



THE

# Gill Newsletter

February 2006 Issue

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## NEWSLETTER COMMITTEE

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- Peter Jenkins
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- Ronnie LaChance
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- Pam Shoemaker
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## Town Hall News

### Tax Rate Update

The Assessors office has been hard at work preparing for a tax rate. The State Department of Revenue certified real estate values. Overall, property values went down in Gill. The Selectboard held a public hearing on classification of values, which determines the percentages of the local tax levy to be borne by each class of real and personal property for fiscal year 2006 January 17th. A single rate was adopted. The next step is a recap of revenue and expenses to determine the resulting tax rate, which also requires Department of Revenue approval. If all goes as planned, the tax rate should be set by January 31st and tax bills in the mail by mid February, due thirty days from the billing date.

A thank you to all the taxpayers that pre-paid their real estate taxes using last years figures as an estimate. Prepayments helped keep the Town fluid and reduced the amount necessary to borrow in anticipation of revenue at \$400,000 for a three-month period at 3.54%. A special thank you to Ronnie LaChance for accepting prepayments, as it creates additional work for her office.

### Zoning Bylaw Changes

By the time you read this, a Special Town meeting will have occurred on January 23, 2006 to vote on proposed amendments to Gill's Zoning By-Laws transferring Special Permit review from the Planning Board to the Zoning Board of Appeals.

The initial meeting to kick off a review of our zoning bylaws was rescheduled to January 18th due to inclement weather. We had a good turnout, almost twenty people! The Franklin Council of Governments Planning Director Peggy Sloan and Planner Tracy Zafian guided us through what items required further review and what new things folks felt they would like to see included. Back-lot development, a cluster or open space bylaw, reduction in the number of special permits required with performance standards and addition of a commercial residential district were just some of the proposals discussed. A second meeting has been set for Wednesday, February 22, 2006 at 7 p.m. with a snow date of February 27, 2006. PLEASE join us — the more the better! We would rather have your input now than wait until a vote at town meeting to find out it is not the changes the majority of residents want. Look for updates and future meeting dates online at [www.gillmass.org](http://www.gillmass.org) entitled "smart growth zoning project."



Check in with the  
Gill Website  
**[www.gillmass.org](http://www.gillmass.org)**  
for up to date news,  
announcements and  
contact information!



## Town Hall Alterations

If you come into the Town Hall, you'll see some renovations happening.

The Accountant's office, formerly the kitchen, is losing the sink, cabinets and countertop. Actually, we're reversing the kitchenette to the hall wall and enclosing it behind sliding doors. The room will become an office for the Selectboard and Administrative Assistant. The Accountant will share an office space with the Treasurer/Tax Collector, since they use the same accounting software and computer. Next on the agenda is construction of two pits on each side of the Town Hall basement with sump pumps to control underground water that seeps into the Assessors' office on occasion. The Highway staff is supplying the labor on both of these projects as weather permits, saving tax dollars!

### Open Positions Remain

The Town still has openings on the Board of Assessors (1), Zoning Board of Appeals (1), Council on Aging (1), Personnel Committee (1) and Memorial Committee (3). A new opening on the Finance Committee has emerged via a resignation from Tom Bergeron, citing lack of time.

If no one steps forward or chooses to run on the ballot to fill the open position(s) on the Board of Assessors, Selectboard members may be forced to assume the role in addition to their current responsi-

bilities, as the Town cannot legally operate without at least a majority of the Board of Assessors.

Here again is information on the open positions for your consideration:

**Assessors** are responsible for assessing property, 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 proposed 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.

**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.

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

**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.

**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.

### **Mariamante Parcel**

A Phase One archeological study of the Mariamante Parcel is complete. As soon as the written report is received, the information will be used to prepare a request for proposals for purchase and development scenarios.

### **Town Clerk News**

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.

The Town Clerk received approval from the MA Attorney General on the bylaw voted at the November Special Town Meeting organizing the Council on Aging. The legal process requires posting for specific period prior to becoming law.

Thank you for your help,  
Lynda Hodsdon Mayo

## **FRIENDS OF GILL**

**T**he month of December was unusually busy for the Friends of Gill: we purchased and delivered fruit baskets and poinsettias during the holidays to Gill senior citizens; we donated to the Nature's Classroom Project of the sixth grade of the Gill Elementary School; and we sent phone cards to the following Gill servicemen: Chris Demars, Neil Darquis, Brandon Bergeron, and Haley Whitehead. If you know of any servicemen not on our list or would like addresses so that you can write to the above, call Ronnie LaChance at 863-9240 (home) or 863-2105 (office).

On Sunday, March 26th, the first Sunday of spring, from 8:00 to 10:30 AM, at the Gill Congregational Church, we will hold our annual Pancake Breakfast. This is one of our fundraising activities and is growing in popularity as a place to gather with friends and neighbors to enjoy the best pancakes in the area. The menu will include pancakes with pure maple syrup from Bill Burnham's Turkey Ridge Farm, sausage, orange juice, and hot drinks.

Our major fundraiser is the Fall Arts and Crafts Festival which this year will be in its 14th year. As the fair has grown, more Gill townspeople have become active in helping to the point where it is truly becoming a town affair. We are already planning for the next Festival, which will be held on October 14th and 15th, 2006, and we welcome volunteers for any amount of time they can give whether it be at the fair, with advertising, or with the many tasks needed before the event. We would appreciate suggestions and ideas for its continued success. If you are willing to help in any of our fundraising projects, please call Barbara Elliott at 863-9708 or Cathy Augustine at 863-2212. This is a good opportunity to get to know fellow townspeople while helping to raise funds to support many projects and events in Gill.



## Recycling Update

The arrangement for residents to use the Greenfield transfer station has been finalized - at last. Any resident can use the facility by paying a \$5 per day user fee. This is a flat rate for multiple trips in one day. The per item charge is as follows:

### Materials and Pricing Guidelines

#### Greenfield Solid Waste Transfer Station\*\*

For All Questions — Call the Franklin County Solid Waste District at 772-2438.

#### Transfer Station Hours:

Tuesday-Friday: 12:30 PM to 2:30 PM Saturday:  
8:30 AM to 4:00 PM

**Any Area Resident:** Non-Greenfield residents must pay a \$5 per day User Fee.

No loads larger than pick-up truck bed or 3 cubic yard trailer.

1. Recyclables: Newspaper, cardboard, glass, cans, and plastic - \$0  
Must meet all materials preparation and separation requirements.  
Loads must be covered and securely tied.
2. Televisions, computers, toilets, sinks - \$10 each
3. Console TVs (with furniture case) - \$15 each

4. Large Metal Items (up to 80 lbs) - \$0  
No fuel tanks attached. All rubber tires removed
5. Fuel tanks — propane tanks - \$5  
Must be empty of fuel
6. Demolition materials (sheetrock, plaster, brick, cement, roof shingles, etc.) - \$70/cubic yard. No deliveries in trucks larger than a pick-up or on trailers bigger than 3 cubic yards. No item or wood longer than 4 feet in length.  
Loads must be covered and securely tied.
7. Wooden furniture and other bulky items not listed elsewhere - \$15/cubic yard. Items not accepted: Liquid wastes, chemicals, pressure cylinders, ammunition, large quantities of brush or demolition materials. No items or wood longer than 4 feet
8. Stoves, dryers, washing machines, dishwashers, microwaves, and heaters - \$10
9. Refrigerators, freezers, air conditioners, and dehumidifiers - \$15 each. Doors must be removed.
10. Car Tires - Without Rim - \$4 each;  
With Rim - \$7 each
11. Sofas or overstuffed chairs - \$20 each; Limit of 2 per day per household.
12. Mattress or box springs - \$20 each; Limit of 4 per day per household.

The following items are not accepted: brush, leaves, grass clippings, fluorescent light bulbs, paint, motor oil, antifreeze, household hazardous waste. Contact the Franklin County Solid Waste District for disposal information for these materials: 772-2438.

\*\*The Town of Greenfield reserves the right to deny access to the Transfer Station to anyone for any reason if the Town judges it to be in its best interest. Households or organizations that are delivering any item(s) in quantities that are larger than a single household would produce will be denied access.



## Notice from Gill Assessors Office

Because of recent issues surrounding undevelopable lots, the assessors have reclassified all undevelopable lots with proper acreage and frontage as developable lots. This does not necessarily mean that the lots are developable, but rather they are being assessed that way. Failed percolation tests will not be accepted as criteria for classifying a lot undevelopable. If you believe you have a lot that is not developable under any circumstances, a letter from the Franklin County building inspector stating that will be required.

## Gill Fire Department

### 2005 Run Summary

The Gill Fire Department answered 205 alarms during 2005. Medical emergencies, where Fire Department personnel provide first aid and basic life support until the arrival of an ambulance, accounted for 38% of the year's total runs. Automatic fire alarms at Mount Hermon and private residences made up 14% of the calls while mutual aid to surrounding communities made up nearly 8% of the calls.

Assist Police Department - 10  
Brush Fire - 1  
Building/Residence Fire - 2  
Chimney Fire - 3  
Electrical Fire - 2  
Elevator Entrapment - 1  
Fire Alarm Sounding - 29  
Fire Prevention - 6  
Furnace Malfunction - 1  
Hazardous Materials Spill - 3  
Illegal Burning - 1  
Medical Emergency - 79  
Motor Vehicle Accident - 12  
Motor vehicle Fire - 3  
Mutual Aid - 16  
Public Assistance - 4  
Public Service - 8  
Smoke Investigation - 5  
Storm Coverage - 1



**Geri Johnson & Associates**  
REALTORS

**Geri Johnson**  
ABR, CBB, CRS, GRI  
Senior Real Estate Specialist

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Water in Basement - 11

Water Rescue - 2

Wires Down - 5

### **Brush Permit Season**

Brush burning season runs from January 15 to May 1, 2006. Town residents who wish to burn brush, sticks, or fallen tree limbs may contact Shelburne Control at 625-8200 to obtain a permit. Fires must be at least 75' from buildings, contained, and attended. Residents may not burn trees, logs, stumps, leaves, trash, or demolition materials. Fires must begin before noon and be completely extinguished before 4:00 PM. Call the Fire Department at 863-8955 if you need further information on brush fire permits.

## **Gill Police Department**

### **Parking Violations**

The Gill Police Department will soon be issuing parking violations for traffic scofflaws. The police department had a nine-year lapse in the issuance of civil parking tickets because the department had run out of ticket books. Traffic rules and regulations were promulgated by the town on September 17, 1974. The fine for most parking violations is \$20.. After a recent review of the traffic rules and regulations with the town Select Board, it was determined to keep the fine at twenty dollars still. The most common parking violations observed by officers are:

- \* Parked facing on-coming traffic (left side wheels of vehicle to curb)
- \* Within an intersection
- \* Upon any sidewalk
- \* Upon any crosswalk
- \* Upon the roadway in a rural or sparsely settled district
- \* Upon any roadway where the parking of a vehicle will not leave a clear and unobstructed lane at least ten (10) feet wide for passing traffic
- \* Upon any street or highway within five (5) feet of a fire hydrant
- \* In front of a private road or driveway
- \* Upon any street or highway within twenty (20) feet

of an intersecting way, except alleys

- \* Handicap or Veteran parking violations
- \* Winter parking ban violations between the hours of 1:00 AM to 6:00 AM on any day between November 1st and April 15th of the succeeding year (except in cases of emergencies, no longer then one hour)

Parking tickets will be processed by the Town Clerk. Failure to pay fine(s) can result in a vehicle registration suspension or revocation, in addition to towing the vehicle if the condition warrants it.

### **Officer Receives Thank You Letter**

On January 2, 2006, Chief Hastings received a letter from Lt. Theresa Sepe of the Winchester, New Hampshire, Police Department. Lt. Sepe wanted to thank Sgt. Christopher Redmond for lending his assistance in the apprehension of two subjects wanted in connection with an armed robbery that occurred in Winchester New Hampshire.

At 11:57 PM on the night of December 27, 2005, the Winchester Police Department had dispatched a "be on the lookout" broadcast for two Hispanic males operating a stolen Volvo sedan from Springfield Massachusetts. The two subjects were wanted for an armed robbery in Winchester, and were last seen leaving the area in the stolen motor vehicle.

At 12:07 AM on December 28, 2005 Sgt. Redmond observed the stolen vehicle and the two wanted robbers on Rt. 10. Sgt. Redmond continued to follow the vehicle until the subjects had stopped on the side of Rt. 91 in Vernon Vermont. The two subjects parked the stolen car in the break down lane adjacent to a highway cross over. The two subjects then exited the vehicle, and approached Sgt. Redmond's cruiser. Sgt. Redmond was not in pursuit at the time and was following the vehicle until further units could arrive to assist in the apprehension. As the subjects were approaching Sgt. Redmond's cruiser, Officer Michael Kelly of the Bernardston Police



Department arrived on scene. The two subjects were detained and later taken into custody by the Vermont State Police. Both subjects were charged with possession of a stolen motor vehicle, armed robbery and possession of a large amount of heroin. Lt Sepe stated in her letter that without Sgt. Redmond's initiative to search for and follow the vehicle, the suspects may have remained at large.

## Gill School News

The late winter and early spring are interesting times at the Gill School. During that time, we will be focusing on two substantial events. The first is the all-school play, *The Wizard of Galafree*, and the second is the state-wide exams (MCAS). Both events are a challenge to students and staff and we are busily in preparation.

The performance of *The Wizard of Galafree* will showcase the acting, singing and dancing talents of all of our students. The story is the basic tale of good versus evil, with a resolution that will please the theater interests of all. Our students in grades 5 and 6 are the main actors and carry the plot line. The other classes join the action on the stage for songs and dances to provide large, Broadway-like extravaganzas that thrill and delight all viewers. Students and staff have been working with Court Dorsey (Director) and John VanEps (Musical Director) to make the show come to life. Music teacher Nan Sadoski has been instrumental (pardon the pun) in helping students learn their songs. Many volunteers pitch in to turn the all-purpose room into a theater, assist with stage construction and set design, and make the show a memorable event. Mary Reeder has been an extraordinary volunteer in assisting with the myriad of details necessary for a successful show. We are looking at a March 22nd show date; contact the school if you are interested in attending.

The MCAS exams are scheduled to be administered for five weeks between the end of March and the end of May. All students in grades 3 through 6 will be tested in Language Arts and Math. In addition, there is a long composition exam for the fourth grade, and a History / Social Studies test and a Science/Technology test for the fifth grade. These tests are designed by the Department of Education (DOE) to evaluate student achievement based

## Renaissance Builders

Stephen Greenwald  
President

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on their mastery of skills as outlined in the Massachusetts curriculum frameworks. The frameworks are available for your examination at the DOE website: [www.doe.mass.edu](http://www.doe.mass.edu). Test results are released in the fall. We work hard to prepare the students for the test, and utilize results to help us examine our classroom practices.

Other ventures at school include our watershed project, mural project and Sargent Center trip. The watershed project, as discussed in prior newsletters, is a program in which we utilize graduate students from Antioch University in Keene, NH to assist our students in studying and understanding of the Connecticut River watershed. Our young scientists are busy (even in the winter) examining animal and plant life, and the impact of natural and man-made forces on the watershed. The mural project is an off-shoot of the watershed work. This will be a creative construction by the students of many aspects of the watershed that they have been studying. The mural will adorn our walls for years to come and be a terrific enhancement to the look of the building. Thanks go out to Jocelyn Castro-Santos for her incredible effort in making the mural project a reality.

And finally, our sixth grade is headed up to the Sargent Center in Hancock, New Hampshire for a week-long environmental education experience. This is a fantastic chance for students to be immersed in learning many aspects of winter ecology. They will study the plant and animal forms (biology and zoology), as well as the local geology and even astronomy. This is our second year of sending our senior class on this exciting venture and we are thrilled by witnessing their growth as scientists and as maturing, young adults.

Again, thank you for your support of the efforts of the school district as we work hard to provide challenging and meaningful experiences for your children.

Sincerely,  
The staff of the Gill School

## Hometown Students

### Honor Roll

The Town of Gill has ten students attending the Franklin County Technical School. Five of those students are on the Honor Roll.

**Grade 12 Honors:** Michael Crochier and Michael Olson

**Grade 10 Honors:**  
Nicolas Berniche

**Grade 9 Honors:**  
Ashly Brown and Derek Whiting

**Deerfield Academy Fall Honor Roll** - Suriah M. Odeh  
Northfield Mount Hermon School Honor Roll:

**Grade 12:**  
High Honors: Evan Hefner

**Grade 11:**  
High Honors: Grace Booth, Ashley Storrow, Evan Hefner and William Ward

**Grade 10:**  
High Honors: Aja Kane

Honors:  
Zoe Hastings, Spencer Hattendorf

**Grade 9:**  
High Honors: Harriet Booth

**Football honors** were given to Gill students after the 2005 season.

Turners Falls High School football players Travis St. Peter and Nathan Underwood were awarded the Cannon Novak Awards at the 47th annual dinner, December 12th, at St. Kazimierz Hall in Turners Falls. Travis's award was for defense and Nate's for offense.

In January 2006, Sunday Republican All-Scholastic awards were given to Nate Underwood chosen for "First Team Offense" and Travis St. Peter named to the "Second Team Defense" from all Division III Western Massachusetts football teams. Congratulations to all who received honors!



*Nate Underwood (left) and Travis St. Peter (right) show off their Canon Novak awards.*

## School Sports

The basketball season is now in full swing. The Turners Falls basketball team has seniors Paul Marguet, Travis St. Peter and Nate Underwood along with freshmen Tom and Jake Fields. It's not surprising to see three of the five players on the court from Gill. Alex Tufano, Eric Dumas and Brandon Rawson are on the junior varsity team.

Ashleigh St. Peter and Angela Marguet are playing on the TFHS girl's varsity basketball team. Chelseigh St. Peter plays half a game on the junior varsity and then hops up to help the varsity team. Amber Henry and Katie Rinaldi are on the junior varsity team.

Jeff Gibson, Andy Turban and Mackae Freeland play on the Great Falls Middle School boy's basketball team and Danielle Dolhenty, Makayla Dolhenty and Natasha Vaughn are on the GFMS girl's team.

The Turners Falls High School co-operative hockey team has Michael Crochier scoring goals to help his team. Mike is a senior at Franklin County Technical School and Joey Rinaldi, a TFHS freshman, is a goalie on the junior varsity team.

Gill teens swimming for Turners Falls High School are Ben and Matt Garber, Anna and Molly Perry, and Abbey Daniel-Green.

Gill elementary students James Elliott, Malcolm Hatch Crosby, and

Krystal Cloutier are swimming for the Montague Bluefish team.

Jacob Galipault is playing on the Pioneer varsity basketball team coached by Gill's Police Chief David Hastings. Jared Towne is playing on Pioneer's middle school team.

Zack French continues to lead the Four Rivers Charter School basketball team to victory.

Erika Loomer plays on the Northfield Mount Hermon School girl's varsity basketball team and Harriet Booth on the junior varsity team. Ashley Storrow and Grace Booth were on the field hockey team this fall. Grace has continued with an outside sport, NMH's Nordic ski team.

## Upcoming Events

The TFHS Sophomore class is holding a fundraiser to have a class picnic after the upcoming MCAS tests. The students are selling tickets for only \$5.00 to see the *The Pink Panther* at Greenfield Garden Cinemas on February 11th. *The Pink Panther* opens in all theatres the day before. Tickets are available from the sophomores, co-advisors Nancy Daniel-Green and Rachel Kent and at the Gill Elementary School.

The Sophomore class is also sponsoring an Easter Breakfast with the Easter Bunny on April 9th, the Sunday before Easter, at the Elks Club in Turners Falls. Tickets are available from the students and co-advisors.



Mark your calendars now to see the musical performance of *Grease* on March 10th, 11th or 12th at TFHS under the direction of Gill-Montague Regional School's new Musical Director, Melissa Urey. Chelsea Isles, Abbey Daniel-Green and Ben Garber are among the students performing in the show.

## Gala Concert with Elisabeth von Trapp

A Concert with Elisabeth von Trapp will be held on Saturday, April 29, 2006, at 7:30 in the Turners Falls High School Theater. Performing with Elisabeth will be The Gill-Montague Elementary Chorus and The Great Falls Middle School/Turners Falls High School Singers.

The 2nd annual Gala is sponsored by The Gill-Montague Education Fund, a non-profit organization established for the purpose of raising funds for student's enrichment through the academic, arts and athletic programs. The Gala is underwritten by corporate sponsor Hillside Plastics, Inc.

Elisabeth is the granddaughter of the musical matriarch, Maria von Trapp and her father, Werner, is one of the seven Von Trapp children made famous in the Rodgers and Hammerstein musical, *The Sound of Music*.

Tickets go on sale February 11, 2006. Prices are: \$20, \$15, and \$10.

Tickets Locations: Equi's Store, Scotty's Convenience Store, World Eye Bookshop, Web's of Northampton, all Gill-Montague Elementary Schools or by calling Turners Falls High School at 863-9341.

### Thank You

The staff of the Gill Newsletter thanks those readers who have made financial contributions to help offset the cost of printing and distributing our town newsletter. We couldn't do this without you!

## Recreation Committee



Happy New Year! I hope everyone is enjoying 2006 so far. Well, here we are again in Basketball season. This year we have 3 teams and a skills group for Kindergarten and 1st graders. We have a 2-4 coed team, 5/6 girls team and a 5/6 boys team. Rose Levasseur is leading the K/1 skills group with help from parent volunteers. The 2-4 coed team is coached by Fred Bezio and Steve Baskowski with assistance from Steve Striebel. The 5/6 Girls team is coached by Genie Woods, Ed Dolhenty and Alan Vaughn and the 5/6 boys team is coached by Nathan Duda & Jim Poulson. Steve Striebel is also at most of the games and practices lending a helping hand. We have had a few games so far and the kids are really enjoying themselves. If you would like any information on game times you can contact Nathan Duda. We would like to send a special thank you to Steve Striebel & Steve Baskowski (aka Mr. B) for taking time out of their busy schedules to recruit some of the younger kids to make a 2-4 team possible. We would also like to thank Rafaela Calicchio and Tom Pratt from NMH for allowing us the use of the Basketball facilities to hold all of our practices. The Gill community is very grateful for all the generous and helpful people from NMH for allowing us the use of your facilities for our recreational use year after year. Thank You!

Looking ahead to February we are planning our 5th annual wacky sliding party at Oak Ridge Golf Course. This is one of our favorite events to hold. The basic idea is to make a wacky homemade sled with your family. Get creative! You can use just about anything. We have found that large cardboard boxes are almost always a good bet to make it down the hill. We will be handing out prizes this year along with certificates for the fastest, most creative and of course wackiest sled along with a few other categories. We are hoping to see lots of great entries this year. As always, making your own sled is NOT required. If you would just like to have a fun afternoon with your friends, just bring your sled or snowboard and join us for an afternoon of fun and laughs. We will also have a grill



and will be cooking hot dogs and we will have hot cocoa and cookies. All of the food is supplied by the Recreation Committee. There will also be volunteers from the Gill Fire Dept. with their rescue truck for people to warm up in if they get really cold. We are planning to hold this event on Sunday February 12th from 12-3 PM as long as Mother Nature is on our side and we have enough snow. If we don't then we are looking at a second date of March 5th from 12-3 PM. Hope to see you there!



For the **5th annual Red Sox Trip**, we have just received 105 tickets for the Sunday, May 14th, game vs. the Texas Rangers. Game time is 2 PM . Cost this year is \$60 a person. Seats are Right Field Grandstand under the roof. As always, we will be using two of Travel Kuz luxury coaches. Look for the sign at the Town Hall with a Saturday date when you can stop in to purchase your tickets. This is on a first come first-serve basis. You must pay to reserve your seat. We sell out very fast so don't wait or it will probably be too late. Any questions, call Nate Duda at 522-3209.

### Go Red Sox!

We are still working with NMH on getting some dates for family swim and ice skating. Watch the Gill school newsletter for more information on this or call Nathan Duda at 522-3209.

Respectfully submitted — Nathan Duda, Gill Recreation Commission Chairman

## Know Your Gill Businesses

**ShopWesternMass.com** brings the flavor, color and culture of Western Massachusetts right to your doorstep. Started in 2003 by husband and wife team (and Gill residents) Lynn Nichols and Don Krüger, the website is the first and only online store devoted solely to products from Western Massachusetts.

The site had its origins in the couple's affinity for buying locally. Transplants to Western Mass, they fell in love with the Pioneer Valley's rural character when they moved to Gill in 1999. The graphic designer/writer (Lynn) and website architect (Don) started a business (Starstruck Design) producing websites and promotional material for local businesses. On the weekends, they found themselves poring over the locally-made products at area craft fairs. It didn't take long for the two ideas to merge into one concept — local products for sale on a community-based web portal.

Before the formal launch, the couple spent more than a year researching online stores, talking to vendors from throughout the Valley, and getting their products up on the site. They now have more than 35 individual vendors and hundreds of products. Visitors can browse the entire store and add products to their secure shopping cart from any of the companies represented.

The offerings on **ShopWesternMass.com** are diverse — everything from healing products made from emu oil to pottery, fine art, clothing, furniture, framed photographs, notecards, books and music. There's also a growing number of food items, such as award-winning goat's milk cheese from Hillman Farm (Colrain), Chef Myron's Asian cooking sauces (Millers Falls) and specialty olive oils imported by Alejandro & Martin of Montague and bottled in Greenfield. New additions include salsa maker Hedgie's Hot Stuff (Belchertown), Western Mass travel guides, a CD of Celtic, English and American songs from Deerfield artist Jennie McAvoy, and 2006 calendars, including the popular Western New England Golf Calendar.

The website can be found at [www.shopwesternmass.com](http://www.shopwesternmass.com). Prospective vendors with locally-made products to sell can reach Lynn or Don at [info@shopwesternmass.com](mailto:info@shopwesternmass.com).

**Shop Western Mass.com**  
*Think outside the box store!*



## 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:

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## Next Newsletter Deadline

March 15th for the April Issue

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