



THE

Gill Newsletter

WINTER 2023 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.

NEWSLETTER COMMITTEE

Susan LaScala
Editor

Harry van Baaren
Layout

Barbara Watson
Advertising

Bev Demars

MAILING TEAM

Jeffrey Blomstedt

Betsy Evans

Lissa Greenough

Vicky Jenkins

Colleen Lilly

Emily Samuels

Anna Steele

Dorothy Storrow

Barbara Watson

Anne Wiley

Town Hall

Platinum Anniversary

Belated congratulations to Gloria and George (Manny) Holmes, who celebrated their 70th wedding anniversary on December 27, 2022! What a fantastic milestone to reach.

Winter Parking Ban

Just a reminder, the winter parking ban is in effect through April 15. There is NO on-street parking allowed between the hours of 1 AM and 6 AM. Your cooperation is greatly appreciated.

Winter Sand for Driveways

The Highway Department keeps a pile of winter sand (sand & salt mix) at the Public Safety Complex (196 Main Road) for Gill residents who need a few buckets for driveways and walkways. Use the driveway on the left (Fire Department side of the building), and look for the pile behind the building, off to the left. The pile may not be used by snow removal companies and other private contractors.

Fred W. Wells Trust Scholarship

Applications for 2023-2024 Fred W. Wells Trust scholarships are now available on the Town's website www.gillmass.org in the News section. Scholarships are available to graduating seniors and full-time college students who have resided in Gill (and other eligible towns) for at least two years immediately before application. The completed applications must be postmarked on or before March 20th. If you are unable to download or print the application, please contact Town Hall to make arrangements to pick one up.

Tax Bills

The second tax bill for FY23 will be mailed in February. Residents are reminded tax bills are not sent to mortgage companies. It is your responsibility to notify your mortgage company and ensure an on-time payment. If you use your bank's online bill payment to send a check, be sure to include the current Bill # as part of the memo line. Online bill payment is also available by following the link on the homepage of the Town's website.

If you mail in your tax payment, include the tear-off portion of the bill, and write the Bill # on the memo line of your check. If you wish to have a receipt of payment, be sure to enclose a self-addressed, stamped envelope. Please note, the Tax Collector no longer has a PO Box; payments should be mailed to 325 Main Road, Gill, MA 01354.

To drop off a tax payment or motor vehicle excise bill when the Town Hall is closed, you may use the secure drop box located next to the back door of the Town Hall.

*Thank you,
Tom Hodak, Tax Collector*



Check in with the Gill Website

www.gillmass.org
for up to date news,
announcements and
contact information!





Board of Assessors

The Board would like to thank Pam Lester for her excellent service on the Board of Assessors. She has been an invaluable asset and wonderful colleague. Unfortunately, Pam has decided that she will not be seeking reelection at the end of her term this year in May. Anyone interested in assessing local real estate, who would like to join the Board of Assessors, please contact Doreen Stevens, Town Clerk, for information on getting on the Town's ballot. You may also contact Diane Sumrall, Assistant to the Board of Assessors for more information about the position.

The Board of Assessors would also like to let residents know that Real Estate Research Consultants, Inc., (RRC) will be coming to Gill to develop and implement a personal property revaluation program for all locally assessed personal property in Gill as of January 1, 2023. Real Estate Research Consultants, Inc. is a full-service revaluation firm, specializing in personal property discovery and valuation. Their work will include a door-to-door visit of the personal property accounts in Town. The Board of Assessors will notify residents when they come to Town to begin work.

Gill Fire Department

The Gill Fire Department Receives Grant Funds

The Gill Fire Department recently received a Massachusetts Fire Safety Equipment Grant of \$21,000 for battery-powered vehicle extrication tools (spreaders, cutters, and rams), also known as the "Jaws of

Life." This life-saving equipment will be placed in service on the rescue vehicle donated by Northfield Mount Hermon School. In addition, a Federal Emergency Management Agency Grant of over \$15,000 was used to purchase a Lund University Cardiac Assist System (LUCAS Device). Designed by researchers at Lund University in Norway, a LUCAS is an automatic device that delivers consistent and uninterrupted chest compressions during emergency cardio-pulmonary resuscitation, commonly known as "CPR." The LUCAS Device has been shown to provide higher quality chest compressions than human hands and improved patient survival rates after sudden cardiac arrest.

New Fire Engine on Order

Gill's firefighters extend heartfelt thanks to the town's citizens who chose to finance a new four-wheel drive pumper/tanker truck that will improve access in winter and in hard-to-reach areas. This new vehicle is on order and awaiting assembly at Pierce Manufacturing Inc. in Florida. The fire engine, which is scheduled for delivery in March 2024, will replace a 1986 KME pumper/tanker currently in use.

Join Your Community Partners at the Gill Fire Department

The Gill Fire Department is always looking for community-minded members who want to help their neighbors. Are we looking for you? Our members receive training in all aspects of firefighting and basic first aid, including CPR and defibrillation. What if you don't want to run into a burning building? There are plenty

of other ways you can help out. The GFD needs trained First Responders to answer medical calls and individuals who just want to help out at an emergency scene or in the fire station. If you are interested in becoming a member, please call the fire station at 413-863-8955 for more information, or stop by the station at 196A Main Road during our weekly drill sessions. Drills take place on Wednesday evenings at 6:30. Check it out. It's one of the most rewarding ways a citizen can help our community.

Open Burn Season

Gill residents may apply online for a single-day burn permit between January 15 and May 1. Online burn permit applications must be submitted at <http://www.fcburnpermits.com> between the hours of 8:30 a.m. and 1:00 p.m. on the day you wish to burn. Open burning must be done between 10:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. Fires must be tended at all times by a responsible adult and at least 75 feet from all dwellings. Permit holders are allowed to burn brush, cane, driftwood and forestry debris (but not from commercial or industrial land clearing), agricultural materials, including fruit tree and bush prunings, raspberry stalks, and infected bee hives for disease control, trees and brush from agricultural land clearing, and fungus-infected elm wood, if no other acceptable means of disposal is available. Residents may not burn leaves, brush, trees, cane or driftwood from commercial or industrial land clearing, grass, hay, leaves, stumps or tires, construction materials or demolition debris, or household trash.



Visible Street Numbers

Gill's new street number signs make it easier for first responders to find you in an emergency. Please try to keep your signs visible this winter. Try to fix any signs that are bent or damaged by plows this winter. If you are unable to repair a number sign, please call the fire station at 413-863-8955 and fire-fighters will fix or replace it for you.

Please Keep Hydrants Clear

Please keep snow and ice away from the fire hydrants in your neighborhood. Ideally, hydrants should be completely exposed to the ground, with all couplings visible. A clear path to the hydrant from a street and/or sidewalk will make this important water source more rapidly available to firefighters.

Keep Warm. Keep Safe.

Heating is the second leading cause of fires in the home in Massachusetts. Home fires peak from December through February when the cold weather drives people indoors, heating systems are in regular use, and people turn to alternatives such as space heaters and wood or pellet stoves.

No one thinks fire will happen to them, but it is more important than ever to consider safety when heating your home. Give furnaces an annual check-up because efficiently running furnaces save money and prevent carbon monoxide poisoning. Certified professionals will check chimneys for cracks in the mortar and clean accumulated creosote to prevent chimney fires.

Heating is also the leading cause of carbon monoxide poisoning in homes, so make sure you have both working smoke and carbon monoxide alarms on each floor of your home. Carbon monoxide is an invisible killer because

it has no color, taste, or smell, and the symptoms are just like getting the flu. Test all the alarms once a month and change alkaline batteries twice a year. Replace smoke alarms that are older than ten years and CO alarms older than seven years. When replacing alarms, look for models with a ten-year, sealed, non-replaceable, non-rechargeable battery.

Store wood outdoors and pellets for stoves indoors, but away from heat sources. Dispose of the ashes in a metal container, with a secure lid, away from the house. A single ember can stay hot for days without being detected and easily fanned back to life. So many fires have started when ashes were placed inside cardboard boxes, paper bags or plastic containers, and then stored inside the garage, the breezeway, or under the porch.

Have a safe, comfortable heating season. For more information on winter heating and fire safety, visit www.mass.gov/keepwarmkeepsafe.

Ice Safety Tips

Ice on moving water in rivers, streams and brooks is never safe. The thickness of ice on ponds and lakes depends upon water currents or springs, depth, and natural objects such as tree stumps or rocks. Daily changes in temperature cause the ice to expand and contract, which affects its strength. Because of these factors, no one can declare any ice surface to be absolutely safe.

For your safety, never go out onto the ice alone. A companion may be able to rescue you or call for help if you fall through the ice. Always keep your pets on a leash. If a pet falls through the ice do not attempt to rescue your pet, call or go for help. New ice is usually

Doug's Auto Body
Doug Smith - Owner



MA Reg. #RS2190

Ph: (413) 863-2785 39 Center Road
Fax: (413) 863-0120 Gill, MA 01354

Painting Contractor & Retailer Since 1900
HIC Lic. 100326

* Commercial
* Residential
* Industrial



Christian S. Couture
President
chris@couturebros.com
Lead Paint Renovator R-I-18398-10-04197

4 Generations Over 120 Years!


Tel: **413-863-4346** - Fax: **413-863-3740**
400 Avenue A-P.O. Box 270 - Turners Falls, MA 01376
www.couturebros.com

Neil Zilinski & Sons
Small Engine Repair

Owner
Neil Zilinski
413-498-2605
655 Main Road Gill MA 01354
Service for your small engines

BY APPOINTMENT ONLY

INFO@REBUILD.NET
413-863-8316



RENAISSANCE BUILDERS

WWW.REBUILD.NET • PO BOX 272, TURNERS FALLS, MA 01376



Giving
Tree
School

3 Wood Avenue, Gill, MA • (413)863-9218
www.givingtreeschool.org

Empowering children with conflict resolution
and problem-solving skills since 1976.



Healing Body
Mind, Heart
and Soul

**Aches & Pains, Allergies, Anxiety,
Arthritis, Boosting Immunity,
Depression, Headaches,
Insomnia, Low Energy, Stiffness,
Stress, & more...**

Janet Masucci 413-863-8694 JanetMasucci.com
64 French King Highway, Gill, MA



stronger than old ice. As the ice ages, the bond between the crystals decays, making it weaker, even if melting has not occurred. Beware of ice covered with snow. Snow can insulate ice and keep it strong, but it can also insulate ice to keep it from freezing. Snow can also hide cracks, weak, or open ice. Any slush is a danger sign, indicating that ice is no longer freezing from the bottom and can be weak or deteriorating. Ice formed over flowing water is generally 15% weaker than ice on still water. Finally, ice seldom freezes or thaws at a uniform rate. It can be one foot thick in one spot and be only one inch thick only ten feet away. Stay safe and think twice before you step out on ice.

Antenna Cloud Farm

Greetings from Antenna Cloud Farm! Things are as busy as ever here on the hill, though we are trying to squeeze in some time for hibernation, rest, and reflection as well. We just hosted the Experimental Institute Winter Retreat, which brought our 2022 summer cohort back to Gill for a long weekend of reconnecting, music-making, cooking and eating, hiking through our beautiful and serene Town Forest, and lots of wonderful conversation. We are currently deep into artistic planning for the Antenna Cloud Farm 2023 summer festival and institute season. Sign up on our mailing list to receive artist updates, exciting news, and the occasional recipe or creative recommendation. Sending our best wishes to the whole community for a warm and healthful winter season. See you after the snow melts!

Slate Library News

Did you know that Slate Library has a “Library of Things”? Stop by and view our directory of electronic items that you can check out and try at home. We have trail cams and video cameras, projectors and screens. We also have four sets of snowshoes, rated for different weights. If you have always wanted to try snowshoeing with your family but aren’t sure if everyone will love it, why not check them out from the library and try them out? We aim to provide materials that we can share in our community. We would love to hear your suggestions in person or via email. Contact us a gill.slate.library@gmail.com

On Saturday, February 11 from 10 a.m. - 2 p.m. the library will host a drop-in Valentine card-making workshop. Come play with colored paper, stamps, ribbon and glitter and craft some special cards for your loved ones. We welcome all ages and abilities and all materials are free! While you are here, check out some of our new titles including *The Seven Moons of Maali Almeida* by Shehan Karunatilaka, *Hester* by Laurie Lico Albanese, *Mad Honey* by Jodi Picoult, and *Babel* by R.F. Kuang. In non-fiction you will find titles such as *An Immense World: How Animal Senses Reveal the Hidden Realms Around Us* by Ed Yong and *Strangers to Ourselves: Unsettled Minds and the Stories that Make Us* by Rachel Aviv. Our graphic novel collection for YA readers continues to grow and we have a fresh crop of winter picture books, including *Snow Horses* and *A Thing Called Snow* which are perfect for our youngest readers.

The Gill-Montague Education Fund GALA

Faithfully presents “An Eagles & Journey Experience

On Saturday, April 29, 2023@ 7:00pm in the TFHS Theater, “Faithfully” will present “An Eagles & Journey Experience” for the Gill-Montague Education Fund Annual Gala.

Faithfully will perform the music of The Eagles & Journey with material from all eras of the band’s career, encompassing the band’s biggest hits as well as fan favorites, including: “Tequila Sunrise,” “Desperado,” “Open Arms,” “Don’t Stop Believin” and many more. Faithfully re-creates the music of The Eagles & Journey making them a hit with fans for their high energy show, spot-on vocals, and superior performance.

Advance tickets are \$30. They are available the GMEF website – www.thegmef.org.

Returning in April 2023 after a 4-year hiatus generates mixed emotions – excitement, hope, and uncertainty – to name just a few. The impact of the pandemic on K–12 student learning was significant. During the past 4 years, we have continued to award 3 (\$250) scholarships, roses to our graduates and assisted our staff financially with enrichment projects.

Highway Department

The Highway Department is very pleased to announce the arrival of the town’s new 2023 International Model HV507 single axle dump truck. The truck is equipped with an 11’ power angle front plow and also an 11’ wing plow. The body is made of



stainless steel and is an All Season Body, meaning the sander is built into the body. The purchase order was signed on 7/19/2021. Build times were changing on a daily basis due to supply chain shortages of computer chips, engines, axles and labor. We received the truck on 10/6/2022. This truck replaces our 2009 Sterling single axle dump truck.

The Highway Department is also excited to say that the new 2022 International Model CV515 cab and chassis is in Vermont and being up fitted. We are hopeful to receive the truck in the next 4-6 weeks. This vehicle will replace our “front line vehicle,” a 2005 Ford F550. The F550 will then be re-purposed and turned into our bucket truck to be used for tree work.

Sewer System Problems at Riverside Sewer Pump Station

The Riverside Sewer Pump Station continues to have problems caused by clothing and other debris (rope, diapers, t-shirts, sports bras, underwear and other clothing) being flushed into the sewer system. These items get tangled up in the two pumps at the Pump Station and cause the pump motors to overheat and even to burn out! Repairs due to inappropriate materials being flushed have cost users of the Riverside Sewer System nearly \$10,000 to rebuild or replace the two pumps and are a chief reason why the sewer rate will need to increase again later this year.

PLEASE: If it doesn't come out of your body, don't put it down the toilet.

We have had 14 incidents since July 1st causing 62 man hours and over \$1800 in labor to clear the pumps of debris. Since February of 2022 when the issues began, we have totaled over 173 man

hours and over \$5000 in labor costs. The Highway Department has seen the issue get “worse and worse.”

Gill Energy Commission

How I Made My House Warm in the Winter and Cool in the Summer on a Budget

by Janet Masucci

This year I got two new heat pumps and now my home is 100% electric, although I still have an oil burner for back up. Of the \$10,500 I paid for the last two heat pumps, I got a \$10,000 rebate from MassSave! Even though it was a brutally hot summer, I was comfortable in my home and office. It was necessary to have a no cost Home Energy Assessment first and tighten up my nearly 100 year old home but it has been well worth it, financially and comfort-wise. Also, because I opted to get my electricity from “Gill Community Choice Power Supply,” I am paying less for electricity. (It couldn't be easier to opt in) <https://colonialpowergroup.com/form-gill/>

I've had several of these Home Energy Assessments. The first time, they air sealed the basement and attic (for free) to keep the conditioned air from escaping above and the cold air from being pulled in below. Just that made a big difference. I took their recommendation to put 12 inches of cellulose in the attic. The worker said the only insulation I had up there was all my boxes of stored stuff. There was nothing under the floor boards! They also gave me enough CFL light bulbs to replace my incandescents and a water-saver shower head. I already had a programmable thermostat that cost me over \$50, so I didn't need the free one they offered.

Renaissance Excavating
Complete Site Work
 Septic & Drainage Systems
 Sand, Gravel, & Loam



Main Road
 Gill, MA 01376
 Douglas Edson 413-863-4462

THE SPIRIT SHOPPE
 SPIRITS, BREWS & FINE WINES



6 Main Rd
 Gill, MA 01354
www.thespiritshoppe.com

Follow the Sun Into the Future




GREENFIELD SOLAR
 2 Fiske Avenue, Greenfield, MA 01301 (413) 772.3122

Bakery Open Year Round!
 411 MAIN ROAD, GILL
 OPEN 7 DAYS, 8 AM - 7 PM
 413-863-4431
WWW.UPINNGIL.COM




UPINNGIL
Food You Need from the Land You Love

NEIL A. ZILINSKI
ELECTRICIAN
 RESIDENTIAL*COMMERCIAL
 FULLY INSURED* FREE ESTIMATES
24 HOUR EMERGENCY SERVICE
 OFFICE:413-498-2605 * CELL: 413-834-5780
 GILL, MA LIC# 39553E
FOR ALL YOUR ELECTRICAL NEEDS



THE WAGON WHEEL



39 French King Highway, Rt. 2
 Gill, MA
 (413) 863-8210
 Jon Miller Carolann Zaccara



The second time they came, I had them insulate behind the knee walls on the second floor and construct an insulated box to go over the pull-down stairs to my attic. This time I replaced the CFL bulbs with LEDs and got some smart power strips. I have tin on the walls in most rooms on the first floor and I didn't want to damage it, so this last time I had them blow cellulose from outside into the walls. MassSave paid 75% of the cost of the materials and labor for the insulation each time.

MassSave helps people save money on heating and cooling their homes. Pricing is consistent among all the approved contractors through the program, so there is no need to contact multiple contractors to get the best quote. If you haven't had a free home energy assessment yet, or if you haven't had one in a while, there are BIG \$ reasons to do so! An Energy Specialist can assess your current energy use, help you develop a plan to make your home more energy efficient, and educate you on rebates and incentives you may qualify for. If you rent or own a 1-4 unit building you qualify. Customers who meet household incomes guidelines may also be eligible for enhanced offers through the Mass Save Income Eligible Program

Energy Bills Through the Roof?

To schedule your no-cost virtual or in-person Home Energy Assessment, start by calling 866-527-SAVE (1-866-527-7283).

If you prefer to work directly with one of their approved Home Performance Contractors, find one here: <https://www.masssave.com/residential/find-a-contractor-hpc>

Would you like to join the Energy Commission? We have a vacant spot and would enjoy the company of another person who is interested in helping the town save money through energy conservation activities. Email encom@gillmass.org if you are interested!

Cultural Council News

Each year the Gill Cultural Council receives funding from the Massachusetts Cultural Council to support Arts and Cultural projects that will benefit the residents of our town. This year we received 27 proposals, and we chose to either fully or partially fund the 18 projects listed below. Some projects occur in Gill, and others occur in the surrounding area- but we feel will be of interest to our town residents. We hope everyone in Gill will find something on this list that is of interest to them!

Antenna Cloud Farm (in Gill)

2023 Season of Concerts and Community Events

Pioneer Valley Symphony, Inc.

“The Mystery of the Missing Music”
2023 Education Concert

LAVA (Local Access to Valley Arts)

On The Boards/Off The Shelf Play Readings by diverse local playwrights, and contemporary classics

Musica Franklin, Inc.

Community Concert Series

The Nolumbeka Project, Inc

Full Snow Moon Eastern Woodlands Gathering and Social Dance (held at Greenfield Community College)

The Nolumbeka Project, Inc

10th Annual Pocumtuck Homelands Festival (occurring in Turners Falls)

Hilltown Youth Performing Arts Program, Inc.

Hilltown Youth Summer Theatre Workshop

Silverthorne Theater Company, Inc.

Intimate Apparel (Performed at Hawks and Reed in Greenfield)

The Performance Project, Inc.

“Mother Tongue” by First Generation (performance at the Shea Theatre in Turners Falls)

Serrilli, Elyssa

When We Came Together: The Building Bridges Mural Journey (documentation in book form and online)

Town of Gill Recreation Committee

Community Square Dance at the Gill Town Hall

Mennella, Cheli

The Three Billy Goats Gruff: In Silhouette (performed as part of Greenfield's Winter Carnival)

Deerfield Valley Art Association

Lecture Series at Fiddleheads Gallery in Northfield “The Intersection of Art and Disciplines that Touch Our Lives--Music, Science, Religion, History, Medicine”

The Friends of the Great Falls Discovery Center, Inc.

The Power of Place: Finding a Sense of Belonging Through Story, Conversation and Song / A keynote concert that celebrates our connections to Franklin County (at the Shea Theatre in Turners Falls)

Gill Historical Commission

Preserving the Past for Tomorrow

Great Falls Creative Movement

How do YOU dance? Creative Dance program for students at Gill Elementary School



Gill Agriculture Commission

Music for Gill Annual Fall Festival

Richie Richardson

FPFW 2023 Upcycle Fashion Show
(occurring in Turners Falls)

The Gill Local Cultural Council needs more members!

Come join a small group of your neighbors once a year to review projects being proposed and help decide which are the most worthwhile for our community. All ages are welcome, 16 and up. Please let Ray Purington, Town Administrator, know of your interest at 413-863-9347.

Gill Elementary School

The Gill Elementary School (GES) students and staff returned from the holiday break in full swing after having a “December to Remember” filled with spirit days and holiday joy. During the month of January, the students are focusing on a “Polite Words Challenge” wherein they use their manners and polite words throughout the day, never knowing when they might be heard by a staff member. They will be awarded with a coin to use to get a book from the school book vending machine. After receiving their book, they get their photo taken and it is hung in the school hall for all to see. A number of students have earned coins and it has been encouraging to hear all the “polite” words around the school such as “Thank you,” “Excuse me,” “Good morning (afternoon or day),” and “You’re welcome.” We are truly blessed to have such wonderful students at the school.

In other news, the teachers, along with the PTO, are organizing a pilot after-school program here at GES to run between February and April

breaks. This will give the students an opportunity to explore some activities we normally do not get to do during the day. We hope to expand the program in the future to include more activities and find various ways to engage the students with the community.

As a part of the Gill-Montague Regional School District, GES has representation on the district Social-Emotional Curriculum Committee. This committee is working together to define what social-emotional learning is and to identify a curriculum that can be used K-6 district-wide. With everything that has happened in the world over the last two years, it is important to address our students’ social-emotional needs as well as their academic needs. As the committee works together over the next few months, we will share the outcomes with the greater community.

Also, we want to say thank you to Northfield Mount Hermon School for their partnership with us. We had the String Orchestra perform for us back in the fall. Additionally, the top Spanish students are coming every Friday to work with classes on learning Spanish language and culture. We are so grateful for them and look forward to continuing to do more with NMH in the future.

Lastly, we continue to be grateful for the support of the community. Without it, we would not be able to do what we do with our students.

Master Lic.4121701 Established 2013

FREELAND
Gill, Mass
EQUIPMENT SERVICES

Factory Certified **413-824-5140** Fully Insured
Tractor and Implement Repairs - Welding, Hauling, Snow Plowing

Patrick M. Cotter, D.V.M.

Diplomate, American Board of Veterinary Practitioners

53 Munns Ferry Road
Gill, MA 01354 (413) 203-4422

Memorial Day Committee

The Gill Memorial Committee is planning its annual Memorial Day service for Sunday, May 28, 2023 beginning at the Gill Church and continuing with service and gun salute at the Gill War Memorials across the street. In anticipation of Memorial Day weekend we plant geraniums and replace gravesite flags in each of the four cemeteries in Gill. If anyone is interested in participating, please contact one of the committee members:

- Gary Bourbeau 413.768.9543
- Merri Bourbeau 413.863.8613
- Doug & Elaine Smith 413.863.3115
- Tony Zager 413.522.6915

We meet approximately 4-5 days each year to prepare for the Memorial Day service, place flags for Memorial Day and Veteran’s Day, and keep records updated of our Gill veterans. If you are interested in becoming a member, we would be glad to have you join us.



A SUNDAY GILL PUB SING

Wagon Wheel in Gill, MA Sunday, 2/26/23; 2~4 pm

Please bring a song to share. Restaurant's kitchen will be ready for hungry and thirsty singers. Pellet stove will be ablaze. This is the last pub sing of this series until the fall. We will fill our hearts with song and our bellies with goodies from the kitchen. I love the ice cream. Warmth, song, and food - what a way to chase away cabin fever on a chilly, Gillbilly afternoon.

For info - Steve at 802-451-6663

From the FRCOG Public Health Team

Tick-bite prevention

The coming of spring weather means it's also time to prevent tick bites. Lyme disease and anaplasmosis are the two most common tick-borne diseases occurring in the region and are carried in deer ticks.

Useful habits to prevent tick-borne diseases:

When outdoors, stick to hiking trails, wear light-colored clothing (to see ticks) and tuck in loose ends.

Make a habit of checking yourself, your children, and pets for ticks after coming inside. Think like a tick: ticks often hitch a ride after physical contact with brushy plants—start by checking feet, ankles, legs and any place below the belt, and work your way upwards.

Use tick repellents, like DEET (designed for skin) and pre-treat

clothing, including socks and shoes, with permethrin (not to be put on skin). Permethrin is invisible, odorless and stays effective in fabric through many washings. Using both repellents together is recommended by the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) and the Department of Defense (DOD).

If you have been bitten (the tick is attached to your skin), remove the tick with fine-tipped tweezers. Grasp the tick as close to the skin's surface as possible, and pull with even force. Wash the bite area and continue to check for several weeks; if you develop flu-like symptoms or a rash, see a doctor.

If you need to test the tick for tick-borne diseases, save the tick in a small plastic bag. Log on to www.tickreport.com and follow the mailing instructions. Other resources, including tick identification: mass.gov/mosquitoes-and-ticks and tickcounter.org.

COVID Update

Vaccine outreach for both COVID and flu provided 58 people with 92 vaccinations at a September clinic at Gill Elementary. Additionally, FRCOG public health nurses provided 50 vaccinations (flu and COVID) to Gill residents in their homes from November 2021-2022.

The FRCOG website has up-to-date information on what to do if you are exposed to or test positive for COVID. Additional information includes treatment options for COVID-19, current testing options, vaccination/booster shots, Long COVID resources, and on how to get rapid COVID tests to have on-hand, at home—including those with MassHealth and Medicare. Visit the website at <https://frcog.org/covid>. No internet? Give us a call: 413-774-3167 ext. 206.

Walk-in Wellness

The FRCOG public health nurses will be in Gill every 2nd Friday from 10 a.m.-12 p.m. at Stoughton Place Community Room; walk-in wellness hours are open to the entire community.

February is for Heart Health

The American Heart Association has dubbed February as Heart Health Month. Due to recent news of professional athletes and heart attack, heart health—and also heart disease—may be at the top of our minds.

Heart disease is the leading cause of death for men and women, according to the CDC, killing about 1 in about every 4 people it affects. Our individual risk for heart disease



comes from both our family history and our lifestyle.

Luckily, even small lifestyle changes made over time can lead to big improvements in heart health. Steps to improve heart health include: continuing with routine medical care, exercising regularly, choosing healthy foods, limiting salt intake, and reducing or quitting smoking. Does some of this information sound similar? Our bodies are interconnected—so what’s good for the heart can also be good for the lungs, brain, and other organs!

One resource for heart-healthy recipes is the National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute’s website: <https://healthyeating.nhlbi.nih.gov>.

Heart attack is serious and can be deadly. If you see signs of heart attack, call 9-1-1 immediately. A heart attack may not be the dramatic movie scene of someone grabbing their chest. Here are some symptoms of heart attack:

- chest pain
- feeling weak/lightheaded or faint
- Pain in the jaw, neck or back
- Pain or discomfort in one or both arms or shoulders
- Shortness of breath

Signs can look different in men and women. Breaking out into a cold sweat, feeling like a rope is squeezing the chest, upper back pressure, and dizziness and fainting may be important-to-identify symptoms in women.

More information can be found on the American Heart Association website, heart.org.

Gill Historical Commission

Save These Two Dates: Saturday, April 29 and Saturday, July 29, Gill Town Hall, 1 to 3pm.

April 29, Professor Richard Little, Adjunct and Professor Emeritus, Greenfield Com. College, speaks on *The Deep History of Gill*.

You will be amazed by under-glacier events plus Lake Hitchcock’s shoreline evidence that dominate the surrounding landscape. Also, understand the significance of Gill’s mud balls. Funded by Gill’s Cultural Council.

July 29, Gravestone Girls, speakers on *The Art and Meaning of New England Gravestones*. The illustrated talk will be followed by an optional walking tour in Gill’s Center Cemetery.

Thank You!

Robert Darr Wert’s daughter Sara has sent an appreciative thank you to the Gill Historical Commission and the Gill community for all of their efforts in 2022 to honor her father and Country Prints. The two Wert events helped educate the community on the artistry and production at Country Prints as well as promote the sense of community that the Werts valued highly in Gill.

The Year – 1816 – Twelve Months of Winter

The year of 1816 has passed down in the annals of New England history as a year without parallel. The shivering farmers of Massachusetts looked back upon it as “Eighteen-Hundred-and-Froze-To-Death.”

In every month of the year there was frost or snow, and for only short periods were people able to doff their mittens and earmuffs. Water froze in the month of May as far south as Virginia, and six inches of snow accompanied by severe cold in early June destroyed all gardens and killed baby livestock and fowl. June then turned around and furnished the hottest temperatures of the year with thermometers soaring to 101 degrees. Then on July 4 the following week, people donned their heaviest clothing, and August produced another freeze. October brought 12 inches of snow as winter began again in earnest.

The loss of vegetables and fruit, hay and grain, as well as so many of the flocks and herds, caused widespread destitution among farmers of the local area. So much suffering and sickness resulted that many thought it was a sign to move to another place. Out of general discouragement and poverty was wrought the great migration to the Middle West from New England, beginning in 1817. The fertile land of Western Reserve in Ohio and the development along the Erie Canal in New York State offered the hopes of a new beginning.

- *Stoughton’s History of Gill*. Vol. 1, 312-313.

The Town of Gill
sends its appreciation to
Northfield Mount Hermon
for its ongoing support with
the Newsletter production.

Town Hall
325 Main Road
Gill, MA 01354-9747

PRSR STD
ECRWSS
US POSTAGE
PAID
EDDM Retail

LOCAL
POSTAL CUSTOMER

GILL, MA 01354



Flu & COVID Vaccine Clinic

Buckland Public Library
Saturday, Feb 4th 12-3 pm
30 Upper Street, Buckland

Register online at frcog.org/covid
(recommended, although walk-ins will be welcome).

Get a free \$75 gift card
with any COVID
vaccine or booster!

Bring your ID,
insurance card, and
vaccination card!

- **Anyone over 6 months old** may be eligible for a flu and COVID vaccine, and can receive them at the same visit.
- **Insurance card needed for flu vaccine.** If uninsured, call a public health nurse at (413) 774-3167, or bring a \$28 check.
- **All COVID vaccines/boosters are no-cost.** A single Omicron-specific (bivalent) booster is available to those 5+ who received any other COVID vaccine at least 2 months ago.

More information at frcog.org/covid