**Town Hall News**

There will be an informational pre-town meeting held **Monday, June 19th at 7:00 PM**, one week prior to the Annual Town Meeting in an attempt to better inform voters on articles, budgets and other actions to be taken at Town Meeting without having the pressure of needing to vote that same day. Department Heads will be present to answer any questions related to their Department budgets. Finance Committee and Selectboard are working hard to have a balanced budget to present to the voters in time for the informational pre-town meeting on June 19th.

**SPECIAL TOWN MEETING: Monday, June 26, 2006 5:30 PM**

There are currently three articles planned for a Special Town Meeting immediately preceding the Annual Town Meeting continuation. The first article asks for permission to enter into an agreement with the Towns of Erving, Sunderland, Deerfield, Leverett, Whately, and Pelham to share leased mowing equipment provided by agreement with Western Massachusetts Electric for mowing the roadsides. Gill is the lead town this year under a multi-year agreement, which requires we procure the leased machine, garage and maintain, and at the end of the five years - we, as lead town are granted ownership. WMECO gets the benefit that the land underneath their lines are kept clear, which the Town needs to do for safety reasons regardless and the benefit of a machine at minimal cost at the conclusion.

The second article requests a stipend be setup for the Emergency Manager from Vermont Yankee Emergency funds. Since September 11th responsibilities for this position have grown enormously. Vermont Yankee has indicated support by a willingness to increase their annual gift by the amount of the stipend.

The Gill-Montague School Committee requested the third article regarding Vermont Yankee's emergency zone. The article requests expansion of the emergency zone to twenty miles (currently ten), planned assistance 100% of residents (currently only 20%), wider notification in all towns within the zone, drills for evacuation (to demonstrate enough resources are available) and funds
to build a reception center to accommodate all evacuees within the expanded zone in the event of a nuclear catastrophe. You might recall the Town of Montague voted the same language at their Annual Town Meeting.

ANNUAL TOWN MEETING
CONTINUATION follows at 6:00 PM

The posted warrant includes nineteen articles. The first three articles accept the Annual Town Report, elect field drivers, fence viewers and Measurers of Wood, Bark etc., and ask for authority to accept and expend Chapter 90 type funds for highway repair.

The fourth article fixes the salaries of the officers of the Town, which includes an annual cost of living increase (COLA), 3.5% this year. The COLA is per the Town’s personnel policy and is derived from the mean of two indexes (US Urban City and Northeast Urban Average) at a specific point in time, and then adopted by both the Personnel Board and Selectboard. All town employees, elected and appointed receive the annual COLA.

The fifth article reauthorizes the revolving fund for the sale of trash stickers, allows us to deposit revenues to pay the 5% commission to the vendors from that account. Annual reauthorization is required by MGL. The remaining cost for solid waste disposal is offset by the receipts from sticker sales, in addition to funds received from the tonnage of recyclables collected. The Town receives on average a $28 per ton revenue from the containers and papers residents recycled. So, the more you recycle, the greater revenue received and ultimately a lower tax rate!

The next three articles empowers the town to act relative to the regulation of dogs, authorize a revolving fund for collection of fees and associated costs and establish bylaws, fees and regulations. The Regional Council of Governments has been acting as the agent for Towns in regard to the licensing of dogs and at one time included a regional dog officer. However, since the demise of that part of the program, the program no longer serves a purpose and therefore they are encouraging towns to opt out of the county program for autonomy.

The next two articles propose two new bylaws brought forward at the request of residents. The first brings up the question of excessive noise. If approved, the bylaw would place a limit or maximum on the noise level allowed to interfere with the peace and quiet of the inhabitants of Gill. The second establishes an Agricultural Commission for the purpose of serving as an advocate, mediator, and educator, promoting agricultural based opportunities in Town, preservation of farmland, and advises town boards as needed.

The eleventh article asks the town to accept the provisions of MGL C140§53E. If accepted, Chapter 32B§18 allows the community to save money on retiree health insurance costs when retirees enroll in Medicare in place of regular insurance. The MGL mandates enrollment in an extension plan (Medicare B). Costs for these plans are generally significantly lower than they are for regular, full-featured municipal health insurance plans due to the fact that they need only supplement the federal Medicare coverage. Since the extension plan insurance is generally cheaper than the regular municipal insurance, both the municipality and the retiree save money.

The twelfth article annually requests transfer from a fund set up by Quintus Allen for use by the local school system. The Elementary School historically requests the annual gift to Gill for a specific program.

The subsequent article requests a full-time firefighter at the request of the Fire Department Board of Engineers. The Department is concerned with the continuing lack of available daytime
coverage, the expansion of NMH in Gill and the ever-increasing red tape.

The fourteenth article is requesting a sum of money for a recollection of property data on file in the Assessors’ office and may include purchase or upgrade of appraisal software and conversion of data. This article is at the request of the Board of Assessors. The subsequent article requests funds for a triennial revaluation, but will not be necessary if the recollection in article fourteen is approved.

The Sixteenth article is a request to purchase a voting scanner. The request from the Town Clerk is a result of discontinued service on our scanning machine that has become obsolete.

The Seventeenth article represents the omnibus, the expenditure of funds for the operation of your town government. This includes police, fire, highway, schools, recreation and library line items, not to mention general government, conservation, historical, veterans, etc.

And, the final two articles request use of free cash to reduce the tax levy and the transfer of any remaining available funds to a stabilization account.

Please come to pre-town meeting and ATM Continuance to vote. The services you receive are a direct result!

**Town Clerk Notes: Annual Town Election Results**

Thank you to the 55 voters that cast their ballot in our Annual Elections.

The following individuals were elected, with the exception of any individuals to the Board of Assessors! We had no one running on the ballot and the two individuals that received the highest number of write-in ballots have refused the position. That puts us back to one Assessor, unable to act. If you are interested in learning more about this position, please contact the Assessors or Selectboard office!

**Selectman, Sewer Commission:**
3 yrs. Candidate for Re-election: Leland Stevens

**Board of Assessors:**
3 yrs - Write-in candidate refused the position - OPEN SEAT

**Board of Assessors:**
1 yr - Write-in candidate refused the position - OPEN SEAT

**Cemetery Commission:**
3 yr - (Write-in candidate) Patricia Haigis

**Moderator:**
3 yrs - Candidate for Re-election: Ray Steele

**Tree Warden:**
3 yrs - Candidate for Re-election: Ernest Hastings

**Library Trustee:**
3 yrs - Candidate for Re-election: Ellen Johnson

**FRIENDS OF GILL**

Come join your friends and neighbors for the Annual Picnic on the Common sponsored by the Friends of Gill on Sunday, June 25, from 12 to 3. Again this year the Gill Firemen will be serving food from 12 to 3 PM including their famous “made from scratch” French fries. The Friends of Gill will be serving strawberry shortcake with freshly picked strawberries, ice cream, and beverages. From 1 to 3 PM there will be the popular hay ride with a horse drawn hay wagon and music by the Fall Town String Band from our neighboring town of Bernardston. The sawdust coin hunt, a favorite with the children, will be held at 2 PM. This is a festive occasion celebrating the arrival of the first week of summer and giving Gill residents the opportunity to meet each other in a casual setting.

On the same day, the Friends of Gill is also sponsoring a Farm and Garden Tour from 10 AM to 3 PM. For details, see the separate article in this issue of the Newsletter.
Board of Health: 3 yrs - Candidate for Re-election: Randy Crochier

Town Clerk: 3 yrs - Candidate for Re-election: Lynda Hodsdon Mayo

Treasurer: 1 yr - Veronica LaChance

Valeria Smith was also elected as Gill’s representative to the Gill-Montague Regional School Committee!

On Friday, June 16th, there will be an open voter registration for The Special Town Meeting being held on June 26, 2006. The Town Hall will be open to accept new voter registrations from 2-4 PM and 7-8 PM on that day.

Annual Town report is complete and will be available at Annual Town Meeting continuation or at the Town Clerk's office.

— Lynda Hodsdon Mayo

Gill Fire Department

A couple of reminders:

Carbon Monoxide 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 Massachusetts residents 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 habitable living spaces. On levels with sleeping areas, the alarms must be placed within ten feet of bedroom doors. 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.

**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.

**Slate Library News**

Summer’s on the way and with it comes another Summer Reading Program at Slate Library, complete with fun and educational programs every Saturday morning, performers, prizes and a beautiful gameboard to color and record your reading progress. This year the theme is **BUGS** — there’ll be plenty of opportunities for reading, learning, singing and joking about insects, as well as observing, exploring, drawing and painting them. We salute artist and librarian Jocelyn Castro-Santos who created this year’s program and gameboard. Below is the schedule of events; further details will be sent home with Gill Elementary schoolchildren with their newsletter. For more information, please call the library at 863-2591.

**Saturday, June 24**

10:00-12:00 Kick-off Party with refreshments. Registration and distribution of gameboards.

10:30-12:00 “Garden Friends: Bugs, Butterflies and Fairy Puppets,” a sock-puppet workshop led by Jocelyn Castro-Santos.

**Saturday, July 1**

11:00-12:00 “Book-making for children,” led by Jeannie Hunt. Recommended for ages 8-14 yrs. (Limited to 20 children.)

**Saturday, July 8**

11:00-12:00 “Stinkbug Bug-aloow,” stories, songs, jokes and legends with Mary Jo Maichak.

**Saturday, July 15**

10:30-12:00 Scratchboard drawing with local artist Karen Gaudette. Recommended for ages 8-14 yrs. Registration required (limited to 10 children).

**Saturday, July 22**

10:30-12:00 “Butterflies!,” nature exploration, stories, and activities with local biologist Kim Sprankle.

**Saturday, July 29**

10:30-11:30 “Creepy Crawly Creatures,” with Rae Griffiths of Teaching Creatures. Featuring: Big Madagascar Hissing Cockroaches, Eastern Lubber Grasshoppers, Giant African Millipedes, and local bugs, too!

**Saturday, August 5**

10:30-11:30 Closing party and picnic. Display of completed gameboards. Song and Stories with Davis Bates!

In other news:

**GIANT USED BOOK SALE** on the lawn at Slate Library! Saturday and Sunday, June 24-25, 10:00 AM - 2:00 PM. Hardcovers, paperbacks, videos, DVD’s, cassettes, CDs in all genres and in all conditions. Come browse, buy, and support your local library! Anyone interested in volunteering in any capacity for the books sale, please contact Lissa Greenough at 863-4386.
Early Summer Farm and Garden Tour

Gardens and farms are central to the agrarian nature of Gill. They show our residents’ creativity and honor our reliance on the land for beauty and food.

The Friends of Gill will host a tour of Gill farms and gardens on Sunday, June 25, the weekend of the annual Picnic on the Common, rain or shine, from 10AM to 3 PM. The tour will include horticultural and agricultural treasures by local farm and landscape professionals, hobbyists, and enthusiasts. Come see what is flourishing in the early summer gardens and farms of Gill.

Tickets may be purchased in advance for $5.00 each at Uppingil Farm on Main Road, the Gill Store, Yukl’s Greenhouses, and Songline Emu Farm on the French King Highway, World Eye Bookstore in Greenfield, and Books & More on Avenue A in Turners Falls. Tickets may be purchased for $7.00 on the day of the tour at the Annual Picnic on the Common. Children under 10 will be admitted free.

Take a lunch break at the Picnic in the Common with friends and neighbors and savor the Friends of Gill strawberry shortcake and the firemen’s cooking and their famous homemade French fries.

All proceeds support community projects and events in Gill.

Hometown Students

Spring Sports

Anna Perry, a member of TFHS girl’s swim team, met the high standards of excellence established for The Republican’s Winter 2005-2006 All-Academic Sport Team. Anna was also chosen for the Fall 2005 All-Academic Sport Team while playing soccer.

Abbey Daniel-Green has joined the golf team, Betsy Giknis the tennis team, and Anna Perry and Daniele Dolhenty the track team for TFHS.

The TFHS softball team had another perfect season and hoping for a third state championship this year. Major team players Ashleigh and Chelseigh St. Peter are hitting the ball all over the field sending their teammates across home plate. Haley Trenholm and Angela Marguet are also helping the team while freshman Jodie Hallett is playing on the JV team.

Eighth graders Katie Rinaldi and Sarah Underwood are on the Great Falls Middle School softball team.
Senior Derrick Rawson and sophomore Zach Little are playing on the TFHS baseball team this season while seniors Colby Bergeron, Mike Tombs and Nate Underwood along with eighth grader Scott Brown chose to participate on the track team.

The Great Falls Middle School baseball team has five players from Gill, Jack Hubert, Andy Turban, Matt Garber, Jacob Bezio and Mackae Freeland.

Seniors Michael Crochier and Freshman Eric Levasseur are playing baseball for the Franklin County Technical School. Senior Michael Olson chose golf this season along with Sophomore Nathan Towne.

Junior Max Fish is on the Pioneer Regional School baseball team and eighth grader Jarod Towne is playing for Pioneer’s middle school baseball team.

Bill Ward has been playing second base and doing a little pitching for the Northfield Mount Hermon baseball team.

Kellie Brown is continuing her softball career at American International College. In March Kellie was named the Northeast-10 Conference Freshman of the week. That week she had a pair of homeruns and four RBI’s for AIC. On April 8th she had a sixth-inning three-run homerun giving the lead and win to AIC over Bryant University.

While Kellie is making news up north, a cousin, Corey Godzinski of Clermont, Florida accepted a full athletic scholarship to Wofford College in Spartanburg, So. Carolina. He has played basketball at East Ridge High for four years and has been selected to the All-State team twice, All-County team three times, selected as player of the week four times and nominated to play in the McDonald’s All-American team this year. He will graduate with a 4.4 grade point average at the end of May. Corey’s parents, Donald and Cynthia (Ambo) Godzinski, attended Gill Elementary School and TFHS and keep in touch with their hometown reading the Gill newsletter.
Gill School Sixth Grade Project
Gill Elementary School students are studying the Connecticut River Watershed and the 6th graders are gathering documentation to certify a vernal pool on the school grounds. They have sighted a wood frog and have created a map of the vernal pool area. Eighth grader Brady Ward, who attends Four Rivers Charter School, is very knowledgeable of vernal pools and volunteered to be the guide for the 6th graders as they observed the vernal pools on the Mt. Hermon campus.

Turners Falls High School Band
The Turners Falls High School Band went to the Music Showcase Festival in Yorktowne, VA, and came home again with first place trophies. They were awarded first place in jazz band, concert band and chorus in the Class A division. Gill’s Chelsea Isles won an award for best jazz baritone solo. The Band also received the Championship Overall High School Choral Award and a Championship Overall High School Instrumental Award. Among the 40+ band members those from Gill are Ben Garber, Betsy Giknis, Anna and Molly Perry, Abbey Daniel-Green, Amanda Golembeski, Chelsea Isle, Evan Prokowich, Zachary Little and GFMS students Jack Hubert, Brooke Hastings and Sarah Underwood. Not all students were able to make the trip, but those who competed were able to spend a day at Busch Gardens where the awards ceremony was held.

Surprise Party for Gill –Montague’s Music Director
There will be a surprise retirement party for Music Director Steve Ciechomski on June 22nd at the Schuetzen Verein in Gill. All students, parents, and alumni are invited. You may contact Steve Prokowich of Gill for more information. There are some teachers that students always remember and Mr. Ciechomski is one of those teachers. We have been very fortunate to have such a dedicated musician/teacher bringing music into our children’s lives. Thank you Steve! Remember it’s a surprise party. Don’t tell him.

Honor Roll
Franklin County Technical School
Grade 10 – Honor: Nicolas Berniche

Pioneer Valley Regional School
Grade 11 – Honor: Maxwell Fish & Johanna Johnson
Grade 9 – Honor: Nils Albert Johnson
Grade 8 – High Honor: Jared Towne
Grade 7 – Highest Honor: Patrick Arena

Turners Falls High School
Grade 12 - First Honors: Colby Bergeron, Anna Perry, Liya Samokhina and Nathan Underwood
Second Honors: Melissa Arial, Travis St. Peter
Grade 11 – First Honors: Benjamin Garber, Haley Trenholm
Second Honors: Elizabeth Giknis, Chelsea Isles
Third Honors: Ashleigh St. Peter
Grade 10 - First Honors: Abbey Daniel-Green, Amanda Golembeski, Molly Perry, Alexander Tufano
Second Honors: Zachary Little
Grade 9 – First Honors: Jodi Hallett, Charlotte Parody, Olga Samokhina
Second Honors: Angela Marguet
Third Honors: Amber Henry
Recreation Committee

Happy Spring! I hope everyone is enjoying the longer days and warmer weather (despite all the rain).

Baseball season is here again and we have a record number of players this year. We have six teams this year. We are all very happy to have Roger Parenteau back this year as head coach for our Youth team with assistance from Nathan Duda and Jeff Gibson. Greg Leeds is heading the Pee Wee team this year with help from Charlie Tierney as well as some parent volunteers. The girls softball team is very pleased to have Rolie Weld coaching with assistance from David Kozma. There were so many Pre-K thru 1st graders who signed up for the farm team this year that we had to divide them into 3 teams. A Tee ball team for the Pre-K children and 2 farm teams that have a mixture of Kindergarten & 1st graders. Nathan Duda and Gary Parzych are working with the Tee ball team. Charlie Malcolm is coaching Farm 1 with help from Paul Nicolson and many parent volunteers and Mark Almeida is coaching Farm 2 with help from Brian Kucenski as well as some parent volunteers. We are thrilled to have Tom Bergeron back umpiring all our home games from behind the plate & Brandon Rawson covering the bases. A very special THANK YOU to Jeff & Marie Supernaut for taking the time to set up a food stand that sells hot dogs, drinks and snacks. This is a true lifesaver to so many who come to these games right from work and don’t have the time to get the kids (or themselves) something to eat before the game. The two of you are so appreciated by all.

We had our annual field cleanup on April 15th. This year we held this during practice instead of taking up a separate Saturday afternoon and it seemed to work really well. THANK YOU so much to all the parents who took the time to help make our fields look great and for repairing the bleachers. Thank you all for giving the kids of Gill a great atmosphere to learn, participate and have fun playing as a team.

As most of you already know, the annual Red Sox bus trip which was on Mothers Day this year was cancelled due to rain. We are waiting for the make up game to be announced. We will notify everyone as soon as we get the new date. If you have any questions regarding this please call me at 522-3209.

Phil Snow will be back this year to run the Summer program along with Kelly Brown. This is a new improved program with a new structure. Phil will head the sports portion and Kelly will focus on the arts & crafts portion. There will also be some local teenagers working as councilers. We will be offering full time, 8-4 or part time with the choice of 8-12 or 12-4 again this year. Full time children will need to bring a lunch and snacks and part time kids should bring a snack. We will supply water for everyone. The rate is the same as last year which is $35 a week for part time and $70 a week for full time. We are planning to have an Open House where parents can meet with the Directors and find out more about the program. They will be taking questions and suggestions. Please consider coming to this if you are thinking about sending your child to camp. When a date has been set for this we will post it in the Gill School Newsletter. If you don’t get the School Newsletter you can call me for
the date. Camp will start the week of June 26th and will run for 7 weeks ending on the week of August 7th. You can sign up for as many or as few weeks as you like.

Saturday, August 12th, will be our annual Summer Fun Day.

One last thing, we are in the process of setting a date with Rick & Janice, the owners of Oak Ridge Golf Course, for Gill Appreciation Day. This is a day when you and your family can come out to the golf course and enjoy a reduced greens fee, free cart rental and hamburgers, hot dogs and soda. Look for flyers for this much loved event or you can stop by the course for more information.

Thank You again to all the people who help to support the Gill Recreation Dept. programs. These programs would not be possible without your support. Thank You!

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 have information or questions about Gill and its history, please contact Kit Carpenter, Bev Demars, Stuart Elliott, Dick French, 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.

This month our report shares some entries from the town meeting records of 1793-1828.

_N.B. The original spelling has been retained._

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December 30, 1793

At a legal meeting of the inhabitance of the town of Gill the following votes were passed:

1st Voted Moses Bascom Moderator
2nd Voted that Moses Bascom Wilm Smauley & Samuel Stoughton be A Commite to Settle with the Town of Greenfield
3rd Voted to raise thirtyfive pounds for the support of Schooling
4th Voted to proportion the Schoolmoney in the Useal way
5th Voted to raise fifty Pounds to Procure Materials for a meetinghouse
6th Voted that Charles Richards Samuel Stoughton & Moses Bscom be A Committe to provide Said materials
7th Voted to raise Five pounds to defray town Charges
8th Voted to post Notification at Each schoolhouse in town to warn town meetings in futer

April 7, 1794

(Among the Votes at the legal meting of the inhabitance of the Town of Gill)

8th Voted Charles Richards surveyor of Shingles & Clapboards
9th Voted Saml Stoughton Apollos Allen fence vewers
11th Voted to raise thirty pounds to repair Highways
12th Voted to Allow three shillings & eight pence per day for
Labour done at the highways in the months of May June July & August

March 7, 1803
17th Voted a Bounty on Crows twelve Cents on the old & six on the young
18th Voted that those that kill Crows Shall be intitled to the Bounty by
Carring the Crows heads to the Selectmen or Treasurer to have their Bills Cut off

April 4, 1808
19th Voted that the Seletmen be Directed to forward a Petition to Congress Expressing the evils we suffer and praying relief therefrom

20th Voted Deen Shattuck Benjn Green John Bates be a Committee to Supeerintend the fishery on the Great island so called in Behalf of the Town of Gill the years insuing

May 3, 1813
A letter from Revd Josiah W. Cannon is recorded. One request in the letter reads:
“That my wood now depending on the suvscription of individuals, to the amount of 20 cords, annually be made a measure of the society and punctually brot me early each winter, during my ministry, by such agent or agents as the society shall appoint.”

April 13, 1822
Voted to district the town into school districts
Voted to reconsider the above vote

May 6, 1822
Voted to pass over the matter of districting the town into school districts
Voted to reconsider the vote about school districts
Voted to choose a committee out of each school district to district the town into school districts
Voted to pass over the matter of districting the schools
Voted not to accept the road laid by the selectmen acrost by Daniel Severance to Reuben Kenneys

Put it on your Calendar!

Informational
Pre-Town Meeting:
Monday, June 19th, 7:00 PM

Special Town Meeting:
Monday, June 26th, 5:30 PM

Annual Town Meeting
Continuation: June 26
(follows special Town Meeting)

Annual Picnic on the Common: Sunday, June 25,
12:00 PM - 3:00 PM

Farm and Garden Tour
Sunday, June 25,
10:00 AM - 3:00 PM
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.

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
July 15th for the August Issue

Gill Fire Dept.
196A Main Road
Gill, MA 01354