

NEWSLETTER

TOWN OF LEVERETT

www.leverett.ma.us

December 2012

Notes From Around Town

- **Kimball Trust:** Another way to help this season is with a donation to the Kimball Trust. It was set up in 1909 in the will of Catherine Kimball to provide clothing for Leverett children in need. You may make checks payable to: Kimball Trust in any amount.
- **Hunting Season:** It is deer hunting season. To keep yourself and your pets safe please wear blaze orange (yes, that tacky, hideous orange) it has been proven to be more effective than any "bright color." Shotgun season is first followed by black powder season. In total they run from Nov. 26 to Dec 31. If you and/or your pets will be outside during this time please remember to wear your blaze orange. For more information go to: http://www.mass.gov/dfwele/dfw/recreation/safety/autumn_safety.htm
- Please, keep your **mailbox** clear of snow. The post office will not deliver mail if its driver can't easily reach the box. You don't want to miss all those hand-written letters and gifts from admirers.
- **ALUMINUM FLIP TAB** (from the tops of soda cans etc) COLLECTION reminder from Les Allen: Keep them coming! Your efforts matter. Leave off at Town Hall and/or bottle return section at the landfill
- Leverett has a **parking ban: no parking anywhere on the road or roadsides—anytime during a snow storm.**

NEXT NEWSLETTER DEADLINES:
1 February, 1 April, 1 June 2013

Send news items and dried cherries (chocolate-covered or not) 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

Please note Select Board Meeting Dates for Dec.: Dec. 4th and 18th (as opposed to the second and last Tuesdays of the month).

Thanks to Leverett's Emergency Management Team for their work in preparing for Sandy. Fortunately Leverett did not suffer great damage or extended power outages, but the effort that goes into preparing for that possibility is essential and we are lucky to have such a dedicated crew.

The target date of 2014 for connecting to the 21st century via broadband has not changed! The next step in the process is the assessment and preparation of the poles for stringing the cable. This has to be done by the pole owners, WMECO and Verizon; funds allocated for the broadband project will pay for this, but it is up to these companies to do the work which should take 6 to 8 months to complete. Once the poles are "made ready," the cable stringing can begin getting us all a big step closer to being hooked up.

Be sure to fill out the **Homeowners Easement and Right of Access** that was included with the property tax bill mailed out in October and return it to the address on the form or drop it off at the Town Hall. If you don't have the form it is available on the town's website under "Broadband Committee." This permission is necessary for the broadband to get to your house.

The Regional School District Planning Committee (RSPDC) has been working on the question of Leverett, Shutesbury and Pelham creating a regional school district with Amherst, either as part of the existing regional school district for the middle and high school or as a separate district for Pre-K – 6th grade region. The primary focus areas are education, finance, and governance. Two consultants have been hired for the education and finance component and the committee is seeking funding for legal

consultation. There will be several meetings throughout the winter, spring and summer leading up to a town meeting vote in the fall of 2013 which will provide the opportunity to get more information, ask questions, and provide valuable input. The committee hopes that folks will make an effort to attend. Meanwhile, the RSPDC meetings are open to the public—you can find the timeline, meeting dates, prior meeting minutes, and other information at www.RegionalSchoolPlanning.com.

As most of you probably know by now, the amended cell tower bylaw passed expanding the locations in town where towers would be permitted. This does not mean that any towers will be built any time soon since a cell service provider will be the one building the tower so it has be worth the investment. It was a great turnout for the special town meeting.

The Affordable Housing Trust has been meeting to work on implementing the Leverett Affordable Housing Program and to work with Pioneer Valley Habitat for Humanity to construct new affordable housing units. An application for folks interested in applying for any of the components of the Leverett plan has been developed and will be online once one more legal form is in place.

The consultant to the Well Committee has drafted a plan and is going to meet with the committee to finalize the plan. Thanks to everyone who has worked on this; it's taken many hours and we are fortunate to have such talented residents willing to volunteer their time and expertise.

The new windows in the school look great! This project is completed although negotiations with the architect concerning problems regarding the implementation of the project are ongoing. Thanks to Rich Brazeau and John Kuczek both of whom put in many hours overseeing this project.

Julie Shively, for the Select Board

Help Update Our Honor Roll of Military Veterans

Town Hall contains brass plaques listing names of military veterans from Leverett who served in times of war. The rolls honor veterans who were residents of Leverett at the time of service, and includes names dating from The War of 1812 to the Vietnam War. We ask your help in updating these rolls. In particular, names of veterans who served in more recent wars should be added, including the wars in the Middle East and Afghanistan. Likewise, if names of veterans who served in the earlier wars are absent these should be added as well. We'll be grateful for help in identifying such veterans. Please forward names of veterans to us by calling Lisa in the Town Hall at 548-9150 and/or tell the veteran or his/her family about this project. We will gladly do the follow-up. Consistent with past practice, the veteran should have been a Leverett resident at the time of service. Thanks for your help.

Fire Department

The brush-burning season starts on January 15th and continues until May 1st. This regulation is not meant for land clearing. Using the web is the recommended method for obtaining a permit, if you have internet access, go to www.fcburnpermits.com, then follow the directions to obtain a permit for the day. You can also go to the town's website where there is a link to this address. If you do not have access to the web, call the dispatch center at 625-8200 and they will issue you a permit. As always, it is best to get your brush burning done early in the season because of the strong possibility that permits will not be issued if the weather becomes dry and windy.

In other department news, Captain Wayne Allen has resigned from the department and will be greatly missed. We thank Wayne for his time and dedication to the town.

Respectfully, John Moruzzi

Historical Commission

The Leverett Historical Commission accepted the resignations of two members moving out of town, Kris Thomson and Geert DeVries. Happily we have welcomed four new members: Silas Ball, Carole DeSanti, Lynn Hall and Nan Niederlander.

We have been brainstorming about new ways we can serve Leverett, since the three new historic district projects (North Leverett, Moore's Corner, and East Leverett) have been sent off to Boston and we await word the designations are confirmed.

We hope to work with the Leverett Elementary School and the Historical Society in bringing to the attention of all the part Leverett played in the Civil War. More than forty men fought in the Union Army. These actions mark the beginning of statewide recognitions for the Sesquicentennial of the Civil War.

We will work with Lisa Stratford applying for funding from the Community Preservation Committee to digitize town records in the vault, hiring an outside company to do the work.

If townspeople have projects you think the LHC should be involved in, please call Betsy Douglas at 548-9320.

Betsy Douglas for the Historical Commission.

HOLIDAY LITERATURE PARTY

Everyone in town is invited to the annual holiday party of the Leverett Literature Group on Tuesday, December 18, at the library from 6:30 to 8 pm. We bring good stuff to eat and drink and take turns reading aloud from Dylan Thomas' *A Child's Christmas in Wales* and Truman Capote's *A Christmas Memory*. We also invite anyone interested in reading James Joyce's *Ulysses* to join us in January. Details: Portia @548-9737.

WESTERN MASSACHUSETTS RECYCLING REMINDER

Happy Holidays! Thank you for your recycling efforts over the past year. Following are some guidelines for recycling during the holiday and winter months:

YES

Please DO include the following items in your paper recycling mix:

corrugated cardboard boxes; paperboard gift boxes;
greeting cards (except those with foil, metallic inks, or glitter);
gift wrap, gift bags, tissue wrap (except those with foil, metallic inks, or glitter);
paper shopping bags (any type of handle is okay);
catalogs and calendars.

Please
DO
NOT
include the

NO

following items in your recycling mix:

ribbons, bows, and tinsel;
packing peanuts and Styrofoam; (re-usable, contact your local pack and ship store)
holiday lights;
plastic bags.

If you have any questions about recycling, please contact Franklin County Solid Waste Management District at 413 772-2438 or info@franklincountywastedistrict.org, MA Relay for the hearing impaired: 711 or 1-800-439-2370 (TTY/TDD), or call the MRF Recycling Hotline at 888-888-0784 ext. 2293.

Taxes and Such...

Your tax bill shows the amount of real estate and/or personal property tax you owe for fiscal year 2013 (July 1, 2012 through June 30, 2013) based on assessments (as of January 1, 2012). 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, 2012 **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 2:30-9:30 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, 2013. 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. Thank you!

The **Kimball Trust Fund** was established as the result of a bequest in the will of Catherine N Kimball dated June 7, 1909, whereby \$1,000 was to be set aside and "the income thereof be used . . . for clothing poor children in Leverett." Trust guidelines were established in 1990 and since that time donations to the Fund have allowed us to distribute over \$17,000 to low income families in order to purchase much needed clothing for their children. You can help continue this effort by sending your tax-deductible contribution payable to the Town of Leverett either to the Treasurer's Office, PO Box 300; or to the Leverett Elementary School, c/o Jill Roberts, 85 Montague Road. Thank you for your support!

ENERGY COMMITTEE

Have you looked at your latest electric bill? Checked to see if you used more during this November than last November? (See chart on back of bill.) If you want to become an attentive and conscientious reader of your

electric bill, WE NEED YOU for our friendly (but dead serious) "race-to-the-bottom-of-energy-consumption" competition with other Franklin County towns. We only need a MONTHLY MINUTE or so of your time to register your results. A MONTHLY MINUTE! How can you turn us down?

Meetings every second Monday of month--not always in Town Hall. Details: Portia@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?** Open Space funds were used most recently to purchase a Conservation Restriction on Teawaddle Hill Farm to preserve the landscape and permit hiking and hunting on part of the property. Parking areas have been established and efforts are underway to create trails and informational kiosks.

Or perhaps you have noticed that funds you appropriated at the last Town Meeting are in use right now restoring gravestones at the North Cemetery and the fence at the Moores Corner Cemetery.

We have received the following **New Application** for funding in 2012: From Leverett Elementary School a proposal for \$17,000.00 to improve the Preschool Playground by acquiring a climbing structure to replace the wooden structure that had to be dismantled due to age, replacing the decaying split rail fence that encloses the playground, and purchasing a now-required cover for the sandbox.

A copy of the complete text and backup materials for this proposal is available at Town Hall. Please stop by and take a look, and plan to attend our **public hearing** in March. If the project is recommended to Town Meeting it will be voted on in April.

Laurel S. Kahn, Community Preservation Committee

Rattlesnake Gutter Trust and Leverett Trails Committee, Winter Calendar

Sunday, January 27, 2-3:30, Leverett Library

Adventures in Orkney, John Nove
John Nove, a bookbinder from South Deerfield, has been visiting Orkney for nearly a quarter-century. In his slide presentation he'll discuss the rich cultural and natural history of this group of islands off the northeast coast of Scotland focusing specifically on Papa Westray where seven years ago he bought and renovated a stone farmhouse.

February 15, 2013 is the deadline for submitting photographs on the theme of the four seasons on the Trails of Leverett (exhibit March-April, reception April 7, 2-4)

Sunday, March 3, 2-4. Leverett Library

Thinking About the Trails of Leverett: Second Annual Community Discussion. Help the Leverett Trails Committee review current projects, plan trail-work days, trail stewardship, maps, and future projects.

Trail Work? Weather dependent (and therefore email dependent). To join the email list for Trail Days, concom@leverett.ma.us or 413-559-8238.

Winter treks on the Trails? Weather dependent. Check out www.rattlesnakeguttertrust.org/events and/or ask to be put on the trails work distribution list.

The Leverett Trails Committee is co-sponsored by RGT and the Leverett ConCom.

Leverett Community Chorus Winter Concert

Friday, December 14, at 7:30pm at the Leverett Congregational Church. All are welcome.

Yoga 2013

Thursday Eves at the Leverett Library

Bliss Yoga 5-6 PM (Basic Gentle class)

Evening Yoga 6:15-7:30 PM (Moderate level)

Session 1: January 3 -February 14

Session 2: February 28 -April 11

Bliss Yoga: \$77 for 7 weeks, \$150 for 14 weeks, drop-in \$12 each.

Evening Yoga: \$84 for 7 weeks, \$160 for 14 weeks, drop-in \$14 each.

Please register with Lisa Enzer 413-367-2658 or enzer@earthlink.net

Drop off your nonperishable food items at the following locations:

Town Hall, Library, School, Transfer Station

Thank you!!

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.

LEVERETT RESIDENT

LEVERETT, MA 01054



FOOD DRIVE!

Please Leave Canned or Dry Food at the
Town Hall, School, Library or Transfer Station.
We will deliver all donated food to the
Amherst Survival Center and the Franklin Area Survival
Center just before December 25th.
Thank You! The Select Board