Special Town Meeting Results

The Special Town Meeting on Monday, December 20th lasted just over 10 minutes as 22 registered voters quickly dealt with the 5 warrant articles.

**Article 1** passed by unanimous vote and lowered our June town meeting appropriation for the Gill-Montague Regional School District by $38,121. This brings the Town’s appropriation in line with the amount approved at the District-Wide meeting in November.

**Article 2** was passed over. Both the Selectboard and Finance Committee recommended waiting until nearer to the end of the fiscal year to allocate money to pay for veterans’ benefits.

**Article 3** passed by unanimous vote and created & funded an Education Stabilization Fund. This fund is to be used “for the payment of assessments from or otherwise in support of the Gill Montague Regional School District and/or the Franklin County Technical School.” Voters appropriated $38,121 into this fund.

**Article 4** passed by unanimous vote and transferred $4,500 from Free Cash to the general Stabilization Fund. In June voters approved using money from the Stabilization Fund to purchase and install a dump body for the 1990 Highway truck, with the understanding that once Free Cash was certi-
MBI is to extend affordable high-speed Internet access to all homes, businesses, schools, libraries, medical facilities, government offices and other public places across our state. The MBI is collecting information about high-speed internet availability throughout the Commonwealth. This information will be used to create state and national maps of broadband availability. The maps will be used to identify unserved and underserved areas that need additional resources.

As a citizen, you can contribute important information about services available at your home or business. Take MBI’s broadband survey to tell them if you have access to high-speed internet and what service you use. Follow the link on the homepage of Gill’s website (www.gillmass.org). For more information about the MBI visit www.massbroadband.org.

**Winter Parking Ban in Effect**

After the street-clogging snowstorm of January 12th, it seems worth repeating... there is NO on-street parking allowed between the hours of 1AM and 6AM November 1 through April 15.

Ray Purington,  
Administrator Assistant

---

**From the Town Clerk**

**Census forms are out:**

Please check the mail for Census forms from the Town Clerk. These forms are used for updating our Street List and ensuring accurate voter information. Please make corrections and sign before returning. If you did not receive a Census form, please call the Town Clerk at 863-8103.

**Dog licenses are in:**

The census mailing also includes an opportunity to license your dog. Please return the information to the Town Clerk with the proper payment. The fee is $5 if the dog is spayed or neutered and $10 for all others. All dogs must be licensed by March 31st to avoid a late fee.

**Town Election**

Town of Gill Annual Town Election is May 16th this year. Nomination papers are available in the Town Clerks office and can be obtained no later than March 24th. The last day to submit the nomination papers is March 28th.

If you have any questions, please contact the Town Clerk at 863-8103. The Town Clerk’s open office hours are Monday through Thursday 1PM to 4PM and 5:30PM to 6:30PM on Monday evenings.
From the Treasurer
The Treasurer’s office in the Town of Gill is looking for current addresses of the following former employees of the town:

Hannah Balk
Caitlin Sullivan
Michael Lyons

If you have any information on these people, please call Ronnie LaChance at 413-863-2105 or e-mail her at collector-treasurer@gillmass.org

Real estate and property tax bills
The 2011 actual real estate and personal property tax bills are being mailed out on February 8, 2011. The Town of Gill’s new tax rate for 2011 is $13.90. If anyone does not receive a tax bill please call the Collector’s office at 413-863-2105.

Taxes are due on or before May 2, 2011.
If anyone thinks their valuation is incorrect you can obtain an application for abatement. The application forms are available at the Assessors office or on the town web site www.gillmass.org, the deadline for filing the application is May 1, 2011. Any questions on abatements please call the Assessors office at: 413-863-0138.

Gill Fire Department
Carbon Monoxide Alarms
Carbon Monoxide is known as the Odorless Killer because it is a poisonous gas that has no visible color, taste, or odor. Each year, many people die or are injured from accidental carbon monoxide poisoning. CO alarms are intended to provide the early warning signs that smoke alarms provide in fires. Recent changes in Massachusetts law require that smoke detectors and carbon monoxide alarms be installed on every level of the home, including habitable portions of basements and attics. On levels with sleeping areas, carbon monoxide alarms should be installed within ten feet of bedroom doors. Levels of the home that do not have inhabitable living spaces are not required to have CO alarms. Landlords must install and maintain CO alarms in every dwelling unit that has a source of carbon monoxide, like a furnace or attached garage. More information about smoke detectors and carbon monoxide alarm requirements is available online at www.gillma.org. Follow the link to the Fire Department page. Call the Fire Department at 863-8955 if you need further information on smoke detectors or carbon monoxide alarms.

Brush Permit Season
Brush burning season runs from January 15 to May 1, 2011. Gill residents who wish to burn brush, sticks, or fallen tree limbs may apply for a permit online at www.fcburn-permits.com. Gill residents without computer access may call the regional dispatch center at 625-8200 to obtain a permit. Fires must be at least 75 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 PM. Call the Fire Department at 863-8955 if you need further information on burn permits.

Gill Energy Commission
The Gill Energy Commission will be holding a FREE Winsert (insulated window insert) Workshop on Saturday, February 26, 1-4 PM at the Gill Town Hall, 325 Main Road, Gill. “Winserts” are reusable transparent wooden panels that fit snugly inside window jambs to add two extra layers of glazing. The workshop will be presented by Brian Nugent who has been teaching winsert workshops for over 4 years. Brian says with a properly-constructed winsert, heat loss from a typical single- or double-glazed window will be reduced by up to 50%, thus more than paying for the cost of the
The Gill Newsletter

Doug’s Auto Body
Doug Smith - Owner

PRECISION REPAIRS
MA Reg. #RS2190
Ph: (413) 863-2785  39 Center Road
Fax: (413) 863-0120  Gill, MA 01376

Geri Johnson, Realtor
ABR, CRB, CRS, GRI, SRES
413-863-9736 • GeriJohnson@Realtor.com

Don’t settle for less
Choose a CRS (Certified Residential Specialist)
Only 4% of all REALTORS hold this prestigious designation.
The CRS is my badge of expertise and your shield of assurance. Put your trust in the best to get the job done.
Whether buying, selling or referring, always choose
GERI JOHNSON, CRS  30 years of experience.

Slate Library News

Winter greetings from Slate Memorial Library in the center of Gill. As I look out the library window at the fields and town covered with sparkling snow I feel glad I have a good book to curl up with. Slate Library has many new titles to offer its patrons, such as “Wicked Appetite” the latest by Janet Evanovich, as well as Ken Folletts’ “The Fall of Giants” or Anita Shreve’s “Rescue”. Non-fiction titles include “Life” by Keith Richards, “The Last Boy: Mickey

winserts in less than one year. The design was inspired by a long-forgotten FEMA website and has been adapted by Brian Nugent and other North Quabbin Energy members. The winserts can be used for many heating seasons with a little maintenance from time to time. Winserts require some basic woodworking equipment and skills to make, particularly in the construction of the frame. All materials needed are available in local hardware stores. Please bring a tape measure, hair dryer, sharp knife, hand screwdriver, drill, staple gun or small nails for attaching plastic tabs and/or hand saw if possible.

Make plans now to join us in learning how to make this low cost energy efficient improvement for your home or business. The winserts made at this workshop will be used in the windows in the downstairs offices of the Gill Town Hall. Space is limited! Registration is required.

To register call Ivan Ussach at (413) 773-3830 or email encom@gillmass.org include subject: Winserts workshop.

submitted by Pamela J. Lester

Pam Veith Real Estate

75 Main Street
Northfield, MA 01360

Office: 413-498-6207 Ext. 2
Ofc: Fax: 413-498-0208
Home: Phone: 413-863-9166
Home Fax: 413-863-0218
Email: bedson1@comcast.net

“My Office is Always Open to You!”

Renaissance Builders
Stephen Greenwald
President
P.O. Box 272
Turners Falls, MA 01376
413/863-8316 Fax 413/863-9712
www.renbuild.net
stephen@renbuild.net

SOLAR STORE
Solar Hot Water and Solar Electric
John Ward  Claire Chang
2 Fiske Ave, Greenfield, MA 01301
413 772-3122  info@solarstoreofgreenfield.com

Winter Library News
Mantle” by Jane Leavy and “Cleopatra” by Stacey Schuff. We also have several new audiobooks thanks to a grant provided by the Friends of the Western Massachusetts Library System. Audio books on CD make for an entertaining way to travel and new titles include all three books of Stieg Larssons’ Millennium trilogy as well as newer titles such as “One Day” by David Nichols and “The Story of Edgar Sawtelle” by David Wroblewski.

In the children’s area the graphic novel section continues to grow due to high demand from our young readers. Check out the Amulet series by Kazu Kibuishi or the ever popular Bone cycle by Jeff Smith. For younger children we have beautiful new picture books such as “Big Red Lollipop” by Rukshana Khan and “Busing for Brewster” by Richard Michelson. We welcome families and caregivers each Friday morning at 10AM as Slate Library Story Hour continues throughout the winter months. Come for stories, a seasonal craft project, popcorn and good company!

Stop by for a visit and find out more about upcoming events, such as a Valentine workshop held on Saturday morning February 12 at 10AM. Joins us for a morning spent with ribbon, doilies, glitter and glue, creating a keepsake for the special ones in your family. We welcome your ideas for upcoming events and would like the community to know that we are your public library. Consider starting a book group or knitting group, the library would be happy to host your events. We are also interested in acquiring a few volunteers for a couple of hours a month/ or week to help with our creation of an on-line catalogue. This project was undertaken some time ago but with a few
The Gill Newsletter

Charter Service • Limosine Service • Tours • School Bus Service

community volunteers it could become closer to completion!
Slate Library is open Tuesday 2-6 PM, Thursday 2-8 PM
and Saturday 10-12. For more information call (413) 863-2591 during library hours.

Gill Historical Commission

The Gill Historical Commission meets on the third
Tuesday of each month at 5:30 PM in the Riverside
Building on Route 2. The Commission is charged with
planning for the preservation of historical sites and
records within Gill. In addition to its other projects, the
Commission maintains records and artifacts of Gill history
in the Riverside municipal building. If you have informa-
tion or questions about Gill and its history, please contact
Kit Carpenter, Bev Demars, Stuart Elliott, Bob Perry,
Lynda Hodsdon-Mayo, or Pam Shoemaker.

Thinking about the importance of the Connecticut River
and ferries in Gill’s history, we have chosen excerpts from a
piece Emma Barton wrote in January 1938.

The first white settlers in our Connecticut Valley came up
the river by boat; later as news of the wonderful fertility of
the river lands reached the settlers on the seaboard, they
came through the wilderness. The only means of transpor-
tation was on horseback or by oxen teams.

The smaller streams could be forded, but when the
Connecticut was reached, a different problem was pre-
sented. With ingenuity and determination, the settlers built
boats or rafts, and established ferries. (For example, in Gill,
Munn’s Ferry, Stacy’s later Morgan’s Ferry, and Stebbin’s.)
In most cases, the ferries were named for their managers,
but sometimes took the name of the locality as the
“hockanum” between that section of Southampton and
Northampton. . . . The ferries were mostly operated by
wires stretched across the stream, but one by steam power
and also one of chain and swing, are mentioned in records.
The old time ferryman and his duties are well described
by Herbert C. Parsons’s history of Northfield, A Puritan
Outpost. The Ferry was a social institution. Its ferryman
was the repository of all the news, was in everybody’s con-

ALAN D. WALLACE
Carpentry & General Contracting

River Road
Gill, Massachusetts 01376

TRAVEL KUZ
P.O. Box 484
52 Main Road
Gill, MA 01376
888.863.8048 EXT. #10
413.863.2595
413.863.0235 FAX

Darlene A. Kuzmeskus
President
darlene@travelkuz.com
Charter Service • Limosine Service • Tours • School Bus Service

The Way Road
Food Should Be
Serving
Breakfast
Lunch & Dinner
Beer & Wine
7 Days a Week

RTE 2, GILL
413-863-8210

24 Hour Emergency Service
Zilinski
Office: 413-498-2605
Cell: 413-834-5780
Residential & Commercial – Serving Pioneer Valley
Specializing in Modern Lighting Design
* Swiming Pools * New Construction * Renovations
* Hot Tub * Service Upgrades * Landscape Lighting
Free Estimates – Fully Insured Lic# 39553E
Quality Service Always! All Calls Returned.

Gill Historical Commission

The Gill Historical Commission meets on the third
Tuesday of each month at 5:30 PM in the Riverside
Building on Route 2. The Commission is charged with
planning for the preservation of historical sites and
records within Gill. In addition to its other projects, the
Commission maintains records and artifacts of Gill history
in the Riverside municipal building. If you have informa-
tion or questions about Gill and its history, please contact
Kit Carpenter, Bev Demars, Stuart Elliott, Bob Perry,
Lynda Hodsdon-Mayo, or Pam Shoemaker.

Thinking about the importance of the Connecticut River
and ferries in Gill’s history, we have chosen excerpts from a
piece Emma Barton wrote in January 1938.

The first white settlers in our Connecticut Valley came up
the river by boat; later as news of the wonderful fertility of
the river lands reached the settlers on the seaboard, they
came through the wilderness. The only means of transpor-
tation was on horseback or by oxen teams.

The smaller streams could be forded, but when the
Connecticut was reached, a different problem was pre-
sented. With ingenuity and determination, the settlers built
boats or rafts, and established ferries. (For example, in Gill,
Munn’s Ferry, Stacy’s later Morgan’s Ferry, and Stebbin’s.)
In most cases, the ferries were named for their managers,
but sometimes took the name of the locality as the
“hockanum” between that section of Southampton and
Northampton. . . . The ferries were mostly operated by
wires stretched across the stream, but one by steam power
and also one of chain and swing, are mentioned in records.
The old time ferryman and his duties are well described
by Herbert C. Parsons’s history of Northfield, A Puritan
Outpost. The Ferry was a social institution. Its ferryman
was the repository of all the news, was in everybody’s con-
fidence, an authority on events recent and remote, local and national, inescapably a philosopher. The craft was a flat boat capable of carrying as many as four carriages when skillfully interlapped. A stout wire anchored on each shore passed through two posts on the up-stream side of the boat and a small pulley wheel on each kept down their friction. The ferryman carried a mallet shaped wooden implement with a deep slot to slip over the wire. He was the motor. Gripping the wire at the front post he walked the length of the boat thus propelling it by just as long a distance as he walked. His mastery of the process was such that his conversation with his fares was unbroken.

. . . At Bissell’s Ferry, above the Falls, crossing near round hill in Riverside, Remington, the ferryman in 1820, was crossing a man horse, and a pair of oxen in flood time; the ferry overturned, and both men were drowned, the boat and animals carried over the dam; the yoke broke, and the horse and one ox landed on the shore below with the remaining ox floating to the small island near the mouth of Fall River. His bellowing disturbed the whole neighborhood for several days until the water receded enough to allow his rescue.

The ordinary way of signaling the ferryman was by blowing a tin dinner horn, which was hung on a post near the landing. . . . A bell was hung on a small building at Stebbins Ferry, but the usual method was a “Hello Boat” shouted loudly by the waiting passengers.

The last ferry to be put in operation was 1834 when John Munn petitioned for a road. The request was granted on condition that he maintain a ferry, which he and his descendants continued for many years. The revenue from toll during the later years was so small that the towns had to furnish the boat and pay a yearly bonus to the ferryman. The last boat in use here was brought up from Morgan’s Ferry, which crossed to Northfield Farms, when that was discontinued about 1915; the boat continued in service at Munn’s Ferry until the fall of 1935. . .

The coming of the automobile was the death blow to several of the local ferries as the detour necessary to reach a bridge was considered preferable to waiting for the slow crossing and driving up and down the steep and sandy banks to say nothing of the toll charges. Thus another relic of the old horse and buggy days has passed. The good old times of which we often speak, but would not enjoy living in, had more privations than the comforts of modern times.

THE FRIENDS OF GILL

Will Spring ever come? According to the calendar the first day of Spring is Sunday March 20th. Most likely there will still be snow on the ground on Saturday the 26th but come join the friends of Gill as they celebrate the change of season with their annual Pancake Breakfast in the Gill Congregational Church from 8 to 10:30AM.

The Friends of Gill are known throughout the valley for serving the best pancakes in Franklin County. There will also be plenty of made-in-Gill maple syrup, sausage, coffee, milk, and orange juice. The room is always alive with friendly conversation so be sure to put the date on your calendar.
Business Advertisements

The Gill Newsletter will include business card size advertisements of local businesses for a year (six bi-monthly issues) for $60.00. Please send a copy of your business card and a check for $60.00 payable to ‘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
March 15th for the April Issue.

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

February 2011