

# Gill Newsletter Fall 2025 Issue

### **Disclaimer:**

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### **New Faces at Town Hall**

We are pleased to announce two new additions to the Town's financial team. Effective July 1, 2025 the Selectboard appointed Cathryn Thomas as the Town Accountant and Aimee Williams as the Tax Collector. Although she is a new employee of the Town, Cathryn is not new to the Town, having worked in Gill as the Accountant for the last two years through the Franklin Regional Council of Governments' Town Accountant Program. Cathryn brings 15 years of FRCOG experience to Gill, along with business office experience in a private school setting. She lives in Bernardston and is an owner/operator of CAT's Croft, a small-scale organic farm known for 50 varieties of Garlic. Aimee is no stranger to Gill. either. She is a life-long, 4 th generation resident, and previously served as a member of Gill's Board of Assessors for two terms in the late 1990s. Aimee has extensive experience as a business office coordinator and customer service manager in healthcare settings and with a leading education training provider. Welcome aboard, Cathryn and Aimee. Office hours and contact information for both can be found on the Town's website.

### From the Town Clerk: August 2025

Things are very quiet in the Town Clerk's office as we are not anticipating any elections until next May.18, 2026. It might be a good time to refresh everyone's

memory as to the things the Town Clerk's Office can provide. If you were born while your family was living in Gill the clerk can provide you with a birth certificate. If you took out your marriage intensions in Gill, the Clerk can provide you with a marriage certificate. Death certificates can be provided to the family of anyone who passed while living in Gill. The town clerk's office can provide business certificates (DBA), a voter registration certificate, and dog licenses are of course also available at the Town Clerk's office. A reminder that all dogs in the Town of Gill should at this point be registered for 2025, unless of course you are new to Gill or you have a new pup. License Fees: Spayed or Neutered dogs; \$15.00, intact dogs; \$20.00, late fee; \$20.00 per license.Residents over 70 get one dog license per household at no charge. Registered service dogs are licensed at no charge also. This year's dog license list will be sent to our Animal Control Officer by September 15 th.

Office hours: Monday 9AM-4PM,



### www.gillmass.org

for up to date news, announcements and contact information!





Tuesday 9AM-1PM, Wednesday 9AM-3PM, Thursday 3PM-6PM or call for an appointment 413-863-8103.

Doreen J. Stevens, Town Clerk

### Tax Bills are in the mail

The semi annual Preliminary Real Estate and Personal Property tax bills were mailed on August 20, 2025. The due date is November 3, 2025. Tax Collector hours are: Monday 12 pm to 6 PM, Tuesday 9 am to 2 pm, Wednesday 12 pm to 5 pm, and Thursday 9 am to 1 pm. Additionally, I will be available on Thursday, October 30th from 3 pm to 6 pm. For convenience, there is a locked drop box by the back door of the town hall, and payments may also be made online through the Town of Gill website. I look forward to meeting all who stop by! Thank you, Aimee Williams, Tax Collector

### **Annual Harvest Festival**

Join Your Neighbors at the 6th Annual Gill Harvest Festival!

- The Fire Department will offer food and drink
- · Farm activities for all ages!
- Gill farms and farmers will display the fruits,

vegetables and meats of their labors

- Tractors to climb, stock to pet, and hay wagons to ride
- · Search for coins in the sawdust
- Coloring Contest
- Birds of Prey Presentation
- Live Music with the Falltown

#### String Band

- · Visit with friends and neighbors
- · Crafts to see and purchase
- Plus more, much more! Sunday September 28, 2025 from 12-3 p.m.

Rain Date October 5, 2025
The Common, Town Center, Gill
All those interested in displaying crafts, farm or farm-related
products please call an Ag Commission

member or go to the town website. Ag Commission members are Roger Augustine, Tom Chalmers.

Zoe Fox, Dick French, Ed Golembeski, Dan Flagg, and Gary Stevens.

### Gill Artist Showcase at the Harvest Fair

Sunday September 28 POSTPONED

Due to a personal issue Cultural Council member Karen Larsen is not able to organize this event for the Harvest Fair this year. She hopes to be able to make it happen for next year's fair, so feel free to contact her at any time to talk about being part of the event. All Gill artists will be welcome to take part, whether you're a professional or create your art just for the love of it. All age artists are welcome, including our student artists!

### Gill Forest Committee Meeting

The Gill Town Forest Committee has a public meeting planned on

September 24, 2025 at the Town Office starting at 7:00pm. In June the Committee received the Bird Habitat and Climate Change Plan from a grant received by the Commonwealth in 2024. This Plan is posted on the Town Forest web page that can be found under the Conservation Commission. We are interested in hearing your comments and thoughts on the plan and its recommendations for the Blake Town Forest. In addition, the Mountain Road property now has a sign at the "Loop Trailhead" on the road behind the Town Garage. The trail is very well marked, in either direction, has some interesting habitat and ledge features and takes approximately 15 minutes to walk. Please contact Ken Sprankle with any questions 413-325-3069.

### Cultural Council Grant Application Deadline

October 16, 2025

It's that time again! The Gill Cultural Council looks forward to your applications for cultural events of interest to Gill residents, which will take place in Gill or nearby in 2026.

We encourage a broad range of applications from visual artists, writers, musicians, filmmakers, craftspersons, historians, dancers, playwrights, venues, theatre artists, presenters, documentarians, puppeteers, performance artists, book artists, lecturers, art teachers, and collaborators. Be creative! If your project involves



the arts and/or the humanities we will consider it for funding. We especially encourage projects that will occur in Gill, but will also consider projects that occur nearby and will be of interest to those who reside in Gill.

The application opens September 2, 2025

The Cultural Council will have a table at The Harvest Fair, which is two weeks before the application deadline. Come on by to say hi and we can answer any questions you have about submitting an application.

Grant decisions will be made public in January of 2026

https://massculturalcouncil.org/ communities/local-cultural-councilprogram/application-process/

### Want to be a Good Neighbor?

The FRCOG's Franklin County/ North Quabbin Community Health Improvement Plan (CHIP) Network and Greenfield Community College invite you to celebrate Massachusetts Good Neighbor Day on or around the weekend of Sept 26-28. September 28 was declared National Good Neighbor Day during Jimmy Carter's presidency and has had a resurgence recently with increased awareness of the powerful positive impact social networks can have on individual and community health. In Massachusetts, the statewide Coalition to Build Community and

End Loneliness is rallying com-

munities across the state to host

Good Neighbor Day events this

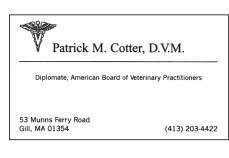
year. There are lots of ways to organize an activity that strengthens connections between people who live, work, or play in a particular place such as a park, neighborhood, library, apartment building, or senior center. You don't have to start from scratch! The FRCOG can provide a Good Neighbor Day Toolkit and lots of other helpful materials forgetting to know your neighbors. Interested in hosting something to bring neighbors closer together? Fill out this form or visit bit.ly/GND-CHIP to sign up.

### **Our Public Health Nurses**

Meg Ryan, and Lisa White, RNs serve Gill as Public Health Nurses through the Town's membership in the Cooperative Public Health Service (CPHS) of Franklin Regional Council of Governments (FR-COG). Besides the drop-in hours that they offer at community sites including at Stoughton Place the second Friday of each month from 10 am - 12 pm, Lisa and Meg: work directly for Local Boards of Health to monitor the occurrence of infectious illness throughout the 15 Town CPHS region assist health promotion activities offer flu and covid vaccine by appointment at nursing hours and in home visits provide community education about chronic illnesses, including Alzheimer's and dementia support communities to become more ageand dementia-friendly (assuring services are welcoming and available to people of all ages and abili-















ties). Their work also involves collaboration and connection with other community agencies, therefore being able to assist residents to connect with services they need. To learn more about CPHS nursing services, please see https://frcog.org/project/public-health-nursing-program/ or call Meg or Lisa, FRCOG CPHS at (413) 774-3167.

### Protect yourself from mosquitoes carrying disease

Throughout the summer, mosquitoes are routinely trapped and tested for diseases across the state. The prevalence of mosquitoes carrying disease tends to increase as the summer passes. As of early August, mosquitoes across the state have tested positive for two notable illnesses: West Nile Virus and Eastern equine encephalitis (EEE). In our region, we have had positive mosquito tests for West Nile Virus in a few towns, which has raised our risk level on the state map (https://www.mass.gov/infodetails/massachusetts-arbovirusupdate). There have been no human cases of either disease in our region. Although only a small percentage of mosquitoes carry disease, the best way to prevent illness is to prevent mosquito bites. Take these steps to avoid bites:Use insect repellents when outdoors. Repellents that contain DEET, permethrin (for clothing, not skin) or picaridin work against mosquitoes. Oil of lemon eucalyptus can provide as much protection against mosquitoes as

low concentrations of DEET, butshould not be used . Always read and follow the label's instructions carefully. Schedule outdoor activities to avoid the hours from dusk to dawn and wear long sleeves. Repair damaged window and door screens - many hardware stores offer this service. Remove standing water from plant pots, tire swings, kiddie pools, etc. This can disrupt mosquito breeding so you can eliminate future mosquitoes—and their bites!

### **Prevent Respiratory Sickness**

Each year, respiratory viruses cause millions of illnesses and thousands of hospitalizations and deaths in the US. Flu and other types of respiratory viruses, including COVID-19, and respiratory syncytial virus (RSV) are spread mainly by airborne droplets released by talking, sneezing or coughing. There are actions you can take to help protect vourself and others:1. Get vaccinated. Vaccines are available for all major fall and winter respiratory diseases. 2. Put physical distance between yourself and others in public spaces. 3. When you sneeze or cough, use a promptly disposed of tissue, or the crook of your arm. 4. Handwash regularly and use a hand sanitizer when soap and water is not available.5. Clean surfaces such as door handles and railings. For more information see www. cdc.gov/respiratory-viruses/

index.html or contact Franklin Regional Council of Governments Cooperative Public Health Service Nurses Lisa White or Meg Ryan at 413-774-3167.

### **Senior Center News**

The Gill Montague Senior Center now has official memberships and we've installed a swipe card sign in. Membership is, of course, free and open to anyone over 60 or close in Gill and Montague or the surrounding towns. Stop in and register and get your card. This system will enable us to collect all sorts of data which will be useful in annual reports and grant applications. If you prefer not to become a member, you are still always welcome at the Senior Center and can attend any of our programs or classes as a guest. We still have lock boxes available for Gill residents who would like to have one installed at their house. These boxes are accessible by a code known only to you and emergency services and will contain a key to your door. Should you have an emergency and are unable to unlock the door, emergency services can access your key. The boxes and installation are free. All you need to provide is a spare key. You could also give the box code to trusted family members or use it when you've locked yourself out. To get a box, call Roberta at the Senior Center 413-863-9357.Tech Tuesday continues providing drop-in help with all things digital. This in-



cludes, computers, cell phones, lap-tops, and tablets. The service is free; there are no appointments necessary, and it is every Tuesday from 12:30 pm to 2:00 pm. The current experts are students, faculty, and graduates from the Tech School's Programming and Web Development Shop. Don't forget that we have free yoga (mat, chair, and outdoor chair) and Tai Chi classes every week. Relaxing, stretching, breathing, balancing, and focusing are all important skills to cultivate as we get older. Andrea Chesnes, Eileen Dowd, and Mari Royang are the instructors and they are all gifted, patient, and lovely people. Their classes arewelcoming to everyone regardless of experience. You don't need equipment and you don't need fancy exercise clothes. The class schedule is on our web site gillmontaguecouncilonaging.org or you can simply call the Senior Center at 413-863-9357.

Gillbilly Paddle held on Connecticut River

The first Gillbilly paddle of 2025 was held on Saturday, July 12. Six boats, eight paddlers, one passenger, and a dog put in at the docks owned by NMH School and paddled to a take-out below the French King bridge. Although the sky was overcast, conditions on the river were comfortable, after several days of heat and high humidity. Despite concerns about low water level, due to repairwork at the Turners Falls dam, the river was "back to normal". A

vintage signal cannon signaled the start of the event. Upingill provided support for boat returns, and a good time was had by all.

### **Upcoming Cultural Events**

The last Cultural Council funded events of the 2025 cycle will be presented here in town.

Antenna Cloud Farm events

Saturday, August 30, 2025 Kinnen Azmeh and City Band ACF Outdoor Stage in Gill, MA6:00 pm Concert (grounds open 4:30)Followed by a reception.Rain location: The Shea Theater

Thursday, September 4, 2025 The Solomon Diaries Clarinetist Sam Sadigursky and multi-instrumentalist Nathan Koci

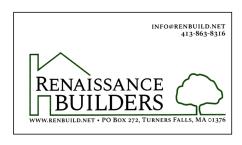
Location: Temple Israel27 Pierce Street in Greenfield 7:00 pm Concert. FREE Co-presented with Temple Israel

Sunday, September 7, 2025 Dreaming in Diaspora A Hilltop Klezmer Mini-Fest ACF Outdoor Stage in Gill, MA1:00-7:00 (see schedule below)

Rain location: The Shea Theater

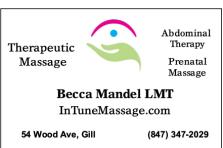
Saturday, October 19, 2025 Coyote Makes A World Featuring Storyteller/vocalist Enaq'ymi' (Lone Eagle. & Percussion Cooperative The Forest

The Shea Theater Arts Center

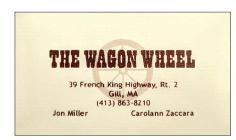














71 Avenue A in Turners Falls/ Great Fals 4:00 PM Show

Saturday, September 27 Community Square and Contra Dance Town Hall, 2nd Floor See the town website for time of the event

Come dance the night away with your friends and neighbors!

Sunday, September 28
Gill Harvest Fair
Town Green
See the town website for the time
of the event

### **DEAN'S LIST**

Mia Snedeker was named to the dean's at the University of Massachusetts Amherst for the spring semester.

#### **GRADUATES**

Levi Halla, Josiah Little and Zachary Zilinski graduated from the Franklin County Technical School.

Sheni Ovalle Roblero graduated from Turners Falls High School and received the Global Seal of Biliteracy in Functional Fluency Spanish Award, the TFHS Class of 1957 Scholarship, the Doctor Sarah Kemble Scholarship and the Harriet Tidd Scholarship.

Grace Bird, Liam Shea, Madigan Pillsbury, Quinn Bathory-Peeler and Rigel Velez graduated

from Northfield Mount Hermon School. Grace Bird received The Piscuskas Day Student Prize Award.

#### **HONOR ROLL**

Franklin County Technical School Second Semester

Grade 12

High Honors: Josiah Little Honors: Zachary Zilinski

Grade 11

High Honors: Emma Little and

Ella Vassar

Honors: Dylan Brunault and Ash-

lyn Chapin

Turners Falls High School Fourth Quarter

Grade 11

First Honors: Ella DeLorenzo and

Lily DeLorenzo

Second Honors: Rojelio Galvez Mendez and Kainen Stevens

Grade 9

First Honors: Madison Haight

and Jakhia Williams

Second Honors: Jocelyn Ovalle

Roblero

Great Falls Middle School Fourth Quarter

Grade 8

First Honors: Santiago Buri Ro-

sales

Second Honors: Owen Zilinski Third Honors: Allison Raymond

and Bristol Stevens

Grade7

First Honors: Kaelynn Dudek and

Josephine Hayman

Grade 6

Second Honors: Carter Flagg

and Carter Greene

Third Honors: Evelyn Galvez

Mendez

## Keeping Fats, Oils, and Grease out of the Septic and/ or Sewer System

This is a reminder that fats, oils, and grease (FOG) items should never be put down the sink. FOG are natural byproducts of the cooking and food prep process. Common sources include food scraps, meat fats, cooking oils, lard, baked goods, salad dressings, sauces, marinades, dairy products, shortening, butter, and margarine. In a warm, liquid state, FOG can appear harmless since it flows easily down the drain. However, shortly after it enters the drain, it can quickly cool and turn into a solid that will cause problems in the pipes in your home and in your septic system or the town sanitary sewer system. As the FOG builds up, it restricts the flow in the pipe and can cause untreated wastewater to back up into your home, resulting in high costs for cleanup and restoration. Most homes in Gill are connected to a septic system. FOG are detrimental to septic systems because they solidify and accumulate in pipes. blocking the wastewater flow and disrupting the system's natural bacterial breakdown processes. This buildup creates clogs, reduces the septic tank's capacity, and can lead to costly backups. foul odors, and severe damage to



releasing harmful waste into the environment. Most homes in the Riverside neighborhood are connected to the Town's sanitary sewer system. Over time, FOG will accumulate along the walls of the sewer pipes. This will restrict the flow of wastewater and can cause sewer backups not only into your property, but throughout your neighborhood. Manholes can overflow into vards, streets, and storm drains, allowing FOG to contaminate local waters, including drinking water. Exposure to untreated wastewater is a public-health hazard. FOG also contributes to operational issues for our wastewater utility such as obstructing flow in the sewers, causing foul odors, interfering with equipment and treatment processes, along with potentially polluting rivers and streams. More than \$8,000 was spent in 2024 to remove several FEET of accumulated grease from the wet well (large underground tank where incoming sewage is stored before it is pumped) at the sewer pump station on Riverview Drive, FOG has the potential to cost the Riverside Sewer System thousands of dollars for unplugging or replacing grease-blocked pipes, repairing pump stations, and cleaning up costly and illegal wastewater spills. Excessive FOG in the sewer system affects Gill's sewer rate. Please do yourself a favor today by NOT flushing fats, oils and grease down the sink. The presence of FOG in septic systems and in the sewer system affects everyone in our community!

the leach (drain) field, potentially

Town Hall 325 Main Road Gill, MA 01354-9747

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The last Roving Gillbilly picture was of the Riverside Building, taken through the center of the grist stone out front