



THE

Gill Newsletter

October 2006 Issue

CONTENTS

Town Hall News 1

Tax Prepayments 2

Brd of Assessors 2

Friends of Gill 3

Fire Department 6

Cultural Council 7

Gill Sixth Grade 8

Hometown Students . 9

Recreation Comm . . 10

Historical Comm . . . 11

Disclaimer 12

News Deadline 12

NEWSLETTER COMMITTEE

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

Town Hall News

Selectboard News

Many thanks to the boards and committee members that gave up their time to come out for the volunteer fair August 7th. Over 25 individuals were available with information on the duties, responsibilities, and time required for their particular position. As a result, open positions on the Cultural Council (Emily Samuels, Steve Damon and Lynn Nichols), Planning Board (Richard French), Finance Committee (Nancy Griswold), Personnel Committee (Thomas Hodak) and Board of Assessors (Peter Conway) were filled. Thank you to those residents who reached out as a current or future volunteer! Your participation represents the democracy that is Gill!

It was a wonderful opportunity for the boards and committee members to visit amongst themselves, broadening their awareness of other committee responsibilities. One suggestion for improvement was to bring the fair to the people rather than expecting residents to come out for the event, for example, placing a booth at the picnic on the common. So, look for us at future events!

There remains one open position on the Zoning Board of Appeals. The

ZBA usually meets once a month and is responsible for the review of applications for special permitting and variances related to zoning, ensuring compliance with state and local bylaws.

Smart Growth Update

Zoning Bylaw Proposals will be highlighted at informational gatherings planned. The first planned for September 20th at the Town Hall was wonderfully done and answered many questions brought forth by attendees. **MARK YOUR CALENDARS TO ATTEND** the session on October 4th at the Riverside Municipal Building beginning at 7 PM, bring your questions and concerns. **NOW IS THE TIME TO COMMENT TO EFFECT CHANGE.** Peggy Sloan and Tracy Zafian, Planners from the Regional Council on Governments and Gill Planning Board members will be on



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



hand to present highlights of the proposed revisions and explain the rationale for the changes. It's called Smart Growth and it is made possible by a grant from the State Executive Office of Environmental Affairs. Drafts of the proposed bylaws are available at the Town Hall, Slate Library and online at www.gillmass.org. A formal public hearing will occur in November, with final recommendations from the informational gatherings reflected in the proposals before proceeding to a special town meeting.

Main Road Reconstruction

The Main Road reconstruction project that began the planning process in 1998 will finally break ground this fall or early spring. F & J Construction of Ludlow, MA was awarded the \$3+ million dollar bid, funded with Federal & State transportation bond funds. MA Highway and F&J Construction have rented space in an existing building on Main Road for the duration of the project.

Preliminary construction submissions between F & J, GPI (Our Design Firm) and MA Highway are in full swing. Superintendent Mitch LaClaire is working with MA Highway and F & J repre-

sentatives on behalf of the Town. Watch the newspapers and website for possible construction delays and detours.

Mariamante Parcel

Mariamante Request for Proposals (RFP) is being carefully composed to reflect the intent of the many residents that attended the planning charrette, Gill's Community Development Plan devised by your public officials and residents of Gill, as well as the many state laws that dictate the process. It is a very complex ordeal and a committee composed of a member of the Selectboard, Finance Committee, Zoning Board, Historical Committee, Charrette Ad Hoc Committee, Franklin Regional Council of Governments staff member and the Administrative Assistant has been appointed. The committee will be responsible for the oversight of the content, publication and formal review of responses, recommending finalists for negotiation of a purchase and sale agreement. There will be ample opportunity for public involvement in the process and acceptance by town meeting of the final transfer.

Congrats to Lynda

Congratulations to Assessors' Clerk Lynda Hodsdon Mayo, who has successfully completed Assessors Course 101 - Assessment Administration: Law, Procedures and Valuation. Lynda attended the weeklong course at the University of MA, Amherst culminating in an online test offered by the MA Department of Revenue. Successful completion of the course is a requirement for Assessors. Thank you for your time and talent Lynda!

Tax Prepayments

The Collector of Taxes will be accepting prepayments on homeowners 2007 Real Estate Tax Bills. Homeowners can use 2006 rate. Any differences will show on the 2007 bill when issued. Any questions, please call Ronnie LaChance at 863-2105.

Gill Board of Assessors

The Assessors have been reviewing the RFP submissions for recollection of data and new software. The process is a lengthy one as they try to determine the company that will provide the best service to Gill.



By recommendation of the State, the assessors will reinstate excise on all boats moored in Gill. The lists have been supplied by the Massachusetts Environmental Police and include all boats moored in Gill July 1, 2006. Bills will be sent out in October. This revenue will be helpful to our community.

All Farm Animal Excise Forms and Forest Products forms should be returned by October 1st. Also all 61A and 61B applications mailed out should be returned by October 1st as well.

Town By-laws

After the town voted to accept by-laws at the Annual Town Meeting they must be submitted for approval by the Attorney General's office. The Attorney General's office has 90 days from my submission date to review the by-laws. Article #10 establishing an Agricultural Commission was approved on August 7, 2006.

That bylaw reads: Article 10: To see if the Town will vote to establish an Agricultural Commission to represent the Gill agricultural community, as well as other farming and forestry activities, or take any action relative thereto.

The purpose of the Agricultural Commission will be to support

FRIENDS OF GILL

Gill Arts and Crafts Festival Oct. 14-15

The Fourteenth Annual Gill Fall Arts and Crafts Festival, sponsored by the Friends of Gill, will be held on Saturday, October 14th, and Sunday, October 15th, on the grounds of the former Riverside School on French King Highway. The Festival will be open on both days from 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM, rain or shine. This is a juried event which showcases artisans from throughout New England and features pottery, photography, woodworking, fine and folk art, jewelry, fabric art and more. Among the new attractions this year will be a booth where you can roll your own beeswax candle, and an expanded produce section. Children's activities will include face painting and, on Saturday, children will be able to purchase, stuff, and dress a Snugly Creation. Again, the firemen will be on hand to serve hot dogs, hamburgers, and their famous "made from scratch" French fries. Also, two Gill authors will be on hand to sign their recent books: Joe Parzych, author of "Jep's Place," a charming, warm memoir of his youth in Gill, and Ted Graveline, author of an exciting series of books on his experiences as a firefighter and Deputy Fire Chief in the town of Greenfield.

The Festival is a large undertaking and the Friends of Gill is a very small group of people endeavoring to enhance the sense of community within the town. We need help setting up and operating the fair grounds and, again, seek volunteers to make a commitment to contribute some time to this endeavor. If you can do this, please call 863-2212 or 863-9708. All proceeds from these festivals are used by the Friends of Gill for charitable and educational purposes within the town of Gill including two \$500 scholarships awarded annually to graduating Gill high school students and, recently, the new flag and flagpole at the veteran's monument in Gill center. Expenses such as insurance and tent rental, however, keep going up each year cutting severely into the net proceeds. We would welcome contributions to help offset our expenses. Checks payable to The Friends of Gill may be mailed to Barbara Elliott, 27 Franklin Road, Gill, MA 01354.



agriculture and other farming activities in the Town of Gill. The Commission’s duties shall include but will not be limited to the following: serve as facilitators for encouraging the pursuits of agriculture in Gill; promote agricultural-based opportunities in Town; act as mediators, advocates, educators, and/or negotiators on farming issues; work for the preservation of prime agricultural lands; advise the Board of Selectman, or any other appropriate Town Boards on issues involving agriculture; and shall pursue all initiatives appropriate to creating a sustainable agricultural community.

The Commission shall consist of five members appointed by the Moderator, of which the majority of the membership shall be substantially engaged in the pursuit of agriculture. All members of the Commission must either be residents of the town, or owners and farmers of agricultural property within the town. There may be up to three alternates appointed to the Commission by the Moderator that will serve to fill any vacancies at a meeting of the Commission. In making appointments, the Moderator is asked specifically to consider the intent of the Commission to represent the agricultural interests of the Town.

The terms will be as follows: Two members for a term of three years; two members for a term of two years and three thereafter; and one member for a term of one year and three years thereafter. The Moderator shall fill a vacancy based on the unexpired term of the vacancy in order to maintain the cycle of appointments, based upon the recommendations of the Commission.

Dog Licensing Articles

Articles #6, #7 and #8 concerning the licensing of dogs were approved on September 19, 2006. These articles amended the Gill by-laws as follows:

Article 6: The town will accept the provision of

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MGL chapter 140, section 147A to empower the town to enact by-laws and ordinances relative to the regulation of dogs, or take any action relative thereto.

Article 7: The town will authorize a revolving account pursuant to Chapter 44, Section 53E, to account for fees or fines related to the licensing and care of dogs, such funds to be under the authority of the Town Clerk. Monies from the fund will be used to purchase dog tags, pay for various expenses in relation to licensing, care and other related dog control expenses, or take any action relative thereto. The Town Clerk is authorized to expend a sum not to exceed \$2000 from the Revolving Fund during fiscal year 2007, or take any action relative thereto.

Article 8: To see if the town will establish the following bylaw pursuant to MGL Chapter 140, Section 140, or take any action relative thereto.

Section 1 - 1.1 The registering, numbering, description and licensing, pursuant to the provisions of MGL chapter 140, of all dogs and kennels in the Town of Gill shall be conducted in the office of the Town Clerk. Said licensing period is from April 1 to March 31. All dogs six months of age or older shall be licensed and have a current rabies inoculation as required under MGL chapter 140, sections 137 and 145B as amended.

Section 1 - 1.2 The fees shall be as prescribed in MGL chapter 140, except that the annual fee for the licenses shall be:

- Male.....\$10
- Female..... \$10
- Neutered Male...\$5
- Spayed Female ...\$5
- Kennel license
 - a. Not more than four dogs.....\$15
 - b. Five to nine dogs.....\$30
 - c. Ten or more dogs.....\$50

Section 1 - 1.3 An additional late fee of \$10 for every dog shall be assessed to a dog owner who fails to properly license his dog by June 1 of any year.

Section 1 - 1.4 The Select Board as deemed necessary will approve any future changes to the fee structure of the dog licensing program. Kennel fees shall be set from time to time by the Select Board and shall reflect the cost for boarding and care of a dog on a daily basis.

Section 1 - 1.5 No fee shall be charged for a license for a service dog specifically trained and certified as such. No license fee or part thereof shall be refunded because of a subsequent death, loss, spaying, neutering, removal from the Town or any other disposal of the dog.

Section 1 - 1.6 All monies collected for licenses, fees or fines related to the licensing and care of dogs will be retained by the Town in a revolving fund pursuant to Chapter 44, section 53E to pay for the various expenses in relation to the licenses, the care and destruction of the dogs, and any payment for damages committed by dogs of no known owner.

Section 1 - 1.7 Any payments made for damages are subject to Chapter 140, section 161A and in no case shall exceed \$500.

Noise By-law

Article 9 was approved on September 19, 2006. This Article is a noise by-law as follows:

Article 9: To see if the Town will vote to adopt the following Excessive Noise bylaw, or take any action relative thereto.



Because excessive noise can interfere with the public health, safety, welfare and peace and quiet of the inhabitants of the Town of Gill, it shall be unlawful for any person or persons occupying, having the charge of, or being present in or about any buildings, structure, premises, shelter, vehicle, or conveyance or any part thereof, in the Town of Gill, (other than that section of any establishment licensed under Chapter 138 of the General Laws) to allow a continuing regular or repeated source of noise for greater than a fifteen minute duration including but not limited to undue or extreme acceleration of a motor vehicle, snowmobile, ATV, or skidding or spinning of the wheels of such vehicle on the pavement or road surface, or by other means, make or cause to be made any harsh or unnecessary noise or disturbance.

Assessment of the noise shall be as follows: if the noise is plainly audible at a distance of 200 feet from the building or structure or premises or shelter or lot line thereof, in which or from which the noise is produced, the fact that the noise is plainly audible at said distance of 200 feet shall constitute prima facie evidence of a violation of this bylaw.

Whoever is found in violation of any of the provisions or requirements of this by-law may be punished by a fine of not more than two hundred dollars (\$200.00) for each offense. All prosecutions of any violations shall begin within six (6) months from the date of the offense. Police Officers are empowered to enforce violations of this bylaw.

Thomas F. Reilly, Attorney General
By: Kelli E. Gunagan, Assistant Attorney General By-law
Coordinator, Municipal Law Unit

Election Workers

Many thanks to the Election Workers who came out to work at the State Primary on September 19, 2006. Everyone was there and ready to go at 6:30 AM.

We were pleased to see a bigger response than we projected from past participation, so many thanks to the voters as well. My sincere appreciation to the Highway Department, Fire Department and Police Department. At every election we set up our voting equipment at the Gill Fire Department. This provides a location with ample parking space as well as interior space, central to most of the residents of Gill. The part people may not realize is the amount of support and assistance that everyone at the municipal building gives us in preparation of the Election Day as well as during that day. I want to make it known to others how great they all are to work with!

State Election

We will look forward to seeing everyone at the State Election on November 7, 2006. Remember that if you are not registered or wish to change your party enrollment, the deadline for doing this is Wednesday, October 18th.

— Lynda Hodsdon Mayo, Town Clerk

Gill Fire Department

National Fire Prevention Week

October 9-16 is National Fire Prevention Week. Students in the Gill Elementary School and local pre-schools will participate in fire safety activities with members of the Gill Fire Department. A Student Awareness of Fire Education (S.A.F.E.) grant from the Massachusetts Department of Fire Services funds this



year's activities for Children, which include pamphlets and other handouts, educational videos, "hands-on" training, and S.A.F.E. T-shirts for participants.

National Fire Prevention Week is a great time to review your family's plans in case of fire or other emergencies. Please take the time to read the safety pamphlets with your children. Most of this vital safety information pertains to adults, too. Plan ahead. Do you know how to operate a fire extinguisher? Do your children know when and how to call for help? Where will you meet if your family must evacuate your home in case of fire?

Fire Prevention Activities

Tuesday, 10/10:

Gill Elementary School (kindergarten)
"Stop, Drop, and Roll"

Gill Elementary School (grades 1 and 2)
"Learn Not to Burn"

Gill Elementary School (grades 3 and 4)
"Exit Drills in the Home"

Wednesday, 10/11:

Gill Elementary School (grade 6)
Fire Extinguishers and Fire Safety at the Fire Station

Thursday, 10/12:

Gill Elementary School
Fire Safety Education at the Fire Station

School personnel will announce times and any schedule changes to parents.

Fireman's Association: Frugal Gourmets

It has been locally known for some time that the Gill Firemen's Association serves the best natural potato fries in the county. Once again, members of the public have an opportunity to satisfy their appetites at the Gill

Firemen's Association food booth during the Gill Fall Arts and Crafts Festival on October 14 and 15 at the Riverside School on Route 2. The Association will be selling hamburgers, cheeseburgers, hot-dogs, soda, coffee, and, of course, French fries.

Annual Halloween Party

The Gill Firemen's Association will hold its annual Halloween Party on Sunday, October 29, from 1:00 PM until 2:30 PM, at the Gill Fire Station. School-age children from Gill are invited to show their costumes and participate in games and fun activities hosted by the firefighters. Prizes and treats are available for all participants

Smoke Detectors Save Lives

Fire Prevention Week is a good time to check the batteries in your smoke alarms. Be sure to check carbon monoxide detectors as well. Remember, early warning systems save lives, and they should work properly before the heating season begins. Please call the fire station at 863-8955 if you have questions about smoke alarms or carbon monoxide detectors.

Gill Cultural Council

The Gill Cultural Council has set an October 16, 2006 deadline for organizations, schools, and individuals to apply for grants to support cultural activities within the community. These grants can support a variety of artistic projects and activities in Gill including exhibits, festivals, short-term residencies or performances in



schools, workshops, and lectures.

The Gill Cultural Council will also entertain funding proposals from schools and youth groups through the PASS Program, a ticket subsidy program for school-aged children.

The Gill Cultural Council is part of a grass-roots network of 329 local councils that serve every city and town in the Commonwealth. The program is the largest, most decentralized one of its

kind in the United States. The state legislature provides an annual appropriation to the Massachusetts Cultural Council which then allocates funds to each local council. This year the Gill Cultural Council will distribute about \$4,000 in grants.

Contact Ronnie Lachance, the Gill Cultural Council Chair, at 413-863-2105 or taxcollector@gillmass.org, for specific guidelines and information. Application forms and more information about local Cultural Council Programs are available on the web at http://www.mass-culture.org/lcc_public.asp.

Gill Sixth Grade Discovers Vernal Pool

June's graduating sixth grade students of Gill Elementary School not only finished their elementary school careers in fine form, they also completed several months of observations and recordings that were accepted by the Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife as proof of a vernal pool on the Gill School grounds. The vernal pool is now certified by the Natural Heritage and Endangered Species Program and may benefit some protections from damage by land development. Lead by Dori Drachman, an Antioch University graduate, seventeen students and accompanying staff learned about the pool and its inhabitants through observation, the use of field and computer guides, and measurement. The application involved learning about the criteria for vernal pools and completing the application as well as measuring and mapping the school grounds and photographing evidence of vernal pool critters. Students also researched critters found in the pool and developed information brochures about them. All information will be presented to the Conservation Commission in an upcoming meeting.



Hometown Students

Ashley Storrow

Ashley Storrow of River Road spent six weeks this summer with the group “Amigo de las Americas” helping residents of a village of about 1,600 in Mexico. Ashley had to spend time in Boston training for her trip and once in Mexico could speak only Spanish with the villagers. She lived with a Mexican family and worked together with two other American teens and a Mexican youngster to plan their classes. All the school-rooms were locked for the summer so after finding an unlocked storage room they cleaned it out giving them one indoor classroom. The other classes were held outside with tarps overhead. The classes taught were health, nutrition, creative expression and English. There were special English classes for teenagers and adults. A group of adults asked if they could have an exercise class so Ashley and her friends granted their wish with aerobic classes.

The villagers told Ashley and her friends they would like trees in their town so with the signatures of the townspeople, Ashley went to the town officials. A letter was written and forwarded to city government. Soon 300 small trees arrived and the residents planted them around their village. Ashley enjoyed working with the villagers in their community gardens, mural painting, and promoting nutrition through plays.

Ashley is a senior at NMH and continues to take college level Spanish classes. She is a student leader and has been on the School’s honor roll.

Expect to hear more about this girl. She is just getting started.

College Graduations

Johanna McComb graduated with a bachelor’s degree in integrated studies for elementary education from

Liberty University in Lynchburg, VA.

Danielle Hodsdon graduated from Russell Sage College, Troy, NY, where she was a creative arts in therapy major. Danielle was named a Kellas Scholar for the spring 2006 semester by being on the dean’s list for three consecutive semesters. Dean’s list students achieve a semester grade point average of at least 3.4 while carrying a course load of at least 12 credits.

Honor Roll

Northfield Mount Hermon School

The Honor Roll for NMH for the 2006 spring semester includes:

Grade 12

High honors: Evan Hefner

Grade 11

High honors: Grace Booth

Honors: Ashley Storrow

Grade 10

High honors: Spencer Hattendorf

Grade 9

High honors: Harriet Booth

Franklin County Technical School

2006 Spring Semester

Grade 12

Honors: Timothy Hughs and Michael Olson

Grade 10

Honors: Nicolas Berniche

Grade 9

Honors: Ashley Brown and Eric Levasseur



Recreation Committee

On Saturday, August 12th, we ended our Summer program with the annual Summer Fun Day at the Gill School. The Gill Fire Dept., always so helpful, was there to assist by keeping the 100 ft. homemade water slide wet. Special thanks to Stu Elliott and Mike Crochier for taking the time to help. The kids also enjoyed the bounce house and Go-Cart rides. Candy Vaughn and John Duda served hotdogs, cotton candy, and snow-cones. Al Vaughn, like every year, was there to help with the pick up, set up, take down, and the return of the equipment. Thank you all for your help; many children look forward to this event every year.

It is with great pleasure that I welcome and announce Kim Malcolm as our newest member of the Recreation Committee. Kim, her husband Charlie, and children, Patterson and Victoria, are one of the many NMH family that participate in the Rec. activities and sports programs. Kim offers organizational and computer skills along with a desire to help to enhance our great community. With her assistance we hope to have all our programs and special events posted on the Town of Gill web site soon. We will keep everyone updated on its progress.

Soccer season has started and Steve Striebel is all over it. This year we have a coed 5th/6th grade team coached by Brian Bodell and Steve Striebel. As well as two coed 2,3, and 4th grade teams: Gill 1 coached by Charlie Malcolm and Jim Poulsen, Gill 2 coached by Ted Kenyon, Nate Duda, and Bridget Logan. At our youngest level kindergarten and 1st grade we have

an inhouse league known as the Gillamonsters headed by Jim Burstein with many parents helping out along with the NMH Boy's varsity soccer team. All our practices and home games will be at NMH Gill lower fields. The 2nd through 6th graders will have practices Thursday nights from 6 PM to 7 PM and games are Saturday mornings beginning at 9 am and ending at 10:15 AM. The Gillamonsters will practice/scrimmage Saturday mornings at 9 AM. Registration never ends so if your child is interested, just show up. A big thanks to all the coaches, Tom Pratt and NMH for making all this possible.



I would also like to thank Steve Striebel for all his efforts, including his annual recruiting visit to the Gill School. He shows up every year with soccer ball in hand going from class to class spreading the joy of soccer. Through the years he has convinced numerous kids to give soccer a try and ultimately they end up playing throughout their grammar school years and beyond. This year he is also on a quest to upgrade our goals. Currently, we use flags which we hope to change to PVC piping with a steel base. We would like to have one set of large goals and 3 sets of smaller ones. If Anyone has this type of material and wishes to donate some to the Rec. Department it would be greatly appreciated.

We are still working with the owners of Oakridge Golf Course, Rick and Janice, on creating a Gill Appreciation Day. This event will be on a Sunday afternoon some time in October. It will be a family best ball game (everyone hits from their teams best



ball.) Greens fee will be \$5; the Rec. Dept. will take care of the cart fees. We will also be cooking burgers and dogs. Watch for the sign at the town common for this upcoming event. If your family is interested in a practice round ahead of time, Oakridge welcomes family golf for all ages.

Any suggestion, input or questions are always welcome and appreciated, please feel free to call Nathan Duda at 522-3209. Have a great fall.

Respectfully Submitted,
Nathan Duda, Gill Recreation Committee Chairman


Historical Commission Report

The Historical Commission meets on the third Tuesday of each month at 5:30 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 preserve 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 last year, the Museum hosted one hundred and sixty visitors despite the rainy 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. Commission members will host another open museum during this year's Craft Fair. Come see what is new at the Museum this year.

The Historical Commission now has a computer system and is beginning a project of putting pictures and information into a computerized inventory. This technology will allow storage and access to materials more efficiently. As soon as a copier, scanner, and printer is installed, the Commission will be able to scan photographs and documents to preserve more Gill history. When the Museum is open on Veteran's Day weekend, the Commission invites residents to bring in family and town photographs for our copying. Originals may be taken home and copies left in our files.

The Gill Museum will be open on Saturday and Sunday during the Gill Craft Fair. It will also be open on the Saturday of Veteran's Day weekend. We hope to see you soon.



Stephen Greenwald
President

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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 01354. If you would like to make a contribution to help us meet expenses in a very tight budget, we would also welcome such contributions mailed to the above address.

Disclaimer:

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

Next Newsletter Deadline

November 15th for the December Issue

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