FALL 2022 Issue

Disclaimer:

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Town Hall

Thank you Arthur Cohen!

After more than 35 years of continuous service to his town, Arthur Cohen has stepped down as the Town's representative to the Franklin County Solid Waste Management District. He was first appointed in the fall of 1987 to Gill's Solid Waste Planning Committee. That group represented the town on the Franklin County Solid Waste Planning Board, whose work led to the formation of the District that is still in existence today. Arthur has been Gill's representative for all these many years, and we are grateful for the passion and dedication he brought to the role, and for the many solid waste and recycling initiatives that he helped bring about. Thank you Arthur!

ill /

This means the Town is looking for a volunteer to pick up where Arthur left off (and serving 35 years is completely optional!). The District's Board of Representatives typically meets four times per year in January, May, September, and December. If you are interested in being appointed, please contact Ray Purington, Town Administrator, at 413-863-9347 or administrator@gillmass.org. To find out more about the District and the role of a town representative, please contact Jan Ameen, Executive Director, at 413-772-2438 or fcswmd@crocker.com.

Vacancy – Finance Committee

There is a vacancy on the Finance Committee. If you are interested in serving on this committee, please contact Doreen Stevens, Town Clerk, at 863-8103 or townclerk@gillmass.org or Town Moderator Isaac Bingham at isaacbingham@gmail.com. The Finance Committee is appointed by the Town Moderator, and terms are generally for three years.

Vewsletter

The Finance Committee acts in an advisory role on all financial matters considered at Town Meeting. Most of the group's meetings occur in the late winter and spring months, providing review and input on the Town's budget for the next fiscal year. To learn more, contact Claire Chang, Chair, at 413-626-3620 or claire@ solargreenfield.com.

COVID-19 Self-Test Kits and Face Masks

While supplies last, residents can get free COVID-19 Antigen Rapid Tests (iHealth brand) from the Town Hall. Although the Use By date on the box is 07/24/2022, the FDA has granted an extension to the shelflife of these products to 01/24/2023.

Please only take as many test kits as you will responsibly use. And if you are exhibiting any COVID-19 symptoms, please contact the Town Hall to arrange for a contactless, outdoor pickup.

We also have three styles of adult-size disposable face masks available for free at the Town Hall. The tightest fitting is Aura 1870+, which is an N95 mask made





by 3M. The loosest fitting is a TB-01 three-layer disposable protective mask (often called a "procedure mask") made by JCJZ. In between those two is a 4-ply non-medical N95 mask made by FFP2.

Lastly, we have children's size ear loop three-layer disposable face masks made by Sumeasy Enterprises.



Winter Reminders

Our first taste of winter weather will be here before we know it. That means it's time for a few reminders.

Winter sand is available to all residents, for private use only, at the Safety Complex. No contractors, please.

Gill's wintertime parking ban begins on November 1st and runs through April 15th. There is NO on-street parking allowed between the hours of 1 AM and 6 AM. Your cooperation is greatly appreciated.

Residents are advised to secure their mailboxes against possible damage from snow removal operations. The Town is not responsible for damage to mailboxes caused by snow removal operations.

The Town's Snow Removal bylaw states the following: "No person shall throw or put or cause to be thrown or put any snow or ice from any privately owned property into any street, public way, or town-owned land. Whoever violates this bylaw shall be punished by a fine of \$25.00 for each offense. The Town's Snow Plowing bylaw states the following: "The Highway Superintendent may, for the purpose of removing or plowing snow, or removing ice from any way, remove or cause to be removed to some convenient place, any vehicle which interferes with such work, and in the event of the removal of any vehicle in accordance with the terms hereof, the actual cost of removing said vehicle and any storage charges that may be incurred as a result thereof, may be enforced by the Town in any manner provided by law for the collection of a debt based upon contract."

From the Town Clerk

Early Vote by Mail is now available in Massachusetts; the Town Clerk has Vote by Mail Applications. To get your application contact the Town Clerk, 413-863-8103. Applications can also be obtained at www.sec. state.ma.us, follow the prompts for Voting, Early Voting, and Vote by Mail. The State will also be mailing out applications to Vote by Mail. If you do not wish to choose the Vote by Mail option, there will also be the opportunity to vote early in person at the Town Hall. Dates are listed below, and the last day you may register to vote for the State Mid-Term Election is listed below. Please follow all the instructions in the instructions included with your ballot. Ballots maybe rejected if sent without a signature on the envelope included in the voting ballot kit, and the ballot may be rejected if it is submitted without the envelope. You may vote in person on Election Day upstairs at the Town Hall from 7AM to 8PM.

State Mid-Term Election: Tuesday, November 8th, 7AM–8PM

Last Day to register to vote for the Mid-Term Election: October 29th

In-Person Early Voting Dates: Saturday October 22nd thru Thursday November 3rd

Vote-By-Mail Application due at the Town Clerk's Office on Tuesday, November 1st 5PM

Early Voting Schedule State Election

Saturday, October 22: 11AM–3PM

Sunday, October 23: No Early Voting

Monday, October 24: 12-2PM

Tuesday, October 25: 12–2PM

Wednesday, October 26: 12–2PM

Thursday, October 27: 4-6PM

Friday, October 28: by appointment only (863-8103)

*Saturday, October 29: 9–11AM and 3–5PM

Sunday, October 30: No Early Voting

Monday, October 31: 12-2PM

Tuesday, November 1: 12-2PM

Wednesday, November 2: 12–2PM

Thursday, November 3: 4-6PM

Friday, November 4: by appointment only (863-8103)

*Last day to Register to Vote

All early voting times are subject to change. If you have any questions, please call the Town Clerk 413-863-8103.

Doreen Stevens Town Clerk



Veterans' Services

The PACT ACT was signed into law in September, 2022. The law adds nearly two dozen presumptive conditions related to burn pit exposure, meaning veterans who served in overseas locations with active burn pits no longer have to prove their exposure or establish direct service connection if diagnosed with ailments listed in the law that are known to cause such conditions.

The new law also expands medical coverage by extending from five to 10 years, the time period that combat veterans who were discharged or released on or after Oct. 1, 2013, have for guaranteed enrollment in the VA health care system. For combat veterans whose service was completed before that date, the law provides a one-year open enrollment period.

For Vietnam veterans, this landmark legislation will finally make hypertension a presumptive condition for those exposed to Agent Orange, making it simpler for the VA to award benefits to them or their survivors. The law also expands all Agent Orange presumptions to cover veterans who served in Thailand, Cambodia, Laos, Guam, American Samoa and Johnston Atoll.

Our Office is ready to assist with claims for Veterans who would qualify under the Pact Act. For those veterans who have been denied a condition in the past that is covered in the Pact Act our office can assist with reapplying to have those conditions service connected.

More information on the PACT ACT presumptive conditions you can find them on the VA website at **https://www.** va.gov/resources/the-pact-act-andyour-va-benefits/. You can also visit or call the Upper Pioneer Valley Veterans Services Districts Office at 294 Main Street Greenfield MA. Office hours are Monday – Friday 8:30 AM to 5:00 PM Phone number is 413-772-1571.

From the Tax Collector's Office

The Tax Collector's mailing address is no longer a PO Box. The office address has changed to:

> Tax Collector 325 Main Rd Gill, MA 01354

Please make a note of this address change. Mailings to the former PO Box will likely be returned to you by the Postal Service, possibly making your payment late. If you pay your bills online via your bank, please verify you are using the correct address. Massachusetts laws dictate that payments must be RECEIVED at Town Hall by the due date. The postmark has no bearing.

Homeowner Assistance Available

The Gill Tax Collector's Office is working with the Massachusetts Homeowner's Assistance Fund (MassHAF) to assist homeowners affected by the COVID-19 pandemic. MassHAF is a federally funded program administered by the Massachusetts Housing Partnership. (This service is provided free to the town.)

Eligible homeowners may receive assistance with:

- outstanding monthly mortgage payments.
- outstanding escrow (taxes, insurance, homeowner association fees, and condominium fees).
- municipal charges (water, sewer, natural gas, electric, or waste).











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The MassHAF is available online at www.massmortgagehelp.org and contains application and eligibility information. The toll-free phone number is 1-833-270-2953 Mon thru Fri 8am to 8pm. Please contact them directly for information.

-Tom Hodak

The Gill-Montague Education Fund

Annual Gala Returns

April 29, 2023

In 2019, the GMEF held its Annual Gala – "Dancing Dream" a Tribute to ABBA. Then, because of the COVID-19 pandemic, there were no performances for 3 years.

On Saturday, April 29, 2023, the GMEF is returning to the Turners Falls High School Theater with "Faithfully" - An Eagles and Journey Tribute Band Together in One Show!

Formed in Nashville, Tennessee in 2011, the band Faithfully has quickly established itself as one of the country's most popular tribute acts, and is garnering international recognition, press and fan following. The band has performed at the Atlantis 2 in Nassau, Bahamas, The Hollywood Casino group and numerous premier venues worldwide. Faithfully has shared the stage with the legendary Sawyer Brown, country sweetheart Jo Dee Messina, and many of the biggest names from the rock n' roll world.

For more information and tickets visit our website: www.thegmef.org

Gill Energy Commission

Save money with the Gill Community Choice Power Supply Program

In 2020 Gill joined the Community Choice Power Program (the Program) under which our residents are able to both take advantage of reduced costs for the supply of electric power and to purchase energy from sustainable - or "green" – sources. Your electric bill is based on a rate composed of two pieces: an electric supply rate (i.e., the cost of generating the electricity itself) and a delivery rate (the cost of the transmission system that carries the electricity to your house). The delivery rate is not affected by our Program, but on the supply side we can compare the current fixed Eversource rate of \$0.15348 per kilowatt hour with the rates charged by our Program supplier, **Dynegy Energy Services:**

Standard (default) rate 30% green energy \$0.10292 per kWh

Optional Green 100 rate 100% green energy \$0.13134 per kWh

Optional Green 5 rate 10% green energy \$0.09534 per kWh

Thus, the savings from the fixed Eversource rate to the standard Program rate currently is about 5 cents per kWh, which means a savings of about \$360 per year if the monthly consumption is 600 kWh – plus the use of a lot more green energy. Since the Eversource rates will go up January 1st and the Program rates can not change until 2024, the savings will be even greater next year. You can opt in by filling out the simple form at **https://colonialpowergroup. com/form-gill/** or call a member of the Gill Energy Commission for help. Detailed information and useful links are available at **https://gillmass. org/p/58/Gill-Community-Choice-Power-Supply-Program**.

Regional Mattress Recycling Program Begins October 24th

The Franklin County Solid Waste Management District is working with five towns to accept clean and dry mattresses and box springs for recycling. This program is open to residents in all District towns. The program is only for clean and dry fabric covered mattresses and box springs, including foam and crib mattresses.

Beginning on October 24th District residents must take clean and dry mattresses and box springs to a recycling program in Bernardston, Colrain, Deerfield, Montague, or Wendell. The MassDEP now prohibits all clean and dry mattresses and box springs from going into the trash for landfill disposal and these will be rejected if brought to a transfer station for disposal.

All regional mattress recycling sites charge \$35 per mattress or box spring regardless of size. Check the specific information for each site before bringing a mattress for recycling.

Site addresses, hours, and payment information is below:

Bernardston Transfer Station, Nelson Rd, Thursday & Saturday 7 am – 5 pm. Checks only.

Colrain Transfer Station, Charlemont Rd, Saturday 8 am – 4 pm. Cash or checks.



Deerfield Transfer Station, Lee Rd., Tuesday, Thursday, & Saturday 8:30-4. Checks/ money order.

Montague Transfer Station, Sandy Lane Turners Falls, Wednesday 7-1 & Saturday 7-2:30. Checks only.

Wendell Transfer Station, New Salem Rd., Tuesday 12-5:50 & Saturday 7:30-3:30. Cash or checks.

Franklin County residents can also use the Greenfield Transfer Station on Cumberland Rd, which is open Tuesday through Friday 11-2:30 and Saturday 7:30-2. Mattresses and box springs cost \$30 each plus a \$5 host fee for out-oftown residents.

Orange residents who have a transfer station permit can bring mattresses and box springs to the Orange Transfer Station for recycling; call or visit Orange Transfer Station for details. Orange residents can also bring mattresses and box springs to one of the sites above.

Shopping for a new mattress? Ask your mattress seller if they will take away your old mattress when they deliver the new one. Some retailers will include this service as part of the delivery, and some charge a fee.

District towns include Bernardston, Buckland, Charlemont, Colrain, Conway, Deerfield, Erving, Gill, Hawley, Heath, Leverett, Montague, New Salem, Northfield, Orange, Rowe, Shelburne, Sunderland, Warwick, Wendell, and Whately.

For more information, visit franklincountywastedistrict.org or call 413-772-2438. MA Relay for the hearing impaired: 711 or 1-800-439-2370.

Four Winds School

It's been a busy fall at Four Winds School, with lots of new and exciting changes, including two new staff members who have joined our team! In addition to their study of earth science and local history this year, our students have been up to some exciting new projects. This fall we've partnered with the Carnegie Public Library in Turners Falls to enhance our research and literature curricula. We feel so fortunate to be able to take advantage of this wonderful, free local resource that is within walking distance from the school.

This winter we will be trying out our first ever Winter Intersession, in which students will suspend all 'normal' academics for two weeks and instead focus on a project or subject of their choosing: stay tuned to learn what they end up deciding to pursue! Finally, we are looking forward to possibly partnering with the Gill Historical Commission later this year as we study local history. If you have any questions about Four Winds School, visit our website at www.fourwindsschool. info or send us questions at fourwindsteachers@gmail.com. Have a great fall!

Gill Rec Soccer Success!

The newly re-formed Gill Recreation committee had fantastic turnout for our first after-school soccer program in seven years. Over forty kids turned out, enough to field three teams: two Junior Soccer teams (grades 1 - 3) and one Senior Soccer team (grades 4 - 6). The Gill School teachers and staff were very supportive of the program. Phil Galluzzo of River Road spearheaded









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the coaching with many parents stepping up to help out. There is a lot of enthusiasm for Gill Soccer to return next year and hopefully become a regular annual program. The Soccer season consisted of 10 Saturday morning games and concluded with a league-wide Soccer Jamboree hosted in Bernardston.

Looking forward, the Recreation Committee is inviting members of the Gill community to consider joining our committee which is currently shorthanded. In particular we are looking for help to plan a Gill Town Square Dance to be sponsored by the Recreation Committee and which will coincide with next year's Annual Gill Town Festival (2023). Please contact isaacbingham@gmail.com to join in the fun.

Antenna Cloud Farm

Antenna Cloud Farm had another wonderful summer of music, from the ACF Music Walk, to the Experimental institute, to some wonderful concerts up on the hill and out in the community. We enjoyed collaborations with Stone Soup Café, RiverCulture, and Nolumbeka Project, and support from New England Public Media, Música Franklin, Upinngil Farm, Artisan Beverage Cooperative, and Real Pickles. Thanks to everyone who joined us for some live music! We're already planning for next summer (while we enjoy this year's spectacular fall colors) but in the meantime, please sign up on our mailing list to stay in the loop with events, music, recommendations, and even recipes: /www.antennacloudfarm. com.great rest of the summer!

Welcome Yule 38th Annual Midwinter Celebration at the Shea

Welcome Yule: A Midwinter Celebration - Music, Dance, Songs and Stories to Drive the Dark Away returns to the Shea Theater Arts Center in Turners Falls, MA on December 9, 10 & 11. This year is Welcome Yule's 38th annual celebration of the return of the light at the darkest time of year. It is a festive family show filled with music, dance, songs and stories to drive the dark away.

This December's show weaves together English, Scottish and Celtic traditions associated with Yule - the Scottish New Year's celebration of Hogmanay, a bit o' Robert Burns, and Imbolc, the feast of St. Brigid (who raises fallen Winter and brings forth new life in Spring), traditionally celebrated on February 1st, bringing the audience on a journey from one end of winter to the other. The Yule log will be passed around, there will be dancing with swords and sticks, a mummers play, the singing of old carols and wassails, "The Shortest Day" poem, and the mysterious Abbotts Bromley horn dance.

The show will be held at The Shea Theater Arts Center, 71 Avenue A, Turners Falls, MA, Friday December 9 and Saturday December 10 at 7:30 p.m., and Sunday, Dec. 11 at 2 p.m.

Tickets are \$15 for adults ages 17 to 64, \$12 for seniors and children ages 5 to 16, and FREE for children under 5. Tickets can be purchased at the door and in advance at sheatheater.org. Tickets can be reserved at reservations@welcomeyule.org.

Gill Historical Commission

GHC Website

Have you looked at the Gill Historical page on the town 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. The September article featured Gill Schools and the October highlights the history of the old North Cemetery with its first burial in 1777 before Gill was founded in 1793. (Visit www.gillmass.org, select "Boards and Committees" and then select "Historical Commission".)

GHC Facebook

The expanding GHC Facebook page is a source for pictures, historical information and memories. "Whatis-it-Wednesday" challenges the visitor to identify items from the Gill museum, and "Throw-Back Thursdays" shares class photos and memories, making the Town's history alive and participatory. Visit us on FaceBook.com@ GillHistoricalCommission.

Stoughton's HISTORY OF GILL (Volume one) Digitized

GHC has worked with the Digital Commonwealth project to have the first volume of Ralph M. Stoughton's Gill History (Volume 1) added to its database. This out-of-print resource is now available on-line under the Statewide Digitization Project with the Boston Public Library. Check the GHC web page under "Additional Links" for the link.

2022 Harvest Fair

GHC members enjoyed participating at the September offering and thank everyone who stopped at our display and shared conversation about Gill's history.

Books for Sale

Both GHC's Jennie and Riverside books are available for holiday giving. Details and forms are available at the Town Hall and on the GHC web page.

Henry Barton's 1887 Diary Excerpts

GHC's Riverside book contains the ancestry of Henry Barton and his wife Emma (Weatherhead), who lived on what is now Route 2, across from the Riverside Municipal Building. Civic leader and farmer, Henry Barton kept detailed diaries of each day's farming, family, and social events. Excerpts from the 1885, 1891, and 1892 diaries are included in the Riverside book. Last fall Slate Library found Barton's ledgers for 1887, 1888, and 1889, which we have begun to transcribe. Here is a glimpse of work and life in the fall of 1887.

Saturday, October 8, 1887

Pleasant. Went to Greenfield with melons and squashes, good sale. Farm work has been digging potatoes, and mowing and tending rowen – got in two loads. Took potatoes, squashes over to Turners. Mary Lazelle went to Bernardston in the evening. Emma and the children drove over to Greenfield. Leaves from apple and maple trees have fallen fast for a day or two. [Mary L. was a domestic. The Barton children were Mary and Herbert.] [Rowen is a second crop of hay in a season.]

Monday, October 10, 1887

Cloudy and warm. Apple picking has been the main work. Ed and I have finished laying the scaffold floor in the new barn addition and got it ready to fill with rowen. Uncle Len went to Leyden in the forenoon and to the other place in the afternoon with Mr. Felton and sold him his sixteen head of fat cattle. Joe Scott began work for a few days. [The Bartons pastured cattle in Leyden for the summer. They apparently walked them to the summer pasture where grass was more plentiful than in the wooded land in Gill.]

Wednesday, October 26, 1887 Pleasant, cold morning down to 22 degrees. Forenoon. Went to Greenfield to deliver squash, apples, etc.

Belden and Joe have sold a load of cabbage at the Falls. Ed took a load of apples to Montague City and later he and Uncle Len stacked some corn stalks. Afternoon. We have sold a load of potatoes at the Falls. Got in some corn. Loaded two teams with apples for the cider mill. Delivered a lot of truck in the neighborhood and gathered up a lot of cider barrels. Also sorted a few apples. Edward came to spend the night with us. It begins to look like getting our "cold finger" jobs cleaned up if it doesn't snow soon. [Produce was sold to merchants in nearby towns and to buyers who took good to Springfield and Boston by train from Greenfield and Turners Falls.]





Tuesday, November 8, 1887

Fine weather. Forenoon. I helped Ed load putting on storm windows between times. Belden plowed on the plain. State election. Uncle Len, Belden, and I attended – had a good vote out (128). Stayed till after the count and rode down with Frank Smith. Ed has stuck to his manure job. Emma and the children have gone up to Bernardston to stay for a few days. [Emma's parents Lucius and Laura (Newton) Weatherhead farmed in Bernardston before eventually moving to Riverside.]



Wagon Wheel in Gill, MA Sunday, 11/13/22; 2~4 pm

Please bring a song to share. Restaurant's kitchen will be ready for hungry and thirsty singers. Pellet stove will be ablaze. Such sing-alongs will continue on the second Sunday of the month: 12/11, 1/8, and 2/12. We will fill our hearts with song and our bellies with goodies from the kitchen. I love the French fries. Warmth, song, and food - what a way to chase away cabin fever on a chilly, Gillbilly afternoon.

For info - Steve at 802-451-6663

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