



THE

Gill Newsletter

December 2005 Issue

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NEWSLETTER COMMITTEE

- Lynn Nichols
Starstruck Design
- Dorri Beaubien
- Bev Demars
- Barbara Elliott
- Joe Elliott
- Peter Jenkins
- Don Krüger
- Ronnie LaChance
- Dan Sachs
- Pam Shoemaker
- Dot Underwood
- Barbara Watson

Town Hall News

Prepayment of Taxes

The 2006 real estate tax rate will not be established prior to the end of the calendar year. The collector has agreed to accept prepayments to allow residents the income tax credit and at the same time bring in revenue for the Town. Taxpayers may use last year's amount as an estimate of the first-half of their taxes. Anyone with questions may call Ronnie LaChance at 413-863-2105.

Zoning Bylaw Changes

On September 8th, the Gill Planning Board held the first public hearing to discuss proposed amendments to Gill's Zoning By-Laws outlined in last month's newsletter. An additional change was added regarding an increase in membership to the Zoning Board of Appeals from three to five after the public hearing on September 8th. As a result, a second public hearing was scheduled for October 13th. The Planning Board received significant input from residents in attendance and continued the hearing to November 10th. At that time, the Planning Board opted to move forward only those proposals that transferred special permit authority from the Planning Board to the Board of Appeals and effected a

change in the membership of the Board of Appeals. The housekeeping issues that were initially included appeared to cloud the motivation for the changes, to free up the Planning Board to allow more time for short and long term planning. The Planning Board will be meeting with Town Counsel, Board of Appeals members, Selectboard members and other interested parties in December to draft final motions for a special town meeting tentatively planned in January of 2006. Watch the bulletin boards and website for the date!

The Town has received notification that we were successful in our application for a grant from the State Executive Office of Environmental Affairs to allow a complete review of our zoning bylaws. It is an exciting project and will effectively shape what Gill will look like in the future with the assistance of professional

The archeologist working for the town on a survey for the Mariamante parcel is asking residents who may have collected artifacts from the Mariamante parcel over the years to share this information with him. You may contact Tim Binzen by e-mail at tbinzen@tei.umass.edu or by telephone at (413) 577-0776. Tim wants residents to be sure to know that no one will "get into trouble with the State" for having collected these artifacts, it's just important to record this info if it exists. He is also interested in hearing about any other sites that folks may be aware of in Gill, but info on the Mariamante property would be particularly useful.



planners from the Regional Council of Governments. Where do you want commercial development? Do we steer new housing into village centers? Do we encourage back lot development to keep open space along the roadsides? Do we require future subdivisions to protect a certain percentage of the acreage involved as open space, grouping the housing into a small portion of the property? These are just some of the many questions that need to be addressed using the tools available for “smart growth”. The drive for new and affordable housing is coming from the east and from the south. We can't stop it, but if we act quickly we can direct where and how it occurs in Gill.

Residents, farm families and business owners that would be interested in working with members of the Planning Board, Board of Appeals, Conservation Commission and Selectboard on the zoning revisions should contact the Selectboard or Administrative Assistant at administrator@gillmass.org or call 413-863-9347.

Kudos to Planning and Appeals Committee members Tim Storrow, Larry Underwood, Barb Watson and Bill Burnham for giving of their time outside

of the required meetings to attend a seminar about special permits and variances in preparation for the proposed zoning changes. Thanks for your time, talent and dedication to Gill on a cold and rainy fall evening when it would have been very easy to stay home in a nice warm, dry house.

Open Positions

The Massachusetts Constitution under the heading of “Frame of Government” states: “that the people ... form themselves into a free, sovereign, and independent body politic.” It is that which requires citizens to serve their community in self-governance. The Town currently has openings on the Board of Assessors (1), Zoning Board of Appeals (2), Building Committee (1), Council on Aging (1), Personnel Committee (1) and Memorial Committee (3). Your town government must function in accordance with the rules and regulations placed on us by the State and Federal constitution, not to mention local bylaws and we do so almost entirely with volunteer (elected) positions. Some of the situations require as little as a few hours of your time a year, others require a weekly or monthly meeting time. The consequence of a lack of partici-

pation in a community is that it will no longer reflect the ideal of its constituents. Here's a little something that might help decide which position might be of interest to you!

Assessors are responsible for assessing property taxes, the major source of revenue for most communities, as well as miscellaneous excise taxes assessed such as the motor vehicle, boat and farm animal excises. Assessors value all real and personal property within their communities as of January 1st each year based on “fair cash value,” the amount a willing buyer would pay a willing seller on the open market. This protects the property owner's constitutional right to pay only his or her fair share of the tax burden.

The State Department of Revenue reviews a community's values and certifies that they reflect current fair cash values. The Board of Assessors meets weekly.

Board of Appeals currently hears requests from residents for variances from the current zoning regulations and appeal decisions by the Building Inspector. Decisions are based on strict criteria outlined in state law. If pro-



posed zoning revisions pass town meeting in January, they will also hear and decide on special permit applications.

Decisions for special permit applications must be based on the criteria outlined in your zoning bylaws. The Board of Appeals currently meets as needed, but will be moving to a monthly meeting if proposed bylaws are successful.

The Building Committee is responsible for care and maintenance of town buildings. Their charge is to address and recommend actions for short and long-term maintenance concerns. The Building Committee is in the process of inventorying facilities and equipment and preparing a schedule of capital projects required over the next ten years for a capital improvements planning schedule. If you're interested or have abilities in financial planning or building maintenance, this might be the place for you! The Building Committee meets as needed.

The Council on Aging meets monthly at the Turners Falls Senior Center and works cooperatively with the Montague Council on Aging regarding programs and concerns for our senior population. They assist in

FRIENDS OF GILL

For those of our readers who are superstitious, the tale of the 13th Annual Fall Arts and Crafts Festival will most likely confirm your beliefs. On Friday, as we were marking out the crafters' sites we had sporadic rain showers during the entire process. The fact that we were using a water-based marking compound which might wash away didn't put our minds at ease. Saturday was very cold and uncomfortable with pouring rain all day. Sunday dawned bright and clear but with even colder gale force winds. Our marking compound was still visible but we spent most of the day rescuing crafters tents and helping to reassemble them. Miserable is certainly the best adjective to describe the weather.

We deeply appreciate the help from all of the volunteers who braved the wind and rain to make the fair a success in spite of the weather. The crew from the Highway Department always make sure that we are ready to set up. We are grateful for the help and support that Beth Shepard, Ann Banash, Lynn Nichols and Don Krüger give to the Festival throughout the year. Lynn also designed this year's beautiful Festival postcard in her Starstruck Design studio. Thanks to the members of CERT, Liz Bocon and Cathy Mitchell, who organized the parking of cars, Elaine Smith who helped with the making of a record number of pies and Dot Underwood and Ellen Keech who helped sell them, Emil Demars for setting up the grounds, Lisa and Colleen Dumas for helping with the children's crafts, and Amber Henry and Amanda Golembeski for children's face painting. Thanks to Tim McCabe, Hughes Pack, Meg Donnelly, and the Out Reach Students from Northfield Mount Hermon, Sung Won Park, Brooke Evans, Yi Nua Liu (Angel), and Caroline Wise for their help.

Jan Bean brought her angora rabbit, always a favorite, from which she spins the rabbit's fur into yarn. Weaver Edward Cothey brought two yaks from Tregelly's Fiber Farm and demonstrated the beautiful things that can be woven from the wool of the various animals he raises at the farm in Heath.

The Friends of Gill are pleased that the Festival has continued to grow and now enjoys the support of many of our Gill friends and neighbors.



the planning for events, and provide information, assistance and referral services for elder needs.

The Memorial Committee is responsible for the annual Memorial Day celebration in the town square. They arrange music, readings and ensure flowers and wreaths are available to honor the public holiday. They meet only as needed.

The Personnel Committee currently meets monthly and reviews and makes recommendations to the Selectboard on the personnel policies of the Town of Gill. The committee deals with issues such as wage levels and annual cost of living increases, and policies relating to hiring, grievance and employee benefits.

Grant Application

The Administrative Assistant and the Library Trustees filed an application for a grant to install a smoke and heat detection system in the Slate Public Library. The application required a commitment for a small contribution by the Trustees, but will protect the building and property located therein.

The grants will be awarded at the Annual meeting of the Massachusetts Municipal Association in January.

Mariamante Parcel

Special town meeting November 14th approved the expenditure of \$15,000 from the Stabilization fund to complete a Phase One archeological study of the Mariamante Parcel. While it is not legally required that the Town do the study prior to the sale, the Selectboard, Historical Commission and Ad Hoc Committee member Liz Gardner are in favor of the action and town meeting members agreed.

Performing the study prior to the sale of the property will determine if and where any substantial archeological findings exist on the open space portion of the parcel, since that is where development is likely to occur. UMass Archeological Services will conduct background research, a walkover reconnaissance survey and subsurface testing of pits 2x2x3 feet at intervals of 25-50 feet. Excavated soil is screened and any artifacts will be cleaned, cataloged and photographed and curated at the UMass Department of Anthropology in Amherst. A written report will be provided upon completion of the study. We are hopeful the study can be completed before the ground freezes. The information will be used in preparation of request for proposals for purchase and development scenarios.

Town Clerk Notes

Please look for Census forms from the Town Clerk in your mailbox. These forms are used for updating the Street List and ensuring accurate Voter information. Please make corrections to any information that you note on the form or simply return as is if correct. Please be sure to include your signature.

The mailing includes an opportunity to register your dog. If you are interested, please be sure these are returned to the Town Clerk with proper payment and all other necessary information noted.

Thank you for your help, Lynda Hodsdon Mayo



Change in Office Hours

Town offices will be closed Monday, December 26th, and Monday, January 2, 2006 in observation of the Christmas and New Year holidays. The Town Clerk will be out of the office the week of January 9th.

\$10 Lost and Found

Cash found at the Northfield Clean Sweep Collection on Saturday, October 22nd. Contact the Solid Waste District to claim it: 772-2438. Specific details will be required to confirm the owner.

Recycling Center

Montague has graciously agreed to continue to accept bulky waste items at their recycling center until an agreement has been reached with Greenfield allowing outside citizens to utilize their transfer station.

Recycle Center Fees (must be paid by check or money order)

- Sofas, Chairs, Bureaus, Rugs, Etc. -\$15.00.
- Mattress, Box Spring- \$20.00
- Air Conditioners, Refrigerators, Freezers
- Dehumidifiers- \$15.00
- Microwave Ovens- \$5.00
- TV's, Computers, Monitors, Key Boards, VCR'S, Etc. - \$7.00
- Large TV's 27" Screen or Larger/Consoles- \$10.00
- Pool Liners Small- \$20.00 Large- \$30.00
- Demo. - \$60.00 cu.yd. With Demo Permit from Highway Dept.-.00
- Tires - Car, Pick Up Truck - \$6.00, Large Truck - \$10.00

Must be off the rims and no Heavy Equipment Tires

- Propane Tanks - \$5.00
- Fluorescent Bulbs - 4ft. .50; over 4ft. \$1.00 each
- Ballast - \$5.00 each
- Brush - \$12.00 cubic yard
- Grass, Leaves, Garden Compost (no charge)
- Clean Used Motor Oil (no charge)
- Clean Metal (no charge)

NO PAINT OR HAZARDOUS MATERIAL

Hours Are:

Wed: 7:00 AM - 2:30 PM; Sat: 7:00 AM - 12:00 PM

B.P. Jacobsen

413-863-5054

24hr Emergency
Service

Roofing

Siding



Windows

Decks

Chimney Repair

Painting

Gill, Ma

Licensed and Insured

Free Estimates



Gill Fire Department

Fire Prevention Week

Children from area schools participated in Fire Prevention Week activities during the month of October. Firefighters visited preschools where children became familiar with the appearance of firefighters in full turnout gear, learned how to dial 911 for help in an emergency, and participated in active “Stop, Drop, and Roll” training. Firefighters visited the Gill Elementary School where children in the first and second grades received practical instruction in emergency exit drills, after which the children were encouraged to practice their fire escape routes at home with their families.

Firefighters taught students in the third and fourth grades how to identify fire hazards in their homes. All children received age-appropriate literature and materials to encourage them to bring this message back to their parents.

Fifth grade students visited the fire station, where they received instruction on basic fire behavior and viewed a video presentation of the short time it takes a small room fire to develop into a conflagration. Firefighters then filled a room full of artificial smoke to demonstrate the disorientation smoke can cause and how to crawl beneath it. When the sixth graders also toured the fire station, firefighters taught the students how to identify the classes of fire and how to extinguish small fires. Students were able to use portable fire extinguishers to put out small controlled fires outside. All children who participated in S.A.F.E. programs this year received a S.A.F.E. tee-shirt designed by the Gill Fire Department.

Follow-up activities will include return visits to the classes with seasonal handouts for the students to take home, such as holiday safety during the

winter and bicycle and skateboard safety in the spring.

Haunted Firehouse

Nearly eighty children dressed as ghouls and goblins participated in the annual Gill Firemen's Association Halloween Party held on October 30. Children's games and snacks were as popular as ever thanks to Dorri Beaubien, Maureen Parzych, Staci Cutler, and, of course, the Gill firefighters. The Fire Department handed out seasonal fire safety pamphlets to older children as they finished their games.

Safe Holidays

The Gill Fire Department wants you to keep your holidays safe. If you use a Christmas tree, select a fresh tree that is not dry or shedding its needles. Keep your tree in a sturdy stand away from exits, stoves, fireplaces, and other heat sources. Water the tree daily. Use lights that are certified by an independent testing lab. Do not use lights with cracked or frayed cords, or loose or damaged sockets. Never overload electrical outlets or run extension cords under carpets. Be sure extension cords are not pinched behind or beneath furniture and unplug all decorative lighting before leaving home or going to bed.

Place candles in non-tip holders and keep them away from trees, decorations, curtains, and other combustible materials. Never burn candles in windows or near exits. Do not leave candles burning unattended or within the reach of small children. Extinguish all open flames before you leave the room or go to bed.

Wood Heating Safety

It's the start of the heating season. Keep your house safe while you keep warm. Use your



wood stove or fireplace wisely. Burn dry, seasoned hardwood. Use a metal fire screen or glass doors in front of the fireplace at all times. Never burn trash or large amounts of paper (especially wrapping paper), coal, charcoal, plastic, or plastic foam. Store wood safely away from the fire source and never use lighter fluid, kerosene, or gasoline to start a fire. Be sure the fire is out before you leave home or go to bed.

Most chimney fires result from a build-up of creosote, an extremely flammable tar-like substance. All wood-burning chimneys collect creosote, which is caused by the incomplete combustion of wood in the stove or fireplace. Other causes of chimney fires include faulty installation and poor maintenance. Chimneys need frequent inspection. Call a certified chimney sweep to check for obstructions (like bird nests or leaves), crumbling mortar, damaged flashing, broken tiles or liner, cracks or holes, or corrosion in metal chimneys. The chimney sweep will advise you how to make your chimney safe.

Renaissance Builders

Stephen Greenwald
President

P.O. Box 272
Turners Falls, MA 01376
413/863-8316 Fax 413/863-9712
www.renbuild.net

stephen@renbuild.net

Gerri Johnson & Associates REALTORS

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ABR, CBB, CRS, GRI
Senior Real Estate Specialist

66 French King Highway
Gill, MA 01376
(413) 863-9736
Fax (413) 863-9739



**SUPPORT YOUR
FIRE DEPARTMENT**



VOLUNTEER!

CALL 863-8955

Volunteers

The Gill Fire Department is always looking for able-bodied men and women who would like to serve their community. Learn how to help someone in need.

Training, which takes place on Thursday nights at the fire station, includes basic

firefighting and rescue skills as well as CPR and First Responder certification. Please call the fire station at 863-8955 or stop by on a Thursday evening if you are interested in becoming a member.



Gill Police Department

New Officer Coming Aboard

We are pleased to announce that Scott Waldron will be joining the force, in the next few weeks. Scott lives in Gill with his wife and children. Scott works full time as a Sergeant at the Franklin County Sheriff's Office. Scott will be training with Sgt. Christopher Redmond for the next several months before being cleared for patrol. Scott looks forward to becoming a police officer and is excited about working in his home town.

The process for becoming a part-time police officer is quite lengthy. Candidates must attend a basic reserve intermittent training program which consists of training three days a week and a total of 140 hours spent at the academy, on nights and weekends.

Candidates are then required to take a 40 hour first responder class and training in firearms, CPR and AED. Once those basic requirements are met, the candidates will train with a field training officer for an unspecified period of time, based on the candidates abilities, types of calls answered, and ability to attend other certified courses such as pepper spray, use of force, RADAR certification, certifications in alcohol testing machines, field sobriety testing, and many other courses.

Currently officers who train for becoming a part-time police officer in the town, must donate all of their time at training, and in addition must pay for the training course (\$350.00) and then must purchase all of their equipment, including uniforms, gun belts, bullet proof vest, and firearm.

Officers must complete all of the above before they receive any compensation from the town. Once an officer has successfully completed all of the training, He or she will start at \$12.50 an hour and work on an as needed basis. We welcome Scott aboard the force!

Pistol Permit/FID Appointments

With the assistance of a state funded community policing grant, the Gill Police Department will have a regularly scheduled night for completing firearms licensing. Officer Nikol Fiske will be processing new and renewal licenses on Tuesday evenings at the station. Anyone who is interested in obtaining a firearm identification card, or license to carry should contact the station at (413) 863-9398 or by email GillPolice@aol.com to set up an appointment.

Highway Safety

The Gill Police Department along with many other cities and towns, have received a grant from the Governor's Highway Safety Bureau. This grant will fund extra patrols at the state's expense for the purposes of enforcing safety belt laws, drunk driving and aggressive driver/road rage patrols. The Gill Police Department has received funding from the highway safety bureau for the last several years.

Gill School News

The Gill School is in full swing and there are a number of exciting things happening. We are finishing off the first phase of our work with graduate students from Antioch Graduate School of Education. Sue Ward, an associate professor at Antioch, has been instrumental in coordinating the growing partnership between the two schools. Megan Hess and Dori Drachman have been working with each class since school opened to expand our awareness of the natural world around us. We have taken walking trips to



the stream behind the school and to Dry Brook. We have investigated the plant and animal life that inhabits those areas and are gaining a greater understanding of the properties of a watershed. We are also in the process of determining whether a vernal pool exists on the school's property. The sixth grade is undertaking the chore of taking the basic measurements and will proceed with local environmental agencies as necessary. The Watershed Project is a year-long project involving the entire school. This work will be the main focus of our science program and has generated a great deal of excitement and interest throughout the building.

The arts programming is in full swing. We have our district organized music programs with Nan Sadoski (general music) and Steve Ciechowski (instrumental music), as well as parent supported weekly art classes (taught by Anne Larsen) and a special mural painting program organized by Jocelyn Castro-Santos (as part of the Watershed Project). We are pleased to again produce an all-school play. This year's extravaganza is *The Wizard of Galafree* — another

Know Your Gill Businesses

As you drive past the “Thickly Settled” sign on Main Road towards the center of downtown Gill, it is difficult not to notice **The Gill Store** with its new roof and siding and its freshly painted white trim. The alterations have been done by the new owners of the store, Lissa Greenough and her husband, Alden Booth. Both are residents of Gill and when not in the store, you will find Lissa checking out books in Gill's Slate Library.

The store is under the management of Vicki Van Zee, another Gill resident, who leases the store from the owners and who once worked for the Upinngil Farm and was recently director of the CISA project to support and promote local agriculture. During the renovations to the interior an effort has been made to maintain as much as possible the quaintness of the original appearance of the almost 200 year old store. There are, however, many new coolers and display cases, including a large bin for local fresh produce. The back room, which was once used for storage, has been transformed into a dining room with tables and chairs where customers can sit down to enjoy a delicious selection of sandwiches and homemade soups from the delicatessen which, among other things, includes Boar's Head meats and cheeses. Sandwiches can be made from a variety of fresh baked breads from the Leverett Coop.

An application is pending for a license to sell beer and wine. As soon as the application is approved there will be a gala opening celebration.

In the meantime, the store is presently open with hours on Monday to Friday from 7 AM to 7 PM; Saturday from 8 AM to 7 PM; and Sunday from 9 AM to 1 PM. There are many other items in their large inventory. For further information call: (413)-863-9006.



tale of good versus evil with lots of singing and dancing along the way. Court Dorsey and John Van Eps return to direct the action and music respectively, with the incredible assistance of parent volunteer, Mary Reeder. The performances are scheduled for February 15, 2006. The play is supported through grants from the Massachusetts Cultural Council, the Quintas Allen Fund and the Gill School PTO.

This is the time of year for numerous opportunities for the school and the community to mix. In November, we are holding our parent-teacher conferences and are using two half days and an evening (11/15) to meet with the parents and report on the progress of all of the students. We are also hosting our grandparent luncheon and giving the grandparents a chance to enjoy lunch and some of our mid-day activities. In December, we are also organizing our Holiday Crafts Night and Book Fair (12/2), as well as the ever popular Cookie Exchange (12/19). As we enter winter, there are lots of activities that connect us with the families and friends of the school.

Thank you for your on-going and terrific support of the school and our activities. We wish you and all of the Gill families a happy and healthy holiday season.

— The Gill School Staff

Hometown Students

TFHS Student of the Year

When Gill Montague Regional School District Superintendent Sue Gee presented Anna Perry the “Superintendent's Academic Excellence Award” from Turners Falls High

School at a banquet held at the Franklin County Technical School on November 3rd it was not a surprise to many people. Anna has had the highest grade point average in her class all four years at the high school. She is a well rounded student who participates in extra curricular activities such as the marching, concert, and jazz bands, soccer, track, and swim teams. We wish Anna all the best when she attends the College of the Atlantic in Maine this fall. Congratulations Anna on this award.

Honor Roll

Pioneer Valley Regional School

Grade 11: High Honors, Johanna Johnson; Honors, Maxwell Fish

Grade 8: High Honors, Jared Towne

Grade 7: Highest Honors, Patrick Arena

Turners Falls High School

Grade 12

First Honors: Anna Perry, Travis St. Peter, and Nathan Underwood.

Second Honors: Paul Marguet, Michael Palumbo and Michael Tombs.

Third Honors: Melissa Arial, Evan Prokowich and Liya Samokhina

Grade 11

First Honors: Benjamin Garber, Elizabeth Giknis, Chelsea Isles and Haley Trenholm

Grade 10

First Honors: Amanda Golembeski, Molly Perry and Alexander Tufano

Second Honors: Abbey Daniel-Green. Zachary Little, and Nicolas Picariello

Third Honors: Veronica Santucci

Grade 9

First Honors: Jodi Hallett

Second Honors: Amber Henry

Third Honors: Eric Dumas and Olga Samokhina



Great Falls Middle School

Grade 8

First Honors: Danielle Dolhenty and Sarah Underwood

Second Honors: Matthew Garber and Kathleen Rinaldi

Grade 7

First Honors: Brooke Hastings, Julie Howard-Thompson, Andrew Turban and Savannah Yates

Second Honors: Makayla Dolhenty, Michael Gonyer, Jack Hubert, Joseph Lafleur, and Natasha Vaughn

Third Honors: Rachel Arial

Sports

Senior tailback Nathan (Nate) Underwood reached over 1,000 yards this year rushing for the Turners Falls High School football team. He is 7th in a line of TFHS Indians that have reached that milestone. Nate has pushed himself all year and we are pleased his efforts have paid off.

Among those football players that have helped the varsity team this season are Travis St. Peter, Colby Bergeron, Mike Tombs, Mike Palumbo and Zack Little. Junior Varsity players included Tony Denofrio, Jake and Tom Fields. Although the Indians were disappointed in the Thanksgiving game loss, we enjoyed watching them play for TFHS.

Seniors Paul Marquet and Derrick Rawson were an important factor in the varsity soccer season this year. They are going to be missed next year. Nathan Towne also played varsity soccer, but for the Franklin County Technical School. Erika Loomer is back in action again playing for the NMH volleyball team. She's having another terrific season. In a recent game she had 26 assists to lead her team to victory over Cushing Academy.

Charlotte Parody

Charlotte Parody was six years old when she began gymnastics at the YMCA in Greenfield. As she watched the older girls practice she wanted to be just like them. Charlotte worked hard and tried her best to compete with the gymnasts that had been practicing much longer than she had. At age seven she was asked to compete on the Y team but felt she wasn't ready. It wasn't too long after that she accepted the offer and started competing in Level 3 competition. Three years later she was in Level six and now in her eighth year, at age 15, she competes in Level 9.

When Charlotte started practicing at the YMCA the gymnast had to set up the equipment for every practice. The floor was foam blocks covered with layers of plywood with a thick mat covering the plywood. Later a permanent room was set up for the gymnasts with brand new equipment. Charlotte continued to push herself and found she really enjoyed the bars. She was amazed that she caught on to the exercises so quickly. She watched intently as the older girls practiced their routines. Working many hours on the vault, bars, and beam she moved up to Level seven when she was 11 years old. Level seven is the "optional" group, allowing you to make up your own routines, but still perform certain requirements within an allotted time slot. Charlotte has received many awards for her performances.

This year when Charlotte traveled to the Bay State Games she and her friend realized they had not brought their music for the floor routine. Charlotte listened for music similar



to hers. When she found the music, she was able to borrow a tape to use. Without any practice with the new music, she scored 9.1 out of 10.0 on her floor exercise. Charlotte received a third place in vault and a second on the beam. The gymnast season runs from autumn to late spring and the competitions take place all over New England, with a few in New York. Still competing Charlotte also finds time to work part time at the YMCA with the youngsters that are now looking up to her.

Franklin Tech School

The Franklin County Technical School School Committee recently honored retired committee member Marshall Aronstam who represented his town of Deerfield on this committee for the previous 26 years and at one point in his tenure served as committee chairman. He was presented with a plaque by Franklin, the school's new mascot. The presentation was made during a school committee dinner held in the Apprentice Restaurant at the school.

Superintendent Steven Johnson stated that "this award is for the deep appreciation we have for his outstanding service and dedication to the students of Franklin County Technical School. Our eagle mascot embodies the spirit of our students reaching for the sky in their educational endeavors." Mr. Aronstam's devotion, commitment, and passion for the well-being of the students of Franklin Count Tech will be sorely missed.

Slate Library News

This winter at the library...



Story Adventures with Liz Gardner continues on Friday mornings from 10-11:30 AM.

This program invites pre-schoolers into picture book-based explorations in art, music, movement, and drama. The library opens at 9:30 to allow time for conversation, play, and a chance to check out books and other material. A healthy snack is included! For more information, call Liz at 863-8626.

The library's regular hours are:

Mondays 2-6 PM
Thursdays 2-8 PM
Saturdays 10 AM - 2 PM

Please consider taking advantage of our library pass to the Eric Carle Museum of Picture Book Art. This is a wonderful outing for both children and adults, especially in the colder weather. The pass grants free admission to four people; to reserve it for a specific date, please call ahead.

Military Addresses

The Friends of Gill are looking for the addresses of Gill residents who are serving in the military in Iraq, Afghanistan, or other areas. We would like to send them a holiday greeting. Please call Bev Demars 863-4792 or Bill Burnham 863-2970.

Purple Heart Ceremony

On Friday, November 11, 2005, Veterans Day, a Purple Heart Ceremony was held at the Bernardston Elementary School to honor 26 veterans who have received the Purple Heart from the towns of Bernardston, Gill, Northfield,



and Warwick. The Purple Heart is given to those who have been wounded or killed in action. The recipients were given Official Citations from the U.S. Congress, State Senate, and House of Representatives. Congressman John W. Olver, Senator Stan Rosenberg, Representative Chris Donelan, and Representative Denis Guyer all attended and handed out the citations. The ceremony was organized by Leo. J. Parent Jr., Director of Veterans' Services for the Central Franklin County Veterans' District. The five veterans from Gill honored at the Purple Heart ceremony were Cpl. Robert E. Guyette, Vietnam, wounded in action February 2, 1968 and March 15, 1968, E-4 Robert P. Lahey, Vietnam, wounded in action May 8, 1969 and July 4, 1969, Pfc. George V. Parody, Jr., WWII, wounded in action December 1, 1944, Tec/4 Donald A. Roy, Vietnam, wounded in action March 30, 1967, and S/Sgt. Charles D. Shebell, WWII, wounded in action May 28, 1944.

Recreation Committee

As always Steve Striebel has guided the Gill Rec Soccer

program to another very successful season. This year we had 52 kids participate (a new fall soccer enrollment record). With this large number of players came many volunteers to coach and referee all the practices and games. At the Senior level (5th and 6th Coed) I (Nathan Duda was head coach with assistance from Steve Striebel and Mark Smith). This group of kids played as an unstoppable team showing up at the Nov. 4th Soccer Jamboree at Pratt Field in Bernardston as the team to beat. They finished the day undefeated (6 wins) with all the players working together and having fun. At the Junior level (3rd and 4th grades Coed) Greg Leeds (head coach) taught this group the more advanced fundamentals of soccer and the rewards and joy of playing as a team. At the youngest level (K to 2nd grades Coed) (Gila Monsters) Everett Logan and Charlie Malcolm (with assistance from many other parents) taught this group the basic fundamentals of soccer as well as how to play as a team and good sportsmanship. I would also like to thank all the Referees for our home games, Steve Striebel, Alan Vaughn, NMH students, and the parents for making a

great soccer season for all 3 Gill Teams. The Gill Rec purchased certificates and medallions that the coaches awarded to their players. Steve Striebel also bought the entire senior team lunch at the new Gill Store out of the joy of watching and working with this incredible group that worked so well as a team. Steve Striebel and Greg Leeds were also responsible for setting up all of the flags and lines on fields before each home game. I would like to thank NMH and Tom Pratt, Athletic Director, for the use of the lower fields to host all of our home games. To be able to host multiple home games at the same time makes it that much more enjoyable for all who are there. NMH has always been great in assisting many of the Gill Rec functions and helpful in making Gill the great community it is.

Just as soccer season has come to an end, basketball season is just around the corner. Check the school newsletter for a sign-up date or give me a call (863-3791). We are trying to set up family swim time again this year as well as ice skating, both to be held at the NMH campus. We





are hoping to offer these activities on Sunday afternoons throughout the winter months. It has been a few years since we have had ice skating and we have a lot of parents inquiring about this, as well as offering their assistance. We will have more detailed information regarding these activities in the school newsletter or you may call me with any questions.

Respectfully submitted,
Nathan Duda
Gill Recreation Commission
Chairman

Historical Commission

The Historical Commission meets on the third Tuesday of each month at 5:00 PM in the Museum at the Riverside School on Route 2. If you have information or questions about Gill and its history, please contact Kit Carpenter, Bev Demars, Stuart Elliott, Dick French, Bob Perry, Linda Hodsdon Mayo, or Pam Shoemaker.

The Historical Commission maintains the Gill Museum at the Riverside School on Route 2. The Museum is part of the Commission's charge to pre-

serve the history of Gill. The Museum is open during published hours once a month or by appointment as well as during the Gill Craft Fair in October. At the October weekend opening this year, the Museum hosted one hundred and sixty visitors despite the weather. Some were from the local area and came to look at the school pictures, reminisce about going to school at Riverside, look at family files, or view house histories. A number of other visitors from the Northeast came to learn about the area.

The mud balls and dinosaur prints were popular as examples of Gill history. Commission members hosting the open museum, listened to stories about living in Gill; these memories are noted and added to the family files. The Open House on Veteran's Day also brought visitors to our display.

With newly rearranged display cases, the Museum featured a WWII memorial display of loaned items from various Gill families. A special thank you to Paul Seamans and Thomas Murley as well as to Edward Smith's daughter Carol and son Joel, Bolick Sokoloska's wife Constance, Theodore Gaida's wife Mildred, Ernest Yukl's son

Bruce, and Bernard Rosewarne's wife Lillian. Charles Shebell loaned memorabilia from Charles, Philip, and James Shebell. Pam Shoemaker loaned her father Grover's collection of Army Air Force squadron patches; she also loaned a series of cartoons by Al Jaffee of MAD Magazine fame, which were done at Bolling Field in 1943 and 1944. Loans also came from Stephen, John, and Anthony Krejmas from their niece Nancy Krejmas. Others items came from Chet, Harry, and John Warren of Riverside Drive.

If you have memorabilia from Gill or pictures we could borrow to copy for the Museum's collection, please be in touch with one of the members. One project that needs attention is the collection of information, photographs, and stories about the various school houses in Gill. The Commission is looking for interesting collections of Gill residents that could be loaned for special displays of several months in lengths. If you have a family history that we do not have, we would like to copy it for our collection. Please let us know what you might have or would like to see. We hope to see you soon.



Republican Committee Meeting

A Republican Committee held a meeting at the Gill Town Hall on November 27, 2005, at 7:30 PM. The committee was formed to comply with Commonwealth law, which requires formation by December 1, 2005, in order to send delegates to the State Convention in 2006. Temporary Officers were elected as follows: Ronnie LaChance, Chairman; Harriet Tidd, Secretary; Philip Maddern, Treasurer. The committee is looking for interested Republican citizens to serve. Please call Harriet Tidd at 863-9223 for further information.

Poem

Hi there

Glad to make your acquaintance

Could you be a friend per chance?

Who gives support to such as me,
And I return the same to thee.

Demands not, what I am willing not to give.

No matter what the trouble, is ready to forgive.

Courage and strengths are mutually exchanged
and peace is real, not feigned.

Can this person make you really smile
and forget your problems for even a little while?

Can you relax quietly within the others presence
and feel harmony and companionship in the silence?

If your answer is no

An acquaintance is all you have to show

These can also bring you pleasure,
but friends can be your very best treasure.

Real friendship is feeling, real friendship is love.

So you see

Acquaintances are easy to find,

but friendship is a liking and respect of an enduring kind
And true friends are yours forever.

Eddie Galbraith

River Road, Gill

Holiday Spice Cookies



This recipe submitted by newsletter editor Lynn Nichols comes from Caprilands Herb

Farm in Connecticut. It makes a very spicy cookie (coffee is one of the ingredients!) that is sure to satisfy those who prefer their holiday treats a little less sweet.

Cream Together:

1/2 cup shortening (Crisco)

1/2 cup sugar

1/2 cup molasses

1 egg

Sift and add to above:

2 1/4 cups flour

2 teaspoons ginger

1 teaspoon cinnamon

2 tablespoons anise

1 tablespoon coriander

1 scant teaspoon ground cloves

1/4 teaspoon salt

Dissolve and set aside:

2 teaspoons baking soda

2 tablespoons hot water

Add to flour and spice mixture:

6 tablespoons strong black coffee

Beat in soda, then combine all ingredients and mix well. Drop by spoonfuls onto greased cookie sheet, 2 inches apart. Bake at 350 degrees for 15 minutes. Do not overbake as cookies should stay soft. Yields 60.



Subscriptions

Know anyone no longer in town who would like to receive the Gill Newsletter? For \$7.00 per annum, we will mail out six issues. Please send subscription name, address, and a check payable to the Town of Gill to Barbara Watson, 143 River Road, Gill, MA 01376. 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 Deadline

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