



THE

# Gill Newsletter

Winter 2019 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 Clerk

### Annual Town Election

The Annual Town Election will be held on Monday, May 20, 2019 from noon to 8:00 p.m. at 196A Main Road, the Town Municipal Building, in the Fire Station. The deadline for voter registration to vote at the Annual Town Election will be 8:00 p.m. on Tuesday April 30, 2019 at the Town Clerk's office.

The offices and candidates on the town ballot this year include:

**Selectboard, Sewer Commissioner,**  
three year term,  
Randy Crochier, Incumbent.

**Assessor,**  
three year term,  
William Tomb, Incumbent

**Cemetery Commission,**  
three year term,  
Gary Bourbeau, Incumbent

**Board of Health,**  
three year term,  
Douglas Edson, Incumbent

**Library Trustee,**  
three year term,  
Vacant

**Treasurer,**  
three year term,  
Veronica LaChance, Incumbent,  
Undecided

The offices and candidates on the school ballot this year include:

**Gill-Montague Regional School Committee,** three year term,  
Jane Oakes, Incumbent

**Gill-Montague Regional School Committee,** one year term,  
William Tomb, Incumbent

Nomination papers are available at the Town Clerk's office through March 28th.

I would like to remind voters that absentee ballots will be available for anyone unable to be at the polls on election day due to hardship or because they are out of town. Please contact the Town Clerk.

Also, remember that we have a voting machine that allows voters to sit instead of stand, a touch screen to record choices, and a recorded listening device to lead you through the ballot. All this can make the voting process easier. Voters who used the machine at the last election found it to be very helpful. People will be available to help you use it, if you wish.

*Lynda Hodsdon Mayo*

Town Clerk

Office hours are Monday-Thursday 1:00 to 4:00 p.m. Monday evening 4:00-5:30 p.m. and other times by appointment. 413-863-8103



Check in with the Gill Website

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





## Board of Assessors

The Assessors presented the data and recommendations for the 2019 tax rate to the Select Board at a special public hearing during their regular meeting on January 7th, 2019. The Select Board approved the recommendations. The Division of Local Services within the Department of Revenue approved the data on January 17th, 2019.

Gill's 2019 tax rate will remain at a single rate.

The total 2019 taxable valuation:

Real Estate:

\$149,613,676.00

Personal Property:

\$8,694,960.00

Total of Personal and Real estate:

\$158,308,636.00

The assessed value is \$17.26 per \$1,000 based on valuation on January 1, 2018. A fair market value on sales was derived from analysis using sales from July 2016 to July 2018. If you have any questions please contact the Assessors' office Monday through Thursday from 9 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. at 863-0138.

The Board of Assessors will be sending out a Form of List to be returned by March 1, 2019 to document all Personal Property subject to taxation in the Town of Gill.

The Board of Assessors are also continuing to work out in the community to record project progress up to the January 1, 2019,

deadline date that becomes the bases of all the assessments for the 2020 tax bills.

Meetings for the Board of Assessors continue to be held in the meeting area of the first floor of Town Hall, instead of in the basement office space, due to the moisture and mold issues. Efforts are being made to construct an alternate area in which to have an office space for the assessors.

*Board of Assessors*  
*William Tomb, Chair*  
*Pamela Lester*  
*Tim Storrow*

## Vietnam Veterans Annual Tribute

All members of the Gill community are invited to attend the annual Vietnam Veterans ceremonial tribute at the Greenfield Veterans Memorial Park. The ceremony is one of the few that will be conducted in Franklin County. The ceremony will be held on Vietnam Veterans Day Friday, March 29th, 2019 at 10:00 a.m. and will include guest speakers and a presentation of a wreath on the Vietnam Memorial in the Veterans Park.

We will respectfully honor the:

- Nine million Americans serving during that time
- 2.7 million U.S. service members who served in Vietnam
- 7 million Americans living today
- 58,000 whose names are memorialized on a black granite wall

in our nation's capital

- 304,000 who were wounded
- 1,253 Missing in Action (MIA) heroes who have not yet returned to American soil
- 2,500 Prisoners of War (POWs)

Any questions regarding this ceremonial tribute can be addressed the Upper Pioneer Valley Service Office at (413) 772-1571. RSVPs are not needed to attend the ceremony.

## Gill Cultural Council Awards

Mass Cultural Council's Local Cultural Council Program distributes funds to local and regional cultural councils, which then re-grant funds to arts, humanities, and interpretive science projects in their own communities. (Check out [www.mass-culture.org](http://www.mass-culture.org) for more information about this important local cultural council program.) The Gill Cultural Council met in December to consider distribution of this year's allotment of money from the state; we received grant applications from twenty individuals and organizations seeking almost \$12,000. Because we had only \$4,700 to distribute, we had to make some hard choices. Based on the Council's stated priorities, the following grants were awarded:

**Sorrel Hatch: A Farm-to-Table program**, in collaboration with Upinngil Farm, for the 5th graders at Gill



**Gill Historical Commission:** a Historical District sign for the Town Common

**Hilltown Families: support for the online newsletter, "Learn Local. Play Local"**. This provides information about cultural events for families.

**Steve Henderson: Theater performance** at the Gill-Montague Senior Center

**Michi Wiancko: Antenna Cloud Farm concerts**, musician residencies, and community outreach

**Amy Gordon: an after-school drama program** for Gill students grade 4-6, culminating in a performance at Town Hall

**Pioneer Valley Symphony:** Program for 3rd- 4th graders to learn about the symphony, and to attend a Pioneer Valley Symphony concert

**Steve Damon and the Gill Anniversary Committee:** 2 contradances in Gill

**John Root:** Program in Gill on how to attract butterflies and birds

**Racial Justice Rising:** support for monthly programs on racial justice, in Greenfield

**Nolumbeka Project:** support for Native American Homelands Festival in Turners Falls

## Town Forest

The Town Forest Committee is developing a new trail in the forest. It can be picked up near the beginning of the Esker Trail, across the road from the kiosk. It winds past wetland and ferny

ledges, comes close to Bascomb Hollow Road, heads up along an esker through tall pines, looping back to the Esker Trail. Very pretty, and though sandwiched between Bascomb Hollow and Hoe Shop Roads, this trail feels remote and quite different from other parts of the forest.

## 2019 GMEF Annual Gala

### Dancing Dream ABBA Tribute Band



On Saturday, April 27, 2019 @ 7:00 p.m. at the TFHS Theater, "Dancing Dream – ABBA Tribute Band" brings the brilliance of the pop sensation ABBA to the Gill-Montague Education Fund Annual Gala.

Of all the treasures Sweden has heaped upon the world — from Volvos and tiny, fish-shaped candies to Björn Borg — no gift has touched more people more profoundly than the music of ABBA. Now "Dancing Dream – ABBA Tribute Band" brings the brilliance of the pop sensation to the Turners Falls High School Theater. Expect to hear hits like "Dancing Queen," "Take a Chance," "Fernando," "Mamma Mia" and many more at this high-

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energy concert filled with lush harmonies, elaborate costumes and iconic choreography.

Advance tickets are \$25. They are available the GMEF website – [www.thegmef.org](http://www.thegmef.org).

Our collaborative effort with Underwriters, Corporate Sponsors, Advertisers, and Tier-givers have resulted not only in quality entertainment for our communities but also made available more than \$119,480 of student enrichment grants.

For more information visit our website - [www.thegmef.org](http://www.thegmef.org). Watch a “Dancing Dream” video; discover the depth and variety of our Student Enrichment Grants; and purchase advance tickets at our website. Watch for Ticket Outlets listing on March 1st.

## Green Burial Soon to be an Option in Gill

Are you looking for a different and more environmentally-friendly way to be buried when the time comes?

Green/natural burial consists of placing an un-embalmed body directly in the ground in a biodegradable shroud or casket made of cardboard or pine. A practice long familiar to many cultures around the world, it was also common in the United States prior to the Civil War. Burial at 3.5 to 4 feet deep, using only biodegradable materials, allows the soil to be enriched as aerobic bacteria enhance the natural decomposition. Local flat stones mark the graves and GPS coordinates identify the grave position.

In the summer of 2016, the Gill Cemetery Commission did a survey to determine interest in a green cemetery in town. Although there were only 36 responses, 22 (61%) were in favor of a local green burial option. In September of 2016, the Town of Gill assumed ownership of the Riverside Cemetery and the adjacent wood lot. The Cemetery Commission then began the work of creating a green cemetery in these woods; last spring a Franklin County House of Correction crew started the project by clearing brush. Since there is still more to be done, a volunteer workday will be held in early spring - watch the papers for the date.

Since most people prefer their final resting place to be in their own hometown, many Massachusetts towns have responded by offering the option of green burial: Amherst (Wildwood Cemetery), Brewster, Cambridge (Mount Auburn), Chesterfield, Chilmark, Hawley, Heath, Leyden, Shutesbury, South Wellfleet, Springfield (Hillcrest Park), Warwick, Wendell, Wenham, Westfield, West Tisbury, Williamsburg (Mountain Street Cemetery), and Worthington. Many more are considering this option.

For more information about green burial, consult these websites: Green Burial Massachusetts ([greenburialma.org](http://greenburialma.org)) or Green Burial Council ([greenburialcouncil.org](http://greenburialcouncil.org)).

## Hazardous Waste Management

Franklin County Solid Waste Management District’s Household Hazardous Waste Drop-off Sites are open regularly year-round for convenient disposal of common hazardous wastes. These permanent “Supersites” are located in at the transfer stations in Bernardston, Colrain, and Conway.

Any resident from a town belonging to the Franklin County Solid Waste Management District may utilize these Supersites. Member towns of the District are: Bernardston, Buckland, Charlemont, Colrain, Conway, Deerfield, Erving, Gill, Hawley, Heath, Leverett, Montague, New Salem, Northfield, Orange, Rowe, Shelburne, Sunderland, Warwick, Wendell, and Whately.

The Bernardston facility, located at the town transfer station on Nelson Drive (off S. Merrifield Road), is open the first Saturday of each month. The facility’s winter hours, for December through April, are from 9 a.m. until 11 a.m. The facility’s summer hours, for May through November, are 8 am until noon, the first Saturday of each summer month.

The Colrain facility, located at the town transfer station at 7 Charlemont Road, is open from 8 a.m. until 4 p.m. every Saturday.

The Conway facility, located at the town transfer station at 186 Old Cricket Hill Road, operates 11 a.m. until 2 p.m. the first Saturday of every month.



The Supersites provide District residents with the opportunity to dispose of the most common hazardous materials, including: motor oil, oil filters, anti-freeze, oil-based paint, household batteries, fluorescent light bulbs, PCB ballasts, thermometers, thermostats and mercury-containing switches. Fees apply for disposal of some items: cash or check only. For more information, call 772-2438 or see [www.franklincountywastedistrict.org/supersites.html](http://www.franklincountywastedistrict.org/supersites.html).

For hazardous wastes other than these, the District's annual Household Hazardous Waste Collection is held each fall at GCC and Orange Transfer Station. The 2019 date is September 21, 2019. Residents of most District towns may participate for free.

For more information on disposal of hazardous materials, recycling, composting or other solid waste issues visit: [www.franklincountywastedistrict.org](http://www.franklincountywastedistrict.org); email [info@franklincountywastedistrict.org](mailto:info@franklincountywastedistrict.org); or call 413-772-2438. Hearing impaired individuals can contact the District through the Massachusetts Relay at 711 or for TTY/TDD access dial 1-800-439-2370.

## Honor Roll

### 1st Quarter

#### Pioneer Valley Regional School

##### Grade 12

High Honor: Jake Wallace and Rylie Zager

##### Grade 9

Highest Honor: Meena Relyea-Strawn

Honor : Issac Damen and Robert Kenyon

##### Grade 8

Highest Honor: Anna Baskowski  
High Honor: Samantha Peila and James Staelens

#### Turners Falls High School

##### Grade 12

Second Honors: Reilan Castine  
Third Honors: Bryce Waldron

##### Grade 11

Second Honors: Alyson Murphy  
Third Honors: Mason Kucenski

##### Grade 10

First Honors: Karissa Olson, Leah Timberlake, Hailey Wheeler and Olivia Whittier

#### Great Falls Middle School

##### Grade 8

Third Honors: Matthew Marchefka

##### Grade 7

First Honors: Regan Marshall and Jessica Tricolici  
Second Honors: Otilia Bartolon and Owen LaValley

##### Grade 6

Second Honors: Josiah Little and Zachary Zilinski

## Deans' List

Joey Lawton-Curtis has made the Deans List at Champlain College in Burlington, VT for the fall 2018-2019 semester.

Emily Minor, attending Franklin Technical School, has won a John and Abigail Adams scholarship. She scored in the top 25 percent of students in the district with a combined score at the advanced and proficient levels on the grade 10 MCAS tests in English and Math.




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## Pancake Breakfast

Friends of Gill will have our spring pancake breakfast on March 23 from 8 AM to 10:30 AM at the Gill Church.

**Please join us.**

We are very lucky to have many volunteers who help us in our endeavors to raise money for local scholarships and requests for Gill activities. We would welcome new members to our committee at any time.

Scholarship applications will be out around the end of February. Please have your high school seniors apply.

We hope to see you for breakfast on March 23rd.



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## Music Honors



Isaac Damon and Meena Relyea-Strawn of Gill recently participated in the band at Castleton University's Honors Music Festival. The students play French horn and alto saxophone, respectively. The band consisted of 106 grade 9-12 youngsters from VT, NY, NH, and MA. Both students are freshmen and play in the band at Pioneer Valley Region School, under the direction of Tim Burns. The trip was sponsored by Steve Damon and the A Natural Music School, based in Gill.

## Riverside Book

A few copies of the Riverside book (fifth printing) 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.gillmass.org/historical.php>) or email: [Lstomb@gmail.com](mailto:Lstomb@gmail.com).

## The Gill Historical Commission (GHC)

Meetings are on the third Tuesday of each month at 3:30 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 Kit Carpenter, Lynda Hodsdon Mayo (alternate), Bob Perry, Terri Rice, Pam Shoemaker, Lynn Stowe Tomb, or Bev Demars (alternate).

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## Historical Commission

### Gill Center Historic District

With approval this December by the National Park Service, the Gill Center is honored by being listed on the National Register of Historic Places. The Gill Center Historic District will join the previously approved Riverside Village District on the National Register. The Gill Historical Commission is looking at options and costs for signs to be placed in both districts. Ideas for signage designs are welcome.

### Membership

If you are interested in membership on the Gill Historical Commission, please contact any member for more information. GHC currently has several openings and is looking for residents who are interested in Gill's history and participating in projects to preserve and educate about it.



## Provisions Carried on the Ship “Mary and John” in 1630

For every 100 passengers, not counting babies and small children, each ship in the Winthrop Fleet carried certain provisions. The Mary and John, a ship sailing from Plymouth, England, to Boston in 1630, would have loaded the following:

- 11,000 gallons of beer
- 1,500 gallons of water
- 1,200 loaves of bread
- 22 hogsheads of beef
- 40 bushels of peas
- 20 bushels of oatmeal
- 1,400 salt cod
- 96 pounds of candles
- 1 ½ bushels of mustard seed
- 20 gallons of oil
- 2 firkins/casks of soap
- 2 rumlets (casks) Spanish wine  
1,000 lbs. cheese
- 20 gallons brandy
- 42 wine gallons of beer vinegar

The above provisions could have weighed in excess of 150,000 pounds. There were about 15 sailors for every 100 passengers, so they required similar provisions. Since the crew had to make the return crossing to England, each was counted twice. The total provision load may be been about 200,000 pounds or 100 tons.

In addition, for every 100 male passengers over 16 years, a quantity of weapons was packed. The Mary and John is estimated to have had 50 males so the list included:

- 4 cannons
- 5 full muskets
- 45 lbs. of shot
- 5 horn flasks
- 40 bastard muskets
- 50 swords and belts
- 6 barrels powder
- 30 suits of armor
- 20 pikes, and 10 half pikes

Clothes, bed ticks, mats, shoes, spoons, bottles, kettles, and other necessities were stowed. The settlers also took seeds for anticipated crops, grape vines, apple seedlings, herbs for dyes, and domestic animals such as cattle, sheep, and goats. The feed for these animals added more weight to the ship’s cargo.

These estimates may be credited to Burton W. Spear, researcher and expert on the “Mary and John,” which brought a number of colonial ancestors from England to New England. Some settled in Dorchester and eventually migrated to western New England and Gill; another group walked from Dorchester and settled in Windsor, Connecticut, before going west into New York State and north up the River Valley to Hatfield and on to Deerfield and Gill.

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