



THE

Gill Newsletter

Summer 2026 Issue

Disclaimer:

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FROM THE TOWN CLERK

Annual Town Election was held on Monday May 18, 2026 with the following results:

Board of Assessors 3-year term
Alexander Buedinger -202
Noavakay Knight (write-in)-8
Board of Assessors 1-year term
Noavakay Knight (write-in) -33
Selectboard, Sewer Commission
Jennifer Waldron-171
Dan Flagg (write-in)-69
Cemetery Commission
Fred O. Chase, III-222
Constables
Alexander Buedinger-183
Craig Gaudry-95
Fred O. Chase, III-194
Library Trustee
Megan Bathory-Peeler-228
Board of Health
Charles Garbiel, II-218
Tree Warden
Joseph Williams-223

Question:

Shall the Town of Gill be allowed to exempt from the provisions of proposition two and one-half, so-called, the amounts required to pay for the bond issued in order to perform a roof replacement and building accessibility compliance renovations for the Gill Elementary School?
187 Yes, 42 No

School Committee Election Results

Representing Gill
William Tomb-222
Blank-28

Representing Montague

Clifford Spatcher-170
Sue Ann Richardson-154
Blank-176

Part 2 of the Annual Town Meeting will take place Monday, June 8th at 7PM this is a continuation of the Meeting held on May 4th. The following Monday, June 15th there will be a Special Election for the proposition 2 ½ override. Polls will be open 10AM to 6PM upstairs at the Town Hall.

The next Election will be the State Primary Tuesday, September 1, followed by the Franklin County Technical School building project on Tuesday, October 6, 2026, and at this point the last election will be the Mid-Terms Tuesday, November 3, 2026. Things are going to be very busy in the Town Clerk's office.

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

Check in with the Gill Website

www.gillmass.org

for up to date news, announcements and contact information!



no later than the final registration date).

Vote-by-Mail applications are available on line at www.sec.state.ma.us, and at the Town Clerk's office.

Once you receive your ballots in the mail, please follow all instructions to avoid rejection of your ballot. Return your ballots as promptly as possible. All ballots must be returned to the Town Clerk's by 5PM election day.

Please remember, if you have not already sent back your census/street list forms and made any changes necessary, please do so. Making sure your census is up to date is so important to keep your voter status active and making sure 911 has all the information about number of people in your home, this is so important in case of fire or other emergencies.

Dog licenses are available in the Clerk's Office; remember you must license your dog.

Spring is well underway; it is so nice to see everything getting green outside. We are looking forward to warm days, summer vacations, fresh vegetables from the garden and family gatherings.

Doreen Stevens, Town Clerk
Notary Public, Justice of the Peace

Office hours:
Monday 9AM to 4PM.

Tuesday 9AM to 1PM.
Wednesday 9AM to 3PM.
Thursday 3PM to 5PM.
Other times by appointment.
413-863-8103.

From the Board of Assessors

We welcome our two newly elected town Assessors: Alexander Buedinger and Noavakay Knight. Both are residents who understand our local property landscape firsthand and bring a deep understanding of our community to their new roles. We also welcome Dori Kwader, a past resident, and the newly appointed Assistant to the Assessors. All are eager to serve the community and look forward to working with the Gill residents to ensure fair property valuations for everyone.

Fiscal Year 2027 (July 1, 2026, to June 30, 2027) is a revaluation year for the Town, which means the Massachusetts Department of Revenue (DOR) reviews and certifies property values town wide prior to setting Gill's tax rate. This process has been ongoing since early spring.

Property Inspections Coming Soon

The Assessor's Office wants residents to know that valuation consultants will be conducting the regular cyclical and building permit inspections that must be done to be in compliance with the Massachusetts Department of Revenue guidelines. The purpose of the inspection process is to verify data on which assessed values, in part, are based. Since

soundly based equitable assessments require accurate property data, we ask that you permit our consultants to inspect your property. A complete inspection consists of an exterior as well as an interior inspection of your property. Typically, these inspections take only a few minutes and consist of a walkthrough of your basement and living areas, as well as an exterior measurement of your home. Pictures of the outside of your home will also be taken as the Massachusetts Department of Revenue has directed us to put pictures on all property cards. These visits will be done during the summer months. If you have any concerns, please call the Assessors' Office at: 413-863-0138. Your assistance in this effort is greatly appreciated as we strive to maintain the accuracy of our parcel data. We appreciate your help in this matter.

Thanks: As a final note, our sincere thanks to departing Assessors Pam Lester (three terms of service) and Robert Whittier (one year of service) for their dedication to our community. We appreciate their time and expertise, and we wish them both the very best.

Office hours are as follows:
Monday through Thursday 9:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. You may call Dori Kwader in the Assessors' Office at 413-863-0138 or by email to assessors@gillmass.org with any questions.



Gill Planning Board

Greetings fellow "Gillbillies!" This year, the Board welcomes prior member Mark Beaudry as the new Planning Board Chair. With his leadership and years of civil engineering and planning experience, we knew we were passing the torch into excellent and very capable hands. Thank you Mark for stepping up to the plate!

We also want to congratulate Doug Smith for his unwavering tenure as Planning Board Chair for the past 20-years who kick-started from the Planning/Zoning Board split in May 2006. As per his first Annual Report quote, "All of us living in Gill have a lot to be proud of... the beautiful open spaces and pride in community are just some of the great things that make our town a wonderful place to call home," and we are proud to include him as another great part of our town. Thank you for your service to our country and our Town, Doug!

We are very proud to announce that all four of our proposed zoning bylaws passed unanimously at this year's Town Meeting! The bylaws consisted of the following:

Manufactured Housing; a definition replacement that aligns with current M.G.L. standards.

Accessory Dwelling Units; Board-drafted regulations for by-right ADUs.

Floodplains; a definition replacement that aligns with current

FEMA standards.

BESS and Data Centers; a one-year moratorium on energy storage and data centers 50kWh or more.

For more information on these bylaws, please feel free to visit our Planning Board page on the Town website or contact the Town Clerk.

Lastly, we thank all of you for your feedback and recommendations at the Public Hearing, and for voting unanimously at the Annual Town Meeting. We couldn't have done this without you!

Gill Energy Commission

Our goal on the Energy Commission is to increase sustainability, save energy and money, and upgrade old, costly or failing systems, in order to preserve the health and quality of life and the land we all cherish here in Gill. We work with surrounding towns, the state and local organizations in the larger community as well.

In the past we have successfully completed projects that you may not know about.

Heat pumps, insulation and air sealing at Town Hall, the Slate Library and the Riverside Building

Upgrading and cost savings with LEDs in the Gill street lights

Insulation at the Public Safety Complex

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Currently we are working on:

Energy usage and efficiency upgrade for the Public Safety Complex

New roof for the Gill Elementary School

Further improvements in the Riverside building.

In the past, we have taught energy efficiency and sustainability workshops so people can get informed about options so they can make choices. If you have thoughts or ideas or questions you would like to share or have us think about or research, please let us know by sending an email to: encomm@gillmass.org

Agricultural Commission

With Spring moving into Summer, the Ag Commission is also waking up and encourages participation in planning and activities. The Commission website is <https://gillmass.org/g/1/Agricultural-Commission> and our email address is gillag@gillmass.org

Gill Annual Harvest Festival

September 27, 2026 (Rain Date 10/4/2026) from 12-3 p.m. on The Common, Town Center, Gill
The 2026 Gill Harvest Festival will be full of fun activities for all ages including food, music, games, and more. Local farmers and artists will be displaying and selling their wares. If you are interested in displaying farm or farm-related products or presenting crafts for sale please email us

at gillag@gillmass.org or contact a member of the Ag Commission.

Farmland Protection Planning

The Ag Commission along with other members from other commissions and the community will be participating in a planning process to develop tools for identifying farmland protection opportunities and strategies in the town. The planning process will be facilitated by FRCOG. To learn more about the process, you can attend our next scheduled meeting, first Wednesday of the month at 6pm at the Town Hall.

Farm Tour and Potluck

There will be a potluck supper and farm tour 5 PM Sunday, July 12 at Upinngil Farm, 411 Main Road in Gill. This is the inaugural gathering of the “Gill Farms, Forests, and Trails” group, which is being formed to facilitate greater opportunities to connect Gill residents to the land, nature, and each other—fostering stewardship, community resilience, inclusiveness, and sustainability. We will discuss the purposes of the group and future farm and forest visits. All are welcome!

Meetings and Feedback

The Gill Agricultural Commission meets monthly on the first Wednesday of the month at 6pm in Town Hall throughout spring, summer, and fall. We welcome you to join us any time! Let us know if there are any agricultural issues or projects that we can support. please email us at

gillag@gillmass.org or contact a member of the Ag Commission.

Agricultural Commission Members: Tom Chalmers; Gary Stevens; Zoe Fox; Dan Flagg; Ed Golembeski; Roger Augustine; Dick French.

Gill Historical Commission

Nolumbeka Project

As you may know, the Discovery Center in Turners Falls with David Brule, President of the Nolumbeka Project, hosted a Day of Remembrance of the 350th anniversary of King Philip’s War recently, on May 16th. This day started in a dramatic way and ended in another one.

Dramatic events at Unity Park

For the last 12 years, the National Park Service’s American Battlefield Program has offered a grant to study what happened in and around 1676, the time of King Philip’s War. Historical commission members from Northfield, Gill, Deerfield, Montague and Greenfield and Tribal Historic Preservation Officers from four local tribes (Abenaki, Chabunagungamaug band of Nipmuck, Wampanoag and Narragansett) have served on an advisory board to share perspectives on the research being done on Greenfield, Gill, Turners Falls and nearby locations. Several members of the Gill Historical Commission have served on the board, and continue to serve on the Steering Committee to guide development of educational resources for our communities.



The first resource to recommend was presented at Unity Park on the morning of May 16: three permanent metal signs installed along the bank of the river, near where the attack took place. They were veiled in black fabric and introduced one at a time by Rich Holschuh, Abenaki; Liz Coldwind Santana-Kiser, Nipmuck; and David Brule. The signs depict various aspects of Indigenous life in the 1600s here, trace the route of the colonial attack and results of the research that has just ended. A former member of the GHC contributed the graphics and designs of these signs; the texts in the signs show that Indigenous members of our communities are still here.

Transfer of deed:

At the Gill end of the Turners Falls Bridge, a small piece of land holds a monument dedicated with pride to Captain William Turner, who led the massacre of 300 women, children and elderly early on the day of May 19th , 1676. The Pocumtuck Valley Memorial Association of Deerfield has held this land and monument for some time, but at this time, over 600 of its members voted to turn this land and monument over to the Nolumbeka Project. At the end of the Day of Remembrance, the deed for the land and monument was turned over to David Brule and the Nolumbeka Project. Plans are in the works to share the ownership of this land with local tribes and to add a new symbol of Indigenous culture as an alternative view of this little in size, but very heavy in meaning,

piece of land. GHC recommends that you view the signs and stay tuned for another installation on the monument land.

These two dramatic parts of the Day of Remembrance this year mark a huge step forward in helping to heal the still-present traumas of what happened in our history. Riverside Municipal Building Update

Riverside Municipal Building

We are thankful that an asbestos search proved negative for the Riverside Municipal Building, so we are busy making small repairs needed to reopen the building. We plan to create a space for community events, so if you have any ideas for that, or have time to help us get set up again, please join us as volunteers for this special town! Please drop us a note at the Historical Commission mailbox at the Town Hall. Kit Carpenter, Chair

Cultural Council News

We hope you've had a chance to attend and enjoy some of the projects our town helped to fund in 2026. Here are the projects that will occur in the next few months.

On The Boards '26, June 2026, multiple dates, LAVA (Local Access to Valley Arts) LAVA Center, 324 Main Street in Greenfield On the Boards 2026 continues our now annual play reading se-

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ries with a dozen readings of new works by Massachusetts playwrights. Building on and refining what we learn from each year's experiences, OTB '26 will begin with table readings of 15-minute excerpts of new work and work in progress, followed by three weekend programs each featuring concert readings of two plays 60 minutes or less in length, and culminating in a guest appearance by Real Live Theater sharing their newest work in progress. Each reading (or set of readings in the case of the table reads) is followed by a moderated conversation with the audience seeking input to questions offered by the playwrights.

Note that Gill's own Patricia Crosby - whose term as chair of the Cultural Council only recently ended - is presenting her recent play "Calling" on Saturday, June 20, 2026 from 7:00-9:00 PM. Her play is directed by Penney Hulten. You can contact L.A.V.A. to reserve a ticket to this or any of the other On The Boards plays. Further information at: thelavacenter.org/events/

Franklin County Pride Parade and Festival, June 26, 2026, Franklin County Pride, Inc. Energy Park in Greenfield, plus the Parade Route

The Franklin County Pride Parade and Festival is an annual gathering of members of the LGBTQIA+ community and their allies from within Franklin County and surrounding areas. The event begins with a parade in downtown Greenfield that leads into Energy Park. Over 70 groups

march in the parade, several of which include Gill residents. As of this writing the Parade organizers were still accepting applications from those who want to march, or make a float, and they were still looking for volunteers. You can contact them at info@franklincountypride.org. The Parade begins at 12 Noon, and the Festival begins at 1 PM.

Montague World Music Festival, June 27, 2026 Weathervane Community Arts Corp Turners Falls, MA -- Peskeomskut Park and Brick House Community Resource Center, Day-long Montague World Music Fest featuring performances and workshops of music and dance from a variety of world cultures. The centerpiece will be a new collaboration between Zaira Meneses (Boston-based Mexican musician) O Ksenos (Greek music ensemble) and Myrtle Street Klezmer, exploring the connections between traditional Mexican folk music and Sephardic Jewish music. Additional performers will include John Hughes (Brattleboro-based West African musician) and Mountain Lions (NYC-based Balkan ensemble). A professional video of the events will also be posted to our website.

13th Annual Pocumtuck Homelands Festival: A Celebration of Native American Art, Music, and Cultures, August 1 & 2 Unity Park, Turners Falls, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m. both days. Rain or shine. Featuring Mohawk elder Tom

Porter: Nipmuck flute player Hawk Henries. Aquinnah Wampanoag singer-songwriter Thea Hopkins; Rez Dogs drum and singing group; Andre Strong-BearHeart Gaines, and more. Forty Indigenous artists and authors, colorful outdoor market with beautiful arts and crafts, children's activities, history talks, and much more.

This year will include recognition of the 350th Anniversary, the "end" of Metacom's Resistance aka King Philip's War on August 12, 1676. This site remains historically, culturally, and spiritually significant to Tribes today.

RPM Fest, September 4-7, RPM Fest LLC Millers Falls Rod and Gun Club, 210 Turners Falls Rd, Montague RPM Fest is a three-day outdoor heavy music festival. Run by volunteers, all profits go to improvements for following years. Features a high quality but affordable festival showcasing our favourite performers, artists, and vendors with a focus on local and independent talent. The main features include heavy music acts and entertainment including burlesque, wrestling, drag brunch, and yoga. Also features a vendor market and artist alley with wares and food for folks to enjoy.

Following The Dino Tracks: Science Events Podcasts Across Western Mass, Marshall Escamilla Details can be found here: <https://www.nepm.org/dinomap> The live events for this program have already occurred, but you can still listen to the podcasts



and follow the maps for the locations of the local Dino Tracks in Gill, Turners Falls, Greenfield, Amherst, South Hadley, Holyoke, and Chicopee. Click on the link above for information, the podcasts, and printable guides.

Community Square and Contra Dance at the Gill Town Hall,

September 26th evening, Town of Gill Recreation Committee Upstairs at the Gill Town Hall Held in conjunction with the Gill Town Harvest Festival on the same weekend. Similar to 2025, the event will feature a live band and a caller to teach the dances with the goal of bringing families from all parts of Gill together for a fun evening of music and dance.

The Cultural Council needs your help!

Please use the following QR code to fill out a brief survey which will aid the Cultural Council as it makes decisions about how to disburse each year's grant money.

When you take a photo of the code below with your phone's camera it will flash a link that you can click for the survey.



Gill Montague Senior Center News

Even the most experienced drivers can benefit from brushing up on their driving skills.

The Gill Montague Senior Center is offering a Driver Safety program through AARP on Thursday, June 18th, from 9:30AM to 3:00PM, including a break for lunch.

This updated AARP Smart Driver Course offered by AARP Driver Safety is the nation's largest driver safety course and is designed especially for drivers age 50 and older. By taking the new AARP Smart Driver Course, attendees will be taught:

- The current rules of the road
 - How to understand new traffic control devices on our ever-changing roadways
 - About defensive driving techniques
 - About some of the new technical features in vehicles like lane departure warnings, blind spot indicators and adaptive cruise control and
 - How to operate a vehicle more safely in today's increasingly challenging driving environment.
- You may be eligible to receive a multi-year auto insurance discount upon completing the course (consult your insurance agent for details). AARP membership is not required to take the course. There are no road tests to pass.

The fee for this program is ordinarily \$20 for AARP members and \$25 for non-members.

HOWEVER, the Gill Montague Council on Aging is paying for



Turners Falls
Schuetzen Verein
2026
Car Shows
Free Admission
4Pm-Dusk
May-September
(No Dogs Please)

May 21 - June 18 - July 16 - August 20 - September 17

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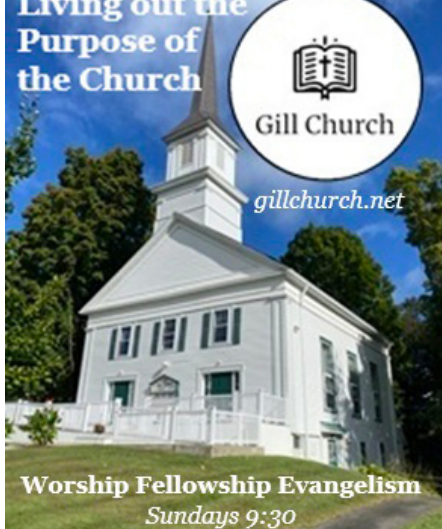


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Worship Fellowship Evangelism
Sundays 9:30



the course with funds from a grant from the Massachusetts Executive Office of Elder Affairs so the course will be free for participants. The course will run from 9:30AM to 3:00 PM with a break for lunch. Bring your own lunch, beverages provided. Pre-registration is required and space is limited to 20 individuals. To register for the course, contact the Gill Montague Senior Center at 413-863-9357 or e-mail coa@montague-ma.gov.

Independence Day Event in Gill

Every year there has been a gathering at the church that rings the bell on July 4th. We will do the same this year, especially in recognition of the semiquincentennial. This year we will be reading the Declaration of Independence and ringing the bell 250 times. We invite the community to join us in this event.

Anyone wishing to participate should arrive no later than 11:30 AM, Saturday the 4th in order to determine the sections of the Declaration they will read. (We recommend the document be previewed in order to familiarize yourself with the "usurpations", "sanguinities" and "magnanimities" and other words not commonly used today.

Following the reading we will begin the 25 minute long process of ringing in America's 250th birthday at or about noon.

It is in the spirit of civic engagement and the reflection of our shared history - especially in Massachusetts, the cradle of the

revolution - that we invite you to join us.

Gary and Merri Bourbeau Franklin County Fix-It Days

Local towns in conjunction with the Franklin County Solid Waste District and the Franklin County Tech School are hosting the 2nd annual Franklin County Regional Repair Events.

Students, instructors, and local fixers will be on hand. Every effort will be made to repair your item(s). Antiques and heirlooms cannot be fixed at this event. These events are free and open to all Franklin County residents.

Saturday, June 13th 11 am - 2 pm Colrain Central School
A wide variety of repair stations will be set up at the Colrain Central School at 22 Jacksonville Rd. Fixing stations include electrical, woodworking, gluing, mending/darning, jewelry, knife and tool sharpening, restringing weed whackers, and bikes. There will also be activities for kids.

Saturday, June 27th 11 am - 2 pm Conway Grammar School
This fix-it event is still being planned. Details will be posted to the Franklin County Solid Waste District's website.

Local "fixers" are being sought. If you are interested in volunteering, contact the solid waste district.

Details on repair stations and more will be available at franklincountywastedistrict.org. Contact

the solid waste district by emailing fcswmd@crocker.com or by calling 413-772-2438.

Franklin County Solid Waste District's Disposal Days

Household Hazardous Waste Day:
Saturday, September 19, 2026
Pre-registration is required for Haz Waste Day; registration opens in mid-August.

Bulky Waste Recycling Day:
Saturday, October 17, 2026

Household Hazardous Waste Day is free for residents of most towns.

For more information on these events, including locations, participating towns, hours, and pricing: <https://franklincounty-wastedistrict.org/>

Franklin County Solid Waste Management District: info@franklincountywastedistrict.org or 413-772-2438. MA Relay for the hearing impaired: 711 or 1-800-439-2370 (TTY/TDD). The District is an equal opportunity provider.

Gill School News

Springtime Activities:

In May all our Gill students enjoyed their favorite rite of spring: exploring the vernal pool with Paul Sievert. This year we added microscopes and children were able to examine fairy shrimp and all sorts of tiny creatures up close. Also this Spring, Kindergarten planters planted pumpkins around the bonfire from seeds they saved in the fall. We anticipate a nice big pumpkin patch in time to harvest before next year's



bonfire!

com

6th Grade Adventures to Nature’s Classroom:

The Gill Elementary School 6th graders recently returned from their highly anticipated trip to Nature’s Classroom. Nature’s Classroom is a non-profit residential environmental education program that provides “outdoor classroom” experiences for students in Charlton. Students spent their time hands-on with environmental science, engaging in team-building outdoor activities, and strengthening their peer connections. It was a wonderful opportunity for them to learn outside the traditional classroom setting and make memories that will last a lifetime. Ms. Carey and Ms. Gobeil provided incredible leadership, organization, and dedication in making this trip such a massive success for our students!

Gill School Garden Stewards: The Gill School Garden Stewards spent a day in early spring with Ben Woodward learning about maple season. They tapped trees, hauled sap and boiled maple syrup in Ben’s sugar house.

Gill School Garden Club:

The garden club is back in action. Students have been busy getting the water system up and running, preparing beds and seeding crops. Garden Club will continue through summer, meeting every Tuesday 3 - 4:30. Everyone is welcome! Children must be accompanied by an adult. Questions? Contact Faith Rand: randdonahue@gmail.com or Sorrel Hatch: slh53z@gmail.



School Play:

Did you notice the beautiful painted backdrop at the recent Town Meeting? It is from a recent performance by our talented Gill students. This winter Amy Gordon, assisted by Emily Samuels and Isaac Bingham, revived the after school theater program known as ACT. Starting in January, and rehearsing 2 afternoons a week, the group of students and directors coalesced into a working theater company with stellar performances in mid-March.

Imagine an active group of 23 nine to twelve year olds in your workplace, dropping off backpacks, coats, basketballs, snacks, and amping up energy like a microburst. Community comes in many guises, and giving up hallways and working spaces to accommodate costume changes is community at its best. Town officials seemed pleasantly bemused by the transformation of town hall into a theater, and it is a credit to them

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Gill Neighbors
Offering Help to Gill Seniors

We are a group of volunteers who give rides to appointments, pick up prescriptions, pick up pre-ordered groceries, deliver library books...

Are you a senior who could use some neighborly help? Do you know of someone else who might? Would you be interested in becoming a driver?

Please call Emily Samuels at 413 863-9446 and leave a message



that they offered no resistance, only support, despite what must have been quite a level of inconvenience.

There are not a lot of 9-12 year olds who may be trusted with a wooden sword, but each of the actors promised to be safe, and they did so, clacking swords effectively in a fight, in protecting the weak, in a mock beheading, and finally, knighthood.

While not a musical, the songs of the show served as enhancers, setting the scene, emphasizing action, and drawing all to conclusion. The kids soaked up the melodies with a great thirst, and sang with gusto.

Rotating panels that had been painted by the kids (with assistance from Jocelyn Castro-Santos, our Art Teacher) allowed for clever and convincing scene changes. In part with the sponsorship of the Gill Rec committee, theatrical lights had been rented, and with the window curtains drawn, the effect was magical. The value of the arts should be so obvious that it is beyond discussion. As the community watched these children, some almost young adults, the faces of the performers were a true measure of the importance of this experience. Thanks to all who helped!



Lupa Zoo: Finally, the entire Gill Elementary School is gearing up for their all-school field trip to the Lupa Zoo in Ludlow.

HONOR ROLLS

Pioneer Valley Regional School

Third Quarter
Grade 7

Highest Honor: Charles Hodgkin
High Honor: Adelaide Abercombe and Brooklyn Barry

Turners Falls High School

Third Quarter
Grade 12

First Honors: Ella DeLorenzo, Rojelio Galvez Mendez and Kainen Stevens

Second: Lily DeLorenzo
Grade 10

First Honors: Madison Haight, Jocelyn Ovalle Roblero and Jakhia Williams

Second Honors:
Jazzlyn Gonzalez
Grade 9

Second Honors: Isabella Hansen and Jordan Welcome

Third Honors: Allison Raymond

Great Falls Middle

Third Quarter
Grade 8

First Honors: Josephine Hammond

Grade 7

Second Honors: Bryson Gauthier and Carter Greene

TFHS Graduates Off to College

Gill's 2026 High School graduates entering college this fall are: Ella DeLorenzo and Lily DeLorenzo - Concordia University in Montreal, Quebec; Canada. Rojelio Galvas Mendez - Mount

Wachusett Community College in Gardner, MA

Vaughn LaValley - University of Massachusetts, Amherst, MA

Miles Riley - Greenfield Community College

Kainen Stevens - Greenfield Community College

Franklin County Tech School News

This 50th anniversary of the opening of Franklin County Technical School is cause for celebration and comes at a time of transition.

New Director:

The FCTS School Committee voted unanimously at its May meeting to appoint Ryan Rege as the school's new superintendent. Mr. Rege is currently Pathfinder Regional Technical Vocational High School principal, as well as an adjunct professor at Westfield State and Fitchburg State universities. Mr. Rege will replace current FCTS Superintendent Richard Martin, who will retire on June 30. Mr. Martin led the Franklin County Tech for 17 years, first as principal and later as superintendent. He has an impressive record of spearheading growth and modernization at the school and has been the driving force behind the proposal to build a new school.

Proposed Construction:

The proposed plan for the construction of a new Franklin County Technical School is on pace for a vote by our 19-member communities on October 6. The estimated cost of the proposed new school for the 19-member



towns is \$122.8 million after applying the Massachusetts School Building Authority (MSBA) reimbursement rate of 67%. The total project cost is \$236.6 million. If the project passes the October vote, the MSBA will contribute approximately \$113.8 million toward the project, with the remaining \$122.8 million funded by the local member communities through a 30-year bond. For the average household across the district, the estimated tax impact is projected to be approximately \$240 per year.

The last in a series of three public forums regarding the project was held on May 12 at Greenfield Community College. Visit fctsnwbuildingproject.us to view the video of the public forum and find other information about the proposed new school.

SkillsUSA National Competition:

Welding and Metal Fabrication student Levi Clark is the first FCTS student in 10 years to qualify to compete in the Skill-USA National Competition in Atlanta this month. A junior, Levi won a gold medal in Welding Sculpture and People’s Choice at the state competition in May. The eight-member FCTS team also received an award in the “Chapter Excellence Program,” which is awarded for chapters that show excellent community service and outreach.

Franklin County Tech Aviation Program:

Franklin County Technical School’s Aviation Maintenance Technology program is officially certified by the Federal Aviation Administration as an Airframe training facility, opening the door for graduates to enter a high

demand industry. Students who graduate from the program will be trained and eligible to test for their Airframe certificate. An Airframe rating authorizes a mechanic to work on the structure and systems of an aircraft, but not the engine.

FCTS will become one of only a few vocational high schools in the country that has FAA certification for Aircraft Maintenance Technicians,” said FCTS Superintendent Richard Martin. “As certified Aircraft Maintenance Technicians, our students will have job opportunities not only in Massachusetts, but throughout the entire United States.” Aviation Maintenance Technology teacher Michael McIntyre said the program will be working toward becoming Powerplant certified. He added that the program is in a great position to include Powerplant.

Individuals who wish to test to become Airframe certified either have to spend upwards of \$40,000 to attend a private school or need 36 months of on-the-job experience. Franklin County Tech Aviation Technology graduates will already be eligible to take the test.

Farewell to the Class of 2026:

Last, but certainly not least, we bid a heartfelt farewell to the Class of 2026 as they take the giant leap into adulthood. They were a proud, high achieving, well trained, responsible and compassionate group of young individuals. We’ll miss them and will keep an eye out for their great accomplishments in the years ahead. Congratulations to the Class of 2026!

GILL PICKS UP!

Twenty-eight+ families, teams, or individuals fanned out over Gill in April to welcome spring by picking up roadside trash. It looks like 100% of Gill Roads were covered this year! Ranging in age from 7 to 75+, people volunteered for ¼ to ½ to 2-mile stretches of road (or more), mostly near or around their homes. Some pushed further, making sure the environs of the Gill Town Forest were included, or the sadly litter-ridden slopes of unpopulated sections of Barney Hale and Pisgah Mountain roads. (And then--risking life, limb and tick-bites--there’s the volunteers in protective gear who fork beer cans out of the little wetlands off Route 2 in Riverside.)

Some of these people have let us know they are out there on their walks year-round, picking up the trash that’s been discarded. Thanks to all!

(...and thanks also to the people who may not have signed up but who keep our roads tidy by picking up anyway...)

If you did not know about this campaign and want to be on the invitation list next year so you can formally sign up, email phcrosby@gmail.com .

Town Hall
325 Main Road
Gill, MA 01354-9747

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The last photo was taken in the dining room of The Wagon Wheel
Where in Gill is this?