are open and all are welcome. If you want to be on the email list for announcements (or if you want to be off) just let me know. giegess@shoreham.net, 462-2182.

Selectboard News

We, too, await spring! Another problem that the Select Board can't solve – weather. If we could that would be meaningful “local control.”

The winter months have been quiet and Town Meeting was an admirable example of direct democracy: caring citizens working together to address community issues with civility and good humor. Thank you all.

The VTGas/International Paper pipeline issue continues into the “process” period as the Public Service Board and supporting players carry out their respective roles. The Department of Pub-

lic Service local input meeting was well attended but no “breaking news” emerged. Addison County Regional Planning Commission members wrestle with competing agendas as the Commission seeks a coherent position.

Landowners continue to be frustrated by Vermont Gas' conduct of easement negotiations. The Select Board continues our dual efforts to, on the one hand, oppose PSB's issuance of a Certificate of Public Good while, on the other, attempting to have an intelligent dialogue with VTGas and/or International Paper so that, if the project is approved, Cornwall is treated as well as possible. Our active opposition will challenge the VTGas “story” they filed with the PSB and includes preparing to make our

opposing argument to the PSB when our turn comes. To date and despite good faith efforts we have failed to achieve any substantive dialog with VTGas with our proposals dismissed without rejoinder.

This spring – when it arrives – we will consider how to improve the land adjoining Town Hall (formerly filled by the Lavalley building) and whether and how to craft a new and practically enforceable dog ordinance ... plus whatever else comes in over the transom.

Public Service Board Hearing & Workshop Related to VT Gas

The Vermont Public Service Board's March 19, 2014 scheduling order contains dates for their public hearing and site visit concerning the International Paper pipeline. They are both scheduled as follows -

May 7, 2014. Site visit: 2:00 pm
Public hearing 7:00 pm location to be announced.

Typically a site visit for a transmission line involves visiting various locations along the proposed route and can reasonably be expected to take several hours. Vermont Gas executives and PSB staff will be present.

Also, the PSB is holding a workshop for interveners in Cornwall, Monday April 7 - Cornwall Town Hall, starting at 1:30 PM. Please inquire of the Public Service Board directly at: (802) 828-2358 for more information about this workshop.

Bequeathing Spring by Gary Margolis

By now the Redwings are a box
of licorice. Singing from one flag
post to another. Claiming love's
space. By now the ice is a stage
of dancers.

Not an ice age.

Our little Antarctica.

Breaking into pieces of hope.

Tell me what's the first noise
you hear by now? Bequeathing
spring? Tanks in the woods.
Shadows in the sand. An army
of screen-savers. Anything but this
winter-overing. Not one
Redwing yet. Song-bound.

A post's eye candy.
Love's melting. Love's lasting
expectation.

Road Commissioner's Report

Had enough yet? I'm tired of thawing culverts. Maybe this week is the beginning of the end. Blackbirds and Turkey Buzzards are back. Then again we've plowed snow in April. Woe to the sugar makers, but I'm thinking spring's going to come on fast now. Hopefully with a brief mud season. We'll start chasing potholes here right off. Fair warning here and now....hoping to get out with the shoulder disks if we get the weather window we need. Despite the short term mess it's a great maintenance tool. So much so, other towns are buying, building or borrowing disks. We've been in touch with manufacturers and discussed some other techniques we might try, mostly disking in the summer or fall. Several towns are continuing with the Right-of-Way herbicide permit process. The required public notice is in this newsletter. We will be treating the guardrails on Sperry Road. The other treatments will be to manage stump regrowth especially of undesirables such as sumac, box elder and buckthorn.

There is a map at the Town Hall for folks, especially organic growers to verify their property adjacent to the TOWN Right-of-Way. By statute it is the property owner's responsibility to contact us.

Let's see what else.... The new truck is here in time for gravel season. Looks like the last one only different up close.

We did put together an all angle plow to mount on the loader. Probably could have used it more during that big blowing storm, but it was new to us then and I wasn't confident in what it would do, but we're past that now.

Speaking of that storm quickly. It could've been a lot worse, been through worse. We appreciate that folks seem to, for the most part, be willing to hunker down and let it pass. We haven't had to risk man nor equipment chasing people stuck that had no need to be out.

Mailboxes....they took a beating this year. So I'll try a new approach here.

You've got 6 + months to do some maintenance on them. With only a few exceptions most that went down were dilapidated, rotten and in need of repair long before we got there. There has actually been a flurry of discussions on the Local Roads List Serve about mailbox ordinances and policies. I don't want to go there, but it shows this is a universal issue. Remember to call Dig Safe if you are going to replace the post, yes some of you should.

We've applied for a Class 2 paving grant for Parkhill and South Bingham. We're at the cut off line, so we may or may not get it. Regardless, we'll be changing a bunch of culverts. If we don't get the grant, I'll probably do the south end of West Street. For either project, I'm looking at several different product options that may have advantages and apparently some complications, mostly logistical.

Beyond that looking forward to a routine spring and summer. Be Safe.

Stu

2014 PUBLIC NOTICE HERBICIDE SPRAYING

For the Towns of Addison, Bridport, Cornwall, Rochester, Shoreham, and Starksboro

The above mentioned municipalities have each requested from the Secretary of the Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets a permit to apply the following herbicides: Garlon 4 ultra (Triclopyr), Oust Extra (Sulfometuron) and Rodeo (glyphosate) to control unwanted vegetation along town owned highways. Selective spray operations will start approximately May 20th. The applications will be made by certified pesticide applicators using mechanically controlled equipment and hand control methods. Residents along the right-of-way are encouraged to protect sensitive environmental areas, organic farm land and water supplies from spray. It is the resident's responsibility to notify the town of the existence of these situations adjacent to the town right-of-way. Citizens wishing to inform the town are urged to contact the contact person for their respective town as follows: Addison- Bryan Nolan 759-2570, Bridport- Dusty Huestis 758-2113 Cornwall- Stu Johnson 462-2752, Rochester- Dan Gendron 767-4732, Shoreham- Jason Paquette 897-5451, Starksboro - Tom Estey 453-2319, The appropriate place to contact with comments, other than the towns is the Agency of Agriculture, Food and Markets, Agriculture Resource Management and Environmental Stewardship, 116 State Street, Montpelier, VT 05602, telephone 802-828-2431. Their link Web page that would describe the town's spray permit request can be found at www.VermontAgriculture.com

Cornwall, Vermont

2629 Route 30
Cornwall, VT 05753

We're on the Web
Cornwallvt.com

Vermont Town Meeting 2014 by Gary Margolis

We're rowed in our gym.
Two hands. One vote.
What's my life for
and yours?
The authorities want to bury
a pipe.
We lie down in the road.
We vote with our pencils
and pens.
It's the first week in March
again.
We have to believe
we sit in a gym.
In Ukraine.
Not raising our hands.

No one's coming to save us.
We can burn our notebooks.
Stand by a fire, rubbing sticks,
throwing paper in.
One of us will stand in a row.
To speak for the wind.
At the end of the night
we'll fold our chairs.
There's not a pipe
we'll take.
A tongue we won't speak.
At the end of the day
a vote can take us
to them.