

NEWSLETTER

TOWN OF LEVERETT

www.leverett.ma.us

APRIL 2017

ANNUAL TOWN MEETING SATURDAY, 29 April, 2017, 9:00 AM, LEVERETT SCHOOL

Positions up for election:

Assessors: Cat Ford, Y (3-year);
Board of Health: Fay Zipkowitz, Y (3-year);
Constable: John Swartz, Y (3-year);
Finance Committee: Ann Delano, Y (3-year);
Library Trustees: Joan Godsey, Y (3-year);
Chris Condit, Y (3-year);
Moderator: Larry Farber, Y (3-year);
Planning Board: Jean Bergstrom, Y (5-year);
School Committee: Craig Cohen, Y (3-year);
Select Board: Tom Hankinson, Y (3-year).

Notes From Around Town

- Been to leverett.ma.us lately? Check it out. The home page has an icon of some people that links directly to LeverettMA.net, a community bulletin board. Additionally you can sign up to be informed about meetings and board minutes. Suggestions about the site can be sent to selectboard@leverett.ma.us
- April 22, 1:00 pm Leverett Library: **The Kings of Leverett**; How Leverett Builds Community
- **Transfer Station summer hours: Wednesday 4pm to 7pm. Saturday and Sunday 9:30 am to 1pm**
- **Taxes are due in the Collector's Office May 1.** Payments may be made online by going to the Town website: leverett.ma.us

NEXT NEWSLETTER DEADLINES

1 June 2017

1 October 2017

Send news items and snap peas to Lisa Stratford, Box 300, Leverett, MA 01054; leave them in the *Newsletter* box at Town Hall or email to townclerk@leverett.ma.us.

Candidate Statements:

Our library plays an essential and outsized role in town; it serves as a social, cultural, and educational center. I would like to continue working with its board, staff, and volunteers in keeping the Leverett Library a welcoming place for all.

Joan Godsey, Library Trustee

My first year on the School Committee was a wonderful and rewarding learning experience and I would be honored to continue my service. I have lived in Leverett

since 2011 and currently have two children at Leverett Elementary.

Craig Cohen, School Committee

Select Board

We have survived another budget season in preparation for town meeting. The Capital Planning Committee has revised the list of equipment needs after joint meetings with department heads and the select board. This was a big job as the needs of the town has changed and the old list had become outdated. This does mean that over time we should increase our set asides for the stabilization fund to ensure that money is available as equipment comes up for replacement.

There will be some larger increases in the fire department budget to ensure the proper training of an expanded call force. The library will also have a larger increase to accommodate the financial requirements for participating in CWMARS. Other departments were able to keep increases at or below the maximum 2% increase requested by the finance committee and the select board. Thanks to everyone for the cooperative spirit that prevailed in these discussions.

The towns in the regional school district have reached another temporary formula for the FY18 regional school assessment: 10% based on the statutory method (the state default method) and 90% on the regional school agreement "5-year rolling-average method." The latest plan is to hire a consultant to help us come up with a permanent method that takes into account "ability to pay" based on a variety of criteria including (but not necessarily limited to) town financial information, low-to-moderate income averages as determined by HUD through census data and the state formula for determining a town's wealth.

The state Appellate Tax Board (ATB) finally handed down a decision, the large tax abatement case; it could have been better and it could have been much worse! We have to abate \$67,642 for FY 2014 and \$68,859 for FY 2015 plus a similar amount for 2017. The funds set aside should cover this amount. Going forward, that difference will be covered by increases to other tax payers, or a reduction in the budget. The ATB did come in with a much higher assessment than the property owners had sought so this could have been a worse outcome for sure.

Through HRA (Franklin County Regional Housing Authority) the Town is applying for a Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) to fund the housing rehabilitation program for Leverett. The grant is seeking funds for Leverett, Sunderland, Deerfield, and Conway. Many homeowners in town have taken advantage of this program and we sincerely hope that the grant is

successful so the funds for that program can be replenished.

As it happens, this year Town Meeting is competing with the March for Climate Change** that is also taking place on April 29th across the country. I will also be at the march in Washington DC, with my son and his family (farmers in Vermont): We hope people who will be in town that weekend will come to town meeting.

Thanks to everyone who reached out after the death of my husband, Dan Bennett, in December. I was deeply moved by the cards, emails, offers of help and goodwill of all and am truly grateful.

Julie Shively, for the Select Board

** From the Climate Change Committee

For all of us attending Town Meeting but also wishing to join in the climate marches in DC, Springfield, Greenfield and other places are invited to participate in a show of solidarity during lunch hour outside on the LES playground. Please bring signs—especially clever and heartfelt.

Jenny Daniel, 548-9166

Jim Perkins, 367-9520

Mark Gamble, 413-348-0442

Portia Weiskel, 548-9737

TAX BILLS DUE MAY 1 – HELP OUR SENIORS WITH SOME TAX RELIEF

Many seniors and residents with disabilities in Leverett struggle to pay their taxes and want to be able to continue to make Leverett their home. *The Leverett Tax Relief Committee distributes funds yearly to income-eligible residents: Seniors 60 and over, as well as qualified individuals with disabilities.* The Committee is now funded exclusively by donations from Leverett residents. **Donations are needed.**

- 1,100 (approximately) tax bills are sent out.
- What if 1,000 Leverett property owners contributed \$5.00 a year? Or more?
- 1,000 X \$5.00+ = \$5,000+
- The Tax Relief Committee just awarded over \$5,000 to 11 eligible applicants for 2017.
- Amounts varied between just \$250 to \$750 depending on need. Not much to defray the total bill!

Now we need to replenish the Tax Relief Fund so we can help again next year. YOU CAN HELP!!!

- Help by contributing \$5.00 or more to the Tax Relief Fund. Check the box on the Real Estate bill or your Excise Tax Bill and fill in the amount of your contribution.
- Automatic Deduction: Go online and add your automatic contribution.
- Send a check at any time: Payable to Town of Leverett Tax Relief and get it to our Treasurer/Collector Jason Noschese at Town Hall.

For information about Tax Relief for seniors 60 and older and individuals with disabilities contact the Assessors' Office attention Steve Schmidt, at Town Hall, 548-4945 or the Board of Assessors.

Thank you from the Leverett Tax Relief Committee

Council on Aging

Jennifer Glover, Outreach Coordinator

The outreach coordinator is available to inform residents age 60 and older and their families of the available resources in the community and to link them with appropriate agencies and services. **Please call 548-1022 ext 5 to schedule a home visit.**

Carole King, Meal Site Manager, call 413-367-2694 to sign up for Friday Lunch; Yoga- Wednesdays at 10:00 am. \$6 per class donation; Foot Clinic-2nd Thursday of month \$25 donation. Call 413-548-9415 to sign up for Foot Clinic or Yoga.

Leverett Library News

Leverett Library, 75 Montague Rd. 548-9220

www.leverettlibrary.org

Hours: Tues. and Thurs. 3-8pm, Sat. 10am-3pm and Sun. 12-5pm (closed Sundays Memorial Day to Labor Day). Special Closings: We will be closed Saturday April 29 for Town Meeting.

Community Room Art Exhibits:

April: Leverett Trails Committee. "The Kings of Leverett": Honoring the Legacy of Frances and Gordon King. Photographs, documents and artifacts.

May-June: Paintings by Louise Minks and her students.

Coming Events.

Sunday April 23 @3:30pm, join us for swing music with the *Silverback Swing Trio and Friends*.

Thur. April 27, 6:30-8pm the library book group will discuss *To the Lighthouse* by Virginia Woolf. Open to all. Books are available at the circulation desk.

May the 4th be with you! Join us for Star Wars on the big screen, we will show *A New Hope* at 3:30 and *The Empire Strikes Back* at 6pm.

Sunday May 7, 3-4pm Ukulele Play-Along with Julie Stepanek, #4. We have ukes to borrow. Free and open to all.

Thurs. May 11 @ 7pm Local writer Bruce Watson will talk about fake news and his new project: The Attic - An American Sampler, an online magazine of American culture, music and lore.

Free Movie Night Friday May 12 @7:30pm *Loving*. 2016, PG-13 2hr. This will be the last movie night until September.

Thurs May 18, 3:15 Take apart household electronics to see what's inside and what makes them work with Bethany and Seth Seeger. All ages welcome.

Thur. May 25, 7pm *World Tarot Day with Susie Chang: It's in the Cards!* Come learn about tarot and divination and maybe get a reading of your cards.

Lego Club, the last Thursday of each month @ 3:15-4:15 Join us for new building challenges and snacks. Coming up dates, April 27 and May 29.

Knitting and crochet group, all ages and abilities, the second Thursday of each month, 6:30-8pm. New projects, instructions and supplies offered each session.

Story Hour every Wednesday from 10:30-noon. Developed for children newborn-5, but open to all families. Stop in for stories, songs and play with Heleen Cardinaux. Sponsored by the Community Network for Children.

Thank you to Carolyn Anderson, Arlyn Diamond and Georgie Schmid for their ideas and planning on *Read it, Levertt!* this year. They devised some wonderfully fun events. Thank you to Sue Mulholland and Susan Valentine at Levertt Crafts and Arts for helping set up and for use of LCA for our potluck, and to the Levertt Cultural Council and Friends of Levertt Library for their support on this and our many other events and programs. Come check us out!

Ashley Blais, Library Director

Friends of the Levertt Library

Our latest meeting was on March 15, 2017. You will all be pleased to hear that we have purchased a pass for the Basketball Hall of Fame (good for ticket discount) and a pass for Magic Wings (one adult free per day). And remember that the pass for the Springfield museums is again available; use once daily for up to 4 people free entrance.

We will be selling coffee and donuts at the annual town meeting plus, I hope, a special surprise for your art mug collection.

We are able to take donations of DVDs for resale. Look for them with the resale books.

We are still looking for a person to work in the library gardens this year—no lawn mowing. Please contact us through the library if you are interested in bidding for this work.

And finally, spring is here! Thank you for all your support! Thank you,

Leslie Fiset, President, Friends of Levertt Library

Transfer Station Stuff You Need to Know

New! We now rotate our summer/winter hours with Daylight-savings. This means: *Summer hours* = March - November. *Winter Hours*= November – March.

This is different than the rotation in the past; Memorial Day to Labor Day. Why? To accommodate the Wednesday afternoon hours of operation.

Currently we are on summer hours, until November 5, 2017:

Wednesday 4pm to 7pm. Saturday and Sunday 9:30 am to 1pm.

2018 Transfer Station Permits (valid until July 1, 2018) are \$30 and \$3 for additional cars in household. They can be purchased during operating hours at the transfer Station or Tax collector's office. Current 2016 Permits expire on July 1, 2017.

Reminders for responsible spring cleaning disposal:

Remove excess fabric and wood before arriving to transfer station if you would like to dispose them as scrap metal.

Doors must be removed from refrigerators or they will not be accepted.

Remove lids from paint cans. Why: We do not have x-ray vision. If paint is 100% empty and made of metal, it can be disposed of in the scrap metal dumpster for free. If it still contains any **latex** paint, it must be dried up and disposed of in the construction dumpster for a fee. If it is **oil** paint: keep it at your house until Household Hazardous Waste Day in October. Tip: If the label says you need to clean with mineral spirits; it's oil paint.

All ballasts must be removed from inside the florescent tube lighting before you arrive to the transfer station. The attendant can then properly accept your CFL's and ballasts: **FREE**. We also accept your rechargeable batteries for **free**.

There are so many types of NEW plastic products out there, so it can be confusing, because the standards do change over the years. Here are a few items that are NOT recyclable:

- **BLACK PLASTIC-** Plastic items are sorted by optical scanners which use the reflection of light to identify the types of plastics. Black plastic doesn't reflect light, so cannot be seen and sorted by the scanners and could end up contaminating other materials such as glass bottles.
- **PLASTIC UTENSILS-** These are made of the same resin used to make polystyrene foam and **labeled #6 which is not recyclable**.
- **FREEZER BOXES-** With freezer boxes, it is impossible to remove the plastic from the paperboard, and most municipalities cannot accept this plastic into their recycling stream. **This includes soda/beer boxes.**
- **STYROFOAM-** Styrofoam is made of foamed polystyrene and the technology to recycle this material is not practical, so it has to go in the trash. **This also includes items that seem like plastic but they are a combination of Styrofoam and plastic labeled #6**

You are all doing a great job recycling, leading Franklin County with approximately a 50% recycling rate! Well above the state average.

Ananda Larson, Transfer Station Coordinator

Annual Town Meeting

Saturday, 29 April, 2017, 9:00 AM

Leverett Elementary School

Warrant and Budget enclosed!

(Please bring copies with you to Town Meeting)

APPLICATION FOR A 2017 DOG LICENSE

Renewal _____ or New _____ license

Name of owner _____ Phone _____

Address _____

Name of dog _____ Age _____

Breed _____ Color _____

Male (\$10.00) _____ Neutered Male (\$5.00) _____ Female (\$10.00) _____ Spayed female* (\$5.00) _____

Send check payable to Town of Leverett, **proof of rabies immunization, proof of rabies immunization, proof of rabies immunization**, *proof of spaying, and a **business-size self-addressed stamped envelope** to Town Clerk, Box 300, Leverett 01054. Documents will be returned with license.

TOWN OF LEVERETT
April 2017 NEWSLETTER
LEVERETT, MA 01054

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