



THE

Gill Newsletter

SPRING 2022 Issue

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From the Town Clerk

Dog Registration is now past due. If you have not registered your dog please do so soon. Fees: The fee for spayed or neutered dogs is \$5.00; intact dogs are \$10.00. There is also a \$10.00 per license late fee.

Annual Town Election is scheduled for Monday, May 16, 2022. Positions on the May ballot are:

Selectperson - 3-year term

Assessor - 3-year term

Cemetery Commission - 3-year term

Library Trustee - 3-year term

Board of Health - 3-year term

Board of Health - 2-year term

Treasurer - 3-year term

There is a sample ballot posted on the website for anyone interested.

Absentee ballots are available for the Town election. Please contact the Town Clerk to vote by absentee ballot. Unfortunately vote-by-mail does not appear to be an option for this election. Legislation seems to be tied up but hopefully vote-by-mail will be available for the state primary in September and the state election in November.

Dates to keep in mind:

May 16, 2022—Annual Town Election

May 23, 2022—Tentative Annual
Town Meeting

September 6, 2022—State Primary

November 1, 2022—State Election

Doreen Stevens
Town Clerk

The Energy Commission

Gill Community Choice Electrical Supply

You can save on your electric bill each month by switching to Gill Community Choice while also contributing to clean energy choices. Check your electric bill to see if you are participating in the savings. Dynergy - Gill AGG will be listed as your energy supplier. Those on the Eversource discount rate will remain eligible for the Gill Community Choice program.

Use this link to sign up:

<https://colonialpowergroup.com/gill/>

Gill Public Safety Complex Energy Savings Report

The Energy Commission continues to look at town municipal buildings to see how we can make them more energy efficient and provide greater comfort for the occupants while saving the town money. To date we have worked on the Riverside Building on RT 2, the Slate Memorial Library, and the Town Hall. We are turning our attention to the Public Safety Complex on Main Road. We partnered with UMass Clean Energy Corps, Ben Weil, Lia Douillet and Adrian



Check in with the Gill Website

www.gillmass.org

for up to date news,
announcements and
contact information!





Avola to evaluate the PSC for energy efficiency measures. They came to the Public Safety Complex to run tests and gather data. They made recommendations for new insulation and siding and well as the installation of air source heat pumps for the offices. The Energy Commission will take their data and apply for a Green Communities grant this fall which will help to cover some of the costs.

If you are interested in joining the Energy Commission, please contact Ray Purington, Town Administrator.

Public Health

From the FRCOG Public Health Team

With COVID-19 still present in the community, it continues to be important to take precautions to avoid becoming infected. The FRCOG website has up-to-date information on what to do if you are exposed to, or test positive for, COVID. We have added information about treatment options for COVID-19 and information on booster shots, including 2nd booster shots.

There will be a number of COVID-19 vaccine/booster clinics around Franklin County. **Gill Elementary School will host a clinic on May 13th from 3:30 p.m. – 6:30 p.m.** Sign up online via the FRCOG website, or walk-in. Please bring your insurance card if you have one.

Visit the website at <https://frcog.org/covid>. No internet? Give us a call: 413-774-3167 ext. 206.

Walk-in wellness hours in North County are open to the entire community. FRCOG public health nurses will be offering services at these locations:

Gill every 2nd Friday from 10 a.m. – 12 p.m. at Stoughton Place Community Room

Bernardston every 2nd Thursday from 9:30 a.m. - 11:30 a.m. at the Bernardston Senior Center

Erving on the 1st Tuesday from 9 a.m.-11 a.m. at the Erving Senior Center

Northfield on the 1st Wednesday from 12:30 p.m. - 2:30 p.m. at the Northfield Senior Center in Northfield Town Hall.

Ticks

With the arrival warmer weather, ticks are out-and-about. Fortunately there are many things we can do to prevent tick-borne diseases. Stick to hiking trails, wear light-colored clothing (to better see ticks), and tuck in loose ends of clothing when outdoors. Make a habit of checking yourself, your children, and pets for ticks after coming inside. Use tick repellents, like DEET (designed for skin) and pre-treat clothing and shoes with permethrin (not to be put on skin).

If you are bitten, (the tick is attached to your skin), remove the tick with fine-tipped tweezers by grasping the tick as close to the skin’s surface as possible. Once you have a firm grasp, pull upward with steady, even force. Wash the bite area and continue to check the area for several weeks; if you develop a rash there, or have a fever at any point in that timeframe, see a doctor about getting tested for Lyme and other tick-borne diseases.

If you want to test the tick for tick-borne diseases, you can do so at a reduced rate thanks to the Gill Board

of Health and the FRCOG. Residents need pay only \$15.00 of the \$50.00 cost of getting a tick tested. If you have been bitten by a deer tick, save the tick in a clear plastic bag. Log on to www.tickreport.com and follow the instructions for mailing the tick. Not sure if it is a deer tick? Check <http://www.tickcounter.org> or contact Town Nurses Lisa White and Meg Ryan.

Slate Library News

Slate library has started a seed library! Please come visit and check out the seeds that we have in stock. Take some seeds, and if you can, leave some seeds to share with other members of our community. We currently have lettuce, kale, squash, peppers, beets and beans. We would love to add any extra seeds that you may have to our collection. Get your garden started early and let’s share seeds.

The library has offerings beyond books and DVDs. Stop by and examine our digital lending library. Did you know you can check out a trail cam and find out what kind of woodland visitors travel through your backyard? You can also check out video cameras and GoPros, tripods and projectors, as well as projection screens for a backyard movie night. We would love to hear from you about other ideas for our library of “shared things”. What kind of items should your local library have in stock? Please come in and let us know your thoughts.

Springtime means gearing up for our summer reading program. We offer craft supplies and coloring pages for our youngest guests each week, and a fun game board designed to sup-



port and encourage reading all summer long. Some new children's titles include *The Ogress and the Orphans* by Kelly Barnhill, *The Secret of Glendunny* by Kathryn Lasky, and *The Girl Who Fell Beneath the Sea* by Axie Oh. Our diverse book collection has been growing by leaps and bounds and we have many new graphic novels and picture books. Reach out to us at gill.slate.library@gmail.com, call (413) 863-2591, or stop by during our open hours:

Slate Library hours: Tuesday 2 -6, Wednesday 3:30 - 7:30, Thursday 2 - 8, and Saturday 10 a.m. -2 p.m.

Jocelyn Castro-Santos
Director, Slate Library

Gill Recreation Committee to be Revived

Soccer Coaches Needed

The Town's Recreation Committee, which was last active in 2017, will have three new members beginning their volunteer positions this May 2022. The initial goal in reviving the committee is to restart the after-school fall soccer program at the Gill Elementary School. Gill residents Phil Galluzzo and Isaac Bingham will coach a 1st - 3rd grade team beginning in the fall of 2022. Parents of children at Gill Elementary School should look for a flyer to be sent home before the end of this school year with sign-up information. In addition, the new Rec Committee is looking for volunteers to either join the committee or help with coaching. If we are able to find two more coaches we would be able to field a second team for the 4th - 6th graders. Please contact isaacbingham@gmail.com for additional information.

Avian Flu

There is an advisory regarding Highly Pathogenic Avian Influenza (HPAI) for all keepers of domestic birds.

This infection is present in many wild birds throughout the east coast, making transmission to domestic flocks a real risk.

For more information, please review the material on the town website.

<https://gillmass.org/n/9131/Protecting-Your-Backyard-Flock-from-Highly-Pathogenic-Avian-Influenza>

Four Winds School

We can't believe the school year is almost done! This spring students and teachers have enjoyed walks to Turners Falls, braiding the rope for a new rope swing with Four Winds founder Steve Hussey, and a successful April Open House. In Humanities class, students are finishing their Ancient Civilizations unit by writing and performing skits that take place in ancient times, and in Science class, students finished their Anatomy unit and are now studying Psychology and Human Development. In Math-tivity, students continue to work on growth mindset and creativity in math. In Health Class, Brian Melanson, has been working with our students on consent, boundaries, and healthy relationships. The rest of our time is spent doing independent work, where students work at their own level and pace on self-assigned work. If this sounds like something a middle-schooler in your life would enjoy, check us out online at www.fourwindsschool.info, and send us any questions at fourwindsteachers@gmail.com. Have a great rest of the school year!

Becca Lipton Danielson

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Honor Roll

Franklin County Technical School First Quarter

Grade 12

Honors: Anthony Zager

Grade 10

High Honors: Britney Zager

Grade 9

High Honors: Zachary Zilinski
Honors: Josiah Little

Pioneer Valley Regional School Second Quarter

Grade 12

Highest Honor: Isaac Damon

Grade 11

High Honors: James Staelens

Grade 8

Highest Honors Anthony McNamara
and Charlotte Relyea-Strawn
Honors: Tai Diaby

Turners Falls High School Second Quarter

Grade 11

First Honors: Anne Baskowski and
Adeline Riley

Grade 10

First Honors: Owen LaValley

Grade 9

Second Honors: Maren Batchelder

Great Falls Middle School Second Quarter

Grade 8

First Honors: Lincoln Coleman,
Vaughn LaValley, Emma Little, Miles
Riley and Kainen Stevens

Second Honors: Dylan Brunault,
Christopher Halla and Olivia
Hastings

Grade 6

First Honors: Madison Haight
Second Honors: Jocelyn Ovalle
Roblero

Turners Falls High School Third Quarter

Grade 11

Second Honors: Adeline Riley

Grade 10

First Honors: Owen LaValley

Grade 9

Second Honors: Maren Batchelder
and Pamela Gomez

Great Falls Middle School Third Quarter

Grade 8

First Honors: Dylan Brunault,
Lincoln Coleman, Christopher Halla,
Vaughn LaValley, Emma Little, Miles
Riley and Kainen Stevens

Grade 6

Honors: Jocelyn Ovalle Roblero

Fuel-Efficient Lawn Care

With the price of gasoline and natural gas on the rise, homeowners are looking for ways to cut costs and save energy. If you have a lawn or garden, you may not realize how much fossil fuel you are using. Reducing consumption will decrease costs and help the environment.

How?

- Use an electric or non-powered push mower.

- Use traditional hand rakes and brooms instead of power ones and blowers to save fuel and reduce air and noise pollution. If you employ a landscape maintenance firm, encourage their use of these too. Minimize the need for weed whackers.
- If you have an old mower, consider replacing it. Newer small engines run much cleaner.
- Use groundcovers to reduce the area you need to mow.
- Water deeply once per week on average.
- Recycle grass clippings and mow higher, especially in hot weather.
- Mowing with fuel-efficiency in mind saves money, and is your chance to make a difference when it comes to climate change.

Adapted from the UVM Extension Center publication The Green Mountain Garden, and inspired by Alden Booth.

Gill Historical Commission

GHC Website

Have you looked at the Gill Historical website with information, articles, and pictures that change monthly? The site also provides an archive of previous articles. Order forms for both the Riverside and the Jennie books are available at this location. The GHC members and meeting schedule are also posted.

GHC Facebook

The expanding GHC FaceBook page is a source for pictures and historical information and memories. The goal is to inform readers about Gill histo-



ry and sites and add to understanding Gill's history. Visit us on FaceBook@ GillHistoricalCommission.

Shad Springtime Return

One of the annual signs of spring is the return of the shad coming up the river. In Virginia, Thomas Jefferson wrote that "The peach come into blossom from March 9 to April 4; the Cherry from March 9 to April 13; The Tick Appears from March 15 to April 2; Asparagus first comes to table from March 23 to April 14; and The Shad arrive from March 28 to April 18." It is an old saying that along with the arrival of the shad, the shad bush comes into bloom, or as some say, "The shad come to spawn when the shad bush blooms."

Indigenous tribes and arriving settlers found the spring rivers like the Connecticut teeming with fish, including shad. In Virginia, Captain John Smith wrote of "an abundance of fish, lying so thicke with their heads above the water . . . as for want of nets, our barge driving amongst them, we attempted to catch them with a frying pan." In Gill, Josiah D. Canning, the Peasant Bard (1816-1892), romanticized the fishers at the Falls in poems and speeches. [See page 19 in *Riverside: Life Along the Connecticut.*] In his poem "The Shad-Fishers" Canning advances the enthusiasm for the running of the shad in May:

All in the merry month of May,
When snowy shad trees blossomed gay,
To tell the fisherman the time,
When fish were plentiful and prime.

Writing about "Olden Times at Turners Falls" in the 1892 *Greenfield Gazette*, Josiah D. Canning wrote that a Gill Octogenarian had told him about drawing the seine [net] at the mouth of Unadilla Brook in Gill Center with "abundant success." The fishing seasons attracted farmers from the surrounding towns and region to the Falls for their supply of fish. They came with carts and wagons and took them off for the purpose of salting for the year's use. Two cents each shad or three "Bungtown coppers," was the established price of what was nicknamed "Gill Pork." As Canning continues in his well-known poem,

. . . I've heard gray-headed worthies say,
Not only fishermen, so wet
With sweeping seine and scooping net,
But other folk would muster there
As now they gather at a fair.
From all the region round about
They came, the gentleman and lout;
The yeoman, whose spring work was done,
Resolved to have one day of fun;
The peddler with his gew-gaws fine,
And ballads, dog'rel, not divine; . . .
A motley crowd of beings, wishing
To see each other and the fishing.

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