



THE

# Gill Newsletter

Spring 2018 Issue

## Disclaimer:

The opinions expressed in this newsletter are not necessarily those of the editors, the organizing committee or town officials and should not be construed as such. Although we work to produce accurate and typographically correct copy, we and our advertisers cannot be responsible for errors or the accuracy of materials submitted to us.

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## Town Hall

### Annual Town Meeting

This year's Annual Town Meeting will be held on Monday, May 7th at 6:30 PM at the Town Hall. As the meeting warrant, motions, and explanations become available, they will be posted to the Town's website and on our Facebook page.

In addition to the usual budget matters, this year's Town Meeting includes warrant articles on a variety of topics, including: accepting a gift of 0.08 acres of land on River Road near Main Road, adopting a local excise tax on retail sales of marijuana in Gill, appropriating funds toward the Town's 225th Anniversary celebrations (including fireworks), authorizing the Selectboard to participate in contracts to aggregate the electricity load of Town residents and businesses, and adopting Mass. General Law chapter 90 section 18B allowing roads to be designated as "Safety Zones" with enforceable 20 MPH speed limits.

### Comcast Buildout – Info Meeting

Comcast Cable will hold an Information Night on Wednesday, May 30, 2018 from 7–8 PM at the Town Hall. Representatives from Comcast will be present to answer questions, provide information about their products and services, or make an appointment for a construction estimate for those homes and businesses Comcast has identified will require additional construction. This is a drop-in event, primarily intended for homes and businesses which are part of Comcast's cable expansion in Gill.

## Sewer Rates

As reported in the Montague Reporter's March 1st coverage of a Montague Selectboard meeting, the Town of Montague has experienced a significant loss of revenues for operating that town's wastewater system. The recent closure of the Southworth paper plant accounts for roughly \$200,000 of lost revenue, and another \$345,000 of revenue was lost with the suspension of a program for treating solids from other communities. It is expected Montague will need to increase its sewer rates this fall, and a 45% increase has been discussed by Montague town officials.

This is troubling news, especially for the 113 homes and businesses in the Riverside area served by the Town of Gill's sewer system. The system collects to a pump station on Riverview Drive, where the waste is pumped beneath the river and into Montague's sewer system for treatment. Montague charges Gill for the service, and the expense is passed on to the sewer users by way of Gill's own sewer rate. In recent years, as Montague's rates have increased, Gill's rates have followed suit. It is too soon to know what the impact will be on Gill's sewer rates. However, given



Check in with the Gill Website

[www.gillmass.org](http://www.gillmass.org)  
for up to date news,  
announcements and  
contact information!





the potential for a sizable financial impact on so many Gill households, it is important to spread the word and begin talking about what can be done.

### **Vacancy – Gill Finance Committee**

There are two vacancies on the Finance Committee. If you might be interested in serving on this committee, please contact Lynda Hodsdon Mayo, Town Clerk, at 863-8103 or [townclerk@gillmass.org](mailto:townclerk@gillmass.org). Lynda will put you in touch with the Town Moderator, who makes the appointment. 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.

### **Agricultural Commission Seeking Members**

The Agricultural Commission has several openings. The principal purpose of the AgCom, according to our Town Bylaw, is to "support agriculture and other farming activities in the Town of Gill."

The group generally meets once per month. If you are interested, please contact Ray Purington at Town Hall (863-9347), or any of the AgCom members listed on the Town website.

*Ray Purington, Administrative Assistant*

### **Town Clerk**

The lingering cold weather of 2018 makes it hard to believe that we are already in Town Meeting and Election time. First, a reminder: be sure you have returned your census

forms and you have also registered your dog. We are up to 250 licensed dogs in Gill but other years we have had over 300 so there are still unlicensed dogs out there. Please be sure to come in soon.

A special voter registration session for those who are not currently registered to vote will be held at the Town Clerk's office on May 1st, from 9 AM until 8 PM. Remember that you can come to the Town Clerk's office anytime it is convenient for you, Monday through Thursday, 9 AM to 4 PM before May 1st, to be qualified to vote at Town Meeting this year.

To register to vote, you must be a U.S. citizen, a resident of Gill, and at least 18 years old on or before the town meeting/election. You may register in person or by mail (postmarked no later than the final registration date).

### **Annual Town Meeting**

The opening of the Annual Town Meeting is May 7, 2018, Monday evening at 6:30 PM at Town Hall on the Second Floor.

### **Annual Town Election.**

The Annual Town Election will be held on May 21, 2018 from Noon to 8:00 PM at 196A Main Road, the Town Municipal Building, in the Fire Station.

You may vote absentee if you are unable to vote at the polls on election day due to (1) absence from Gill during normal polling hours, (2) a physical disability that prevents you from going to your polling place; or (3) religious belief. To vote absentee at Town Hall, contact the office to make

arrangements to vote at a time that is convenient for you, or to have a ballot sent to you.

### **Town of Gill 2018 Ballot:**

The offices on the ballot this year include:

#### **Selectboard:**

**Sewer Commissioner**, three year term, currently held by John R. Ward

**Moderator**, three year term, Isaac A. Bingham

**Assessor**, three year term, vacant

**Cemetery Commissioner**, three year term, currently held by Joan L. Pillsbury

**Cemetery Commissioner**, two year term, Shirley E. Flagg

**Tree Warden**, three year term, Roger L. Augustine

**Board of Health**, three year term, currently held by Randy P. Crochier

**Library Trustee**, three year term, Kimber Sprankle

**Town Clerk**, three year term, currently held by Lynda Hodsdon Mayo.

*Lynda Hodsdon Mayo, Town Clerk*

### **Board of Assessors**

May 1, 2018 at 5 PM is the deadline for FY2018 Abatement Applications or Exemption Applications to be submitted for Assessors' determination. These applications can be found at the Gill web site.

On Wednesdays and Fridays throughout April and May, our consultants from Patriot Property



will be doing re-inspections to satisfy the requirements of the Massachusetts Department of Revenue. They will be verifying the data that affects the assessed value of the property in Gill. They will also be updating information related to building permits submitted during 2017. A complete inspection consists of an exterior as well as an interior inspection. Typically these inspections take a few minutes and consist of a walkthrough of your basement and living areas. If you would like to set up an appointment, please contact the Assessors' office at 863-0138. It is mutually beneficial that we view the property to ensure accurate information. Your assistance in this effort is greatly appreciated as we strive to maintain the accuracy of our parcel data.

Also, there is a vacancy on the Board of Assessors, which is a three member board that meets every other week. There is still time to be elected as a write-in candidate or to be appointed as an Assessor by the Select Board, which would allow you to try it out for a year and then be on the ballot next year. This is a stipend paid position and the current Board members would greatly appreciate the help of another member. Please call the office at 863-0138 if you have any interest or questions.

Office hours are Monday through Thursday 9:30 AM to 12:30 PM Board of Assessors meets on alternate Wednesday evenings at 5:30 PM 863-0138

*William Tomb, Chair  
Lynda Hodsdon Mayo, Pamela Lester*

## Energy Commission

The Gill Energy Commission continues to work on ways that we can improve energy usage in the town's municipal buildings while also saving money for the town. We completed the 2018 Competitive Grant, and it has been submitted to the Massachusetts Department of Energy Resources (DOER). If we are successful, we will receive financial assistance for projects at the Slate Library, Town Hall, and Riverside.

While we are working on ways to make town buildings more efficient, we are also open to ideas on how we can support all residents of Gill who are working to have homes that are more comfortable in the extreme seasons while also reducing heating and cooling costs. All homeowners in Gill should take advantage of the no cost home energy assessment - call 866-527-7283 or online at [www.masssave.com](http://www.masssave.com). You can get 75% off of insulation materials and labor, with no limit, through December 31, 2018. There is 100% off for the income-eligible. There are grants to remove asbestos and knob & tube wiring. Please go to the MassSave website and do some research! You can also watch this 6 minute home energy video: <https://vimeo.com/157777138> to get a sense of what a home energy audit is like.

If you have other ideas of how the Energy Commission can support residents of Gill, please send your ideas to the Energy Commission by emailing [encom@gillmass.org](mailto:encom@gillmass.org) or sending a note to our mailbox at Town Hall (325 Main Rd, Gill

**Doug's Auto Body**  
Doug Smith - Owner



MA Reg. #RS2190  
Ph: (413) 863-2785 39 Center Road  
Fax: (413) 863-0120 Gill, MA 01376

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Robin Paris  
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Janet Masucci, ABMP, NCTMB 413-863-8694 Nationally Certified Bodyworker since 1993

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Arthritis, Boosting Immunity, Depression, Headaches  
Insomnia, Low Energy, Stiffness, Stress, & more...



MA 01354). Come to our next meeting on Wednesday, May 16 at 5 PM to ask us questions or suggest some projects. If you are interested in joining our group please let us know!

*Vicky Jenkins, Claire Chang, Janet Masucci, Tupper Brown, Alden Booth, and Andy Cole*

## Police Department

### New Technology

The year 2018 started out with some major changes to the Gill Police Department. In January the department installed and activated new mobile data terminals in all department cruisers. These computers were purchased with support from the Selectboard and donations from the Northfield Mount Hermon School. Special duty ruggedized tablets with a cellular connection now allow all officers to query and generate police reports from the field. Special software, which ties into the regional dispatch center at the Shelburne Falls barracks, was provided by the Executive Office of Public Safety. This project is being utilized by our neighboring police departments along with Shelburne Control. With this new hardware and software our officers can communicate securely with area towns and dispatch. These tools will help our officers be more proficient while on patrol.

### Firearms Licensing Reminder

Firearms permits are scheduled the 3rd Monday night of the month from 4:30 to 6:30PM. These set times have improved our license renewal times with the state. If your permit will expire prior to the office

hours listed above, please contact Officer Nikol Schreiber directly to make an alternate plan. She may be reached by calling or texting 603-903-9853. No appointment is needed for renewals or new issue licenses on the scheduled nights.

## Town Forest

**Work Day on May 6!** An enthusiastic crew will be cleaning up trails after a long winter, posting new signs created by students at Turners Falls High School, and laying out new trails. Participating in trail maintenance is a wonderful way to spend a May afternoon out-of-doors, and we welcome all comers! Let us know if you'd like to be part of the crew. We will meet at 9:30 at the kiosk. [agordon49@gmail.com](mailto:agordon49@gmail.com)

## Energy Conservation

### Home Energy Conservation and Rain barrels too!

July 28 from 10 AM-Noon at the Riverside Municipal Building  
Learn how to save cash, protect the environment, and be more comfortable in your home. Reducing consumption is the best way to reduce energy costs. Come to the Riverside Municipal Building on Saturday, July 28, to watch a 60-minute video created by Janet Masucci. It is based on materials developed by Peter Talmage, PE, and a workshop facilitated by local builder Andy Cole, who specializes in building super-insulated homes.

The video helps to identify low-cost solutions so homeowners can prioritize how to best spend their

resources. Zero in on the most expensive places where your home loses heat. Information on low cost/no cost programs and rebates will also be covered.

At the conclusion of the video, a limited number of rain barrels with diverter kits will be available to those who have pre-registered for the low price of \$35. To register contact Janet Masucci at (413) 863-8694 or email [jmasucci@msn.com](mailto:jmasucci@msn.com)  
“Like” the Gill Energy Commission Facebook page to stay updated about new postings and offerings.

## 225th Celebration

The celebration of Gill's 225th anniversary continues! Raising our voices in song, dancing up a storm, gliding on the ice, we've come together to have fun and share community. We've swapped puzzles and may paddle on the river, attend a concert, or go to a picnic this summer. The newest addition to the activity list is an All-Town Read, in which we will all read the same book and then enjoy conversation about it. It's a little bit like a book club, but with unlimited membership. Read on your own timeline, at your own pace. For those wishing for discussion, opportunities to gather with others will be announced by the next newsletter.

Here are summaries of the two books selected by the Committee:

### Adult fiction: *The Red Garden*, by Alice Hoffmann

“Hoffman offers a fictional glimpse of small-town America, presenting us with some three hundred years



of passion, dark secrets, loyalty, and redemption in a web of tales where characters' lives are intertwined by fate and by their own actions. A young wounded Civil War soldier is saved by a passionate neighbor, a woman meets a fiercely human historical character, a poet falls in love with a blind man, and a mysterious traveler comes to town in the year when summer never arrives. At the center of everyone's life is a mysterious garden where only red plants can grow, and where the truth can be found by those who dare to look."

### **Young Adult fiction: *Someday*, by Jackie French Koller,**

In 1938, fourteen-year-old Celie must cope with leaving her Enfield, Massachusetts, home and her life-long friend, Chubby, as the day approaches when the Swift River Valley will be flooded to create a reservoir for Boston." This is a family-friendly read (if sad, given how we know this ends) that features an actual place that people could visit to hike and picnic.

Of course, you can read either or both! These books were selected both for quality and interest to people living in a small town, but also because they are readily available from a variety of sources. You can purchase the books, but there are also numerous copies at our local libraries. If you have a library card from any library in Massachusetts, you can use the online services of CWMARS to place a hold on a book. <http://www.cwmars.org>. Slate Library, our town library, can also help you obtain a copy. 413-863-2591

Regular format, large print, CD audio, and e-book are all available. There are also many online sellers offering used copies at fairly low cost, often with free shipping. If you are not a regular library patron, or need assistance in procuring a book, please contact the 225 Committee. One of the members would be glad to help. The more readers, the better! [gill225th@gmail.com](mailto:gill225th@gmail.com)

## **Old Time Church Picnic in June**

On June 24, the Gill Church will host an old-fashioned church picnic on the church property and the Town Common. Our goal, in keeping with the underlying theme as stated by the 225th planning committee, is to build community, celebrate Gill's history and have fun. We believe the picnic will fulfill each of these goals. Although still in the planning stages, this is the proposed agenda:

The event will begin with a regular church service from 10 to 11 AM. The service will include our friends from the Agape Baptist Church (Moldovan) youth choir. These young people are skilled and committed gospel singers and musicians, whose presentation will include both Romanian and English. Everyone is welcome.

The picnic will begin at noon, with the ringing of the church bell (225 times, of course), followed by an outdoor presentation by the choir which will include gospel, spirituals, patriotic and American folk tunes, plus some instrumentals. Lunch will be at 1:00. It is a BYOL

(bring your own lunch) event. Our hope is that the community will participate by bringing picnic baskets with their favorite lunches, a blanket or lawn chair, and a desire to enjoy some fun and relaxing community fellowship.

Following lunch, we plan to have more music and singing.

As a gift to the community, the church plans to supply water, lemonade and watermelon for refreshments, as well as bubble-blowing, jump ropes, sidewalk chalk (hopsotch?) and other activities for kids young in age and adults young at heart. The Friends of Gill plans to serve strawberry shortcake.

The last Sunday of June is the day when the Friends of Gill had traditionally sponsored a town picnic. This year it happens to be the 22nd anniversary of the reopening of the church and the beginning of the present church ministry. Among our goals in offering this event is to keep it simple, inexpensive and available to everyone. We are also hoping to have some church and town history material available from the church's own sources, and from both the Historical Commission and Slate Library.

## **Memorial Day Services**

Memorial Day services will be held Sunday, May 27, beginning at 10 AM at the Gill Church. Following the service we will gather across the street at the Veteran's monuments. A rose ceremony, flag-raising, gun salute and taps will take place. All are welcome. Gill veterans will receive a free "Gill Veteran" baseball cap.



## Bulky Waste

### Spring “Clean Sweep” Bulky Waste Recycling Day

Franklin County Solid Waste District’s Spring “Clean Sweep” Bulky Waste Recycling Day is Saturday, May 5, from 9 AM to noon, at three locations. The three drop-off sites are: the Buckland Recreation Facility at 66 Ashfield Rd. (Rt. 112 South), the Northfield Highway Garage at 49 Caldwell Rd., and the Whately Transfer Station at 73 Christian Lane.

Residents from any District town may bring bulky items such as tires, appliances, scrap metal, furniture, mattresses, carpeting, construction debris, computers, televisions, propane gas tanks, and other large items. Disposal fees apply for most items. Materials will be recycled whenever possible. Clean and dry (bagged) textiles and books accepted free for reuse or recycling.

Residents and businesses do not need to pre-register for this collection. Disposal fees, cash only, will be collected at each site. A complete list of prices for the most common items is online at: [www.franklincountywastedistrict.org/cleansweep.html](http://www.franklincountywastedistrict.org/cleansweep.html), and will be made available in mid-April to participating town halls, town transfer stations, and the District office at 50 Miles Street in Greenfield.

Did you know? Staples accepts computer equipment (no TVs) free of charge: call store for volume limits. Various charities and non-profits accept donations of working electronics, including local Salvation

Army and Goodwill stores. Before loading up your car, always call these sites to ask if they can accept your item.

For more information, call (413) 772-2438; email [info@franklin-countywastedistrict.org](mailto:info@franklin-countywastedistrict.org); or visit: [www.franklincountywastedistrict.org](http://www.franklincountywastedistrict.org). MA Relay for the hearing impaired: 711 or 1-800-439-2370 (TTY/TDD). The District is an equal opportunity provider.

## Common People Concerts 2018

### Season 12

**Where?** On Gill Common.

**When?** Summer Tuesday Evenings at 7:00 pm

**Cost?** None, but Friends of Gill will sell refreshments at concerts.

**Why?** Because Gill deserves lots of very good music.

**More info?** Contact Steve at [<damons\\_of\\_gill@yahoo.com>](mailto:damons_of_gill@yahoo.com)

**June 26** - A Natural Concert Band  
Rain site: United Church of Bernardston  
Funded by the A Natural Music School

**July 10** ~ Pat & Tex LaMountain Quartet  
Rain site: Gill Church  
Funded by the A Natural Music School

**August 7** ~ Monadnock Steel Drummers  
Rain site: Gill Church  
Funded by Gill Cultural Concert

## Elementary School Water

### From “Notes from the Gill Selectboard”

Reprinted from the Montague Reporter April 5, 2018

In case you missed it, this is an article on the water situation at Gill Elementary, as reported by George Brace.

(Ray) Purington ... said the town had received an Administrative Consent Order with Penalty (ACOP) document from the state Department of Environment Protection (DEP) pertaining to the well water treatment project at Gill Elementary. The ACOP calls for the town to submit a “substantially complete response” to a “permit technical deficiency letter” the DEP sent in September, and if signed, binds the town to a \$500 penalty for not responding to that letter by its January 12 deadline.

The water treatment project was begun in order to deal with readings of coliform bacteria in the school’s water in 2014 and 2015. These detections resulted in an Administrative Consent Order (ACO) from the DEP in 2015, requiring the town to install a treatment system.

In 2016, that ACO was amended to allow time for a redesign of the system to deal with elevated levels of iron and manganese. A revised plan was sent in, but the September 2017 letter stated that the DEP had determined that according to the manufacturer’s specifications, some of the equipment in the revised



plan was not intended to handle the iron and manganese levels present.

Purington reported that the equipment supplier has been giving one final look at a schematic provided by the well engineer with the requested revisions, and he would “hopefully” hear from the supplier and get a green light on that aspect of the project on April 3. He said that response should put the town in good shape to respond to the ACOP.

Purington suggested the board put off signing the ACOP until the following week’s budget meeting, at which time he would have more information. The board agreed.

## Honor Roll

### 2nd Quarter

#### Pioneer Valley Regional School

**Grade 11**

Honor: Jake Wallace

**Grade 10**

Highest Honor: Jasmine Terounzo

**Grade 8**

Highest Honor: Isaac Damon and Meena Relyea-Strawn

**Grade 7**

High Honor: Anna Baskowski

Honor: Samantha Peila and James Staelens

#### Turners Falls High School

**Grade 12**

Second Honors: Noah Courchesne and John Wheeler II

**Grade 11**

Third Honors: Reilan Castine

**Grade 10**

Third Honors: Mason Kucenski and Alyson Murphy

**Grade 9**

First Honors: Karissa Olson, Leah Timberlake and Olivia Whittier

Second Honors: Taylor Murphy and Hailey Wheeler

#### Great Falls Middle School

**Grade 7**

Third Honors: Dante Ruggiano

**Grade 6**

Third Honors: Jessica Tricolici

#### Northfield Mount Hermon Fall 2017 Semester

**Highest Academic Honors:** Maia Castro-Santos, Ella Bathory-Peeler, Althea Tierney, Emaline Relyea-Strawn, Heidi Leeds, Marina Keator, Noah Burstein, Peter Dowdy, Rebekah Keator and Sydney duKor-Jackson.

**Academic Honors:** Emily Majewski, Fiona Tierney, Katherine Majewski, Taylor Minshall, Audrey Corrigan and Connor Theriault.

#### Dean’s List

Ameilia Pelletier, a freshman at Worcester State University, was named to the dean’s list for the fall 2017 semester.

#### College Honor Roll

Stephen Filiault was named to the fall 2017 honor roll at the University of Dallas, TX. Stephen is majoring in economics and finance.

## Preventing the Misuse of Medications

As many of us have sadly become aware, the issue of misuse of prescription drugs and overdose is a serious public health problem in the United States and in Franklin County. Nonmedical use of pre-

scription drugs is highest among young adults, and each year many young children also accidentally ingest unsafe medications. Reasons for the high prevalence of drug misuse vary by age, gender, and other factors, but likely include ease of access.

Do you have prescription opioids, depressants or stimulants in your home? Here are three recommended steps to prevent the misuse of medications:

**Counting** includes not just knowing how many pills you have but keeping a record of your pill count with your bottle showing the amount remaining.

**Locking** means keeping all medications out of reach to household visitors, contractors, and family members. Through a grant from the Opioid Task Force of Franklin County and the North County Region, a limited number of free medication lock boxes are available to residents.

**Dropping** is proper disposal of medications that are no longer needed. Unused medication (no liquids or injectables) can be disposed of at any one of the Drug Drop-Off Boxes located at police stations throughout the region. The Gill Police Station does NOT have a Drop Box, but boxes are located at nearby police stations including Bernardston, Greenfield and Montague.

For more information on medication safety, disposal, or to request a medication lock box, please call FRCOG Cooperative Public Health Service Nurse Lisa White at 413-



665-1400 x 114, or stop by the community room at Stoughton Place, 12 Main Rd. in Gill, from 9-11 AM on the second Friday of each month.

## Housing Loans

### Zero-Interest Housing Rehabilitation Loans Available to Qualifying Gill Residents

The Franklin County Regional Housing & Redevelopment Authority (HRA) is administering a housing rehabilitation loan program on behalf of the Town of Gill. The program offers zero-interest, deferred-payment loans of up to \$35,000 to income-eligible residents to improve the safety and energy efficiency of their homes. For more information and to request an application, please call Jen at (413) 863-9781 ext. 137, or email [jmorrow@fcrhra.org](mailto:jmorrow@fcrhra.org). Income limits are based on household size: 1 - \$44,800, 2 - \$51,200, 3 - \$57,600, 4 - \$64,000.



## The Zoning Board of Appeals

Are you curious about how things happen in Gill? Are you looking to spend some time helping your community? Are you organized and detail-oriented? If you answered “yes” to any of these questions, then becoming an Associate Member of Gill’s Zoning Board of Appeals may be right for you. The Zoning Board of Appeals (ZBA) is the primary permit-granting

authority in Gill. The ZBA acts on Special Permit requests to allow a use in a particular area, reviews site plans to regulate the development of structures and sites to eliminate or minimize potential problems and nuisances, considers dimensional variance requests for land or structures, and acts on appeals from persons aggrieved by an order or decision of the Building Inspector or other administrative officials. Relatively recent deliberations include: the installation of the solar array on Northfield Mount Hermon School property, the redevelopment of the Mobil fueling station and The Mill convenience Store, and concert series at Antenna Cloud Farm.

Associate Members of the ZBA are volunteers appointed by the Board of Selectmen; they attend all meetings, and may serve as a voting member when one of the five regular members is not able to participate. Become familiar with the ZBA and prepare to fill a vacancy should one arise. Contact Ray at 413-863-9347 or Suzanne Smiley (ZBA Chair) at 413-863- 8174 if you would like to learn more.

## Gill Historical Commission

### Around Gill Center

In celebration of Gill’s 225th Anniversary, the Gill Historical Commission has hung a display of vintage photographs of places around Gill Center. Some show the early town landscape, and others, structures no longer there. The exhibit and its accompanying historical descriptions may be

viewed on the second floor of the Town Hall when meetings are not in session. The GHC hopes that residents will learn more about Gill and that they may add their recollections to our growing knowledge of Gill’s history. Thanks go to Lynn Stowe Tomb for her photographic work, to Pam Shoemaker for assembling information for the descriptions, to the Cultural Council for helping to finance this project, to the Selectboard for giving exhibit space, and to members of the GHC for helping to hang the pictures. One group of photographs shows Herbert B. Hastings and his blacksmith shop, the last one in Gill.

### HASTING’S BLACKSMITH SHOP

*January 20, 1886: A number of Gill citizens have formed a stock company and bought the old blacksmith stand formerly occupied by George A. Bates. They [will] erect a new building on the site 24 x 40, two stories high, with basement suitable for a blacksmith and wheelwright. The site is an excellent one on Beaver Brook in the center, which affords water power about two-thirds of the year. (Turners Falls Reporter)*

A 1905 deed documents the sale of the property “beginning with a walnut tree near a brook” and the Stratton tannery to Herbert B. Hastings, the last of the Center’s blacksmiths. His shop faced the Gill store across the street on the road to Morgan’s Ferry, now River Road. As a smithy, he was preceded by David Squires the first smith, Walter Brown, Enoch Hale, and George Bates. The blacksmiths, like the saddlers, coppers, grist and saw millers, wheelwrights, woodwork-





ers, and shop keepers, provided critical services to the developing community. Married to Grace May (Brown) in 1904, Herbert, age 34, is listed in the 1910 federal census with his wife Grace Mildred, age 20. Children: Marguerite H. (6), Robert N. (4), Elsie M. (2), and Evelyn A. (infant). He was self employed as a blacksmith and lived with his family in a mortgage-free home, on Boyle Road, current home of his granddaughter, Renee Jenkins. Born in Greenfield on May 30, 1876, with parents Marshall and Harriet M. (Grant) Hastings, he died in 1961 and is buried in Gill's Center Cemetery with other family members. Some Gill residents remember that he always had his shears ready to cut boys' hair. His presence is still present in Gill's center because he forged the ornamental iron letters and 1921 date that were hung on the front of the library.

### **225th poster**

The GHC invites you to enjoy the poster hanging between Ronnie and Lynda's offices in the Town Hall. The collection of pictures in the collage and the timeline give more details about Gill's history.

### **Riverside Book**

A few copies of the Riverside book remain for sale. If you would like a copy, you may find an order form at the Town Hall or on the Town of Gill website (<http://www.gill-mass.org/historical.php>) or email: [Lstomb@gmail.com](mailto:Lstomb@gmail.com).

**The Gill Historical Commission** Meetings are 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 preserving 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, please contact Ivan Ussach, chair; Kit Carpenter, Lynda Hodsdon Mayo, Bob Perry, Pam Shoemaker, Lynn Stowe Tomb, or Bev Demars (alternate).

## **Antenna Cloud Farm**

We're excited to announce the second season of Antenna Cloud Farm, a summer music festival, artists' retreat, and outreach organization located right here in Gill on the old Mackin hilltop farm. We have an exciting array of world-class musicians coming to enjoy the peace and beauty of Gill while working on their music, and then performing a concert in our 80-person capacity Great Room.

With concerts running from June through September, we will be presenting an all-female South American folk-pop collective, a celebrated wine-glass-playing virtuoso, an award-winning classical string quartet, and a community picnic and bluegrass concert celebrating the town of Gill's 225th Anniversary, to name just a few. Two of our concerts will be outdoor celebrations, timed to the sun setting over the hills of Franklin County.

We will also send each visiting artist into local schools and community

organizations to give interactive performances and workshops. This year we are offering some Reduced Admission tickets for \$5, for patrons who otherwise can't afford the \$15 general admission. We also have \$10 tickets available for juniors (14 and under). All proceeds go directly to artists and event expenses.

Our concerts feature outdoor receptions with an array of local food and drinks from nearby farms and artisans, including Jen's Bread and Upinngil Farm. Festival grounds open an hour before each concert. Picnickers welcome!

Visit [www.antennacloudfarm.com](http://www.antennacloudfarm.com) for more info. We hope to see you this summer!

## **Trash Talk**

On a Saturday in early April three Gill women gathered trash bags, donned heavy gloves, and, starting at the high point on Barney Hale Road, they made their way to River Road and picked up trash along the way. This photograph shows how much they collected from both sides of the road. The main offenders: nips bottles, coffee cups, bottles that contained frightening liquids, and cans, cans and more cans. As a bonus, a five-minute walk on the logging road took the cleanup team to a place where someone had dumped four big white trash bags that had been ransacked by animals.

Since we are talking trash, Emily Samuels shared a poem she wrote last summer as she biked through our lovely town.



## Only You Can Prevent Roadside Litter by Emily Samuels

Every can on the side of the road is a bad thought.  
I cannot fathom what it takes to finish a drink  
open a window  
and toss the can into the neighborhood  
Because  
it is someone's neighborhood  
and it makes me think that if you are  
a person who does this  
you would have no care in seeing  
your own habitat  
blighted  
by the sight  
of trash

I wonder about this as I ride my bike,  
moving at a pace that allows me to notice  
small things.  
I see your cans  
flung indiscriminately  
and they don't seem small.  
Conspicuous, pernicious, they carry  
a message in a language  
I can't seem to translate.

Is it a disregard for the environment?  
Are you thinking it a retort to the advocates of the bottle bill  
who are willing to pay more to encourage  
people like you  
to return containers?  
Are you thinking you are not part of the world around you?  
That you have no place in it, and therefore no need to  
to consider your effect on it?  
Is it more important to you to keep your car free of debris than the highway  
free of rubbish? Are you just lazy?  
I don't have these thoughts.  
I think they are bad thoughts, and while you may not be a bad person,  
it is a bad thing that you do.

We don't offer much of an aesthetic education, so perhaps it isn't your fault.  
Maybe you just don't see what it is you do.  
But that makes me wonder  
what do you see?  
Do you notice the tiger lilies, so profuse along the side of the road?  
Do you see the myriad shades of green and shadowy dapple of leaves?  
Have you seen the sunbeam that seems so substantial in its radiance  
that it calls for a transport?  
Who are you?





## Cycling in Gill

It's getting to be that time of year when the body yearns for a bike ride — you know the feeling! It goes all the way back to our glorious childhoods with those big black indestructible Schwann Typhoons and banana seat hybrids.

“Stop right there, Alden. If this is about biking in Gill I have something to say before this goes any further. I live “UP IN GILL, remember? Biking the hills around here isn't an option for my legs, lungs and butt — conversation over.”

Ah yes, the inevitable “hill” excuse. And to a point it's a legitimate concern for Gill wannabe cyclists but there are options so hear me out on this. Yes, I've taken many a bike trip from home on Grassy Hill — who knows that spot in Gill? — to Greenfield and back, day and night, winter and summer, and many times in between. But I also take my time and I've got a bit of a beer “engine”, if you get my “mid” drift. I'm not in any amazing shape, just maybe a little more patient than some with my own physical limitations and willingness to take 45 minutes rather than 15 to get to town.

Imagine a warm summer evening and I'm on route home from Greenfield (having just climbed up Main Road from Turners Falls over that majestic bridge.) Now I'm coasting north on Main Road past South Cross road on my left and the Safety Complex on my right. Then by that gorgeous meadow to the east with coyote filled woods

along the ridge, continuing on between Dick and Emily's houses, and then gliding downwards by Keith and Colleen's farm (and their delightful pile or rich compost awaiting our gardens). Around the curve and descending again to “Unadilla Valley” where the Tavern's warm glow tempts me to stop for a beer.

But no, I know where I am in Gill. I'm about to bottom out as I go past Slate library and over the bridge so I don't need to stop and re-fuel my ample engine. Here I am at about the lowest elevation in town, which brings us back to those hills of Gill, whatever direction I go from here. (Here's where you say, “I told you so”). But we still actually have some “less hilly”\* options. (Note: “less hilly” in Gill could be thought of as “more hilly” along the river in Sunderland or out in Ohio somewhere but you didn't hear me say that.)

For instance, if you hang a left at Boyle road, it's quite gradual up to the elementary school and then a nice flat ride all the way to North Cross. Hang a left and with just a small burst of determination (and a downshift of all those gears you paid for), patiently work your way up to the flats of Bernardston past Dan Flagg's eggs for sale on your left, then thru the West Gill Rd intersection and over the RR tracks (much improved crossing now, bless the train lords) and on to Route 10. You have just completed a reasonable ride from the mighty Unadilla to the wide, flat shoulders of Bernardston Road and, if you are so inclined, on to Greenfield

via Barton and Country Club roads heading south from Bernardston center. Maybe it's not the most direct route from Gill to Greenfield but still a lovely 12-mile jaunt that takes advantage of the plains and minimizes crossing peaks and valleys.

Cycling gets you thinking about and literally feeling the topography of where you live and what directions you are traveling. What does it mean to go north west to Bernardston vs. southwest to Turners or northeast towards Northfield? When do I leave one river valley and enter another? You start to notice that most of the major ridges and rivers tend to run north south which is why it's generally more hilly riding east/west in New England rather than north/south.

And then there's the more direct route to Greenfield. Ah, now the other shoe drops. At least I can say it's fun going down to Turners on Main Road. For every uphill that makes you stronger there's a thrilling downhill that keeps you riding. But even for this most direct route to Greenfield you have an option — your car or truck... (did I really say that?) ...with your bike inside or on back. Yes, I confess I've done it many a time especially if I'm short on time or energy. It doesn't have to be all or nothing — the bike or the car. Use a combo of the two and throw your bike in your pick-up or on a bike rack, and drive to Stop & Shop. Park there and ride all over town doing your errands or completing your commute to work. There are so many places in any town or rural



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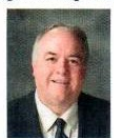
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A few words from Alden —

If I'm lucky enough to be known for one thing in my lifetime I'd like it to be that I got some folks on their bikes, at least once or twice, or maybe for years in all seasons. To that end feel free to pick my brain about local rides, weekend trips or longer in NE, inexpensive ways to stay warm and dry on a bike, routes and trips I recommend and what to take along, bikes and bike maintenance, etc. I'll speak to groups or individuals with wit and humor (or with whips and chains) — whatever it takes. Contact me at: alden.booth@gmail.com

byway where you can park for a few hours or a whole day, and finish your commute or errands by bike. Ten (hilly) miles in the car, and 5 (flatter) miles on the bike is so much better than 15 miles in a car with no exercise on either end and a beautiful day just outside your windshield. And, as a bonus, it's a gradual, more enjoyable way to get stronger for those hills.

So if you are going to stay off your bike again this year, you will have to come up with an excuse other than "those hills". There are many ways to minimize or avoid all-together the hardest hills of Gill (especially if you live in Riverside). Get a tune-up at one of our nearby bike shops and consider getting to know your bike again. And it's especially appealing to ride a bike when doing so means less time in a car. A rack over your back tire and a few bike bags to hang on it and you can carry most everything you need.

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# 2018 GMEF Annual Gala

## “The Music of John Denver”

### Featuring Jim Curry & his band

What better way to celebrate spring than to experience the music of John Denver with the heartfelt message of caring for the earth and each other. On Saturday, April 28, 2018 @ 7:00 PM tribute artist Jim Curry will make a rare New England appearance at the Gill-Montague Education Fund Annual Gala performing “The Music of John Denver”. Chris Nole, Denver’s piano player for the last five years of his career, will join Curry for the concert.

**Advance tickets are \$20 – At the Door \$25**

*Tickets are available at these locations:*

- Hillside Pizza** - Bernardston
- Bobby’s Hair & Nail Salon** - Northfield
- Gill Elementary School** - Gill
- Weatherheads/Dunkin Donuts** - Erving
- World Eye Bookshop** - Greenfield
- Carol’s Beauty Nook, Greenfield Savings Bank and Scotty’s Convenience Store** - Turners Falls

or call Sandy at 863-7296

For more information about our Annual Gala, Tickets, and Student Enrichment Grants go to our website:

**[www.thegmef.org](http://www.thegmef.org)**

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# LET THE LANDSCAPE SPEAK

## The Importance and Meaning of the Indigenous Ceremonial Landscape



### FEATURED SPEAKER

#### **Doug Harris**

Deputy Tribal Historic Preservation  
Officer, Narragansett Indian Tribal  
Historic Preservation Office

Friday, May 18, 2018  
6:00 p.m.

Riverside Municipal Building,  
54 French King Hwy.

The Indigenous Ceremonial Stone Landscape is of cultural significance to the Tribes of the northeast. Mr. Harris will explain why these ceremonial features should be preserved, and what to do if you would like to help protect this important landscape.

This program is supported in part by a grant from the Gill Local Cultural Council, a local agency which is supported by the Massachusetts Cultural Council, a state agency.

This program is also sponsored by the Gill Historical Commission.



# Gill 225

## EVENTS CALENDAR

**APRIL 19, 2018**

**Photograph exhibit** "Around Gill Center" opens, Town Hall, 2nd Fl

**APRIL 27, 2018**

**Arbor Day Tree Planting and Time Capsule** burial at the Town Common. See the website and Facebook page for more details as the date approaches.

**MAY 3, 2018, 8:30 pm**

**Gill Tavern Trivia Night** to benefit the 225th celebration. Put together a team and join in the fun!

**MAY 5, 2018**

**Community Wide Tag Sale** — Host a sale at your location and benefit from joint publicity and signage!

**MAY 7, 2018, 6:30 pm**

**Annual Town Meeting** with special guest Stan Rosenberg

**MAY 18, 2018, 6:00 pm**

**Let the Landscape Speak: The Importance and Meaning of the Indigenous Ceremonial Landscape** — talk by Doug Harris, Deputy Tribal Historic Preservation Officer, Narragansett Indian Tribal Historic Preservation Office, at the Riverside Municipal Building.

**MAY 27, 2018, 10:00 am**

**Gill's Memorial Day Observation** — Ceremonies start at 10:00 am with services at the Gill Church, and then continue across Main Road at the Veterans Monuments.

**JUNE 3, 2018, 2:00 - 3:00 pm**

**Open Forest Guided Walks/Talks** — Park and meet at the kiosk on Hoe Shop Road and explore some of the new trails at our Town Forest.

**JUNE 23, 2018, 10:00 am - Noon**

**Gill Conversations: Neighbors Helping Neighbors: Past, Present, and Future** at the Slate Library. Meet fellow Gill residents and talk about what needs our neighbors have now, learn about how neighbors helped each other in the past, and share ideas about how we might best meet our neighbors' needs in the future. Refreshments will be served. Kim Sprankle can arrange transportation if needed — call 863-2975 or email ksprankle84@comcast.net.

**JUNE 26, 2018, 7:00 pm**

**Common People Concerts: A Natural Concert Band** on the Gill Common (rain site United Church of Bernardston) Funded by A Natural Music School.

**JULY 10, 2018, 7:00 pm**

**Common People Concerts: Pat & Tex LaMountain Quartet** on the Gill Common (rain site Gill Church). Funded by A Natural Music School.

**JULY 7, 2018, 5:30 pm**

**Gill's own music festival and retreat, Antenna Cloud Farm, will host a community event** to commemorate Gill's 225th Anniversary. Join us at 5:30 p.m. for a BYO picnic supper and party, then stay to hear an outdoor concert at 7:00 p.m. by esteemed local folk musicians Chris Brashear and Jim Watson. If it's not too hot out, we'll have a post-show bonfire. \$15 per ticket. More info at [www.antennacloudfarm.com](http://www.antennacloudfarm.com)

**JULY 21, 2018**

**Gillbilly Paddle on the Connecticut River** – Isaac Bingham is organizing our first water event of this special year. The current plans have the flotilla of canoes, kayaks, rowing shells, and boats launching from an as yet undisclosed location, and concluding just after paddling under the spectacular French King Bridge, at the confluence of the Millers River and the Connecticut River. Transportation for boats and people back to their cars up river will be provided. As an extra treat, the launch will start with a bang, provided by Ray Steele's cannon.

**JULY 28, 2018**

Coinciding with the Franklin County Boat Club's Christmas in July festivities, we are planning a **Picnic and Pig Roast at the Riverside School**, including live music and Wagon Wheel ice cream. Details will be announced as we near the date. We are exploring the possibility of having tables for Gill crafters to display and sell their creations. If you are interested in having a table, contact Robin Paris, [robinasa@yahoo.com](mailto:robinasa@yahoo.com)

**AUGUST 7, 2018, 7:00 pm**

**Common People Concerts: Monadnock Steel Drummers** on the Gill Common (rain site Gill Church). Puzzle, game, and book swap will also be part of this event. Funded by Gill Cultural Council.

**NOVEMBER 3, 2018, 10:00 am - Noon**

**Jigsaw Puzzle Swap** – Puzzled with what to do with the jigsaw puzzles you have already completed? We can help! Bring your adult and children's puzzles to the Library in their original boxes, in good condition AND with all their pieces. Exchange your puzzles one for one and go home with some new challenges. If you can, please wrap a rubber band around each puzzle box to keep contents secure.

### Donations Toward the 225th Anniversary Celebration

Interested in supporting these and other events during our 225th year? Donations may be mailed to or dropped off at the Town Hall, 325 Main Road, Gill, MA 01354.

Checks should be payable to Town of Gill, with "225 Donation" in the memo line.