



THE

Gill Newsletter

Winter 2017 Issue

Disclaimer:

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News from the Town Clerk

Census

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

The census mailing also gives you the opportunity to license dogs by mail. Please register your pet as soon as you can. 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.

Annual Town Election:

The Annual Town Election will be held on May 15, 2017 from noon to 8 P.M. in the Fire Station at 196A Main Road, the Town Municipal Building. The deadline for registration to vote at the Annual Town Election will be 8 P.M. on Wednesday April 26, 2017 at the Town Clerk's office. The offices on the ballot this year include:

Selectboard, Sewer Commissioner, three-year term, currently held by Gregory Snedeker

Assessor, three-year term, currently held by Ray Purington*

Assessor, two-year term, currently held by William Tomb

Cemetery Commission, three-year term, currently held by Carrie Stevens

Tax Collector, three-year term, currently held by Veronica LaChance

Board of Health, three-year term, currently held by Edward Galipault

Library Trustee, three-year term, currently held by Megan Bathory-Peeler

Constable, three-year term, currently held by Fred Chase, II

Constable, three-year term, currently held by Fred Chase, III

Constable, three-year term, currently held by Craig Gaudry

*Ray Purington is the only person who has notified town administrators to say he will not be on the ballot for the position he currently holds.

Nomination papers are available at the Town Clerk's office. Candidates who want to run for office need to obtain the signatures of twenty-five registered Gill voters. The last day to submit nomination papers to the town clerk is 5 P.M. on March 27, 2017.

Office hours are Monday-Thursday 1 P.M. to 4 P.M. and Monday evening 5:30-6:30 P.M. and other times by appointment. 413-863-8103

Lynda Hodsdon Mayo, Town Clerk

From the Board of Assessors' Office

The Department of Revenue certified the numbers presented by the Board of Assessor for FY2017 and set a final tax rate of \$16.58. This is based on sales in Gill during 2015 and 2016 and the assessed values reflected on January 1, 2016. The due date that appears on your tax bill becomes the deadline for abatement applications or exemption applications submitted for assessors' determination. These applications can be found at the Gill Town website.



Check in with the Gill Website

www.gillmass.org

for up to date news,
announcements and
contact information!





The Board of Assessors has sent out Form of List questionnaires to be returned by March 1, 2017 to document all Personal Property subject to taxation in the Town of Gill.

The Board of Assessors is also continuing to work out in the community to record project progress up to the January 1, 2017 deadline date that becomes the basis of all the assessments for the fiscal year 2018 tax bills.

Office hours are Monday through Thursday 9:30 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. Board of Assessors meets alternate Monday evenings at 6:30 p.m. 413-863-0138
Lynda Hodsdon Mayo, Assessors' Clerk

Slate Library News

Slate Library has been sprucing up in anticipation of spring! If you haven't been in for a while stop by to see our new look. As always we have many new titles in both adult and children's fiction and non-fiction. Some recent titles include Jodi Picoult's *Small Great Things*, *A Man Called Ove* by Fredrik Backman and *Hillbilly Elegy* by J.D. Vance.


The library has had a series of successful events during the winter months, including a storyteller sharing "King Frost & Other Chilly Tales" with our local children, as well as a fortune-telling workshop. On February 9th at 3:30 PM we will host our annual Valentine crafting party. Please stop by and make something lovely for a special friend or neighbor. Come in to check out a new book or DVD and find out what other events are happening at Slate Library this spring.

Riverside Healing and Bodywork

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Janet Masucci- NCTMB and ABMP
64 French King Highway, Gill, MA
413-863-8694
www.JanetMasucci.com



News from Gill Church

Our ministry is looking forward to beginning the third decade at Gill's beautiful, historic church. We consider ourselves blessed to be able to pursue cosmetic and structural issues, inside and out, at the centuries-old building, but more importantly we are grateful to have a place to worship and pursue our faith. We invite all in the community to visit, worship, investigate and discover with us.

At this time, Merri Bourbeau is leading a women's bible study which takes place on alternating Wednesdays at 9:30 AM. The theme is "Basic Bible Studies," guided by a publication written by Christian theologian and philosopher, Francis Schaeffer. Merri invites community members to join women from our church and from other area churches in these studies. For more information on bible study and the Wednesday schedule, call Merri at 863-8613 or email merrijb@yahoo.com.

In our Sunday School we have begun a new, in-depth, comprehensive series on the doctrine of "heaven." We would love to see you there at 9:00, to share a cup of coffee or tea and a donut, and investigate this fascinating subject with us.

The Gill Church's worship service is held every Sunday at 10 AM and we would be delighted to have you join us. Pastor Gary Bourbeau can be reached at (413) 768-9543 or gryngill@gmail.com.

Gill Cultural Council

The Massachusetts Local Cultural Council program supports thousands of community-based projects in the arts, humanities and sciences each year. For 2017, Gill had \$4,720 to distribute locally. Our town cultural council met in November and, after reviewing over twenty applications, decided to give money to the following:

- Steve Damon, for Common People Concerts on the town common
- Amy Gordon, for an after-school drama program at Gill Elementary, leading to a performance
- Gill Historical Commission, for collection displays at the town museum
- Pioneer Valley Symphony, for Gill 4th – 6th graders to learn about and attend a symphony
- Da Camera Singers, for a concert at the Northfield Mount-Hermon School
- Slate Memorial Library, for a 3-D printing workshop
- Nolumbeka Project, for the Pocumtuck Homelands Festival in Turners Falls
- Franklin County Tech School, for its theater program and Shea Theater performance
- Racial Justice Rising, for monthly workshops in Greenfield
- Co-op Concerts, for summer music at the Greenfield Energy Park
- Hilltown Families, for their online newsletter for Franklin County families

Keep your eyes open for news articles and flyers advertising these cultural events, and join the cultural community by attending and supporting creative and educational performances funded by the Local Cultural Council Program.

If you might be interested in joining the Gill Local Cultural Council, feel free to contact Chair Sue Kramer at sueofgill@gmail.com for information.




- Lawn Tractors
- Snow Blowers
- Rototillers
- Chainsaws
- 0-Turn Mowers
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- Trimmers
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- Financing Available

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The 5th Season

This is the time of year to think of your freezer as the “fifth season”. Although a freezer preserves food quite well, very few foods are worth consuming after being frozen for more than 3 to 9 months and we all know how easy it is to forget what’s in there and how old it has become. About this time annually I begin a serious assault on our freezer before the summer fruit and veggies begin to take priority, as they should, over this older frozen stuff. This is especially important if you have more than one freezer, as we do, since going into the spring with two freezers running makes very little sense. By May at least one of them should be turned off, cleaned, and left empty, using no electricity until you need it again by the end of the coming summer’s harvests.

I want to eat our frozen vegetables, meats and fruits in a way parallel to the way I harvest our May-to-October garden, but on the opposite side of the season. From November to May I try to “harvest” the freezer while its items are still delicious and relatively fresh. This may sound obvious, but it’s good to be reminded that real food is best eaten fresh, maybe preserved for a short while, but never for very long. Many foods these days that appear to be designed to not “go bad” seem to me best to not eat.

Come May if your freezer is still full, go at it aggressively and either compost (or feed your dog) what’s now mostly freezer-burned or go crazy eating and giving it away. As I thaw last year’s strawberries for a winter shortcake or some turkey for a February sandwich, it feels very liberating. You will spend less money and time at the grocery store and more time instead preparing what you already have frozen (or in your pantry and root cellar). Perhaps you’ll discover some new recipes as you figure out how to prepare those random combinations of foods still left in the freezer. And as you eat your way through this fifth season, inevitably you will realize there are just some things in your freezer that you never end up eating and that’s helpful to know when in a few months you turn it back on for re-stocking. So here’s to fresh blueberry pie in July but also to freezer-thawed cauliflower curry right now.

Alden Booth

Keep Warm. Keep Safe.

Winter has arrived in New England, and as residents turn up the furnace or light the wood stove, the Gill Fire Department and State Fire Marshal Peter J. Ostroskey urge residents to take simple steps to ensure they stay warm and safe this season. Home heating fires in Massachusetts have decreased nearly 46% from 2008-2015 (2,495 to 1,455) in large part because of the growing public awareness of fire safety.

No one thinks fire will happen to them, but it is more important than ever to consider safety when heating your home. Give furnaces an annual check-up because efficiently running furnaces save money and prevent carbon monoxide poisoning. Certified professionals will check chimneys for cracks in the mortar and clean accumulated creosote to prevent chimney fires.

Heating is the second leading cause of fires in the home in Massachusetts. Home fires peak from December through February when the cold weather drives people indoors, heating systems are in regular use, and people turn to alternatives such as space heaters and wood or pellet stoves.

Heating is also the leading cause of carbon monoxide (CO) poisoning in homes, so make sure you have both working smoke and carbon monoxide alarms on each floor of your home. Carbon monoxide is an invisible killer because it has no color, taste, or smell, and the symptoms are just like getting the flu. Test all the alarms once a month and change alkaline batteries twice a year. Replace smoke alarms that are older than ten years and CO alarms older than seven years. When replacing alarms, look for models with a ten-year, sealed, non-replaceable, non-rechargeable battery.

Store wood outdoors and pellets for stoves indoors but away from heat sources. Dispose of the ashes in a metal container,

with a secure lid, away from the house. A single ember can stay hot for days without being detected and easily fanned back to life. Many fires have started when ashes were placed inside cardboard boxes, paper bags or plastic containers, and then stored inside the garage, the breezeway, or under the porch.

Have a safe, comfortable heating season. For more information on winter heating and fire safety, visit www.mass.gov/keepwarmkeepsafe or contact the Gill Fire Department at 863-8955.

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Honor Roll

1st Quarter

Pioneer Valley Regional School

Grade 12

High Honor: Ameilia Pelletier

Grade 11

Honor: Rylie Zager;

Grade 9

Highest Honor: Marin Klein and

Emaline Relyea-Strawn

High Honor: Brian Peila, Jr.

Grade 7

Highest Honor: Isaac Damon and

Meena Relyea-Strawn

Honor: Robert Kenyon

Turners Falls High School

Grade 12

First Honors: Elliot Bertini-Franseen, Lexi

Griffin and Bryn Kruzlic

Second Honors: Tahner Castine, Kaili

Lynch and Jeremy Wolfram

Grade 11

First Honors: Branden Chapin and Kyle

Kucenski

Second Honors: Noah Courchesne, Kylee

Mason and David Tricolici

Grade 10

Second Honors: Reilan Castine and

Jovanni Ruggiano

Grade 9

First Honors: Alyson Murphy

Great Falls Middle School

Grade 8

First Honors: Taylor Murphy, Karissa

Olson, Julie Sprinkle, Leah Timberlake,

Luke Timberlake, Hailey Wheeler and

Olivia Whittier

Dean's List

Julia Wallace, daughter of Jason and Joanne Wallace, made the Dean's List for the Fall 2016 semester at High Point University in High Point, North Carolina.

Battery Recycling and Proper Disposal

Free battery and cell phone recycling is available at town hall. Place the batteries described below in a plastic bag and bring batteries and cell phones to the battery box at town hall. Never place batteries in curbside or transfer station recycle bins.

Batteries can release mercury, cadmium or other heavy metals into the air and water, ultimately entering the food chain and posing health threats to people and the environment.

Rechargeable batteries are found in cell phones; cordless phones; ipads/tablets; laptops; power tools; robotic vacuum cleaners, recumbent bikes, toys; ride-on toys; baby monitors; digital cameras; two-way radios, biomedical equipment, toothbrushes, razors, flashlights, and handheld vacuum cleaners. Also batteries that can be recharged with a battery recharger should also be recycled. Cell phones and rechargeable batteries should be placed into the "Call 2 Recycle" battery box at town hall.

The specific batteries accepted include: Nickel-cadmium (Ni-cad), Nickel Metal Hydride (Ni-MH), Nickel Zinc (Ni-Zn), Lithium Ion batteries (Li-ion), and Small Sealed Lead (Pb).

"Call 2 Recycle" boxes for are also available at Lowe's. Rechargeable batteries can also be taken to Household Hazardous Waste Collections. Recycling for these batteries is always free.

Alkaline batteries are the most common household batteries. Alkaline batteries are safe to throw in the trash, but tape the contacts on 9-volts before storage or disposal. All batteries should be checked carefully before disposal, as some rechargeable and lithium batteries resemble alkalines.

Reduce the number of alkaline batteries you use by purchasing an inexpensive

battery charger and compatible batteries.

Carbon Zinc and Zinc Chloride batteries may be disposed of in the same manner as alkaline batteries; see above.

Lithium batteries, often used in cameras, should be recycled by at Town Hall or at Household Hazardous Waste Collections. Lithium batteries resemble alkaline batteries but are marked "Lithium".

Button batteries are the small round silver batteries found in watches, calculators, hearing aids, toys, remote car locks, flameless "flicker candles," electric fence dog collars, singing greeting cards and singing balloons. Button batteries often contain mercury; therefore must be disposed of properly — recycle them!

Lead Acid batteries from cars, trucks, kids ride-on toys, etc. must be recycled by law. Recycling programs, some for cash or credit back, are available at auto supply stores, local scrap metal recyclers, etc. Lead acid batteries are also accepted at household hazardous waste collections.

For more information please contact the Franklin County Solid Waste District at 413-772-2438, email info@franklincountywastedistrict.org, or visit www.franklincountywastedistrict.org.

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Tax Bills

The second tax bill for FY17 will be mailed during the last week of January, with a due date of May 1, 2017. Residents are reminded that tax bills are not sent to mortgage companies. It is your responsibility to notify your mortgage company and ensure an on-time payment. If you use your bank's online bill payment, be sure to include the Bill # as part of the memo line.

If you mail in your tax payment, include the bottom tear-off portion of the bill, and write the Bill # on the memo line of your check.

Riverside Sewer Rates

On December 12, 2016 the Selectboard, acting as Sewer Commissioners, voted to adopt a new sewer rate of \$0.1930 per cubic foot. The increase is necessary to keep pace with a 17% increase in the rate that Montague charges to Gill for treatment and disposal of sewage. Montague's rate increase was adopted on November 1, 2016, and was retroactive to July 1, 2016.

One way to help control the costs of operating the sewer system is to reduce the amount of groundwater and storm water in the sewer lines. Household sump pumps and perimeter drains may not be connected to the sewer lines, as they introduce unmetered water into the sewer system. The treatment costs for unmetered uses are shared by ALL sewer customers. If your house is connected to the sewer system, you are helping to pay for your neighbors' sump pumps and perimeter drains!

A handout about reducing the amount of groundwater and storm water in the sewer lines was included with the sewer bills that were mailed in January. The handout is also available on the Selectboard/Sewer Commissioners page of the Town's website:
www.gillmass.org/selectboard.php

Winter Parking Ban

Just a reminder, the winter parking ban is in effect through April 15. There is NO on-street parking allowed between the hours of 1 AM and 6 AM. Your cooperation is greatly appreciated.

Winter Sand for Driveways

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

Burning Brush

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

Permits are valid for only the day they are issued and are not issued in advance due to the potential for change in weather conditions. Permits may be obtained between the hours of 8:30 AM and 1 PM on days when permits are being issued. If the decision has been made not to allow burning in any town, you will not be able to obtain a permit in that town. This decision is based on fire weather conditions AND environmental air quality. While a rainy day may seem perfect for burning from a fire weather standpoint it may not meet the guidelines for air quality.

Reminders about Curbside Trash & Recyclables

Here are a few helpful reminders that Alternative Recycling, our trash & recyclables hauler, has asked us to pass along:

- Do not leave cash taped to a bag of trash if you're out of stickers. Drivers are instructed to not collect any bag that does not have a Gill sticker.
- One sticker per bag of trash, or one sticker on the topmost bag inside a trashcan. Do not put stickers on the lid or the trashcan itself. (A trashcan with a sticker on the lid will not be emptied.)
- The maximum weight of any bag of trash is 35 pounds, whether it's on the curb or inside a trashcan.
- If a trashcan is used, it must be 35 gallons or smaller, and the total weight of the trashcan and trash is 60 pounds maximum.
- Leave your trash and recycling bins in a location that is easily visible to and accessible for our drivers.
- Don't mix paper in with the cans, bottles, & plastics. Paper should have its own container or be in paper bags.

Trash stickers are still only \$3 each and are available at the Wagon Wheel Restaurant, Upinngil Farm, Spirit Shoppe, Town Hall, and Scotty's in Turners Falls.

Fred W. Wells Trust Scholarship

Applications for 2017-2018 Fred W. Wells Trust scholarships are now available at the Town Hall, as well as at area high school guidance offices. Scholarships are available to graduating seniors and full-time college students who have resided in Gill (and other eligible towns) for at least two years immediately before application. The completed applications must be postmarked on or before March 20th.

Friends of Gill Pancake Breakfast

The Friends of Gill will hold a Pancake Breakfast on Saturday, March 18th from 8:00-10:30 AM at the Gill Congregational Church (6 Center Road, next to the Town Common).

There will be blueberry and plain pancakes (with REAL maple syrup!), plus sausage and bacon.

Adults are \$7. Children under 10 years are \$3. Children 4 years & under eat for free. Proceeds from the event will help support college scholarships awarded to students from Gill.

Gill Historical Commission

The Gill Historical Commission's history, *Riverside, Life Along the Connecticut in Gill, Massachusetts*, has been a big success! In its third printing, over three hundred people including Gill residents, former Gill residents, Montague residents, libraries, history buffs from other towns, and retail stores have purchased copies. We want to thank everyone for supporting our project to preserve part of Gill's history. Copies of the book are now available for sale from Ronnie LaChance at Town Hall or by email: lstomb@gmail.com or pshoe27@gmail.com. The book is \$42.00 plus \$5.00 if shipping is needed.

The previous newsletter included a section from the National Register application to the Massachusetts Historical Commission on the Federal Period of Gill's Center (1750-1776). Next, we are using some details on the Federal Period (1776-1830) [MHC-NR 14-15]

[Once the geographic center of town was established and a meetinghouse constructed with a town common, other development began.] Among the new roads were River Road (1795), Cross Road (1819), and Boyle Road (1825). A bridge was constructed over Woodward

Brook at the time that Boyle Road went in and its embankments remain today. . . . Much of the initial building along the new roads was subsequently lost. Dr. Joel Lyons arrived in Gill Center in 1807 when he was twenty-four and remained for the next fifty years caring for the town's residents, farming, and acting as Justice of the Peace among other offices. Dr. Lyons lived on Lyons Hill Road next door to the Mrs. Merrick House and was said to have charged his patients so little that he had to take on his other work. His house is now gone. A minister's house was built just south of where Town Hall now stands (demolished in 1923 when Main Road was built through the Center). A lawyer, Job Goodale, built a house (now gone) that also served as his office on Center street east of the church; blacksmith David Squires built a house that also served as the Center's first tavern (now gone) near the General Store (now the Gill Tavern) on Main Road. Then James Gould, a lawyer, came to the Center and opened a new General Store, a portion of which is thought to exist today in the General Store/Gill Tavern. He advertised that he was buying ashes in 1897, a common practice at the time as part of a soap-making operation. Gould also advertised warnings to his debtors that he was going to begin collection in 1815, and in 1816 and 1817 it was reported that he was robbed.

In 1807 a second tavern was built by Benjamin Jacobs on the eastern end of the common. Jacobs went on to build a second store in 1815 on the south side of the common opposite his tavern. He advertised that his stock included European and West Indies goods and that he would take cash, county produce, or would extend short credit. He bought butter and grain from local farms. He put the store up for sale within a short period of time, and it went through several other owners before Isaac Chenery bought it and made improvements. Jacobs' store was on the site of the first schoolhouse at the east end of the common, while a new two-story schoolhouse went up at the western end of the common (both now gone). A tannery (now gone) run by

Samuel Stratton went up south of the common on Beaver Brook.

Having done well with his store, Isaac Chenery opened a tavern in his house that he built just west of his store (burned in 1899). Between 1812 and 1815 Benjamin Brainard built the Center's third tavern with a hall on its second floor and room for his residence. It was located on the lot that has become Slate Library and was torn down in the 1860's. A small 14' x 20' post office building went up near Center Cemetery with Benjamin Brainard as Postmaster. When Rev. Josiah Canning became postmaster, he moved the building to his residence (built 1823), on the lot west of the church where it served as post office and Canning's office, and later the town library (now gone).

. . . the town common was used during the period for community functions and celebrations, such as the spring running of the shad when a town-wide dance was held there and the common was said to have danced down to mud.

The Gill Historical Commission (GHC) meets on the third Tuesday of each month at 5:30 PM, unless otherwise posted, in the Riverside Municipal Building on Route 2. The GHC is charged with planning for the preservation of Gill's historical sites and records as well as educating residents about the history of their town. The GHC maintains records and artifacts of Gill in the Riverside building. If you have questions or information about Gill's history, please contact Ivan Ussach, chair; Kit Carpenter, Bev Demars, Stuart Elliott, Lynda Hodsdon Mayo, Pam Shoemaker, or Lynn Stowe Tomb.

We can use some help! If you have time to volunteer and help with projects, please let one of the GHC members know of your skills and interest.



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Poem from 1892

No matter what opinions we residents of Gill may have about the results of the 2016 presidential election, it is worth a step back into history to help us remember that the more things change, the more they stay the same. Below is an excerpt from the poem THE STRANGER'S TALE. THE WAY IT IS DONE. – WITH A MORAL. It is on page 86 of the collection *Connecticut River Reeds, Poetry of the Farm and Rural Life*, written by Josiah Dean Canning of "Gill on the Connecticut, Franklin County, Massachusetts," published in 1892.

MORAL.

Let every "constituent" coming to call,
Who's seen an election, and lived through it all,
With blush of conviction acknowledge, forsooth,
That the tale I have told isn't far from the truth.
When a President's up, or lower the grade
Of seekers for office, a hubbub is made;
A green one, perusing the prints at such times,
Would deem they'd selected a man for his crimes.
And though we can't say but a "Son-of-a-gun,"
Or another "True Blue," too often is run,
'Twould be better by far
To have less wordy war,
Less blazonry, billingsgate, twitting, and pun;
For it all ends in self,
The pickings and pelf;--
Division takes place when the battle is won;
But the government stands
Though it changes its hands,
And keeps forward march, as it ever has done.



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Gill, MA 01376
Douglas Edson 413-863-4462

Town Hall
325 Main Road
Gill, MA 01354-9747

PRSR STD
ECRWSS
US POSTAGE
PAID
EDDM Retail

LOCAL
POSTAL CUSTOMER

GILL, MA 01354
