

NEWSLETTER

TOWN OF LEVERETT

www.leverett.ma.us

December 2011

Notes From Around Town

- Please, keep your **mailbox** clear of snow. The post office will not deliver mail if its driver can't easily reach the box.
- Leverett has a **parking ban: no parking anywhere on the road or its sides—anytime during a snow storm.**
- **Remember to keep using our Post Office!** Buy your stamps there; send a pre-paid postcard to someone; mail your holiday packages there! These are crucial tactics in our ongoing strategy to keep the Post Office open!
- **Property Tax bills have not been mailed. Voluntary payments (any amount) gladly accepted. See page 6 for more information.**

NEXT NEWSLETTER DEADLINES:

1 February, 1 April, 1 June 2012

Send a cheek swab (or get one at your Dr.'s office) so that you can be listed on the National Bone Marrow Registry (so you may get to save a life what better gift could you give?) and news items to: Lisa Stratford, Box 300, Leverett, MA, 01054 or e-mail to townclerk@leverett.ma.us Call 548-9150 for information and guidelines.

Winter Reminders:

Winter sand is available to all residents, for private use only, at the Safety Complex. If you are elderly or physically unable to get sand, the Highway Department will deliver a 5-gallon bucket to you. Call Will at 548-9400 for a delivery.

The Select Board adopted the following policies and would appreciate your cooperation in regard to them:

(February 12, 1996)

No person other than an employee of the Highway Department shall **push, pile, plow, or blow snow or ice onto a town or county road** that impedes the flow of traffic. Whoever violates this resolution shall be punished by a fine of not more than \$50 per offense.

(December 29, 2003)

Residents are advised to secure their **mailboxes** against possible movement from snow removal operations. **The Town is not responsible for damage to mailboxes caused by snow removal operations.**

Select Board News

The Halloween blizzard may be remembered as an anomaly or as a harbinger of climate change to come. Either way, it tested us as households and a town and we survived. **Our emergency team did good work** and is looking at lessons learned. Meanwhile, we attend to ongoing projects unaffected by the storm.

Town Hall is looking better and better as the CPC-funded restoration project nears completion. When the exterior is done and the bugs fixed in the new heating system, we'll have a tighter, warmer, more energy efficient building. The energy performance project at the school building is already finished, and the roof and window projects are on schedule for next year. But for another bout of hard weather—the tornado to our south that demanded more building supplies than were available regionally—the windows would have been installed already. We learn as we go and we do our best to hold things together in difficult times, both natural world and economic.

The **Special Town Meeting in October** focused on some important projects ahead of us, including the fiber-optic telecommunications network, a study of possibilities for school regionalization, and the ongoing dilemma of water contamination in the vicinity of the old landfill. There will be further work to be done on all these at the Annual Town Meeting next spring. Each of these projects involves economic considerations and questions about municipal responsibility: what can we afford and what are our obligations to future generations?

Water quality is a basic concern for all. When the aquifer in part of the Town is damaged by actions of the Town, the Town must respond to the households concerned. The question is how best to do this. The discussion at the Special Town Meeting is guiding us as we prepare proposals for the Annual Meeting.

The Elementary School is often referred to as a center of Town activity, though the children are its primary beneficiaries. The **regionalization study committee** created at the Special Meeting will explore a range of options to assure long-term sustainability of our local school and present these to the Town for deliberation and decision.

Telecommunication is a significant aspect of household and municipal activity. Nearly everything we do for business or pleasure is intertwined with electronic communication. The infrastructure to support this is becoming a municipal concern equivalent to public safety, roads, and schools. Following decisions at the Special Town Meeting to create a 'municipal light plant' and to

join Wired West, our **Broadband Committee is evaluating design proposals to build a fiber-optic telecommunications network** throughout Town, as part of the basic municipal services needed to support households, businesses, and Town operations. A final design plan will be presented to Town Meeting.

By the time you read this, we will have been able to set the tax rate and send out bills to pay for Town operations. But for a delay in Boston bureaucracy, the rate and bills would have already gone out. In the meantime, we had to arrange short-term borrowing to deal with cash flow requirements.

As I write this, the sun is shining brightly through early winter air. We move toward a new year with the knowledge that difficulties are not all behind us, and with the commitment to respond to our shared life with courage and mutual respect.

Peter d'Errico for the Select Board

TOWN STREET LIST/CENSUS

In your mailbox first week of January

Each year we must send out a mailing to all households verifying who is living in each house in town. This is sometimes called the town census or town street list. No matter what you call it, you are asked to PLEASE be on the lookout for an envelope from the Town Clerk which will contain a yellow form listing all who are in your house according to our records. You are asked to **return this to us within 10 days**, either by mail, or by dropping it at the school or the Town Hall.

The information we receive from you will keep you on the voter list (so you don't have to fill in an affidavit and provide proof of address at the important elections in 2012), will ensure that our school projections are on target, and will assure regional school officials that students do in fact live in the region.

It only takes a minute to respond. Please do so promptly. Many thanks.

The Newsletter is published by the Town of Leverett 6 times per year and mailed to each address in Leverett (about 850) and subscribed to worldwide. It is the official publication of the Town and accepts articles from Town boards and committees. No politicizing or editorializing is allowed. When space is available, items from nonprofit organizations may be included. No advertising for the sale of goods or services for personal gain is allowed.

Cover art by Margaret Nutting.

Compiled and humorously written by Lisa Stratford and expertly edited by Portia Weiskel.

New Fire Truck has arrived, and other Fire Department News

The Fire Department thanks the town for voting to purchase a new fire engine for protection of life and

property in Leverett. It has arrived and on Saturday, December the 10th, it will be on display at the Public Safety Complex between the hours of 10 am to 1 pm. Please stop by and view the truck and share some refreshments. It's a beauty!

This is the time of year when our heating systems are used more intensively. Make sure that your heating equipment – furnace, boiler or woodstove – is in good working condition. The chimney of your home should be checked to make sure it is clear and structurally sound.

If the batteries in your smoke and carbon monoxide detectors are over 6 months old, you should change them. Carbon monoxide detectors are required on all levels of your home, within 10 feet of the bedroom door. Carbon monoxide (CO) is colorless, tasteless and odorless. It can cause severe sickness or death. Symptoms include dizziness, nausea and/or headaches, which may worsen over several days.

During the October snowstorm many homes ran generators as backup for electricity. There are a few safety precautions that must be followed. A licensed electrician should wire your generator and make sure it is away from your home or garage. This will prevent CO from entering your home. The main circuit breaker to the electrical panel must be shut off during generator use. This prevents electricity from back feeding to the power lines and electrocuting the utility workers trying to restore power.

If you have any question about any of these items or any fire related concerns, please contact the fire department, 548-9225, and we will try to answer your concerns as soon as possible.

Thank you, John Moruzzi

From the Town Clerk:

The Town voted a change in the zoning bylaws pertaining to a **Solar Overlay District**. As required by law, this change was submitted to the Attorney General for approval. On November 16, the Town Clerk received notification that the Attorney General has approved the bylaw changes as submitted. Pursuant to G.L. c. 40, Sec. 32, this approval must be posted in order for the changes to legally take effect. This publication satisfies this requirement.

Please see Sec. 4970 of the Zoning Bylaws for specifics of these changes. The Bylaws can be viewed online at: www.leverett.ma.us Go to Boards, then Planning Board, then amended bylaws.

FOR HUNTERS AND FISHERS

Beginning January 1, hunting and fishing licenses will no longer be sold at the Town Hall. The state is moving to a computer-based and sporting goods retailer system that we will not be participating with. 2012 licenses will be available online by going to:

www.mass.gov/masswildlife and then clicking on License info. The website also lists locations where you can walk in and purchase a license. The most local places seem to be Dick's Sporting Goods in Hadley and Walmart in Hadley and Northampton. If you do not have access to a computer, or need help with the process, you may ask for help at the Leverett Library where the cheerful and competent staff and volunteers will be happy to help you. (Be sure to bring your credit card if you plan to get your license online.)

Greetings— Leverett Scholarship Committee

The Leverett Scholarship Committee last met in May, 2011, to review the applications received from Amherst Regional High School class of 2010. After considering our criteria of connections to and residence in Leverett, financial need, academic performance, and community service, we were happy to select Elijah Stevens as the recipient of an \$800 award. Elijah is attending Wesleyan University in Connecticut with initial goals of studying anthropology or cultural history.

In his essay, Elijah notes his connections with the Peace Pagoda, visiting, volunteering his labor, and participating in ceremonies. It is fitting that the Pagoda celebrated the completion of its temple this month. Elijah has also displayed the rare ability to excel in math and technical subjects as well as literature and history. In his recent note from school, he writes, "I am having a fantastic time, taking wonderful, rigorous, thought-provoking classes, and being overwhelmed by so many new experiences, in the best way possible!"

Elijah is the twelfth recipient of the scholarship. Contributions by Leverett citizens have made these awards possible. The simplest way to contribute is using the check-off box on your real estate tax bill. If you use the auto-debit option, then it's easy as sending a note to Dee Ann Civello to debit your account for the amount desired, or you can send a check made payable to the Town of Leverett, indicating it is for the Scholarship Fund c/o Treasurer's Office, PO Box 300, Leverett 01054

Thank you all who have contributed to this fund. I am sure the scholarship money is appreciated, and it serves as a vote of confidence for our graduates as they set off in their new direction. The committee always wishes we had more to give. I would like to remind all the families of Leverett that we entertain applications from any students pursuing post-secondary education. The Committee will consider students attending community college, trade school, or traditional four-year college. Criteria to be considered when making awards: financial need; length of residence; service to the community; academic history; and career goals.

With thanks and appreciation,
Leverett Scholarship & Education Committee

Grave Concerns- Cemetery Associations

The two Leverett Cemetery Associations have been working on the "Grave Situation." We have filled out two applications for Community Preservation funds to help us start a program of conservation and restoration of the cemeteries in town.

The Leverett Cemetery Association is developing a plan to improve the condition of the stones in the North Cemetery (the one just beyond the Safety Complex, on the left, heading north); the cemetery dates back to 1780. Many of the stones are weathered, broken, dirty, chipped or flat on their faces. We have been in contact with a conservator, who has made an inventory of the stones, which we have used to acquire bids. We held a workshop with her in October when we were shown the basics for cleaning, resetting, and inventorying the stones. We will be passing this information on to volunteers next spring in order to get the work done sooner and to reduce the expenses.

The North Leverett Cemetery Association is planning to remove and replace the fence at the Moores Corner Cemetery. Carol King of Dudleyville Rd. has done research indicating that the fence was put up around 1910. (Long-time Leverett historian Forrest Briggs was the source.) The cemetery itself dates back to the 1820's and the land was given to the town by Asa Moore. The fence is covered with rust, is corroded in places; one half of the main gate has broken off and the walk-in gate is completely off its hinges. The committee is attempting to save the original posts, as they are still in good shape. John and Charlotte Abbott have put a lot of energy into notifying citizens about the situation and seeking support.

We are planning to keep you up to date with notes in the Town newsletter and on Leverett Listings. We do need your help and support.

Donations may be made out to the appropriate Association and sent to Sharon Raskevitz, Cider Mill Road, Leverett, MA, 01054, to support the North Cemetery plans. Fence donations may be sent to David Glazier, 88 Hemenway Road, Leverett, MA, 01054. Questions may be directed to Edie Field at 548-9452.

Looking for a gift? For others? For yourself?

The new Rattlesnake Gutter Trust T-shirt is available at the Leverett Library, or by calling Julie Collier at 549-8164. (Leave a message, she will call you back to arrange a pick-up time.) Sizes: Adult S, M, L, XL. Price: \$20. Our thanks to Julie Collier for her drawing of the Barn Owl (and, of course, to the owl for posing

so elegantly). For more information about RGT, go to rattlesnakeguttertrust.org and wander around.

Leverett Trails Committee

During this busy season, enjoy some unscheduled time walking the trails (upper and lower loop) that lead south from the 4-H Forest and the new trail that begins just across Doolittle Brook (Woodard's Corner). Park at the 4-H Forest, walk along Shutesbury Road to the Woodard's Corner Trail. AND bring your camera so you can catch the marvelous light on the beaver pond, or filtering through the trees, or your companions enjoying themselves – AND THEN enter your work in the **Photo Contest**. (Copies of the entry form at the Post Office, Library, Leverett Co-op, or online at www.rattlesnakeguttertrust.org - click on Trails, then Photo Contest. Contest deadline February 15.

Say What?

Do you have hearing loss? Do you have trouble understanding what is being said at Town Meeting or at events at the library? Would you like help to be able to understand what Town government is doing or what the speaker at the library is saying? The Selectboard has been asked to install an assistive listening system in town buildings to enable hearing impaired members of Leverett to be able to more fully participate in town government and cultural offerings. Understanding what is being said at Town Meeting, Town Board meetings, and events at the library can be difficult to impossible for the hearing impaired. Amplification often does little, or nothing, to improve speech recognition. The systems are being researched at this time. If you would like to find out more or would like to offer suggestions/comments contact Thom Masterton at mastertonthomas@gmail.com or call 367-2633.

**** Remember to keep using our Post Office!** Buy your stamps there; send a pre-paid postcard to someone; mail your holiday packages there! These are crucial tactics in our ongoing strategy to keep the Post Office open!

Leverett Library

Library Hours *Tuesday 3-8 *Wednesday 10-3 (story hour at 10:30) *Thursday 3-8 *Saturday 10-3 *Sunday 12-5 (closed Sundays Memorial Day to Labor Day).
Special Closings: Sunday, December 25; Saturday, December 31-Sunday, January 1; and Sunday, January 15.
Art in the Community Room Through December, come see Judith Inglese's watercolor and collage illustrations

from the new children's books *I See the Sun in China* (also Nepal, Afghanistan, and Russia).

Thurs, Dec 15, 7-8. Mark Vonnegut, M.D., author of *Just Like Someone Without Mental Illness Only More So*. "An honest, witty and vivid depiction of normal life in between interruptions of mental illness."—National Public Radio. Signed copies will be available to purchase.

Sun, Jan 8, 2-4. Do you have a Kindle or Nook? Sign up for a free workshop with instructor Shirley Keech. Participants will learn about their devices, including how to download free library books and audios. Space is limited, so call the library to reserve a spot.

Coming in mid-February, a 4-week class "Introduction to the Computer" with experienced and popular instructor Shirley Keech. Learn how simple it is to really explore the online world (including e-mail). Sponsored by the Leverett Library and the Leverett Council on Aging. Fee for participants. Call for information and to reserve a spot.

The online catalogue is changing on January 2! Among the benefits, the new catalog will display books, audios, etc. from all of the C/WMARS member libraries in Western and Central Mass, so that it will be easier to find and request items. Patrons who like to place their own holds online, please note: you will not have access to your account on December 30-31. Your password will be reset to the last 4 digits of your library card number. Your "Reading History" and "Wishlists" will not be carried over to the new catalog, so save them before Dec. 30.

Read It Leverett! Our book for this annual community read is *March*, by Geraldine Brooks. Winner of the Pulitzer Prize, the book follows one man (the fictional Mr. March from *Little Women*) as he leaves his family in Massachusetts to aid the Union cause in the Civil War. His experiences utterly change his marriage and challenge his most ardently held beliefs. Books will be available to borrow in January, and a schedule of events will appear in the next newsletter.

Congratulations to the kids who took part in the library's 2011 Summer Reading Program. By reading, they raised \$100 for the Red Cross. Half of the money was designated for relief in Western Mass, half in Japan. The money was donated by the Friends of the Leverett Library.

Sign up to borrow the new library Kindle, purchased with funds donated in memory of Gardner Hobart. It may be borrowed for 2 weeks. The font size can be adjusted from small to large. To check out digital books and audios available through C/WMARS for Kindles and other e-readers, click on "Digital Catalog" near the top of our home page at www.leverettlibrary.org.

Amnesty for Overdue Fines in December: Bring in a nonperishable food item for the Survival Center or some kitty litter or liquid laundry detergent for the Dakin Pioneer Valley Humane Society and we will waive your overdue fines on Leverett Library items. Sorry, but we

cannot waive fines on items from other libraries or on charges for missing or damaged items.

Thank you to Dorothy McFarland for a copy of her new book of poetry, *To Live in This World*, and to Susie Chang for her book *A Spoonful of Promises*.

Linda Wentworth, Library Director

COA NEWS

Do you feel frustrated or left out when you hear the words "visit our website"? The Leverett Library and Leverett COA will be presenting an Introduction to Computers for Adults class with Shirley Keech, research specialist. The class will be held from 10:00-12:00 on Tuesdays, February 14, 21, 28 and March 6. Learn how simple it really is to explore the online world (including tips on e-mail). Small fee. Preregistration required as space is limited. Call 548-1022.

Please contact the COA at 548-1022x5 or coa@leverett.ma.us to be put on a list for the emergency planning committee if you would possibly need medical help during a natural disaster.

Soon take-it-easy yoga and the mealsite will be back at town hall. Please consider joining us in the new year at noon on Friday for a meal (\$2) or at 10:00 on Wednesdays for yoga (\$4).

Eleanor Duncan has moved to her son's home in Southampton. The COA will miss her and all the ways she teaches us. Her commitment to seniors in Leverett is greatly appreciated by many.

Our condolences go to the family of Robert Schuyler, who was the male Boston Post Gold Cane holder in Leverett.

LEVERETT HISTORICAL COMMISSION

On Tuesday, November 29, we held a required meeting in the North Leverett Baptist Church fellowship hall with home owners from North Leverett, Moore's Corner and East Leverett, the areas where new National Register Historic Districts are proposed. Betsy Friedberg from the Massachusetts Historical Commission in Boston gave a powerpoint presentation describing what this kind of historic district is: recognition for the history and architecture of the area. There are no restrictions on what a property owner can do with privately owned property.

Bonnie Parsons, the consultant from the Pioneer Valley Preservation Commission in West Springfield who will be doing the research and writing the applications for the districts, then talked about how she will proceed with the work. The first task is to fix the boundaries of the districts. She would like to know of anyone who has memories or articles about the past. If anyone has information, please contact Betsy Douglas at 548-9320 and she can pass the word to Bonnie.

The whole project will be finished and submitted to the Massachusetts Historical Commission by the end of

May 2012 and then the final awarding of the NRHD designation will follow a year or so later.

If anyone is interested in serving on the Historical Commission, please let Betsy Douglas know.

From the Broadband Committee

The Broadband Committee, using design funds awarded by the Massachusetts Broadband Initiative, is developing a **plan for deploying state-of-the-art communications infrastructure** in Town. The fiber-optic network we envision would have sufficient capacity to carry telephone, television, movies, and the entire world of Internet communications, all at speeds far in excess of DSL and cable (not to mention satellite).

A **fiber-optic network can carry simultaneous multiple streams of data** to each connected location. That means talking on the phone, watching a movie, browsing the Internet, and watching television all at the same time and by multiple users! Deployment of this network would allow Leverett to leapfrog over the gap between what we have now and what we need for usable, affordable, reliable telecommunications.

The key to our planning is the view that **telecommunications is an element in municipal infrastructure**. This view is shared by an increasing number of towns and regions across the country: telecommunication is in the same category as roads, public safety, and schools.

The committee is preparing a set of "frequently asked questions" to inform households about fiber-optic networks. We will seek information about specific telecommunications needs of households and businesses in town, including data about current costs. We will provide educational and survey materials during the planning process, aiming for a presentation and proposal to the Annual Town Meeting.

Peter d'Errico, for the Broadband Committee

Energy Committee

Hello Everybody, Did you get your copy of our energy handbook yet? It's yellow; it has great illustrations; it's written to amuse and inform (imagine: reading about energy saving strategies and being entertained). We are hand-delivering them because we got enough money to compile the thing but not enough to mail to all. If you have two please return one to library; if you haven't got yours yet please let us know and we will do something more direct than just waiting until we bump into you. Both

the handbook and a list of our selected websites are available on line at the town's website (see "boards," then "energy," etc.). One copy of the list will be at the library so you can peruse and choose sites to check or make your own personal copy.

The committee has been working with town officials to achieve official (state) "green" community" status. The bylaw vote at annual town meeting allowing for a Solar Overlay District was a major component of the plan. If successful, the town becomes eligible for the grants to facilitate other energy-saving strategies. Meetings are the 2nd Mondays of the month, 7:30 PM, Town Hall (next is December 12).

Portia @pweiskel@post.harvard.edu/548-9737.

COMMUNITY PRESERVATION COMMITTEE

The Community Preservation Committee has funds available for open space preservation, affordable housing, historic preservation, or recreation. **Have you seen your Community Preservation dollars at work recently?**

Perhaps you have noticed that funds you appropriated at the last Town Meeting are in use right now restoring the Town Hall. Other funds you appropriated last April have been used to purchase a parcel of land on the shore of Leverett Pond. The purchase is complete and a Conservation Restriction has been recorded. Take a walk on the Friendship Trail next to the Leverett Pond inlet channel and see this new acquisition. Research and documentation are underway to apply to have three new National Historic Districts for North Leverett, Moore's Corner, and East Leverett to join our Leverett Center Historic District. You will be hearing more about these in coming months.

We have received the following **New Applications** for funding in 2011:

1. From the Leverett Conservation Commission, Kestral Trust, and Rattlesnake Gutter Trust, an application for \$170,000 to purchase a Conservation Restriction on Teawaddle Hill Farm, eliminating development rights on the farm in perpetuity, for the purposes of protecting agricultural lands and natural resources, maintaining the property in its natural, scenic, and undeveloped condition, providing public access for recreation, and preventing uses or changes that interfere with these values.
2. From the Leverett Cemetery Association, an application for \$28,000 for restoration of 90+ stones in the North Cemetery located on Montague Road about a mile north of Town Hall.
3. From the North Leverett Cemetery Association, an application for \$29,950 to begin restoration of the Moores Corner Cemetery located on Rattlesnake Gutter Road near the North Leverett Coop by replacing the fence along the street side.

4. From Ted Goodnight and Katherine Theodore, an application for \$23,222 to restore the sills, beams, joists, and roof of the 1806 house at 21 Still Corner Road in East Leverett.

A copy of the complete text and backup materials for each of these proposals is available at Town Hall. Please stop by and take a look, and plan to attend our **public hearing** in March. Those projects recommended to Town Meeting will be voted on in April.

Laurel S. Kahn, Community Preservation Committee

FY2012 Real Estate bills should be in the mail sometime this month.

Your tax bill will show the amount of real estate and/or personal property tax you owe for fiscal year 2012 (July 1, 2011 through June 30, 2012) based on assessments as of January 1, 2011). Please check your bill carefully and report any errors or changes to the Assessors' Office (548-4945). **By law**, the name of the owner of record on January 1, 2011 **must** be printed on the bill, so if you purchased the property after January 1, the name of the former owner will appear on the bill. Total amount owed can be paid in one or two installments (bills \$200 or less must be paid in full in the first installment). You can pay online, mail a check (write bill# on check), or sign up for "direct pay" (your account will be debited on the due date). If you bring your payment to the Town Hall, please do so during Collector's office hours (M Tu Th Sat 2:30-8:30 pm; 548-9666). You can also leave your check in the Collector's mailbox to the right of the office; please do not interrupt other Town Hall staff for accepting payments or requesting receipts. If you have an escrow account, your bank has been notified of the amount due, so keep the bill for your records. Late payments are assessed 14% interest from the issue date printed on the bill until the date received. You will not receive a bill for the balance due; it will be added to your second payment due May 1, 2012. If you plan to pay your bill late, contact the Collector's Office for total amount owed.

On March 18, 2002, Leverett voters accepted CH44B **COMMUNITY PRESERVATION ACT (CPA)** and approved a 3% property tax surcharge (\$100,000 assessed value is exempt). The amount of the surcharge is required to be listed separately; however, it is part of the tax bill and subject to the same interest and penalty charges for late payment. Low or moderate-income households may qualify for exemption from this surcharge. Request application or additional information from the Assessors' Office 548-4945 or assessors@leverett.ma.us.

On April 29, 2000, the town accepted CH60 sections 3C & 3D allowing the designation of a "check off box" on Real Estate and Excise bills whereby a taxpayer can contribute to the local Scholarship Fund and/or Tax Relief Fund. During this season of giving, please consider making a contribution in honor of a teacher, a student, or

loved one. Your donations are greatly appreciated. If you have any questions about these funds, please contact the Treasurer's Office 548-9666.

Does the Town owe YOU money? Remember-- Motor Vehicle Excise, the town's second largest revenue source, is PAID IN ADVANCE for the CALENDAR YEAR. Therefore, if you don't have your vehicle for the entire year and have already paid the tax, you may be due a refund. However, this is not automatic -- you must complete an abatement application (available at the Town Hall or online at leverett.ma.us). To determine if it is worth your effort, assuming your vehicle was registered as of January 1, divide tax by 12 and multiply by the number of months you owned the vehicle (this is the tax you owe); subtract that amount from what you paid to determine your potential refund (no refund due if less than \$5.00). Then attach a copy of your plate return receipt, bill of sale, or other document showing the disposition of the vehicle to your application and mail it to the Assessors Office, PO Box 300. If you have any questions about the abatement process, call 548-4945 or e-mail assessors@leverett.ma.us

Dee Ann Civello, Tax Collector

Shop at Target? Earn rewards for LES!

Shop locally...absolutely! All over the Valley we are blessed with amazing downtowns, local artisans, entrepreneurs, business owners, etc. But truth is...many of us head to the "big box" stores with some regularity or even if just on occasion.

Have you been to Target lately?

If so and you are not opposed to having a credit/debit card, consider this opportunity to earn rewards for Leverett Elementary School. Take Charge of Education is a Target program. With use of your Target REDcard, Target will **donate up to 1% of your REDcard purchases directly to LES**. Just think, if 100 people signed up for the Target RED card, and each made a purchase of \$100 (not that hard)...**LES would earn \$100.00!**

Community Events

The **Leverett Family Museum's** "Taylor Exhibit" will end on the last day of December. The ledgers from both stores in town are on display. Museum will re-open in March with old-time maple syruping exhibit.

The **Leverett Literature Group** invites townspeople to its Annual Reading Aloud of Christmas and other holiday stories. Tuesday, December 20, 6:30 to 8 PM, Leverett Library. A Child's Christmas in Wales, Truman Capote's memoir, Dickens, and *your* favorite. Literature-inspired

refreshments. Call Portia (548-9737) if you'd like to come or suggest a reading.



SONGS FOR A WINTER'S DAY

The Leverett Community Chorus will be presenting their winter concert on Sunday, January 8, 2012. The concert will be held at the Leverett Congregational Church at 4pm. Please come and enjoy the beautiful music, and consider joining the chorus for the next session.

(A free will donation of \$5 is suggested to defray costs.)

Echo Lake Coffee House

John Sheldon, local guitarist and songwriter, will play a solo solstice concert at the **Echo Lake Coffeehouse** in the Town Hall, 9 Montague Rd., Leverett, MA on **Saturday, December 17**, starting at **7:30 pm**. Admission is \$12/\$10. For more info: 548-9394 www.echolakecoffeehouse.org

Winter Yoga classes at the Leverett Library

Classes will be held on Thursdays from January 5-February 16. Contact Lisa Enzer 367-2658 or enzer@earthlink.net to register.

Bliss Yoga 4:45-5:45 PM \$77

Evening Yoga 6-7:15 PM \$84

TOWN OF LEVERETT
December 2011 **NEWSLETTER**
LEVERETT, MA 01054

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LEVERETT RESIDENT

LEVERETT, MA 01054

Emergency Management Team---STORM PREPAREDNESS

The October storm was unprecedented and the Emergency Management Team learned many lessons from it. With the entire town without electricity and over 50 % of the town without phone service for several days, communication through our regular means was cut off. We set up a shelter at the Elementary School and sent a Connect-CTY message to inform residents about it but only 48% of the residents received the call. For better communication through this system in the future, please help us to input cell phone numbers and current e-mails into the Connect-CTY system. You can go to the town's website www.leverett.ma.us and enter your information, call 413-548-1022 ext. 4 and leave your information, or e-mail your information to assistant@leverett.ma.us to help accomplish this.

Some other lessons we learned that we would like you to be aware of:

- **Self planning for every household is important** - Please make sure you have needed items available to endure a period without electricity and/or phone. If you have specific needs, such as medicines, make sure you have enough available.
- **Also, please check on and communicate with your neighbors.** When roads are impassible, emergency workers may not be able to get through, but if you know your neighbors and know of their needs, your help may be essential.
- **We need to update our lists of residents who cannot survive without power.** If you need power for medical reasons, please contact Tanya Cushman, Council on Aging Chair at coa@leverett.ma.us, call 413-548-1022 ext. 5, or leave your name at Town Hall. (This information will be kept confidential).
- During any weather event or other emergency, please assume that the **Public Safety Complex and/or the Elementary School at 85/95 Montague Road will be open** to help and answer questions. If you can get to that area, someone will be there.

If you have questions contact Susan Nagy 548-1022 ext. 4 or Margie McGinnis 548-9699. For information on disaster preparedness please visit MEMA's web site and click on the featured links at the bottom of the page or google MEMA.

Jim Field and Sue Nagy for the Emergency Management Team