

NEWSLETTER

TOWN OF LEVERETT

www.leverett.ma.us

JUNE 2018

Here are your elected officials for 2018:

Board of Health- Rich Brazeau (1); John Hillman (3); Sara Todd (2); David Stultz (3);

Constable- Brian Emond (3);

Finance Committee- Tom Powers (3); Gregg Woodard (2);

Library Trustees- Lisa Werner and Rachel Flint (3);

Planning Board- Ken Kahn (5);

School Committee- Bethany Seeger and Levine Schwartz (3);

Select Board- Julie Shively (3).



Notes From Around Town

• **The Post Office needs our help! Please buy things at the Post Office. If \$\$ flows through it they are more likely to keep it open!!**

• Need the **Police**? Messages left at the Police Station (548-4994) are for business only. If you need the Police in an emergency, call 911. To reach an officer for **non-emergency call Shelburne Control at 625-8200** and they will page an officer for you.

NEWSLETTER DEADLINES

1 October 2018

1 December 2018

Send news items and mismatched floral dinner plates to: Lisa Stratford P.O. Box 300, Leverett, MA 01054. Call 548-9150 for information and guidelines. Email: townclerk@leverett.ma.us

FROM THE SELECT BOARD

With only one minor technical glitch our Annual Town Meeting commenced almost on time and ran smoothly on April 28 at the school gym. A failing microphone did not interfere with the full-throated participation of many town residents and guest speakers. The Town Warrant included 33 articles, all of which passed unanimously or near-unanimously. The 2019 budget, \$6,052,921, increases by 1.4% the 2018 budget, and does not include a special, single-year \$20,000 appropriation to fund the elementary school, also voted on and approved. With this appropriation included, the total budget for education in Leverett represents 66% of total projected 2019 spending. This appropriation was necessary due to a shortfall in the projected annual school revenue resulting from lower than anticipated school choice enrollment combined with lower grant revenue. This boosts property tax rate in Leverett from \$21.05 to

an estimated \$21.41 for FY 2019, or \$3.58 below the Massachusetts Proposition 2 1/2 rate limit of \$25/\$1,000 assessed property tax. As the tax rate increases the town becomes increasingly vulnerable to unforeseen or unpredictable tax increases, (e.g., Leverett's contribution to the regional school district). Any major tax increase or combination of tax increases could result in a calculated rate above \$25/\$1,000 assessed property value, resulting in automatic state-imposed Proposition 2 1/2 spending limits AND spending reductions, until such time as Leverett can verify a tax rate below \$25/\$1,000. Examples of spending reductions include, but are not limited to, manpower reductions.

Other approved articles include costs associated with repair of the elementary school sprinkler system (\$88,521, in addition to \$27,950 approved last year), the purchase of a vehicle for the Fire Chief (a first for Leverett), purchase of an additional trash compactor for the Transfer Station, and various additional bookkeeping articles relating to town finances including transfer of funds from the budget and from free cash to fund the Capital Plan. Certain town building maintenance items were also voted on and approved.

Six articles were presented by the Conservation Preservation Committee to fund a variety of initiatives including hiring a Land Use Planner to prepare an Open Space and Recreation Plan, repair the roof on the Leverett Crafts and Arts building, restore the Chestnut Hill Cemetery, and complete a report of the Town Historical Assets.

Another article passed was acceptance of MGL Chapter 64N, Section 3 which imposes a 3% local tax on retail sales of marijuana in town. All of this tax would return to the Town as revenue. Shortly thereafter, the Select Board was approached by a developer expressing interest in building a commercial greenhouse for marijuana production at the corner of Cave Hill Road and Montague Road. The developer proposed building the greenhouse complex and then leasing space to growers. Following a presentation to the Select Board the developer was directed to the Zoning Board of Appeals to pursue rezoning the land in question which currently is not zoned for commercial use. The prospect of a commercial greenhouse on this parcel evoked a broad *inquisitive* reaction on the part of residents living near the proposed building site. Over 20 residents attended a subsequent Select Board meeting to express their concerns relating to potential environmental and light pollution as well as traffic management and site security. The developer has not contacted the ZBA as of this writing.

Finally, the town passed an article presented by a Petitioner to lead the global effort to prevent nuclear war.

In other news, Colonial Power, the company selected by our Energy Committee to serve as the town's Energy Aggregator continues to monitor the energy market for a combination of green energy suppliers that could be combined to provide energy to the town at a rate below that which is commercially available. That more economical combination has yet to occur but there is reason for optimism. Also under consideration is the possibility of working with other communities in the region who together with Leverett could create a purchasing collaborative, but this is still in very early stages of discussion.

Efforts to secure the post office in its current location have both failed and succeeded. It is not possible for the town to either purchase the property, or to accept it as a gift from a benefactor in exchange for a tax abatement or other financial incentive. However, the post office has renewed its contract with the current owner for another five years, one year prior to expiration of the current lease agreement and thus securing its location for the next 6 years. The property remains for sale by the owner with this profitable lease agreement in place.

Tom Hankinson for the Select Board

Leverett Library

www.leverettlibrary.org

leverett@cwmares.org

413-548-9220

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 through Labor Day**).

Special Closings: Wed., July 4 for Independence Day.

Art in the Community Room June: Recollections of Schooling in Leverett. Special program on June 10, 3-5pm with Leverett Elementary School 6th grade students and Leverett historians.

July/August: Nancy Emond and students, paintings. Reception TBD.

Summer Reading 2018: Libraries Rock! Come by for our kick-off Thursday June 14 @3:15.

Sign up, have some snacks and learn to play the ukulele with Julie Stepanek. Sponsored by the Leverett Cultural Council and the Friends of Leverett Library.

Monthly Ukulele Play-Along with Julie Stepanek Thursday June 21, 7-8pm.

Ukuleles available for check out. Sponsored by the Leverett Cultural Council.

The library book group will discuss: *My Brilliant Friend* by Elena Ferrante, Thursday June 21, 6:30-8pm. Open to all. Copies of the book are available for check out.

Join us for a documentary on the water protectors of Standing Rock N.D.; *The River Cried, 'Mni W'Coni'* will be

followed by a q&a with director Jehann El-Bisi. Thursday June 28, 6:30-8pm.

This documentary is an evocative testimony, touching upon subjects of genocide, beauty, and love; found while serving to protect the water on the frontlines in Standing Rock, North Dakota in the autumn of 2016. Jehann is a peace activist, educator and artist with a doctorate in Language, Literacy and Culture from UMass Amherst.

Music on the Patio 2018! Join us Thursdays, 7-8pm all summer, July 5 through August 30 for fantastic local music outside. Schedule will be posted on the library website.

Spanish Conversation Group, Tuesdays, 4-5pm.

Qigong Tuesdays @5:15 with Dvora Eisenstein

Join us every Wednesday from 10:30-noon for stories, songs, and play with Heleen Cardinaux. Developed for children newborn-5, but open to all families. Sponsored by the Community Network for Children and the Friends of Leverett Library.

Please stop by the library to welcome Natane Halasz - our new Library Director. Natane comes to us with a wonderful blend of library training and experience and administrative experience. We're happy to have her join us here in Leverett!

Thanks Leverett for a wonderful five and a half years as your library director, it has been my pleasure. Thank you to all the library volunteers, Friends, Trustees and to the fabulous Sue LaClaire.

Ashley Blais, Library Director

Friends of the Leverett Library

Welcome to summer and all the wonderful activities our library has to offer. Just to remind you all that the Friends of Leverett Library have bought passes for free and discounted admissions to local attractions.

Clark Art Institute: pass for one adult free; Historic Deerfield: 2 passes good for 4 free admissions; Eric Carle Museum: pass good for 2 adults and 4 children free; Holyoke Children's Museum: pass for 6 at 1/2 price; Magic Wings: pass for 1 person free; MassMOCA: pass for 2 adults and 2 children free; Smith College Museum of Art: pass for 8 people free; Springfield Museums (all 6): pass for 4 free. Each is good for 3 days but there is a stiff fine if you fail to return it on time!

And to support the purchase of these passes, the Friends of Leverett Library are selling convenient tote bags with the Roads of Leverett design on them for \$10 and our newest Leverett art mug designed by Louise Minks for \$10. These

will make great souvenirs for your vacationing friends and relatives. Have fun!

Thanks,

Leslie Fiset, president Friends of Leverett Library

Energy Committee

June 2018, and we still don't have the green-and-cheaper electricity aggregation so many of us have looked forward to and worked so hard to achieve. It's not hopeless and it is no one's fault, but it is wicked disappointing. As you read in the Select Board commentary for this newsletter, it has to do with the rates the electricity providers (Eversource for us) announce and the availability of better-priced green sources. Since corporations are preoccupied with their own profits, they can and do influence policies not friendly to green energy. But your energy committee members continue to work, plan, and keep vigilant and hopeful. In the meantime there are other options.

One is simply to really and truly CONSERVE electricity. Each family and individual deciding to use less electricity in our everyday lives is by far the best and easiest way to be a conscientious resident of Planet Earth. It gets a little tiresome to keep reminding ourselves to turn out lights not being used, turning off (UNPLUGGING) devices that use phantom power (power use even when turned off)--computers, dvd players etc. It may be a nuisance but we have to do it anyway! (Stoves, toaster ovens, and washing machines can stay plugged in when not in use.) Another suggestion: consider using your car for not fewer than three reasons--except for emergencies and spectacular weather events etc. And this is the season to hang up a clothesline. Many of us find hanging out our clothes to be quite satisfying, even a little fun! Dryers are power gluttons.

Another is to watch for other green options from 3rd party suppliers. Some of these arrangements have integrity and actually work. The solar company Nexamp is one example. Just don't automatically trust any offer. Some are deceptive and some are hard to get out of. Feel free to call or email me (Portia 548-9737; pweiskel@post.harvard.edu) and one of the committee members will help you think through any of these plans.

You can also entertain and educate yourself by actually reading your own electric bill. Eversource, for example, helpfully provides a graph on each bill comparing your energy consumption in the current billing month with your energy consumption in the same month a year earlier. Keep track of your use. What makes for the differences? Challenge yourself. It's a very illuminating exercise and surprisingly easy to do and not boring.

Do you flush ticks etc down the toilet? All that pristine drinking water from Leverett wells to flush away a bug? Not very clever in a world with diminishing drinkable water supplies.

Consider mowing as little of your lawn as you can get ... several in Leverett owned by satisfied users. Not only are they good mowers, they are less annoyingly loud and one doesn't worry about spilling gas and oil on the grass. No noxious fumes, either. And the more green your electricity source for charging the battery, the more valuable for reducing CO2 emissions.

One other note about aggregation: among other things, our committee is working with other Franklin County communities on the possibility of forming a much larger aggregation--a move that would make us a more attractive customer for suppliers.

Portia Williams Weiskel for the Energy Committee (548-9737; pweiskel@post.harvard.edu)

Leverett Historical Commission

Did you know there were 10 one-room school houses in Leverett before 1950? Sometimes there were as many as 46 students in grades 1-8 in one room with one teacher! In 1950 there were four active one-room school houses when Leverett residents voted a BIG decision to consolidate the schools and build the remarkable school we have today. (The construction at that time included four classrooms--two grades each for grades 1-8, a cafeteria to serve hot lunches, offices, storage closet, and a gymnasium!) Our LES sixth grade class with Mrs. Bull has been interviewing many historians who attended one-room school houses before 1950. ***Come to the library on June 10, 3-5 P.M. for a reception to find out what they learned. Sixth graders and historians will be there!***

The One-Room School House display is ongoing in the Community Room at the Leverett Library through the month of June. Surely our town can boast of the emphasis that we have placed on education for our children throughout the years!

Mark your calendars--June 10, Sunday afternoon from 3-5 P.M. in the Community Room at our Leverett Library!

CEMETERY CONSERVATION

Volunteers who want to assist in the restoration at Moore's Corner will start on June 30, under the direction of TaMara Conde and Edie Field. If you are interested in helping, or want more information call Edie at 548-9452 or just show up at 9:30am!

Announcing the launch of "*Adopt-An-Anccestor*" a campaign to pair current residents with citizens from the past who are buried here. If you would like to be the custodian of one of our illustrious forebearers and look after their marker in one of our historic cemeteries, you are welcome to do so! No obligation to do anything in particular. The Leverett Cemetery Association arranges for the maintenance on most of the cemetery properties (mowing, spring/fall clean-up, etc.), but they do not look after individual markers. Many gravestones have been conserved in recent years through your Community Preservation Act funds. It is fun to place a flower at the marker of a veteran from the Revolutionary War and/or his wife, for instance. Even raking and cleaning after the mowing has been

done can help the stones to remain in good shape longer. Let us know who you choose and where they are buried, so we don't have people overlapping on the same marker. Susan Mareneck, 413-367-2403 or Edie Field, 413-548-9452 or "leveretthistoryinfo@gmail.com". THANKS!

HISTORICAL ASSETS SURVEY

Prior to the Historic Assets Survey concluding, the Historical Commission applied to CPC for a consultant who would complete the first step toward a strategic plan using the data from the survey results. CPC made a recommendation at town meeting that the Historical Commission be given the money for a third party analysis of the survey and a list of next steps. After bidding it out to three suppliers, we selected one and she is working on a report now. The report is slated to be finished by the fall. Concurrently, we have convened a small group of interested parties to explore funding possibilities for our historic assets. If there is one thing that is clear from the survey, it is that most everyone would like to have a strategic plan for the town and most everyone would like our historic assets taken care of through a variety of funding vehicles.

SHRAB VETERANS RECOGNITION GRANT

Work with Martha Lyon, landscape architect, will begin on June 1 at a meeting with interested parties to determine the scope of work. The goal of her assessment will be to provide recommendations for preserving each of Leverett's 12 historic cemetery landscapes, with a focus on increased visitor access and opportunities for interpretation. Designing signs for each cemetery is also a goal of the grant.

Looking forward to a busy, productive summer –
The Leverett Historical Commission

Around Town

LEVERETT CEMETERY ASSOCIATION

The Leverett Cemetery Association held its annual meeting on May 9th. We feel that many of you are not well informed about Leverett cemeteries. So—here goes.

The usual reports were read. The information gathered by UMASS graduate students last summer was shown, these included summaries of the history of the cemeteries that are not included in the town's historic districts. They are Mt Toby, Long Plain/ Depot, (soon to have its name changed to Hillsboro), North, Plainview, and Wiley. We deeply appreciate their efforts.

The cemeteries are mowed twice before Memorial Day, twice in June, once in July, August, September and October. November sees a cleanup for each. There are two in North Leverett and four in Leverett. The total cost

(for all six) is \$640.00. Extra expenses include removing dead branches or entire trees, and these are additional costs. American flags are put on all the graves of Leverett military personnel each year. For more news about our cemeteries, see the article in this letter from the Leverett Historical Commission.

We also discussed green burials. There are a number of choices for this procedure. Plans need to be made ahead, as they differ from the usual burial plans. Please be aware of this if you are thinking in this direction.

Jackson Hill, our latest repaired and restored cemetery, is available for viewing. To park, pull off the road slightly, and trudge up a short slope, open the gate, and view the results of TaMara Conde's labors. We will keep doing our best to make these "outdoor museums" all look this beautiful. If you have questions please call, 548-9452 or write edithfield1@gmail.com. Have a great summer!

Volunteers Needed to Finish Work on Moores Corner Cemetery

Saturday, June 30th has been chosen to finish work at Moores Corner Cemetery. Cleaning and some minor repair work will be on the agenda. TaMara Conde will show us how it should be done! Starting time is 9:30. Work may well go past noon, so if you can stay past lunch bring your own. Drinks and fruit will be provided.

The work is not hard; messy, perhaps. Please bring soft brushes, pails, sunscreen, plastic scrapers, cleaning clothes, bug spray and water.

It would be GREAT if we can get it all done in one day!!!!!! Contact Edie Field with questions.

New Hours for Museum

The Leverett History Museum, at One Shutesbury Road, will have a new schedule for the summer. It will be open Friday afternoons from 1 to 4 and Saturday mornings from 10 to 2. SORRY, NO OVERNIGHT STAYS WILL BE ALLOWED!

NEWS FROM THE POND

The Friends of Leverett Pond are proud to have contributed funds to our Fire Department for the purchase of needed equipment to draw water from the pond and other waterbodies throughout the town fill the tank on its fire truck. As a community-based group we feel an obligation to do what we can, especially during a time of tight budgets.

We continue to fundraise for our big effort to replace the old and failing dam at the north end of the pond. Built in the 1930s it is leaking and in need of replacement. We are sponsoring an auction on June 16 at Leverett Crafts & Arts to raise \$\$ for this project. Many of the top artists in the Valley have signed up and will contribute their work to this event. Steve Adams will be auctioneer. This, by itself, is reason to attend. There will be light munchies and live music. The art to be auctioned will be available for viewing in the Barnes Gallery at the LCA starting June 3. In addition there will be some surprise (non-art) items

in the auction which are amazing. Please plan to attend and support our efforts to save the pond.

Leverett Trails Committee

The Trails Committee has been hard at work! Check out the newly repaired bridge on the trail between Montague Rd and the Cave Hill Conservation Area (many thanks to Sarah Todd for funding--and helping out with-- this project), as well as the newly replaced bridge on the Gordon King Conservation Area. We were able to get 14 people to stand on the new bridge at once-- how's that for a test of strength? Take a look at the time-lapse video of the workday on the Rattlesnake Gutter Trust website (see below).

If you would like to receive emails about guided walks and workdays, or have questions, contact concom@leverett.ma.us. For trail maps and updated information about trails and workdays, go to www.rattlesnakeguttertrust.org/trails. There are also trail maps at the Leverett Library. Please check the Town calendar for upcoming meetings.

LTC is co-sponsored by the Leverett Conservation Commission and the Rattlesnake Gutter Trust.

Open Space and Recreation Plan Update Committee

Thank you, Leverett, for your support at Town Meeting! With Community Preservation Act funding, we now have the funds to hire assistance from the Franklin Regional Council of Governments to see the OSRP Update to completion. We are tackling Section 4 (Environmental Inventory and Analysis) next.

We need photos! We're looking for photos that depict Leverett landmarks, special places, and the essence of life in Leverett. If you have any photos you'd like to share, please send them to concom@leverett.ma.us.

The OSRP is an important tool for imagining and planning for the future of Leverett's landscapes. It describes the current character of the Town and sets a framework for determining land use priorities. The OSRP needs input from a wide variety of Leverett citizens to be both accurate and relevant to our populace.

If you have any questions, comments, or would like to get involved, email concom@leverett.ma.us or leave a message at 413-548-1022 ext. 3. Check out our progress online at <http://leverett.ma.us/g/89/OSRP-Update-Committee>

Rattlesnake Gutter Trust
29th Annual Meeting
June 10, 2018, 1 PM
Upstairs, Leverett Town Hall

Brief Official Annual Meeting
Followed by time to reflect on our 30th year.
All are welcome.

Rattlesnake Gutter Trust

Needed, a volunteer with a pick-up truck or large trailer who can transport recyclable cans and bottles to our redemption center in Greenfield every two weeks. Gas expenses will be covered and it takes no more than 2 hours total per trip. Also we need volunteers to help at the Recycling Shed. Teenagers are welcome to apply and this would count as community service in your college application. Please contact Brooke Thomas at rbthomas@anthro.umass.edu or 548-9281.

Leverett Coop Board of Directors

As many of you know, we have begun the hiring process to find a new General Manager to replace Paul Rosenberg. The Board has been meeting in executive session for the last two meetings discussing and interviewing candidates, and we have another meeting of interviews scheduled this Thursday May 31. We hope to have a candidate meet with the staff sometime within the next week or so. We will be letting you know as soon as possible some tentative dates and times for that meeting. When a new manager is hired, we plan to announce a Meet-and-Greet event at the Coop for the community.

From Ann Ferguson, President

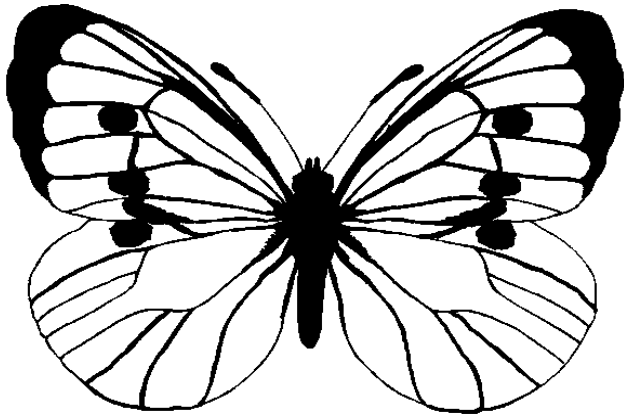
Leverett Crafts and Arts (LCA)

Leverett's Community Art Center!

Come join LCA for the upcoming events on the Summer 2018 calendar. Watch the local news outlets for details on schedules and www.leverettcrafts.org.

Watch for dates of receptions. Free to the public or elective donations.

- June 2-16– Barnes Gallery: Friends of Leverett Pond – art exhibit (see section on FLP in this newsletter), Art auction June 16. Proceeds to the Leverett Pond Preservation Fund
- June: Hall Gallery - Leonore Alaniz, All month art exhibit – Fiber Arts
July: Art exhibit by LCA artists and craftspeople.
- August: Steven and Sarah Stroud – all month exhibits. Father (Steve) exhibits. Retrospective of more than 20 years of illustration art, book covers, etc.
and daughter (Sarah) exhibits contemporary quilting.
- September: Susan Valentine. Annual Open Studio and Exhibit. Artist reception September 9.



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TOWN OF LEVERETT
June 2018 *NEWSLETTER*
LEVERETT, MA 01054

LEVERETT RESIDENT

LEVERETT, MA 01054

Transfer Station Stickers

Transfer Station stickers are necessary for entrance to the Transfer Station. They are \$30 for your household's first sticker and \$3 for secondary or replacement stickers. Residents may purchase transfer station stickers at the Transfer Station or from the Town Treasurer's Office.

If you wish to purchase your sticker by mail, you may send a self-addressed stamped envelope along with the fee, and a completed copy of the form below to: Treasurer's Office, P.O.Box 300, Leverett, MA 01054.

Application for a Transfer Station Sticker by mail

Full Name(s): _____

License

Plate(s): _____

Address: _____, Leverett, MA

Enclosed is the fee for: 1 Primary Sticker (\$30) and ____ Secondary Stickers (\$3/ea)

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APPLICATION FOR A 2018 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) _____

I have enclosed the following:

- A check payable to Town of Leverett
- Proof of rabies immunization
- Proof of spaying (if newly licensed)
- A **business-size self-addressed stamped envelope**

Send to: Town Clerk, Box 300, Leverett 01054. Documents will be returned with license.