



THE

Gill Newsletter

Fall 2024 Issue

Disclaimer:

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From Town Hall

Digital Equity Plan

The Town will hold a Digital Equity open house at the Slate Memorial Library on October 30th from 4-6 PM. It's a drop-in format, so you can come when you want and stay for as long as you want. If the Newsletter is delivered after the open house has taken place, you can have a second bite at the apple, so to speak, at Town Hall on Election Day, November 5th. The posters, notes, and ideas from the open house will be on display and you're welcome to add your thoughts and comments.

The Town received a grant from the Massachusetts Technology Collaborative to develop a Digital Equity Plan that will identify a strategy to ensure all people have the tools and skills they need to access and use digital technologies. Digital equity plans can include programs and funding for affordable internet and devices, digital skills training, and increasing internet availability, among other things. Digital equity is important because it promotes equal opportunities and inclusivity in the digital age. It allows people to participate in education, employment, healthcare, and civic engagement.

In Massachusetts, the Municipal Digital Equity Implementation Program helps municipalities make local investments in digital equity. The program provides funds to execute projects that are indicated in a municipality's Digital Equity Plan. Gill has engaged planners from the Franklin Regional Council of Governments

(FRCOG) to help us create our Plan.

The workshop on October 30th is intended to gather feedback from residents, municipal officials, community groups, and other stakeholders ("digital equity stakeholders") to gather information on the needs of our residents and the digital equity issues facing the municipality. Populations most impacted by the COVID 19 pandemic are also a focus of the Plan.

Winter Reminders

Forgive the early use of the W word, but 'tis almost the season for a few reminders.

Winter sand is available to all residents, for private use only, at the Safety Complex. No contractors, please.

Gill's wintertime parking ban begins on November 1st and runs through April 15th. There is NO on-street parking allowed between the hours of 1 AM and 6 AM. Your cooperation is greatly appreciated.



Check in with the Gill Website

www.gillmass.org

for up to date news, announcements and contact information!





Residents are advised to secure their mailboxes against possible damage from snow removal operations. The Town is not responsible for damage to mailboxes caused by snow removal operations. The Town's Snow Removal bylaw states the following: "No person shall throw or put or cause to be thrown or put any snow or ice from any privately owned property into any street, public way, or town-owned land. Whoever violates this bylaw shall be punished by a fine of \$25.00 for each offense.

The Town's Snow Plowing bylaw states the following: "The Highway Superintendent may, for the purpose of removing or plowing snow, or removing ice from any way, remove or cause to be removed to some convenient place, any vehicle which interferes with such work, and in the event of the removal of any vehicle in accordance with the terms hereof, the actual cost of removing said vehicle and any storage charges that may be incurred as a result thereof, may be enforced by the Town in any manner provided by law for the collection of a debt based upon contract.

From the Town Clerk

The Presidential Election is upon us.

Election day voting is Tuesday November 5, starting at 7AM and ending at 8PM. The Town Hall will be open at 6:30 AM for anyone who wishes to observe the empty ballot box and swearing in of

Election Workers.

If this is your first time voting in the Town of Gill it might be a good idea to bring your ID.

There are 5 (five) questions on the Presidential Ballot, if you would like to bring in a list of how you would like to vote on the questions, please feel free to do so. Be aware that election workers can ONLY read the question to you. They cannot offer you any interpretation or advice on how to vote on any question or race. The state has mailed out little red booklets that contain all the questions on the ballot with explanations. The Town Hall has copies also that will be available to you when you come in to vote. You are welcome to bring this booklet into the polls with you.

Town Census Papers

Shortly after the first of the year you will be receiving your yearly census, street list form along with dog license form. Please take a few minutes to review your information and make any corrections needed, then return the form to the Town Hall. You are welcome to put them in the drop box at the rear of the building. It is important to keep your information up to date so in an emergency first responders know who should be in your home and in case of a fire make sure everyone has gotten out. This information also helps with obtaining state funding for various projects. Thank you

for cooperation.

Dog licenses can be obtained any time after the first of the year at \$15.00 for a spayed or neutered animal and \$20.00 for an intact animal. Please bear in mind that dog licenses from the previous year expire March 31. After April 1 there is a \$20.00 late fee per license. If you are 70 or over 1 (one) dog license per household is free.

Gillbilly Tee Shirts

Gillbilly tee shirts are available in the Town Clerk's office. These are great holiday gifts for all your friends and family. There are navy blue and forest green shirts available in all the sizes for \$15.00 each, these shirts benefit the Agricultural Commission. Wishing you all a very happy holiday season.

Doreen Stevens, Gill Town Clerk
Town Clerk hours:

Monday, 9AM-4PM, Tuesday, 9AM-1PM, Wednesday, 9AM-3PM, Thursday 3PM-6PM or by appointment. The Town Clerk can be reached at town-clerk@gillmass.org or 413-863-8103

From the Assessors' Office:

The Assessors' office would like to let everyone know that the State has passed the Hero Act. It is an Act honoring, empowering, and recognizing our service-members and veterans. Effective immediately, one of the benefits is that 100% disabled veterans with a permanent service-connected disability are eligible for



one motor vehicle exemption. The veterans no longer have to have a determination from the Medical Advisory Board within the Registry of Motor Vehicles. Under the amendment, eligibility will be based on a disability determination by the U.S. Department of Veteran Affairs (VA). In order to receive this exemption, veterans must fill out a motor vehicle abatement application and return it to this office. Section 23 adds two new veteran property tax exemption clauses, Clauses 22I and 22J, to General Laws, c. 59, §5, which is the statute that establishes local property tax exemptions for individuals and organizations. Both new clauses are local options that must be accepted by a city or town to apply in that municipality. Acceptance requires a vote of the legislative body of the municipality (town meeting, town council or city council) subject to the municipality's charter. G.L. c. 4, § 4. Clause 22I, if accepted, would increase the amount of the tax exemption granted to veterans on their domiciles under Clause 22, Clause 22A, Clause 22B, Clause 22C, Clause 22E and Clause 22F annually by a cost-of-living adjustment (COLA) determined by the Department of Revenue (DOR) based on the consumer price index. This would work like the annual COLA adjustment determined by DOR that is already a local option for certain senior exemption amounts and financial means standards. See G.L. c. 59, § 5, Clauses 17E, 17F and 41D. Clause 22J, if accepted, provides an additional exemption up to

100% of the amount of the tax exemption granted to veterans on their domiciles under Clause 22, Clause 22A, Clause 22B, Clause 22C, Clause 22E and Clause 22F. This would work like the optional additional exemption that is already a local option under G.L. c. 59, § 5C½ for all persons granted exemptions on their domiciles as veterans, seniors, blind persons, and surviving spouses. Clause 22J will not apply in a year in which the city or town already uses G.L. c. 59, § 5C½ to grant an additional exemption to all persons granted exemptions. It is an option for cities and towns that do not use that general additional exemption to be able to just grant one for persons granted veteran exemptions. As with the general additional exemption, the application of the Clause 22J additional exemption cannot reduce the tax owed below what the taxpayer would owe on 10% of the current assessed valuation of the domicile. To implement, the city or town must vote to accept the statute and establish the additional exemption percentage before the July 1 beginning of the fiscal year that percentage will first apply. The voted percentage will continue to apply in subsequent years unless and until another percentage is voted before the July 1 beginning of a later fiscal year. G. L. C. 59: 5C ½ In a city or town that accepts this section and is certified by the commissioner to be assessing all property at full and fair cash valuation, a taxpayer who otherwise qualifies for an exemption pursuant to any clause specifically listed

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in the first paragraph of section 5 for which receipt of another exemption on the same property is prohibited, shall be granted an additional exemption that shall be uniform for all exemptions and the amount of which shall not exceed 100 per cent of the exemption for which the taxpayer qualifies, as may be determined by the legislative body of the city or town, subject to its charter, not later than the beginning of the fiscal year to which the tax relates. Notwithstanding any provision of this chapter to the contrary, the exemption shall be in addition to any exemption allowable pursuant to said section 5; provided, however, that in no instance shall the taxable valuation of the property, after all applicable exemptions, be reduced below 10 per cent of its full and fair cash valuation, except through the applicability of clause Eighteenth of said section 5; and provided, further, that the additional exemption shall not result in any taxpayer paying less than the taxes paid in the preceding fiscal year. Acceptance of this section by a city or town shall not increase the amount that it otherwise would have been reimbursed by the commonwealth pursuant to the respective clause.

These clauses have to be accepted by vote at Town Meeting. Please let the office know if you have any questions or comments. You might be hearing that the Assessors have asked the Town to consider a new position of Principal Assessor to the Town's roster of jobs. The assessors are

not asking to increase the office staff to two but to have the ability to recognize the professionalism and expertise that a certified Massachusetts Accredited Assessor would bring to the Town. The Town's current position is Assistant to the Assessors and is basically a clerical position. No assessments are determined. The position of Principal Assessor is analytical and one which determines assessment valuations. Massachusetts Accredited Assessors are few and far between in western Massachusetts and the state is pushing regionalization of assessors' boards to cover this lack of knowledge among the towns' staff and boards.

Diane Sumrall, our current staff, has attained this accreditation. The Board fully supports and appreciates her attaining the expertise to value properties as it helps the office stay on top of generating revenue for Gill without adding unnecessary additional tax burdens. Yes, we have consultants who provide much needed analysis and valuations. But their expertise is on a broad overall level. They do not look at the individual properties. Having a Principal Assessor would fill in the gap where all properties are looked at and are assessed on a fair and consistent basis. The two need to work together to

complete the picture.

Gill Fire Department

Gill Welcomes a New Fire Engine and Brush Truck

The addition of two new specialized vehicles will help ensure Gill residents remain safe during local emergencies. A new brush truck is already in the fire station. The 2024 Ford F-450 four-wheel drive vehicle replaces a 1986 Chevrolet truck that previously served as a military vehicle. The new truck carries a pump, water tank, forestry hose, and firefighting equipment necessary to fight brush fires.

Our firefighters are anxiously awaiting the delivery of a new pumper truck, which is due to be in the station any day now. The new fire engine, custom built by Pierce Manufacturing, features a 1,000 gallon tank and 1,250 gallons per minute pump. The truck has specialized storage areas for firefighting, rescue, and medical equipment. Perhaps most important, this new fire engine is designed to reach some of the more challenging terrain in town, with its four-wheel drive capability, high ground clearance, and shorter wheel-base. This truck, to be designated as Engine 1, will replace the old 1987 KME pumper that served the Town of Gill for the past 37 years.

Keep Warm. Keep Safe.

Heating is the 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.

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

Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Alarms

Heating is 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. The best time to replace your detector batteries is when you adjust your clocks as the northeast goes on and off Daylight Saving Time.

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.

Open Burn Season

Open burning is allowed from January 15 until May 1 with a permit from the Fire Department. State fire wardens determine each day whether conditions are safe for open burning. Weather and air quality can change rapidly, especially in the spring, and fire departments can rescind permits when that happens.

Open burning must be done between 10:00 a.m. and 4:00 p.m. from January 15 to May 1. Fires must be tended at all times by a responsible adult and at least 75 feet from all dwellings.

You are allowed to burn brush, cane, driftwood and forestry debris (but not from commercial or industrial land clearing), agricultural materials fungus-infected elm wood, if no other

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acceptable means of disposal is available, infected bee hives for disease control, trees and brush from agricultural land clearing, and You may not burn leaves, including fruit tree and bush brush, prunings, raspberry stalks, and trees, cane or driftwood from commercial or industrial land clearing, grass, hay, leaves, stumps or tires, construction materials or demolition debris, or household trash.

Gill residents must apply for a single-day burn permit online at <http://www.fcburnpermits.com>. Phone applications are no longer be accepted by Shelburne Control. Online applications must be submitted between the hours of 8:30 a.m. and 1:00 p.m. on the day you wish to burn.

Street Numbers

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

Join Your Community Partners at the GFD

The Gill Fire Department is always looking for community-minded members who want to help their neighbors. You don't have to rush into burning buildings. Most of our members are firefighters, but some members specialize in medical emergencies while some provide support in other ways. The

Department provides adequate training in all aspects of firefighting and basic first aid, including CPR and defibrillation.

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 on any Thursday evening during our weekly drill sessions. Check it out. It's one of the most rewarding ways a citizen can help our community.

Changes at the Police Department



Sgt. Bassett receives his retirement plaque from Chief Redmond

As I enter my eighth year as Chief and my 33rd year in the department, several changes have occurred. Sgt. Jason Bassett, a full-time Sergeant in Gill since 2017, recently retired from full-time policing. Sgt. Bassett has been a valued member of our department since 2007, working part-time and also serving at the Franklin County Sheriff's Office and the Bernardston Police Department. While he's retiring from full-time duty, we're fortunate to retain his expertise as a part-time officer. Sgt. Bassett brought integrity, compassion, and knowledge to the department. His approachability and friendly demeanor made

him a respected and admired colleague. We're grateful for his contributions and will miss him in his full-time role.

Sgt. John Richardson joined our department in September, leaving a full-time Sergeant position in Bernardston. John brings a wealth of experience and we're excited to work with him. We were very fortunate to have a few high quality applicants to choose from, which isn't the norm.

Our current staffing includes two full-time officers: Sgt. Richardson and myself. We're also supported by four part-time officers: Jason Bassett, Derek Worden, Mitch Waldron, and Bill Kimball. All of our part-time officers, except Jason, work full-time in public safety roles in neighboring communities. Recent changes to policing in Massachusetts, has eliminated new part-time officers. Our department has relied heavily on part-time staff for decades, but the options are now limited. The only pathway to policing is now through a full-time 21-week police academy or luring someone away from their current job. We are grateful that our part time staff continue to work above and beyond their normal forty hour work week, and then come serve here. As we say goodbye to Sgt. Bassett in his full-time capacity and welcome Sgt. Richardson, please feel free to stop by the station or introduce yourself to Sgt. Richardson, if you see him on patrol, he will be a great addition to our department!

-Chief Redmond



From Sgt. John Richardson

As Fall brings changes to the weather, change also comes to our town departments. I'm honored to have been selected to join the Gill Police Department to further the GPD mission to work in partnership with all citizens to preserve life and individual rights, protect property and attain the highest quality of life for all throughout our community. Bringing 25 years of experience with a strong focus on community interaction, I've worked throughout Franklin County in several police departments. This has resulted in widespread community connections and collecting a wealth of knowledge well suited to small town policing. As a Franklin County native, I've lived here my entire life and value the people and the area. My career has included many roles, attaining my first sergeant's position in 2002 and becoming a police academy instructor in 2015; I've taught over 30 subjects through the police academy, while also training citizens in many areas as well. As a staunch supporter of individual rights and protecting those most in need, I've been active at the local, county & state level in such areas as the High Risk Domestic Violence Task Force, Elder Exploitation Unit, and similar topics with many agencies - including being a national level lead instructor teaching first responders (Police, Fire, and EMS) in responding to active assault situations such as those which have happened at

some schools.

Combining a love for teaching, a history of collaboration along with a strong community drive, I plan to continue my practice of working together with residents and other town departments to provide services and education in order to maintain a high quality of life. While meeting everyone in a small town can be challenging, I believe in putting forth the effort to meet those in the community from all walks of life. I look forward to building new relationships in Gill.

From the CPHS Public Health Team:

Each summer, the health agents and public health nurses that serve Gill perform inspections at recreational camps. It is required by state law that camp facilities and policies are safe for children. Throughout the 15-town health district, your health agents and nurses served over 2,100 children, with 276 children served at camps held in Gill.

Throughout the fall, Gill decided to pool its opioid settlement money with 14 other towns to support more people affected by the opioid crisis. Just under \$400 of Gill's money will go toward providing an All-Recovery meeting; supporting prenatal and postnatal care through Moms Do Care; and will offer funds to local recovery coaches, to be used with helping people reinstate driver's

licenses, for example.

Through a complimentary initiative, Gill now hosts an outdoor naloxone cabinet at the rear entrance to Town Hall Here, naloxone, better known as Narcan, can be obtained

anonymously and at no-cost, 24/7. Increasing public access to this medication is an evidence-based strategy to reduce opioid-overdose deaths. As a medication, naloxone only works when there are opioids in the body and will have no effect if there are no opioids in the body.

You cannot get high from naloxone. That's why there's little-to-no negative effects if the medication is misused. Learn more at <https://frcog.org/rural-communities-naloxone-cabinet-initiative/>.

This cabinet will be maintained through collaboration between Gill's Town Hall staff, Board of Health, and the Cooperative Public Health Service.



Cultural Council News

The Harvest Fair

We really enjoyed meeting so many neighbors at the Harvest Fair and hearing your ideas for future cultural events in Gill. By the time this newsletter hits our mailboxes it will be too late to submit a grant application for 2025 but it's never too early to think about the next grant cycle! Thanks so much to the Agricultural Commission for including us in the festivities. What a beautiful day, and what a great turnout!

Gill Artist and Cultural Practitioner Directory

We have begun making a list of Gill Artists and Cultural Practitioners. Both professionals and those who create for the love of it. The list will be used only to inform those on the list of opportunities of interest to them; grant application deadlines, opportunities to show their work in town, or social gatherings so we can meet and visit with each other. The list will not be shared, sold, or used for any other purpose, and messages will be sent without revealing contact info to the recipients. The list will include: Artists in all media, Painters, Craftspersons, Fiber, Artists, Photographers, Woodworkers, Potters, Glass artists Sculptors, Filmmakers, Writers, Poets, Musicians, Printmakers, Painters, Mixed Media artists, Puppeteers, Dancers, Anthropologists, Archaeologists, Journalists, Historians, Documentarians. To join the list please send your

contact information to the Cultural Council at our official email: lcc@gillmass.org If you have any questions feel free to contact Karen Larsen, the list organizer, at karenlarsen@earthlink.net

Recreation Committee With Busy Fall Schedule Welcomes Two New Members:

The Recreation Committee is excited to welcome two new members to our committee: Kerri Lapointe of West Gill Road and Rob Marcalow of Wood Ave. We are in our third year of organizing a very popular after school soccer program, fielding four teams, two Junior Teams (grades 1 - 3) and two Senior Teams (grades 4 - 6). Finding a sufficient number of coaches is always a challenge, so please contact us if you have an interest in coaching. Our second annual Town Hall Dance was well attended on the night before the Gill Harvest Festival, with more than 40 people in attendance. The dance included a mix of Square and Contra Dances, taught on the spot by Andy Davis, accompanied by a live band. Finally, the Gillbilly Paddle had spectacular weather, and 14 boats launched from the NMH docks on Sunday October 6th making their way to the French King Bridge in under three hours. There was some friendly disagreement about allowing a rowing shell to participate, as it uses oars instead of paddles. Please join us in the future as we recreate in Gill!

After School Soccer Returns to the Gill Elementary School for Fall 2024:

To sign up your Gill Elementary School student for the Fall Soccer Season use the QR code found on the flyer posted at the Gill Town Hall. Alternatively you can text Isaac Bingham at (332) 205 - 0648 for a link to the online registration form. Grades 1 - 3 soccer teams will practice on Thursdays directly after school until 4:30pm, and Grades 4 - 6 will practice on Tuesdays and Thursdays from 4:30 - 6:00pm. Games against neighboring towns are on Saturday mornings. \$30 participation fee for Gill Elementary School students, \$40 for non-Gill Elementary School students. The participation fee will be waived for any parents who volunteer to help coach.

Gill Historical Commission

Fall Projects focus on increasing space for Gill-related museum items at RMB as we prepare to reopen our Gill Historical Collection museum to the town, at long last, in the spring or summer, with appointments available in the meantime. We look forward to continued collaboration with the Slate Library, the Cemetery Commission and the Gill Newsletter staff, among others. Welcome to interested visitors and volunteers for projects! We meet every third Tuesday of the month from 3:00 to 5:00 p.m. in the RMB museum room. If you're around groups of children or adults, you might bring ideas for educational activities about Gill history, another focus for this



year. If you're looking for holiday gifts, you may already know that we have three history books about Gill for sale: Riverside, Jennie Williams Bardwell (1860-1950), and Gill History Vol. II. See the Gill website for order forms.

Finally, below you'll find the Trivia Quiz we introduced at the delightful Gill Harvest Festival, with answers this time. We in Gill can educate each other about our history! We invite you to write your own Trivia Questions - and answers - about Gill, to contribute for the next round. Please drop these off at the Town Hall GHC mailbox or email them to Kit Carpenter at kitc16@comcast.net

Gill Historical Trivia Questions (answers on the last page)

We invite you to submit your own!

- A. How old is our town?
- B. Can you name the two Gill musicians from the 1960 band Northern Lights?
- C. Why did Gill decide to make a town quilt? (now in Town Hall, finished in 1981)

Gill Garbage

Gill residents are fortunate to have their trash collected every week. A \$3.00 trash sticker is all that's needed to have up to 35 pounds of trash picked up at your curb. This service is provided by Casella Waste Management Systems based in Holyoke MA. Once Casella collects our garbage it's trucked to Republic Services' McNamara Transfer Station in Springfield where it is loaded onto rail cars and sent to a landfill in South Carolina. For the most recent fiscal year (July 1,

2023 - June 30, 2024) there were 345,000 pounds of trash collected from Gill - an average of 6,600 pounds per week! The cost to the Town to run the collection truck around Gill each week was \$109,500 and the Town paid an additional \$16,875 for the year to dispose of this trash. Processing fees for 214,000 pounds of recyclables amounted to \$4,600. Meanwhile, income from the sale of trash stickers was only \$42,000.

There are many ways that we can all help to reduce these costs and save the town money.

- Be sure to participate in our dual stream recycling program and keep all recyclable paper, cardboard, glass, metal, and plastic out of the trash. Processing recyclables can be done for less than half the cost of landfilling trash.
- Clothing and textiles should not be thrown out! If you can't repair or find another use for an item then donate it to the Salvation Army. Items can be dropped off at the Hope Street Salvation Army store in Greenfield.
- Leaves and yard waste cannot go in the trash! If you don't want to use your grass clippings and fall leaves as a natural mulch, they are accepted free of charge at Martin's Farm, 341 Plain Road, Greenfield. Martin's will also accept brush for a fee.
- Gill residents may also use the Greenfield transfer station for a user fee of \$5 per delivery. It is located at 86 Cumberland Road. There is a Salvation Army collection box

on site, and the transfer station will accept compostable materials including yard waste. There is also a per item charge.

Community Compost

Here is another way to reduce waste - Gill has started a FREE Community Compost Collection Program for all residents! A trial program was introduced to some households on September 1, and it has been extremely successful. The collection site is behind the Riverside Municipal Building located at 54 French King Highway. Residents who register for the program

will receive the code to the lock and can then bring their compostable waste to the collection site and deposit it in one of 3 bins that are emptied weekly by the Compost Cooperative - a local worker-owned business in Greenfield. Compost Cooperative takes our organics to Martin's Farm.

Gill's Compost Collection Program hasn't been running long enough to let us analyze the numbers, but it's estimated that 30%-40% of the food supply in this country is wasted and about 60% of wasted food ends up in the trash. Our hope is that if you collect your food waste and other compostable items and take it to the collection site at Riverside then together we can reduce costs for the town. For those who haven't already received the flyer for the Compost Collection Program, keep a lookout as it will be coming in the mail soon!



Senior News

Home Security Lock Boxes for Gill and Montague Seniors

TRIAD, Greenfield Savings Bank, the Montague and Gill Police Department, and the Gill Montague Council on Aging have teamed up to provide and install lock boxes on Montague and Gill seniors' homes. These are small locked metal boxes with a digital key pad (like an ATM machine) and a spare house key to your door is locked inside.

The Police Department will have the box access code on file in case you have an emergency and cannot get to the door to unlock it. This could not only save time in an emergency but also could save you a broken door or window. The boxes and the installations are free and applications are available at the Gill Montague Senior Center in Turners, telephone (413-863-9357), at the Montague Police Department and at the Turners Falls Branch of the Greenfield Savings Bank telephone (Linda Ackerman 413-775-8261)

Senior Tech Time Tuesdays

Come to the Gill Montague Senior Center any Tuesday between 12:30 PM and 2:00 PM with questions about your cell phones, tablets and laptops. Students and faculty from the Franklin County Tech School Programming and Web Development Program will be available to help you. No question is too small and very few

problems are unsolvable. These help sessions are free and no appointment is necessary. Call the GM Senior Center at 413-863-9357 if you'd like more information. This program is funded through a grant from the Executive Office of Elder Affairs.

Chair Yoga

Eileen Dowd from Turners Falls teaches a weekly chair yoga class at the Gill Montague Senior Center every Tuesday at 9:00 AM./ Eileen is a gifted teacher and Chair yoga is a modified form of yoga that allows people to practice yoga while seated in a chair or standing next to it. It's a gentle and accessible way for older adults and people with limited mobility to experience the benefits of yoga. Chair yoga can help with: flexibility and strength and balance and relaxation.

Mobile Pantry

The Food Bank of Western Mass brings its local food pantry to The Gill Montague Senior Center parking lot on the third Wednesday of every month from 1:00 PM to 2:00 PM. Free food is available to everyone regardless of age, income, or family size. There are no applications, no qualifications: just come on by and bring your grocery bags. The product mix is different every month but it's very generous.

Understanding the Why Behind Fitness and Nutrition for Seniors

Grayson Funk, Manager of Strength and Conditioning at the Greenfield YMCA, will join the

Kitchen Club on Monday, November 18th from 1-2:30pm at the Gill Montague Senior Center for the second of our three part series "Fitness and Nutrition for Seniors". This month's topics include: the role of nutrition in the fitness journey, how to optimize food intake for sustained energy, and pre and post workout snacks. Healthy Heart Ambassador and Nurse, Kathie Curnick will be there to take blood pressures for those interested. All are welcome, no appointment

Gill Elementary School

The students at Gill Elementary had a wonderful start to the school year. They returned to school to find an incredible garden which they helped to plant last spring. The Gill Elementary Garden Club under the leadership of Sorrel Hatch and Faith Rand, bloomed into a magical place for everyone. The garden produced some prize-winning produce with 2 blue ribbons, 2 red ribbons, and a white ribbon from the Franklin County Fair! The garden is part of a larger Farm to School initiative. The school has partnered with the MA Farm to School program along with Shelburne Farms in VT to learn how to develop a strong program. Throughout the year, we will continue our mission of educating children about the importance of farming, experiencing new and healthier foods, as well as having the experience of being involved with food production. The Gill Elementary Garden



Club meets every Tuesday from 3.30-4.30pm. If any community member is interested in joining, please stop by any Tuesday.

This holiday season Gill Elementary is having a new fundraiser. It is a calendar raffle with prizes awarded every day in January. Calendars go on sale in December. Our 6th grade class is also raising funds for their annual Nature’s Classroom trip in May. They will be returning to the Maine coast for their trip.

Finally, we are looking for a community representative for our School Council. The School Council went on a break due to the pandemic and we are looking to bring it back to life. If you are interested in joining, please contact the principal, Walter Huston at 413-863-3255 for more information.

Have a great day,
Walter G. Huston, Ed.D. Principal
Gill Elementary School



Gill School Garden Club

Every Tuesday 3:30-5pm

Everyone Welcome!

For Students, Parents, Teachers, & Community Members

Come appreciate and help steward our beautiful school garden and grounds! Our towering maple trees, small fruit orchard, flower gardens, vegetable garden, and wild nature trail are all here to enjoy and care for. Meeting every week at raised beds on south end of building until snow flies. Open to activity ideas, crafts, nature study, cooking, growing Email sorrel@upinngil.com to be added to our email list.



Questions & Suggestions...Contact:
Sorrel Hatch sorrel@upinngil.com 413-676-9474
Faith Rand faith.rand@gmrdsd.us





Answers to Gill Historical Trivia

- A. 231 years old, incorporated Sept. 28, 1793.
- B. Phil Maddern, trumpet and John Chappell guitar and vocals, thier album in the museum!
- C. To honor the national U.S. bicentennial year (1776 - 1976).

Town Hall
325 Main Road
Gill, MA 01354-9747

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UPCOMING EVENTS

OCTOBER 30

-DIGITAL EQUITY OPEN HOUSE

4-6 PM Slate Mel Library

NOVEMBER 1

-WINTER PARKING BAN BEGINS

NOVEMBER 5

-VOTING DAY! - Town Hall

6:30 AM Swearing In of Election Workers

7 AM -8 PM TOWN HALL

Be sure to Vote and while you are there be sure
to look at the DIGITAL EQUITY DISPLAY



Gill Harvest Festival 2024

Gill Purple T-Shirt Fundraiser Holiday Gift Idea



The Town of Gill Recreation Committee has had many requests to make the classic Gill School Purple Soccer T-shirt available for purchase for the general public. This year's t-shirt is made from a "sport-tek" material that is guaranteed to make you run faster (according to a Gill School first grader)



- Use this QR code to fill out an online form placing an order for your shirt. More details provided in the form.
- Cost of shirt \$25
- All proceeds will be split between the Town of Gill Recreation Committee and the Gill School PTO