



THE

Gill Newsletter

Summer 2023 Issue

Disclaimer:

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Town Hall

WANTED: Town Animal Inspector

There is an opening in Gill for an Animal Inspector. Candidates should be reasonably experienced in the care and handling of domestic livestock animals, be generally experienced in their husbandry, and be knowledgeable in the handling and care of other domestic animals such as dogs and cats. Knowledge and experience with common “urban wildlife” such as raccoons, skunks and bats that expose domestic animals and come under the jurisdiction of the MA Division of Fisheries and Wildlife will prove beneficial in the collection of specimens for submission to the State Rabies Laboratory.

There are no scholastic, professional (ie: veterinarians) or farm experience requirements for the position of Animal Inspector. A generalized knowledge of domestic animals will prove very useful.

The primary duty of the Animal Inspector has recently become rabies control in the domestic animal population. Town Animal Inspectors are also responsible for barn inspections.

Anyone interested in applying for the position please contact Ray Purington.

From the Town Clerk

The Town Clerk has moved back to her office on the main floor of Town Hall. Many thanks to everyone who helped make the move upstairs and back down.

Despite having an election in a tent, our local election went off with very few problems, thanks to election workers and residents who faced that challenge with a positive attitude and good humor. Election

results are posted on the Town Website. Thank you to all workers and voters. Gill residents are the best!

A reminder that all dogs in the Town of Gill should at this point be registered for 2023, 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 years of age get one dog license per household at no charge. Registered service dogs are not charged.

This year’s dog license list will be sent to our Animal Control Officer by August 15th.

Exciting new news: on July 12th the new ImageCast Tabulator was delivered, which will be taking the place of our old AccuVote Tabulator. We will be debuting this new Tabulator for the 2024 Presidential Primary on March 5th, 2024. Don’t forget to vote and check out this new technology. Election officials will have had extra training before the Primary so they will be able to answer any questions you may have about the new Tabulator. This ImageCast Tabulator is second generation of the latest

Check in with the Gill Website

www.gillmass.org

for up to date news, announcements and contact information!



Tabulator offered by LHS and should last us many years.

This year at Town Meeting it was approved for the Town Clerk to hire an Assistant Town Clerk. If you are interested, please call the Town Clerk's office for information at 413-863-8103. ~ *Doreen J. Stevens*

From the Energy Commission

Did you know that Massachusetts is one of the most energy efficient states in the country? MassSave has helped make this happen by offering support to residents and business owners for a range of offerings from home energy assessments to rebates for weatherization, heat pumps, and qualified appliances. If the heat and humidity this summer has made you think about investing in an energy efficient system to help you cool your home then contact MassSave and learn more about heat pumps. They are extremely quiet and efficient units, powered by electricity, that heat your home in the winter and cool it in the summer. Contact www.masssave.com or send questions to the Gill Energy Commission at encom@gillmass.org and we'll be happy to help!

Square Dance at Gill Town Hall

On Saturday, September 23rd, from 7pm - 10pm there will be a Square Dance with live music and a caller at the Gill Town Hall. This **FREE** event will help kick off the annual Gill Fall Festival occurring the following day, Sunday, on the common in front of the Town Hall. The band for the Square Dance will be the Fall Town String Band with renowned Square Dance caller Doug Wilkins teach-

ing and calling the dances. Beginners welcome! There will be a 20 minute introductory lesson starting promptly at 7pm. This event is funded with a grant from the Gill Cultural Council and organized by the Gill Recreation Committee. It coincides with the Gill Fall Festival which is organized each year by the Gill Agricultural Commission. The Committee, the Council, and the Commission collaborating for a fun filled weekend! The event is Free and handicap accessible.

Gill Cultural Council News

Of the 18 projects funded for the 2023 Cultural grant cycle, many were presented/completed earlier this year. The following projects may still be enjoyed by Gill residents and others:

Antenna Cloud Farm 2023 season

Hawk Henries will be performing as part of the Pocumtuck Homelands Festival August 5th and 6th at Unity Park in Turners Falls. There may also be opportunities to engage with participants in the ACF Experimental Institute which occurs at Antenna Cloud Farm in Gill August 14-22. For more details please visit the Antennae Cloud Farm website. AntennaCloudFarm.com

10th Annual Pocumtuck Homelands Festival Sat. August 5, 10-7 and Sunday August 6, 10-5 Admission free, at Unity Park in Turners Falls

Organized by The Nolumbeka Project, Inc., there are activities, workshops, performances, and historical perspectives for the whole family to enjoy and appre-

ciate. For more information visit The Nolumbeka Project's website. NolumbekaProject.org

Hilltown Youth Theatre Summer Workshop performances August 3, 4, 5, 6

This program is open each year to youth from a wide area, including Gill. The program results in performances in Heath, MA. This year's program is based on Coraline by Neil Gaiman. For details and times visit their website. HilltownYouth.org

Community Square Dance at the Gill Town Hall September 23

Watch for details on the Town Website

Music at the Gill Annual Fall Festival September 24, Noon-3 PM

The Gill Cultural Council funded the music/musicians chosen by the Agricultural Council to perform at this fun event. Come on down to the Town Common and enjoy the festivities!

At our recent meeting we read the responses Gill residents sent to our annual Gill Cultural Council survey.

Two important take-aways from this year's survey:

- Gill residents would like to see more funded events occur within the town of Gill.
- The Cultural Council needs to work toward making it simpler for Gill residents to complete and return the survey.

The Cultural Council would like to see more grant proposals in each cycle for programs that are instigated by artists and cultural practitioners/organizations based in Gill.



In the 2023 funding cycle we funded every proposal that was submitted by someone associated with Gill. However, that was not a large number of proposals.

The application for the 2024 funding cycle usually becomes available on the Massachusetts Cultural Council website on September 1st, and the deadline for applications is usually in mid-October. Please spread the word to those in the town who might want to request funding for a project.

As always, we welcome feedback, ideas, and information about cultural issues and events in and around Gill. Contact us at LCC@gillmass.org.

Or **COME VISIT WITH US** at the **Gill Cultural Council Table** at the **Harvest Fair** on September 24th. We look forward to meeting you!

Four Winds School

We hope everyone is having an amazing summer! At Four Winds School we are busy preparing for the upcoming 2023-2024 school year, during which we will be studying 1750-the present in Humanities class and the physical sciences in Science class. Additionally, we are looking forward to some exciting partnerships this year, including working with Turners Falls' Carnegie Library to boost student reading engagement and doing our end-of-the-year capstone projects in partnership with LaunchSpace, a maker's space in Orange. If you have any questions about Four Winds School, please visit our website at www.fourwindsschool.info or send us any questions at fourwindsteachers@gmail.com. Have a great rest of the summer!!

2023 Graduations

Four Rivers Charter Public School

Kole Scott Broderick, Isaac Lee Morton, Grace Hannah Parzych and Olivia Noelle Vassar. Kole, Isaac, Grace and Olivia received a Fred W. Wells Scholarship.

Franklin County Technical School

Graduating from the Tech School this year were Matthew Marchefka, Robert Murphy and Samantha Peila.

Matthew Marchefka and Samantha Peila received a John and Abigail Adams Scholarship.

Robert Murphy received an Award for Outstanding Attendance, a Carpentry Lou Kozloski Memorial Award sponsored by Cows Building Supply and a R&R Window Scholarship.

Northfield Mount Hermon

Aaron Burstein, Tea Carboni-Pietras, Djibril Diaw, Hazel Peach Reeder, Meena Relyea-Strawn, Pearl Schatz-Allison and Tobiah Sol graduated from NMH in May.

Aaron Burstein received the Apple Award and the Ralph E. Jillson Award.

Djibril received the Head of School Award.

Hazel Reeder, Class Orator and Cum Laude Society, received the Alice B. and John E. Baldwin Award.

Meena Relyea-Strawn, Cum Laude Society, received the Florence Chapman Haslun Prize.

Pearl Schatz- Allison received the Thompson Art Prize.

Pioneer Valley Regional High School

James Staelens graduated from Pioneer this year. James received a John and Abigail Adams Scholarship, MCAS Mastery in English, Mathematics and Science Scholarship and Pioneer Valley School Scholarship.

Turners Falls High School

Nikolas Martin and Adeline Riley graduated from Turners Falls High School this year.

Class President and National Honor Society member Nikolas Martin received the Harriet A. Tidd Scholarship, Gilmond Lamore Memorial Scholarship, Mery O'Brien

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Memorial Scholarship, Madeline J. Carson Scholarship, Sandy Miner Scholarship, Connie Sicard Scholarship, T. F. Athletic Scholarship, Montague Elks Lodge 2521, and Elks National Foundation Most Valuable Student Scholarship and the Nate Lucas Memorial Scholarship.

Sustainable Yards

This article was submitted by Charley Cormier, who is a Gill resident and 10th grade student at Fours Rivers Charter School. Charley wrote this as part of a school project about plants and the environment and ways to have a more sustainable yard.

Having a yard that is constantly being mowed is not environmentally sustainable, but there are many alternatives that could change that. One simple way to make the yard more sustainable is to reduce the amount being mowed by half.

One alternative for less grass being mowed is to just let it grow, which can help with biodiversity in a few ways. More plants would be allowed to grow in place of the grass and can provide a place for endangered animals like birds to live.

Another option is to plant more native trees, shrubs and perennials in places that have mowed grass, which also helps pollinators and other species. Native plants are also adapted to their local climates, which helps them survive throughout a variety of weather conditions. That usually means they don't need as much care. On the other hand, non-native species may not be able to survive through the weather in climates that are not their native habitats. Non-native plants may need more care.

Maintaining lawns takes about 3 trillion gallons of water, 2 billion gallons of gas, and 59 million pounds of pesticides every year, but that number can be reduced by changes in human behaviors.

Although there can sometimes be a societal pressure to have a well-maintained lawn, it would be better for the environment if residents choose to have more sustainable yards. Remember, being sustainable doesn't mean that all grass has to stop being mowed, but think about ways you might change your lawn-care practices, and consider leaving half of your yard for the butterflies and bees.

From the FRCOG Public Health

As summer weather bleeds into the fall months, the FRCOG public health teams want to remind you that it's important to continue taking precautions against mosquito and tick bites.

For mosquitoes, decrease breeding grounds by removing standing water after rainstorms. Mosquitoes are most active from dusk until dawn; during those hours, consider covering up arms and legs. Use an EPA-registered insect repellent, which as one of the following ingredients: DEET, picaridin, IR3535, oil of lemon eucalyptus (OLE), para-menthane-diol (PMD), or 2-undecanone. Read more at mass.gov/mosquitoes-and-ticks.

The most important step to avoid tick-borne illness is to make a daily habit of checking yourself (and your children and your pets, if you have them), for ticks. Ticks often hitch a

ride after physical contact, so think like a tick and start checking feet, ankles, legs, groin, and then work your way up the torso, arms, neck, hairline and head. Read about more tick prevention steps on frcog.org/tick-safety.

Fall is for apples, pumpkins—and flu clinics! In past years, FRCOG has worked with local places, like Gill Elementary School, to host flu vaccine clinics. Clinic dates will be posted on the FRCOG website (<https://frcog.org/project/vaccine-information/>) as they become scheduled. [As they become approved and distributed, more information on COVID-19 vaccine boosters will be updated on that webpage, too.]

The CDC recommends that everyone aged 6 months and older receive a flu vaccine, as the flu vaccine is the best way to prevent the flu and its potentially serious complications. The CDC notes that “last [flu] season, people who were vaccinated against the flu were 40% - 70% less likely to be hospitalized because of flu illness or related complications.”

FRCOG public health nurses are in Gill every 2nd Friday from 10 am – noon at Stoughton Place Community Room; walk-in wellness hours are open to the entire community.

Gill Historical Commission

Hooked on History?

A farmer's day may never be done... but neither is a Gill resident/Gillbilly who is determined to look up one more deed, one more gravestone or one more diary entry in search of answers!



Do you love Mystery? History? Puzzles? If you answer yes to any of these, we invite you to **come join the Gill Historical Commission at our next meeting in September. No experience needed** – only a desire to learn more about Gill.

We don't pretend to have all the answers, but we do enjoy the search to find them and share with others. For example, are you eager to research the mystery of the **stone walls** around Gill? Does the **history of your own property** interest you? Maybe it's poring over **fragile pages of handwritten diaries** found inside house walls.

Perhaps it's **finding the answer** to questions like a recent email we received:

“I found this unusual rock and it **looks like a fossil**. Can you help identify it?” (And we did)

Or, “I want to buy a house in Gill and I was told it was a chocolate factory in the 70s. Is that true?”

(A **deed search** found that it was just a rumor.)

Pick your interests- and pick a commitment level that works for you: a few hours a month or a few hours a week. We are looking for a few more Gill residents to join our team.

Our members' interests and activities vary:

Organizing public events about Gill's history: geology, art, early and recent history

Representing Gill in research on past local indigenous/colonial battles (e.g. King Philip's War)

Restoration of items for the collection like our antique wood stove

Finding and acquiring historic items, correspondence, and diaries for Gill's collection

Photography of portraits, school pictures, events, historic items

Preservation of Gill's history through FaceBook and on our website postings for the online community

Maintaining historical family files of Gill residents for the community to use for research

Intrigued or interested? Come find us on FaceBook (Gill Historical Commission) and visit our webpage www.gillmass.org to find out what we've uncovered. Join us in person at our next meeting, **September 19th from 3 to 5 p.m. at the Riverside Municipal Building**, if you can!

Call Kit Carpenter at 413-863-2505 for information.

Save the Date!!

Come visit our GHC table at the **Gill Harvest Festival on Sunday, Sept. 24, 12 – 3 p.m. on the Town Common**. Stop by to say hi and bring your questions about Gill. We will have fossils, exhibits and items from our museum on display. Need a gift? We will have Gill history books and hand-crafted maps by a local artist for sale. Learn about GHC, our current projects and about different ways to become a member. Hope to see you there!

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4th Annual Gill Harvest Festival

Sunday September 24, 2023 from 12-3 PM

The Common, Town Center, Gill

Fire Department and The Gill Tavern will offer food and drink • Farm activities for all ages! • Gill farmers will display the fruits, vegetables, and meats of their labors • Tractors to climb and hay wagons to ride • Search for coins in the sawdust • Hay Toss • Live Music! • Visit with friends and neighbors • Plus more, much more!

All those interested in displaying farm or farm-related products please call an Ag Commission member or go to the town website. Ag Commission members are Ray Steele, Roger Augustine, Tom Chalmers, Dick French, Ed Golembeski, Hannah Soll, and Gary Stevens.

Are you 80+ years old?

GILL NEIGHBORS can provide:

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Medication pick-up at
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Rides to visit friends or family at
local healthcare facilities

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