



THE

# Gill Newsletter

April 2006 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

### Zoning Bylaw Changes

A Special Town meeting held January 23, 2006, approved proposed amendments to Gill's Zoning By-Laws transferring Special Permit authority from the Planning Board to the Zoning Board of Appeals. The changes were then forwarded to the Attorney General's office, as the law requires for final approval before taking effect. Within that process, the Town Clerk noted that during the process of revisions and amendments, several places within the zoning bylaws still referred to the Planning Board as the Special Permit Authority. The Attorney General's office approved the changes from the January 23rd meeting, but strongly suggests another process take place to avoid confusion in the reading of the bylaw, asking residents, 'Shall the Town of Gill vote to change all remaining references in the Gill Zoning Bylaws regarding responsibility of special permitting and site plan review from the Planning Board to the Zoning Board of Appeals, or take any other action relative thereto.' A Public Hearing has been scheduled for Thursday, April 13th, at 7 PM in the Town Hall as required and a Special Town Meeting is planned to coincide with Annual Town Meeting date of May 1st to complete the change.

### Smart Growth

The group of residents meeting to comprehensively review zoning bylaws

is growing! Review of the table of uses allowed by right throughout Gill is just one of the items happening at present. Is there a way to control growth in Gill? Can we limit the number of special permit uses required using performance standards instead? How about a limit on multi-family dwellings? Only in certain places? Where then? A commercial district along Route 2 corridor or a mixed-use zone as is more the current condition?

Gill Residents are URGED to participate in the process NOW, while we are writing the zoning revisions, to fit what it is you want for Gill. The landscape of Gill is in your hands. Don't wait until Town Meeting to find out what is happening — get involved in the process. Although the next meeting is scheduled for Monday, March 27th, at 7 PM, prior to this writing, look for updates and future meeting dates online at [www.gillmass.org](http://www.gillmass.org) entitled "smart growth zoning project" or on the signboard outside of Town Hall and in the newspapers.



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



### **Cable Extensions**

Comcast will be working on line extensions on West Gill, Dole, North Cross and Mums Ferry Roads over the coming weeks. Residents should be aware of possible construction delays and communication from the provider. This is as a direct result of your cable committee's role in achieving a new ten-year contract.

A GILL PEG (public educational governmental) access bulletin board channel is also in the works. Within the same contract, Comcast agreed to fund an initial amount of \$1,200 in support of a capital purchase. In addition, Comcast pays a percentage of their annual receipts collected from Gill residents in support of the channel. The Town has received over two thousand dollars thus far to get the channel off the ground. A group of dedicated residents are working hard to bring this channel to you in your homes!

### **Grant Award**

The Town received notice from the Massachusetts Interlocal Insurance Association (MIIA) that our application for a grant to purchase a central station smoke/heat detection system for Slate Library was approved! Library Trustees agreed to provide any funds over the \$2,500 required prior to the application. Installation must occur prior to the end of the fiscal year.

### **Emergency Funding Awarded**

The Town was successful in our application to the Federal and State Emergency Management Associations (FEMA/MEMA) for reimbursement of costs associated with the October storms that culminated in the loss of the Fire Department's rescue boat and equipment, damage to several town roads and staffing to assist homeowners with flooding, but thankfully, not the loss of life. The Town received notice that it will recover 75% of the \$8,638.54 expended (which includes the \$1,000 deductible on the boat and equipment) from FEMA and 12.5% of that from MEMA.

### **Budget Year Begins**

The Finance Committee welcomes Jim Poulsen, Main Road, which provides a full complement going into the budget season! The Selectboard office is compiling draft budgets received from all departments/entities and will begin the long process of review and revision to fit within the allowable levy before bringing the bottom line to the voters. A lot depends on revenues provided by the State in their budget, especially in terms of what the School department receives. It is way too early to make predictions, so we won't. We'll do our best to provide news and updates as they become available!

### **Town Hall Alterations**

After a multitude of meetings with Selectboard, office holders and the Building Committee, it was decided to begin the work of securing office space on the main floor of the building. Salvaged from the former kitchen off the main room and creatively placed on the flip side of the wall, a kitchenette was provided for employees and residents who utilize the space. Then, the former kitchen that had housed the Town Accountant and Treasurer's office, but was only utilized one day a week was changed to accommodate the Selectboard and Administrative Assistant into the newly renovated space. Rearranging cubicle walls on the main floor for a private space for both the Town Clerk and Treasurer/Collector, provided both much needed privacy and a less distracting work space. The Treasurer/Collector is sharing a larger space with the Accountant one day a week.

### **Mariamante Parcel**

While the Archeological report is in its final writing and is expected by the Town soon, the Selectboard received and reviewed a management brief of the survey results. The recommendation indicates the archeological survey clears two of the three lots for development, given that artifacts were widespread and exclusively within the plow zone and determined it unlikely that further testing would provide significant additional



information. While the full report will outline specifics, it identified an area within one lot that a greater density of material was found which in the opinion of the UMass Archeological group that provided the survey warranted further research potential. A representative of the UMass group reiterated that none of this precludes moving forward with the sale of the land. The town's options include requiring avoidance of the area and permanent preservation of the lot as a lawn area or requiring a potential buyer to sponsor a Phase 2 archaeological site examination survey to assess historical eligibility and firmly define boundaries of concentrations. The Selectboard is moving forward with the writing of a request for proposals for the sale and development of the Mariamante site and plans to strictly adhere to the recommendations of the archaeological report in detail.

### Town Clerk Notes

#### **GILL ANNUAL TOWN MEETING and SPECIAL TOWN MEETING: May 1, 2006**

Open Voter Registration Deadline for voting at the Annual Town Meeting is April 11, 2006, from 2-4 PM and 7 to 8 PM.

Open Voter Registration Deadline for voting at the Special Town Meeting on May 1st is April 21st from 2-4 PM and 7-8 PM.

The Gill Selectboard voted at their meeting March 6, 2006, to close the warrant at 4 PM, April 10, 2006, for the Annual Town Meeting after which time no further articles or petitions will be accepted. Annual Town Meeting is scheduled to begin May 1, 2006, at 7 PM.

### Gill Election News Notes

Gill Annual Election —  
May 15, 2006

Nomination Papers for the Annual Town Election are available at the Town Clerk's office and must be obtained by 5 PM March 25th. The last day to submit the nomination papers to the Clerk's office is March 27th at 5 PM. Positions up for election this year are:

- \* Selectman for three years
- \* Assessor for three years — Vacant
- \* Assessor for one year — Vacant
- \* Moderator for three years
- \* Cemetery Commissioner for three years
- \* Board of Health for three years
- \* Library Trustee for three years
- \* Town Clerk for three years
- \* Treasurer for one year
- \* Tree Warden for three years

Open Voter Registration Deadline for voting at the Annual Election is April 25, 2006, from 2-4 PM and 7-8 PM.

Once more, a reminder to all those who have not sent in Census

## FRIENDS OF GILL

The calendar tells us that spring is here but it would be nice for the weather to actually confirm its arrival. We have been busy hosting a Pancake Breakfast on March 26th, making plans for the Picnic on the Common and the Garden and Farm Tour in June, and, of course, planning for the 14th Annual Fall Arts and Crafts Festival. These occasions offer the opportunity to visit with friends and, at the same time, to support the Friends of Gill in their efforts to raise funds for community projects and events. We have also been considering the applications for our two \$500 Bernice Keech Memorial Scholarships for Gill students.

Our recent donations include a new flag for the Veterans Memorial in the center of town and a contribution to the Gill Fire Department for the purchase of equipment for the new river rescue boat. Our meetings on the second Wednesday of the month in the Gill Congregational Church at 6:30 PM are open to the public. We welcome all who might be interested in helping us in our fundraising events.



forms to do so as soon as possible.

Gill dog licenses are available. All dogs in Gill must be licensed by March 31st at the Town Clerk's office or face the possibility of a fine.

## **Gill Police Department**

### **Tracing Threatening Phone Calls**

It has come to our attention that many residents have been receiving threatening or annoying telephone calls. The telephone companies have established a procedure which can be used to trace these types of calls.

The instructions for activating this feature are as follows:

After receiving a threatening/annoying telephone call, once the caller or you hang up, leave the phone off of the hook for about ten seconds to ensure the call terminates. Pick the phone back up and check for a dial tone. If there is no dial tone, hang the phone up again until you get a dial tone.

When the dial tone is heard, dial \*57 and listen for a message regarding the trace. The telephone company automated voice will tell you whether the trace was successful or not and give you a telephone number to call.

Report all this information to the police department and we will assign you a incident report number which will be useful to the telephone company and our department if another call should occur. NOTE: There may be a service charge incurred for using this procedure.

### **Officers to Step Up Police Patrols for Operation "Road Respect"**

In the next few months, the Gill Police Department along with other statewide police agencies will be supplementing normal patrols with officers specifically assigned to target aggressive drivers. This program is funded by the Governor's Highway Safety Bureau and all of the costs incurred from this program are paid by a grant.



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

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





Officers will be targeting aggressive drivers. Aggressive driving is defined as:

Speeding, street/drag racing, running red lights and stop signs and any other egregious violations.

Aggressive driving behavior should not be confused with road rage, which is generally considered an assault — a criminal offence and, though more highly profiled in the media, a much less common occurrence.

### **Security Awareness Forms**

During the last few months the Gill police department has implemented new security awareness forms for officers to use when they witness a potential security threat that could be avoided. These situations may include observing an unsecured door or window at a residence or business.

Vehicles being parked unattended with valuables left in plain view and any other situations that maybe inviting for a thief.

These duplicate forms will serve as a notice to the person receiving them, that someone has noticed a security deficiency. Luckily, this time it was observed by an officer and not someone who would be willing to take advantage of the situation.

Officers will also use these forms when checking businesses and residences during the time a house check was requested by the home owner.

One copy of the notice will be left in an non-descript location, and the other will be brought to the police station and turned in with the officer's duty paperwork. This duplicate form will serve two purposes. One to let you know that we are vigilant in our patrols, and the other will allow the department to monitor our officer's activity. These forms were printed at very low cost by the Franklin County Sheriff's Office printing division.

## **Gill Fire Department**

### **Carbon Monoxide Alarms**

In November 2005, Governor Mitt Romney signed "Nicole's Law," which places certain requirements on owners of all residential properties to install carbon monoxide (CO) alarms. Carbon monoxide is a colorless, odorless poisonous gas that results from the incomplete combustion of fuels such as natural gas, propane, oil, wood, and gasoline. Each year, many people die from accidental CO poisoning and thousands more are injured. Any owner of residential property in Massachusetts, regardless of size, that contains fossil fuel burning equipment (like oil, gas, wood, coal, etc.) or contains enclosed parking (like an attached or enclosed garage) is required to install carbon monoxide alarms by March 31, 2006. Carbon monoxide alarms must be installed on every level of the home, except for basements and attics that do not have inhabitable living spaces. On levels with sleeping areas, the alarms must be placed within ten feet of bedroom doors. There are several types of alarms that are allowed: they include battery powered alarms with battery monitoring, plug-in (AC units with battery backup), AC primary power (hard-wired) with battery backup, low-voltage or wireless alarms, and qualified combination smoke detectors and carbon monoxide alarms. Acceptable combination smoke detectors and carbon monoxide alarms must have simulated voice and tone alarms that clearly distinguish between the two types of emergencies. Anyone who sells their residential property after March 31, 2006 will be required to have an inspection by the fire department prior to the sale or transfer of the property.

### **Brush Permit Season Reminder**

Brush burning season runs until April 30, 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 seventy-five feet 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.

### **Seasonal Outside Fires**

Residents may have cooking fires or campfires on their properties as long as they are contained, at least seventy-five feet away from houses or structures, and they are properly extinguished when done. Campfires are for cooking, and residents who wish to have a larger bonfire on their properties should call 863-8955 to apply for a bonfire permit.

### **S. A. F. E. Grant**

The Massachusetts Department of Fire Services recently awarded the Gill Fire Department just over \$3,000.00 to fund fire safety education services for school-age children. Gill firefighters provide Student Awareness of Fire Education throughout the school year at the Gill Elementary School, Northfield Mount Hermon School, and local preschools.

### **New Rescue Boat**

The new rescue boat has arrived and the Gill Firemen's Association wishes to thank members of the greater Gill community who assisted in the replacement of the rescue boat that was lost during the autumn flood. Before it was lost, the boat helped evacuate flood victims in Bernardston, Deerfield, and Greenfield. Key contributors for the original boat, which was mostly covered by insurance, were Northeast Generation, Inc., the Montague Elks, and the Franklin County Boat Club. The Friends of Gill and several anonymous donors helped defray the additional costs of the new boat and the replacement of water rescue equipment.

## **SUPPORT YOUR FIRE DEPARTMENT**



## **VOLUNTEER!**

**CALL 863-8955**

### **Stanley Ambo, Sr. Memorial Scholarship**

Each year the Gill Firemen's Association offers a scholarship of \$200.00 to a Town of Gill resident who will graduate from an accredited area secondary school and plans to attend college. This scholarship is dedicated to the memory of Firefighter Stanley Ambo, 1928 - 1980, who gave his last full measure of devotion in service to the people of Gill. The scholarship will be given to a member of the senior class who, in the opinion of the Association, demonstrates scholastic ability, need, character, and participation in extra-curricular and community activities.

Any award shall be contingent upon the selected applicant's acceptance into a post-secondary academic program. Gill residents who wish to apply for this scholarship should contact the Guidance



Department at Turners Falls High School, Franklin County Technical School, or Northfield Mount Hermon School. The deadline for completed applications is April 30, 2006.

## Early Summer Farm and Garden Tour

Welcome your friends and neighbors to visit your farm or garden or join the tour and enjoy the beauty of early summer in our local landscape. The Friends of Gill is hosting a tour of Gill's Farms and Gardens the weekend of the summer Picnic on the Common, June 25th. A planning meeting to inform those who have offered to be hosts as well as others who might be included will be held April 10th, at 6:00 PM just before the informational meeting for the Gill Agricultural Commission. The tour will include Gill's horticultural, landscape, and agricultural professionals, hobbyists, and enthusiasts. Please come to the planning meeting to learn more of this event.

## Gill School News

The spring is always an interesting season at the Gill School. As spring fever hits, we are busily completing large scale projects and preparing for the latest round of the state designed standardized test, the MCAS.

We are engaged in an extensive science project this year. In collaboration with the Antioch Graduate School of Education in Keene, New Hampshire, we have embarked on an all-school study of the Connecticut River watershed. Many aspects of the watershed streams, brooks, and vernal pools are either on the school property or are within walking distance, enabling us to use these outdoor laboratories. Each class is connected with an intern from Antioch and explores the characteristics and inhabitants of the watershed. We look to continue this partnership with Antioch for the near future and will explore the fascinating world of the plants, animals and rocks around us.

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We are in the final rehearsals of our annual all-school play. This year's extravaganza is entitled, *The Wizard of Galafree*. This is a tale of young travelers braving trial and tribulation in order to free the wizard from a terrible curse. The play is highlighted by our young performers who demonstrate Broadway-like talent in bringing the show to a rousing finale. This effort energizes the entire school (there are as many adult volunteers behind the scenes as there are performers on stage!) and always plays to standing-room-only crowds. We want to thank the Gill-Montague Education Fund, the Gill Arts Lottery Council, the Quintas Allen Fund, The Gill School PTO, and the Gill-Montague Regional School District's School Committee for providing the necessary funding to make this memorable event a reality. And, of course our thanks go out to Court Dorsey (Director), John Van Eps (Music Director), Mary Reeder (Assistant Director and volunteer extraordinaire!), the Erving Elementary School (authors), and Nan Sadoski (Music teacher) for their hard work on this play.

This spring also marks the start of MCAS season. All students in grades 3, 4, 5, and 6 are tested in reading, writing and mathematics. The testing begins in late March for two weeks and then returns in mid-May for a final three weeks of testing. Our young scholars are in the process of preparing for the tests and aside from some understandable nervousness, will be primed to do their very best.

Here is an actual example of a math problem for Grade 6 from the 2004 MCAS. (We were not able to copy the picture, but here is the information)

There are two scales that are balanced.

Scale A — Four pyramids + one cube = two cubes

Scale B — Three cubes + four pyramids = two spheres

a. Using Scale A, how many pyramids balance 1 cube? Show or explain your work.

b. Using your answer in part a and using Scale B, how many pyramids balance 1 sphere? Show or explain your work.

c. Using your answers in parts a and b, which weighs more, 3 spheres or 5 cubes? Show or explain your work.

These assessments demand correct application of mathematics AND an explanation. Students will only receive full credit when they can do both! If you are curious about any of the other grades and tests, you can go to [www.doe.mass.edu](http://www.doe.mass.edu) then put MCAS into the search box and then click onto MCAS Test Items.

Finally, thank you all for your on-going support and assistance of the activities and programs at the school. The success of the Gill School is an indicator of the interest and support of the entire town.

Sincerely, The Gill School staff

*P.S. Don't forget the Gill School Carnival on Saturday, May 20th, 10:00 AM to 1:00 PM (it will be a beautiful day, guaranteed!)*

## Memorial Committee

The Memorial Committee would like to invite the veterans of our community to contact us for the purpose of discussing activities and ideas. Presently, the committee is involved in replacing the flags and planting geraniums on veterans' graves on Memorial Day, and replacing flags on Veterans Day. Also, we host a service on Memorial Day, beginning at the church at 10:00, and proceeding to the war memorial next to the library for an address, the Rose Ceremony, and the playing of Taps.



Bev Demars retired last year after years of dedicated service, and the committee now consists of new members Doug and Elaine Smith, Chet Kuzontkoski, and Gary Bourbeau. Again, we encourage your input and involvement, and if interested contact Chet at 863-9284 or Gary at 863-8613.

## Elisabeth von Trapp concert

A Concert with Elisabeth von Trapp will be held on Saturday, April 29, 2006, at 7:30 PM 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. This concert is sponsored by the Gill-Montague Education Fund and is underwritten by corporate sponsor Hillside Plastics, Inc.

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

Tickets are priced at \$20, \$15, and \$10 and are available at 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!

## Slate Library News



Spring's here with summer not far behind - if you haven't been to the library recently, now's a good time to visit!

Peruse our selection of new books and bestsellers in both the adult and children's sections, get help in tracking down that hard-to-find title that you've been meaning to read, and take time to

browse our steadily growing collection of DVD's and videos. We'll be beefing up our offerings of books on tape and on CD in preparation for those upcoming vacation trips and leisure hours, too.

Ongoing programs this spring include Liz Gardner's ever-popular Story Adventures for preschoolers. This weekly session of music, movement, stories, art and games meets on Fridays beginning at 9:30. For more information, please call Liz at 863-8626. The Knitters' Circle, hosted by Kim Sprankle and open to knitters of all ages and experience, meets at the library every third Thursday beginning at 7 PM.

Plans are afoot for our annual Summer Reading Program, organized this year by Jocelyn Castro-Santos. Stay tuned for the full roster of events in the next Gill newsletter and through Gill School notices. If you have time and interest to volunteer for this program in any capacity, please contact us at the library (863-2591). We're stocking up for a huge Used Book Sale in June as well; we'd also love any volunteer help in setting up tables and sorting materials.

Open hours at Slate Library are Mondays 2-6 PM, Thursdays 2-8 pm, and Saturdays 10 AM to 2 PM. For information, please call Lissa at 863-4386, or the library at 863-2591.



## Hometown Students

### Honor Roll

#### Pioneer Valley Regional School

Gill students named to the second semester honor roll are:

*Grade 11:*

High honors: Johanna Johnson. Honors: Maxwell Fish

*Grade 8:*

Honors: Jared Towne

#### Turners Falls High School

*Grade 12:*

First honors: Anna Perry and Nathan Underwood. Third honors: Paul Marguet, and Michael Palumbo

*Grade 11:*

First honors: Benjamin Garber and Haley Trenholm. Second honors: Elizabeth Giknis and Chelsea Isles.

*Grade 10:*

First honors: Amanda Golembeski and Molly Perry.

Second honors: Abbey Daniel-Green and Alexander Tufano. Third honors: Zachary Little and Veronica Santucci.

*Grade 9:*

First honors: Jodi Hallett. Third honors: Amber Henry.

#### Great Falls Middle School

*Grade 8:*

First honors: Danielle Dolhenty, Matthew Garber and Kathleen Rinaldi

Second honors: Sarah Underwood

*Grade 7:*

First honors: Brooke Hastings, Julie Howard-Thompson, Jack Hubert, Joseph Lafleur, Andrew Turban and Natasha Vaughn.

Second honors: Makayla Dolhenty

### Underclass Awards Assembly

The Turners Falls High School held its Underclass Awards Assembly on February 6th . Gill students honored were:

*English awards:* Academic Excellence in Advanced Placement English Literature: Anna Perry.

*Health & Physical Education awards:* Excellence in Physical Education Grade 9: Eric Dumas and Jodi Hallett.

*History awards:*

Academic Excellence Sociology, Molly Perry; Academic Excellence in U.S. History I, Veronica Santucci; Academic Excellence in Advance Placement to U.S. History, Benjamin Garber.

*Mathematics awards:*

Best Effort in Honors Geometry, Molly Perry; Outstanding Math Achievement in Pre-Calculus, Benjamin Garber.

*Science awards:* Academic Excellence in Honors Earth Science, Molly Perry; Diplomacy in Physics, Nathan Underwood and Most Outstanding in Physics, Anna Perry.

### John and Abigail Adams Scholarship

Gill students in the Class of 2006 who received John and Abigail Adams scholarships were Paul Marguet, Anna Perry, Derrick Rawson, Travis St. Peter and Nathan Underwood.

Receiving this award qualifies these students for a tuition waiver for eight traditional semesters of undergraduate education at the University of Massachusetts, the seven state colleges or 15 community colleges. This scholarship is based on their performance on the 10th grade English language arts and mathematic assessment of the MCAS tests. They rank in the top 25 percent of students in the district with their combined scoring assessments in the Advanced category in one test and in the Proficient or Advanced category in the second test.



## Franklin County Technical School

The Franklin County Technical School added a new requirement that asks graduating seniors to select a project to highlight the completion of four years of study in their vocational program. Along with a detailed research paper, a presentation must be given in front of a panel of technical school faculty. "Capstone projects" this year included a presentation on geometry in electricity by Mike Olson, an electrical student.

## Dean's List

Johanna McComb was named to the dean's list at Liberty University and Doreen Demars was named to the dean's list at Babson College for the fall semester. Stephanie Brown was named to the dean's list at Keene State College for the fall semester.

University of Massachusetts students named to the fall 2005 dean's list are Courtney M. Gagne and Gredel E. Sullivan.

## Music and Dance

It wasn't a big surprise to hear that Valerie Vaille made her television debut in *Boston Legal* last month. She's worked three years in casting for movies and television and the acting bug has got her. We know Valerie as Valerie Magoon, daughter of Phyllis Magoon. Valerie attended Northfield Mount Hermon School and Emerson College.

TFHS and GFMS students presented *Grease* in March at the TFHS auditorium. Sophomore Abbey Daniel Green and Junior Chelsea Isles were two of the Pink Ladies, Abbey as Patti Simcox, and Chelsea as Jan. Junior Ben Garber, sang and danced his way through the musical as greaser Doody, of the Burger Palace Boys. Freshmen Jodie Hallett's role as a cheerleader, and Danielle Dolhenty and Sarah Underwood as students of Ryder High added their singing and dancing talents to the 50's hit musical. Among the volunteers who helped with the production of the show were Janet Garber, Nancy Daniel-Green, Cindy Isles and Veronica Santucci.

## Northfield Mount Hermon School Music & Dance Programs

A Choral Concert "Building Bridges Through Musical Connections" on February 12th featured Zoe Hastings,

alto, and percussionist Spencer Hattendorf.

The NMH Dance Companies presented "Music in Motion" the next week. Dance was performed with music from J.S. Bach to funk. Aja Kane performed with the group.

Northfield Mount Hermon School music program presented their annual "Honoring our Elders" concert on February 19th to benefit the Franklin County Meals on Wheels Program. Performing in the NMH Symphony Orchestra under the direction of conductor Steven Bathory Peeler were Steve Damon, oboe, and David Dowd, french horn. The Jazz Ensemble featured Spencer Hattendorf, on the alto sax playing *Sophisticated Lady*, dedicated to his mom Sheila.

Wesley Becklo played the role of Luce in the major theater production *Comedy of Errors* at the McCarthy Arts Center, Saint Michael's College, Colchester, VT. Wesley is a theater major.

## Sports

Both the Pioneer and Turners Falls High Schools competed in the Western Mass Division III tournament. Turners lost in the first round while Pioneer reached the quarterfinals before losing to Easthampton. Sophomore Jake Galipault played on the Pioneer team. TFHS seniors Paul Marguet and Travis St. Peter were chosen to compete in the ninth annual Hampshire-Franklin Senior All-Star game. Jake and Tom Field were chosen from TFHS to compete in the second annual Jack Sabin invitational Underclass All-Star game and Ashleigh St. Peter was chosen to compete on the girl's Underclass All-Star game. The senior games benefit the William F. Casey Scholarship Fund and the underclass games benefit the Jim Roche Scholarship Fund.

Eighth grader Matt Garber and his team mates qualified for Western Mass and then moved on to the States to compete in the 4 x 100 relay event for the Turners Falls swim team. Senior Anna Perry qualified for Western Mass in the 100 yard



breaststroke. The Turners swimmers were recognized by the MIAA and received the team award for Best Sportsmanship, Division B.

### 4-H Awards

The Franklin County 4-H Awards banquet held in January in Turners Falls presented the following awards to Gill members. Member recognition: Amber Henry, 8th year; Massachusetts and New England 4-H Dairy Shows delegate: Michael Crochier; Massachusetts State and Regional 4-H Horse Shows: Amanda Golembeski; Massachusetts 4-H Horse Roundup, Hippology: Amanda Golembeski, senior, and Amber Henry, junior; Appreciation of thanks to fair helpers: Amanda Golembeski and Amber Henry; Volunteer Recognition: Alison Crochier, 5th year.

## Recreation Committee

Basketball season has come to an end. Congratulations to the boys 5/6 grade team for placing 2nd in the Vernon Annual Basketball Tournament on the weekend of Feb 18th. On Sunday Feb



26th we held our end of the year gathering for all of our teams at the NMH gym. We had a potluck meal (sorry, I forgot the plates, we now have a storage container with all the essentials) followed by an awards ceremony where all who participated were awarded certificates and medallions for participation. We also had 6 NMH basketball players join in as well. They hosted 4 skills stations that all the rec players rotated and participated in and at the end of the gathering the kids played basketball and the NMH players refereed. A great time was had by all. A big thanks to Steve Striebel, Rafaela Calicchio, Tom Pratt, NMH basketball players and NMH school for allowing all this to happen at your gym. I would also like to

thank all the coaches that devoted a season of their time to all our rec players. Jim Poulsen and Nate Duda — boys 5/6 grade; Ed Dolhenty, Alan Vaughn, and Gene Woods — girls 5/6 grade; Fred Bezio, Mr.B (Steve Baskowski) and Steve Striebel — coed 2nd,3rd and 4th grade; Rose Levasseur and Paul Nicolson — K/1st grade. I would also like to thank all our refs, Eric Dumas, Brandon Rawson, Joey Rinaldi, Maurice Dumas, Jeff and Deb Gordon, and as always, Gill recs driving force, Steve Striebel. On March 4th due to the other team not showing up the 5/6 grade team played their parents and family members instead. A great time was had by all with Jonny Marguet sealing the deal for the boys win over the parents in double overtime.

Family Swim and Family Ice Skate on Sundays returned this year at NMH. This year we shared the Facility with Northfield rec. Many thanks to Rafeala Calicchio and Tom Pratt at NMH for allowing this to happen. I would also like to thank all the NMH families who volunteer as facility sitter making this a weekly event for the winter, Jen Shaw and Mary Reeder for covering the pool and Bridget Logan and David Reeder for covering the rink. A lot of families were very grateful for these Sunday activities. Everything went well and we should be able to continue this next year. Thank you NMH for providing Gill residents the use of your facilities for many of our rec actives.

Due to no snow we had to cancel our Annual Wacky Sliding Party at Oak Ridge Golf Course. For the families that made wacky sleds save them for next year and pray for more snow next year. Rumor has it that our always helping Fire Dept also has a wacky sled they made. For the families that did not have time this year to make a wacky sled you will have 3 more season to get it done.

Our **5th Annual RedSox Trip** will be on Sunday, May 14th, at 2 PM, with the Texas Rangers and is filling quickly. We purchased 105 right outfield tickets. If interested call Nate Duda at 522-3209 and leave a message. I will call you back so arrangements can be made. Cost is \$60 a person (includes coach ride and ticket ). Due to the very high





demand for Travel Kuz's coaches we were unable to get their services this year (with more advance planning we should be able to use them next year). I was able to find alternative coaches for our trip this year. I will be calling all the families that are going a few days before the trip letting everyone know departure time and place.

***Go Red Sox!***

Baseball and Softball sign ups have started. We have teams for K to 6 grade boys and girls. If you missed the sign up or have changed your mind you can call me at 522-3209 and arraignments can be made. Have a great spring and we hope to be playing ball very soon. I will post a copy of all our teams schedules at the town hall for those interested.

Respectfully Submitted

Nathan Duda,  
Gill Recreation Committee Chairman

## Historical Commission Report

The Gill Historical Commission meets on the third Tuesday of each month at 5:30 PM at the Riverside School on Route 2. If you are interested in the projects of the Commission or have information or questions about Gill and its history, please contact Kit Carpenter, Bev Demars, Stuart Elliott, Dick French, Linda Hodsdon-Mayo, Bob Perry, or Pam Shoemaker. Please contact any of the members to find out when the Museum will be open each month or to arrange a special opening.

Thinking about roads in the winter and the spring, we have chosen this month to feature part of Chapter 11 on roads from the Ralph Stoughton's *History of Gill*, volume 1, published in 1978 and available for reading at the town library.

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In the early days of rural travel, country roads were little more than cleared trails that followed easiest directions, full of curves and sharp turns, and laid out by no prescribed plan. They wandered hither and thither, up and down, guided by the obstacles encountered — skirting a

swamp here, avoiding a boulder there, and climbing the sides of hills wherever ridges offered the readiest footholds. The first settlers built cabins on their lots wherever personal preference dictated, and roads in time evolved from the winding paths that connected these scattered homesteads.

The following apt description is quoted from *Legends of New England* by Julia Gill and Frances Lee, pen names of Urania and Frances Stoughton:

“A good spring of water, close by the door, is such a handy things,” said Mrs. Risle. So Mr. Risle, who had no pleasure but to please his wife, built his cabin by the spring. “Whatever I have, I want plenty of fresh air: it makes a place so much healthier,” said Mr. Darby. Therefore on a sightly hill he squared and spliced together the logs that made the walls of his home.

A sheltered spot, where his corn and rye would get an early start, better met Mr. Davis's ideas of comfort. So his cabin was built where a wooded hill sloped down behind and at the sides, while a glimpse of the river showed beyond the clearing in front.

Thus each man built here and there, according to his own taste and convenience; and thus the bridlepaths, which first followed notched trees and finally broadened and hardened into roads, zig-zagged from one clearing to another, up hill and down, with no regard to the convenience or ease of travel but only democratically bent on giving every inhabitant an equal privilege in the advantage of a highway.

The roads that thus came into existence were at first community interests and were maintained by mutual agreements among the inhabitants of each district of the township. Only main thoroughfares were town or county roads, and even these roads showed little consideration for convenience or speed of travel; nor were they always kept in good condition, if reliance can be put on



statements in old letters in which the writers complained about the fatigue and slowness of journeys. It is even related how one farmer, contemplating a trip to a neighboring city requiring a journey of several days, started out at midday with an ox-team loaded with produce, and at nightfall had proceeded so short a distance that he walked back after dark and spent the night at his own home.

After the first settlers had become well established, it sometimes happened that a later settler found himself so hemmed in by others that his only means of exit was a pentroad, so-called, being a right of way across other properties to a traveled road, with a gate of bars at the boundary line of each property through which the traveler passed, and which had to be opened or lowered and then replaced at each passage. Such pentroads were arranged at first by consent or agreement, but when heirs or new owners came into possession of the properties, contention was liable to develop, and the town had to settle matters by building a town road.

The indefinite boundary descriptions given in the town records make the locations of these early roads a difficult matter. Many of them were in use only for a short time and were discontinued when more conveniently located county roads or other town roads were opened, upon which the settlers placed permanent dwellings.

The earliest road here was the old

Proprietors Road from Greenfield to Northfield through Factory Hollow and West Gill. It probably bore little semblance to what we now call a road even after it became a Hampshire County road in 1732, just a trail cleared sufficiently to permit the passage of an ox-cart.

In 1736 when the Proprietors were preparing to allot the land "East of Green River and North of Cheapside," they voted at a meeting held on March 29, "That Thos. Wells, Lieut. Hinsdel, Timothy Childs, Benj. Munn, Edward Allen 2d and Elijah Williams, be a committee to lay out and well mark what Roads for Highways they shall think necessary & convenient in the Lands to be laid out before any allotment thereof be made." On the 10th April, the Proprietors voted "that we will begin to Lay out said Land on ye sixteenth Day of this instant April," so presumably the roads had been "well marked" by that time, though no record gives the information. It is not unlikely that the trails laid out then were the beginnings of the roadways that developed into the Straits Road, the road to Gill Center that branches off above Factory Hollow from the West Gill Road, or old Proprietors Road, and the old road from the Falls to Northfield, of which only the sections at the beginning and the end are now in use.

*(N.B. You may refer to the original text for a section of a few pages in which the location of several early*

*roads are presented with references to homesteads, trees, stone walls, and heaps of rocks.)*

. . . On December 7, 1795 it was "Voted to establish the road leading from Mr. Wrisley's to Mr. Brooks." This was the road from the center south toward the river. Mr. Brooks lived on the farm later known as the "Stacy farm," and Mr. Eleazer Wrisley lived on the other side of Woodward's Brook below the bridge at the end of the common. At that time the brook was crossed slightly beyond Mr. Wrisley's dwelling, and was approachd down the grade beside the Center Cemetery. After crossing the brook, the road swung back to the present route around Mr. Wrisley's farmhouse, which then faced south. Attempts to straighten out this road by building a bridge at the present location occasioned town strife over a long period of years. In 1814 there was considerable agitation in favor of the project, and the selectmen made some changes in the road east of Woodward's Brook in anticipation. The bridge was voted down, however, but the altered road "to David Wrisley's from the meeting-house" remained and was accepted by the town in the following year. Mr. David Wrisley lived on the premises now owned by John Kislowski, his dwelling standing on the crest of the hill above the present farmhouse.

Another piece of roadway that excited much opposition was the construction of a link connecting



the four corners of the present Boyle Road with the Northfield Road. Up to the year 1825, when it was finally accepted, this stretch of road was the subject of heated contention, and apparently caused much altercation between the interested parties, though the exact reasons therefor (sic) are not explained by the records.

On January 23, 1797 it was "Voted to establish a pent-road from David Wrisley, 3d's, dwelling-house, northerly by I. Johnson's to Bernardston line. This was the section of the present Boyle Road north of Mill Lane, continued to the Bernardston line. David Wrisley, 3d, lived in a house on Mill Lane near the place where Herbert Hasting's dwelling now stands, and Isaa Johnson lived at the four corners property now owned by Samuel Day.

The Bernardston, or Boyle, Road originally started from the common at the west line of the present Marble property and then veered eastwardly to the crossing over Woodward's Brook.

Although the road was made a county road in 1801, the direct route now used was not laid out until 1825 when the roadway on the west was exchanged for an equal roadway through the property owned at that time by Alfred Alvord.

Travel over these early roads was made either on horseback or by ox-cart. The coach and the chaise did not become common for

private use until long after the Revolutionary War. Stagecoach routes followed the main turnpikes, and messengers rode "post" and "express" on horseback throughout the countryside over the ordinary town and county roads connecting villages. Travelers over these roads found fording at some shallow spot an easy matter when small streams were encountered, but when a deep stream had to be crossed, a raft was necessary to enable the travelers to reach the opposite side. As a consequence, ferries were established at well traveled points, a toll being collected from the traveler by the ferryman. Early records of the towns along the Connecticut River contain many entries where permission was granted a man to establish a ferry when such a need became evident, and often the maintenance of a ferry was handed down in the same family for many generations.

## Herbert Family's French Meat Pies



This recipe comes from Janet Lata-Herbert and was printed in the *Taste of Gill* cookbook. It sounds like the perfect warming meal for those cool spring nights!

### *Ingredients:*

- 1 lb. hamburger (not too lean)
- 1 lb. ground pork
- 1/4 onion, chopped and browned with meat
- 1/4 tsp. allspice and 1/4 tsp cloves (or 1/2 tsp. Bell's pie seasoning)
- 1-2 boiled potatoes (instant flakes may be used)
- pie crust (make your own or use (frozen)

### *Directions:*

Roll crust into into two circles. Put bottom crust into a pie pan. Brown hamburger, pork and onion in a skillet. Tip pan and add seasonings to grease and distribute evenly through meat mixture. Add potatoes or potato flakes and mash into mixture. Pour into pie pan and add top crust; put slits into top crust and wet edges with water or milk to seal to bottom crust.

Bake at 425 degrees for 30 minutes or until crust is golden. Serve with brown gravy or ketchup (optional).

*Note from Janet: I use frozen dough to save time. Individual pies may be made in cupcake tins. Tuck top crust (slit top) around bottom crust, fill tins to top and pack firmly.*



## 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 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.

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## Next Newsletter Deadline

May 15th for the June Issue

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