



THE

Gill Newsletter

December 2011 Issue

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Editor's Note

The next copy of the Gill Newsletter will be mailed in January 2012. We had hoped to have a December newsletter but found the news insufficient to justify the mailing costs. After the holidays, time, creativity, and news should fill the January copy. Until then, we are posting the current news of the Town Hall, Slate library, Open Space planning, and the Recreation Committee on this website. We send many good wishes for happiness, safety, and good health at the end of 2011 as we turn with the same wishes to 2012.

Town Hall News

Winter Parking Ban

Please be advised that there is no on-street parking allowed anywhere in Gill between the hours of 1AM and 6 AM from November 1st to April 15th. Your cooperation is greatly appreciated.

Nature's Trick-or-Treat??

The amount of damage caused by the heavy, wet snow that blanketed Gill on October 29-30th was certainly unexpected and unwelcome. At one point 100% of the town was without electricity, and most homes and businesses endured 2-5 days with no power. However, compared to other areas in New England, power restoration to Gill and its surrounds was rather timely.

Counting labor, overtime, materials, fuel, equipment, and repairs, \$33,000 is a preliminary estimate of the Fire, Police, and Highway Departments' expenses during and after the storm. This total would have been much higher, but Gill received several days of free assistance from a tree crew provided by the Erving State Forest and another crew provided by the Massachusetts Emergency Management Agency (MEMA). Inmates from the Community Service program at the Franklin County Jail assisted several days with chipping limbs and brush.

As of November 30th, it seems likely, but not certain, that the President will declare the snow event a "Major Disaster," that will allow the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to reimburse towns for 75% of their storm-related expenses.

From a Town perspective, we are fortunate this extended power outage occurred during the seasonable temperatures of October and not during

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Check in with the
 Gill Website
www.gillmass.org
 for up to date news,
 announcements and
 contact information!



the dead of winter. Except for the Public Safety Complex and the Riverside Sewer Pump Station building, no other town-owned buildings are wired to be powered by generators. Like many Gill homeowners, the Town will be exploring options in order to be better prepared for the next extended power outage.

Lastly, please extend a very big Thank You! to all of our Public Safety workers for their long hours, hard work, and dedication to Gill and its residents.

Reimbursement for Tropical Storm Irene

The Town recently submitted the required project worksheets and forms to FEMA for reimbursement of its expenses during and related to Tropical Storm Irene. Labor, materials, and equipment use totaled \$13,291, of which FEMA will reimburse 75% — \$9,968. There is no definite time frame when the funds will be received from FEMA—somewhere between several and many months seems likely.

Holiday Schedule

With Christmas Day and New Year's Day both falling on Sundays, town employees will be taking Monday, December 26th and Monday, January 2nd as holidays. The Town Hall and other town departments will be closed

both days. Collection of trash and recyclables is not affected by either holiday.

Boiler Replacement at Public Safety Complex

The Town is advertising and seeking bids for the replacement of the 33-year-old oil-fired steam boiler at the Public Safety Complex.

Currently, the older section of the building is heated by steam, and the newer section by forced hot water, both provided by the aged, leaking boiler. The plan is to convert the steam zones to forced hot water, which is a more efficient method of delivering heat to the building. Also, instead of one large boiler, two smaller boilers will be installed to provide better reliability and redundancy, and improved fuel efficiency during the more temperate months leading into and coming out of winter. The replacement should occur at the end of this heating season.

Of the estimated \$55,000 total for the project, \$20,000 has already been appropriated. Another \$10,000 will come from Entergy Nuclear because the building is used as our emergency operations center during “unusual events” at the Vernon nuclear plant. The remaining \$25,000 is still being considered by the Selectboard, Finance Committee, and Capital Improvement Planning Committee. Possible funding

sources are free cash, new growth, and stabilization,

Be on the lookout for an announcement for the date of a Special Town Meeting, likely in January, to make all the necessary votes and remaining appropriations for this project.

New Decorative Fence at West Gill Cemetery

There is a new wrought iron fence along the Hoe Shop Road side of the West Gill Cemetery. The fence was donated by Theodora Kelley of Shelburne Falls, the project was championed by Gill's Ted Graveline, and installation was done by the Highway Department. Hardware and incidental costs related to the new fence were paid for by the Friends of Gill. The improvement really looks great, and we offer a round of thank you's to everyone involved.

Open Space And Recreation Plan

Keep an eye on the Town's website (www.gillmass.org) for in-process and final drafts of the updated Open Space & Recreation Plan (OSRP). The presentation from the November 16th public forum is also on the website, and includes results from survey that was conducted. As stated in the last issue, the OSRP helps the Town as it continues to plan for future growth and protection of our nat-



ural, scenic, cultural, and historic resources—all the things that make Gill a special place to live.

*Ray Purington,
Administrator Assistant*

Recreation Committee

An Appeal

The Gill Recreation Committee is in desperate need of new members. For many, many years the committee has been anchored by long-time members Rose Lavasseur and Nate Duda. In recent years they were joined by Cathy Demars Ambo and Debbie Loomer. The committee has worked hard to become fiscally responsible and has started to think forward to the future. Last year we held a dedication of the softball scoreboard in memory of Jasmin Edson.

Unfortunately, the committee is already one person short and now two of the committee members can no longer serve on the committee; we will now have only two members. We have also had difficulty finding coaching for our teams. The same people are relied upon year after year, and it is only through their generosity that some of our programs still exist. If the committee is going to continue, it will need people to volunteer as

committee members, coaches, and support personnel.

If there is no additional support, the recreation programs that you have become accustomed to will not be able to continue. Unfortunately, we will be left with no alternative. No particular skills are necessary to be a part of the committee, just a willingness to meet once a month, help coordinate sport team sign-ups, help coordinate recreation events, and help make decisions concerning equipment purchases and inventory. Any help will be greatly appreciated. With the obesity of our youth becoming a societal health issue, it is imperative that we offer our children as many opportunities as we can to help give them an active lifestyle.

Slate Library News

Winter has arrived and what better way to celebrate the season than to curl up with a good book! Slate library has many new titles for both adults and children. Some new titles for adults include *The Cat's Table* by Michael Ondaatje, *The Marriage Plot* by Jeffrey Eugenides, *Nanjing Requiem* by Ha Jin, *Steve Jobs* by Walter Isaacson, and *Rin Tin Tin* by Susan Orlean. For young adults, we have *Dark Moon* by Tracy Barrett, *The Mysterious Benedict Society: Mr. Benedict's*

Book of perplexing Puzzles, Elusive Enigmas and Curious Conundrums by Trenton Lee Stuart, and the latest from Wendelin Van Draanen, *Sammy Keyes and the Night of the Skulls*. We have lots of lovely new picture books for the little ones, as well as puzzles and kits in the children's room.

If you are interested in starting a book group or knitting group, consider using Slate Library as your gathering place. We encourage community members to use the library as a gathering place and resource for community activities. We look forward to seeing you soon!



Business Advertisements

The Gill Newsletter will include business card size advertisements of local businesses for a year (six bi-monthly issues) for \$60.00. Please send a copy of your business card and a check for \$60.00 payable to 'Town of Gill' to Barbara Watson, 143 River Road, Gill, MA 01354. If you would like to make a contribution to help us meet expenses in a very tight budget, we would also welcome such contributions mailed to the above address.

Disclaimer:

The opinions expressed in this newsletter are not necessarily those of the editors, the organizing committee or town officials and should not be construed as such. Although we work to produce accurate and typographically correct copy, we and our advertisers cannot be responsible for errors or the accuracy of materials submitted to us.

Next Newsletter

January

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