



THE

Gill Newsletter

January 2016 Issue

Disclaimer:

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From the Desk of Ray Purington, Town Administrator

Tax Bills: The second tax bill for FY16 will be mailed in February, with a due date of May 2, 2016. There has been a delay in setting the tax rate until after a Special Town Meeting to finalize spending appropriations. Thank you for your patience and understanding.

Openings on the Conservation

Commission: Let's make it one of our New Year's resolutions for 2016 to fill the two openings on the Conservation Commission. Would YOU like to join? Amy Gordon, Chris Polatin, and Paul Sievert are a fun, hardworking bunch, but could use two more Gill residents, as many hands make light work. The ConCom is responsible for administering wetlands protection regulations in town, and also has oversight of the Gill Town Forest and its Committee. If you are interested in joining this group, please get in touch with one of the members to learn more. Their contact info is on the website, www.gillmass.org

Winter Parking Ban: Reminder: the winter parking ban is in effect through April 15. There is NO on-street parking allowed between the hours of 1 AM and 6 AM. Your cooperation is greatly appreciated.

Winter Sand for Driveways: The Highway Department keeps a pile of winter sand (sand & salt mix) at the Public Safety Complex for Gill residents who need a few buckets for driveways and walkways. Use the driveway on the left (Fire Department side of the building), and look for the pile behind the building, off to the left. The pile may not be used by snow removal companies and other private contractors.

Dear Gill Community,

After fifteen years of leadership, Pam Shoemaker has resigned from her position as editor of the newsletter. Pam's work on the newsletter over the years has been greatly appreciated. She continues to serve the community as a member of the Historical Commission. Many readers and colleagues send their thanks to Pam for her superb organizational skills and devotion.

I would like to introduce myself as the new editor of the town newsletter. I am a nurse practitioner and have lived in Gill with my husband and now-grown children since 1986. I have been on the Cultural Council for six years. My husband Jeffrey served on the School Committee many years ago and is currently on the Planning Board, and our children attended the elementary school. Now that they are gone and I have retired from my job at the Deerfield Academy Health Center I hope to serve the town by helping produce a quarterly newsletter with the Newsletter Committee. If you have town-worthy news and information you would like to contribute to the newsletter, get in touch with me at susan.lascal@gmail.com. I look forward to sharing our journey in the days, months and years to come.

Sincerely,
Susan LaScala



Check in with the Gill Website

www.gillmass.org
for up to date news,
announcements and
contact information!





Fred W. Wells Trust Scholarship:

Applications for 2016-2017 Fred W. Wells Trust scholarships are now available at the Town Hall, as well as at area high school guidance offices. Scholarships are available to graduating seniors and full-time college students who have resided in Gill (and other eligible towns) for at least two years immediately before application.

Vermont Yankee Calendars &

Tone-Alert Radios: If you did not receive a 2016 Vermont Yankee calendar and want one, they are available at Town Hall. Also, if you need a Tone-Alert Radio (or fresh batteries for your existing Tone-Alert Radio), those are available at Town Hall as well. We expect this will be the last year that calendars and radios will be available.

Burning Brush: Burning season started on January 15th and runs through May 1st. Burning brush requires a permit and can only be done during burning season. If a Gill resident would like to burn brush on a given day, please go to the website for Franklin County Burn Permits (www.fcburnpermits.com) and complete the online permit. If you don't have computer access, call 625-8200, and Shelburne Control will assist you. Please note that permits are only issued between 8:30 AM and 1:00 PM, and are good only for that same day.

Right to Farm – Annual

Disclosure: In accordance with the Right to Farm bylaw adopted by the Town in January 2009, we remind our residents of the following:

“It is the policy of this community to conserve, protect and encourage the maintenance and improvement of agricultural land for the production of food and other agricultural products and for its natural and ecological value. This disclosure notification is to inform buyers or occupants that the property they are about to acquire or occupy

is within a town where farming activities occur. Such farming activities may include but are not limited to activities that cause dust, noise and odors. Buyers or occupants are also informed that property located within the town may be impacted by commercial agricultural operations.”

Office of the Town Clerk

This is a very busy time of year in the Town Clerk's office due to the influx of census returns and the licensing of dogs in our community. Also, this year we are looking at four elections, including our own town election. Be sure your voter registration is up to date so that you will not be disappointed on the day you come to vote.

The Town Clerk's office will advertise specific days when residents can come to Town Hall to register, but please note that you can come to the office any time before the deadline. The advertised day is the last day for registration and a reminder to those who may have forgotten to register. The deadline for registration to vote in the presidential primary is Wednesday, February 10th, from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. and 7 p.m. to 8 p.m. at Gill Town Hall. To register to vote, you must be a U.S. citizen, a resident of Gill and at least 18 years old on or before the town meeting/election. You may register in person or by mail (postmarked no later than the final registration date). Call the office if you want to check to find out the status of your enrollment. (863-8103)

Presidential Primary: The first election of the year is the presidential primary on March 1st and it will be held as usual at the Fire Station at 196A Main Road. The polls will be open from 7 a.m. until 8 p.m.

Absentee ballots are available. You may vote absentee if you are unable to vote at the polls on election day due to (1)

absence from Gill during normal polling hours, (2) physical disability which prevents you from going to your polling place; or (3) religious belief. To vote absentee at Town Hall, contact my office to vote here at a time arranged with the Town Clerk. If you would like to have a ballot mailed to you, please call the office (863-8103)

Census: Everyone in Gill should have received the 2016 census forms. Please respond to this as soon as possible. Let me know if you did not receive a census letter.

Dog licenses: The census mailing also provides the opportunity to license dogs by mail. We have more than one hundred dogs licensed so far and this is very good progress. Please register as soon as you can. The Northfield Town Clerk is organizing a rabies clinic at the Northfield Fire Station which I will attend to license newly vaccinated dogs. I do not have the final details about the date or time. Please call my office at 863-8103 for more information. Notice of this clinic will be in the Recorder and on the town Web Page: gillmass.org

Finally, I want to express appreciation to all the residents of Gill for the new offices here at Town Hall. Treasurer and Tax Collector Ronnie LaChance and I could not be happier with the space and having a “door.” Our offices and the open meeting space have a positive and professional atmosphere. Town Administrator Ray Purington has created an organized area where committee members can prepare for meetings. Visitors are surprised and joyful when they see the changes. Many thanks to Roger Augustine for his renovation efforts. The space is perfect! If you have not seen the offices, please come. We would welcome your visit.

Lynda Hodsdon Mayo
Town Clerk



Gill Town Nurse

Regional Public Health Nurse Lisa White helps people who find it difficult to meet the challenges of an ongoing health issue. Help is available in these areas:

- Managing medications
- Monitoring symptoms
- Connecting with needed services

This service is available at no cost to Gill residents through the Board of Health's membership in the Franklin Regional Council of Government's Cooperative Public Health District, and through grant support from Baystate Franklin Medical Center and Franklin County Home Care. Visits can happen on phone, at home and in public spaces.

Lisa White
Public Health Nurse

Franklin Regional Council of Governments
Cooperative Public Health Service
12 Olive St., Suite 2
Greenfield, MA 01301

Phone: 413-665-1400 x 114
Fax: 413-774-3169
Mobile: 413-834-5596

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Greetings from the Gill Church

The current ministry is in its 20th year and we would like to share some of the church's history with the residents of Gill. Much of the church's earliest history can be found in the History of the Town of Gill, Massachusetts, 1793-1943 by R. M. Stoughton, but much has gone unrecorded.

The church building has undergone a series of maintenance projects over the last nineteen years. We have had to be vigilant with the 200 year-old structure. Projects have included painting, maintenance and/or repair of the furnace, steps, walkways, kitchen and dining facilities, electrical work, and most recently, the major and necessary restructuring and cosmetic work on the steeple.

The church was reopened in 1996 due in part to the efforts of Bernice Keech. In the absence of a ministry at that time, she re-established the Friends of Gill, whose vision was to raise funds for the upkeep of the beautiful, historic building. While a ministry has since been established, the basement continues to be used by the Friends of Gill (unassociated with the ministry) as a base of operations for a variety of community projects. We miss Bernice and others who were instrumental in opening the church. She and the other Friends of Gill who helped re-open the building would likely be delighted to see the church today, maintained and looking much the same as it has throughout most of its history.

Some of the logistics in reestablishing the ministry included locating deeds, treasury records, bylaws, and other historical information. At the outset, the desire of those hoping to open the church was to conform closely to the traditional creeds and historical structure of the ministry, and at the same time maintain the historical, traditional New England Congregational style of the building. The idea of renaming the place Gill Church was considered, since it is nondenominational and independent, but eventually the decision was to keep the centuries-old historical name, First Congregational Church of Gill.

Few historical records were found in the building, but the church bylaws were available to guide the direction of the new ministry as it developed policies, church

procedures, membership, etc. No one knows the time frame during which these bylaws were developed and used, but the new ministry was delighted to discover the bylaws, including a covenant statement for new members which conformed to the precepts popularly held in the universal Christian church.

The church ministry would be delighted if the Historical Commission, the Slate Library or any citizen of Gill has additional information on the history of the church which they would like to share with the church or with the community.

Services at the First Congregational Church of Gill are held on Sunday mornings at 10:00, with Sunday School at 9:00, and a ladies' bible study and potluck luncheon every other Wednesday at 11:00. For any other information, Gary Bourbeau can be reached at 413 768-9543 and gryngill@yahoo.com.

Please help us find our next best friend.

We are seeking a Golden Retriever puppy from the bloodline of "Teva" who belonged to area resident Liza Ramlow and sired dozens of litters in the late 1990s and early 2000s. We had one of Teva's sons and would like our next best friend to come from the same bloodline. The dame was "Misty" from Northampton. We are hoping that Golden Retriever lovers from the area have bred litters from Teva's lineage and that we could carry on the loving tradition.

Please call Glenn and Jean at (802) 254-5855 if you can help with information leading to this bloodline.



Honor Roll

1st Quarter

Frontier Regional School

Grade 11

High Honors: Ashley Lavasseur;

Grade 10

High Honors: Joseph Lawton-Curtis

Pioneer Valley Regional School

Grade 12

Highest Honor: Julia Wallace; Honor: Bradley Hastings;

Grade 11

Highest Honor: Amelia Pelletier;

Grade 9

Honor: Jake Wallace and Rylie Zager;

Grade 7

Highest Honor: Sydney duKo-Jackson and Emaline Relyea-Strawn; High Honor: Brian Peila Jr.; Honor: Jacob Smith

Turners Falls High School

Grade 12

Second Honors: Nadia Hasan and Miguel Sandri;

Grade 11

First Honors: Tahner Castine, Bryn Kruzlic and Kaili Lynch;

Grade 10

First Honors: Branden Chapin and Kyle Kucenski; Second Honors: Noah Courchesne, David Tricoli and John Wheeler II;

Grade 9

Second Honors: Reilan Castine

Great Falls Middle School

Grade 8

First Honors: Alyson Murphy; Third Honors: Mason Kucenski;

Grade 7

First Honors: Julie Sprankle, Leah Timberlake, Luke Timberlake and Hailey Wheeler; Second Honors: Taylor Murphy;

Grade 6

Second Honors: Zebadiah Dodge

Gill Cultural Council

The Commonwealth's Local Cultural Council Program supports thousands of community-based projects in the arts, humanities and sciences each year. In November the Gill Cultural Council met to award its annual allotment of funds to local artists and historians. The Council had \$5250.00 to distribute for 2016. It reviewed 26 applications and awarded funds to 12 recipients. The Council prioritizes applications first by their relevance to the Gill community, and secondly with the goal of bringing cultural activities of interest to residents of all ages.

Recipients for 2016:

Gill Historical Commission—publication of a book about the history of Riverside

Amy Gordon—after-school drama and performance program

Steve Damon—band concert on the Gill common

Anna Hendricks—3 creative movement workshops for the Gill school kindergarten

Daniel Prasol—Franklin County Tech School drama program

Steve Henderson—a play at the Gill-Montague Senior Center

Da Camera Singers—a concert to be held at NMH and in Hadley

Slate Library—Fractured Fairy Tales – songs and stories

Slate Library—Birds of Prey presentation

Nolumbeka Project—historical walking tour at Pocumtuck Homelands Festival

Mass. Woodlands Institute—woodland management tour at a Gill farm

Anne Harding—Black History Month events and exhibits in Turners Falls

Keep your eyes open for news articles and flyers advertising these cultural events, and join the cultural community by attending and supporting creative

and educational performances funded by the Local Cultural Council Program. We are always interested in having new members on the committee to help with these important decisions. It is a positive and upbeat committee, giving money to deserving artists and performers. If you would like to be part of this group contact Sue Kramer at sueofgill@gmail.com.

Gill Historical Commission

The Gill Historical Commission (GHC) meets on the third Tuesday of each month at 6:30 PM in the Riverside Municipal Building (RMB). If you have information or questions about Gill and its history, please contact Kit Carpenter, Bev Demars, Stuart Elliott, Lynda Hodsdon Mayo, Pam Shoemaker, Lynn Stowe Tomb, or Ivan Ussach, chair.

In November, the research team hired to conduct Phase 1 of the Great Falls Battlefield Project submitted a Draft Report to the Battlefield Project Advisory Board. The Board has been reviewing the report and discussing related continuing research at its open meetings on the first Wednesday of each month in Turners Falls. As part of that effort, GHC's Lynn Stowe Tomb is working with Professor Peter Thomas and other researchers to more precisely describe the physical landscape of the Great Falls locale as it likely existed in May of 1676. A Final Draft Report for Phase 1 will be submitted to the National Park Service in February 2016.

Concurrently, the Advisory Board has been developing plans for a Phase 2 application, submitted in mid-January 2016. Phase 2 will focus on archaeological investigations (primarily metal detecting) of Core Areas identified in Phase 1. To support that effort, the GHC organized a well-attended meeting in October for landowners in the Riverside core area. As



a result, 17 private landowners as well as the Town of Gill for the Municipal Building property signed Phase 2 survey permissions that will significantly strengthen the Phase 2 application.

On a related archaeological note, in September the GHC signed off on an Archaeological Accountability Policy that requests researchers and the Massachusetts Historical Commission (MHC) to notify the GHC of any research to be conducted in Gill. The Policy is similar to those recently adopted by nearby towns, including Deerfield, Northfield, and Erving. The GHC requested and received from the Selectboard a letter endorsing the policy, and both documents will be filed with MHC.

The MHC has completed an initial review of our research and forms for nominating a section of Riverside to the National Register of Historic Places. The process now continues with Bonnie Parsons reviewing the MHC feedback and revising the nomination forms that will be resubmitted in late spring 2016 for further review. The nomination forms for Gill Center are currently waiting for MHC review in a process that generally takes at least two years.

Members have started working on better ways to display the collection. Electrical outlets have been installed on each wall so that displays and work areas may be better lit. GHC anticipates submitting a grant proposal in the spring to solicit money to implement suggestions from archival consultants.

The book project on the history of the Riverside area continues with publication of a 150-175 page hardcover book anticipated by early fall 2016. Research on Riverside has been comprehensive with the review of the area from prehistory up to c. 1940. Additionally, individual residents and families are contributing their memories, photographs, and ephemera. In some cases, these are donated to the GHC collection, and in others they are copied and returned. We hope that anyone who has material or stories on Riverside will speak to either Lynn Stowe Tomb or Pam Shoemaker to arrange a time to share information.

In this issue, we include an excerpt from the Riverside book on "Harvesting Ice," which uses a memory written by Ernest V. Yukl, a Riverside resident who contributed significantly to the preservation of Gill history.

"... Gill farmers harvested ice along the river near the mouth of the Cove. Some was also done by a milk company from Turners Falls. Mr. Herbert Barton, Henry's son, used to do the cutting, charging so much for each cake. Louis Koch rented the New England Fiber Co. building, closed in 1901, which was in good condition. There was a very deep cellar probably 75 ft. long, 50 ft. wide, and 25 ft. deep with a doorway at the bottom near the Heal All Brook, around to the top, (and) the road went through our yard and around to Pine Street. Approximately in 1924 Mr. Koch tore the building down as no one harvested ice any longer . . ."

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