

NEWSLETTER

TOWN OF LEVERETT

www.leverett.ma.us

October 2012

FROM THE SELECT BOARD

I was going to the Transfer Station on Saturday driving down Teawaddle Hill Rd. and had to stop to admire the beauty of the view from the Mitchell Farm. It was a foggy day between showers but the colors of the valley and Brushy Mountain were spectacular. The idea that both the farm and the mountain would be preserved has been a dream of mine for years. I'm glad that the people of Leverett and surrounding towns have had the foresight to make land preservation projects a priority.

Affordable Housing

The Select Board and Affordable Housing Trust are working on several projects. The Town is looking for sites for Habitat for Humanity projects—either rebuilding existing homes or building lots that the town would purchase and transfer to Habitat to build on. The other project is the appraisal of homes that are on the market that the town would purchase with an Affordable Housing Covenant on as a way to bring down the sale price. Both projects are in the works. If you have questions please contact Margie McGinnis at 548-9699.

Food Drive

Boxes for food donations are set up at the elementary school, library, and Town Hall. Collected items will be delivered to local food banks. Please give what you can.

Notes From Around Town

- **Thank you, Leverett**, for your thoughts, prayers, cards, and well-wishes. I am back at work, feeling great and celebrated my *new* (one-year since stem cell transplant) birthday on September 30! Gratefully, Lisa Stratford
- The **last day to register to vote** in the November 6 Presidential Election is **Oct. 17 from 2-4 and 7-8 PM at the Town Hall**. Forms are on the table upstairs if you would like to register before that. I will also leave a voter list on the table if you wish to check your voter status.
- **Absentee ballot** requests must be in writing. Those forms are also on the table upstairs at the town hall.
- **TAX BILLS HAVE NOT BEEN MAILED. VOLUNTARY PAYMENTS GLADLY ACCEPTED!** Mail check or pay online at leverett.ma.us. It's convenient, fast, secure, & free!

NEXT NEWSLETTER DEADLINES:

1 December 2012 1 February 2013

Send news items (and do something lovely for someone else) to: Lisa Stratford at P.O. Box 300, Leverett, MA or townclerk@leverett.ma.us or call 548-9150 for guidelines.

Additional Energy Upgrades

The Town will be using some of the Green Communities grant to complete lighting upgrades in town-owned buildings. The work should qualify for rebates offered through Western Massachusetts Electric. The Select Board and Energy Committee are working with our consultant Beth Greenblatt to prepare a request for proposals for the installation of photovoltaic panels on the Municipal Safety Complex. The remaining grant funds will pay for that installation.

School Window Replacement Project

The window replacement project is almost complete with only punch-list items remaining. The process has had issues that delayed the installation up to the final weeks of school vacation and through the first week of school. Contractors worked long days and weekends to complete the classrooms for the opening day of school. The Board would like to thank John Kuczek, Town Facilities Manager, Tabitha McLellan and the facility maintenance staff and the staff of the elementary school for all the work they put into the project.

Fire Pond

You may have noticed that the pond at the North Leverett Sawmill has been filled again. This pond is an important source of water to fight fires in town. Repairs to the dam and the installation of a new gate on the outlet were needed before the pond could be filled. We are fortunate that with the drought conditions we experienced this summer we did not have a large fire to contain. Now with this and the Leverett Pond hydrants functional we are better prepared to fight fires in town.

Final Mile?

The "middle mile" is being installed in town. New utility poles are being set and modifications to the existing wiring to provide space for the optic fiber lines are being completed. Peter d'Errico and the Broadband Committee are preparing a request for proposals to choose a contractor to design and install the "final mile." This will be the town-owned fiber system to be installed to all homes in town. More on this project in the next *Newsletter*.

Cell Tower By-law and Special Town Meetings

A Planning Board meeting will be held on Thursday night, October 4th at 7:30 at the Town Hall to discuss the proposed cell tower by-law change that will be on the

Special Town Meeting Warrant. The Town Meeting will be held in the school gym on Tuesday night, October 9th, at 7:00. A copy of the Warrant is attached. The changes reflect the input of the Cell Tower Committee that was formed following the vote at spring Town Meeting. Their findings are available on the Leverett town website. Final changes were formulated at a meeting of the Planning Board, Select Board and Cell Tower Committee. We hope you will attend.

Town Hall preservation

The renovation and repair of the exterior of the Town Hall is complete. The Board would like to thank the Community Preservation Committee for working with us to support the request for funding through Town Meeting.

Taxes and Gifts

Town Hall staff are completing the financial submittal to the state for approval to get the fall tax bills out. We hope that the bills will go out in early November. No one looks forward to receiving a tax bill but there is one part of the process I enjoy. After the payments are received the Select Board signs and sends letters thanking all those who put something extra in the payment for Senior/Disabled tax relief, the student scholarship fund, and the Kimball Trust. These funds go a long way to help those in need in our community. I would like to thank all those in advance who regularly contribute.

Select Board Schedule

Meetings are scheduled at 7:00 on the second and fourth Tuesday of each month. Contact Lisa Stratford at 548-9150 for additional information or to get on the agenda.

Rich Brazeau, for the Select Board

Fire Department

Once again, the 4th grade class is participating in the SAFE program. This program is sponsored by a grant shared by the Leverett and Amherst fire departments, which teaches fire safety and the dangers of tobacco use.

As we move into the fall season, it is time to change the batteries in your smoke-and carbon-monoxide detectors. Did you know that detectors are only good for 10 years? Even if you push the button and the alarm sounds, this does not guarantee it will properly. If your detectors are more than ten years old, replace them. It is a cheap price to pay for your family's safety.

The fire department needs young members to carry on the great tradition of the Leverett Fire Department. If you are over the age of 18 and want to serve the town, either contact the department at 548-9225 or come check it out some Thursday night at 7 pm. There is a time requirement that goes with the job, but, the rewards are well worth the time.

I hope to see you at the Harvest Festival.

*Respectfully,
John Moruzzi*

Community Preservation Committee

The CPC has funds available and is seeking proposals for the next funding cycle. If you have a proposal for open space preservation, historic preservation, community housing or recreation, please consider applying. Application forms are available from the Town Hall or may be downloaded from the Leverett Town website at <http://leverett.ma.us/>. **Our application deadline is December 1.**

To encourage you to think of a project you might want to propose, we want to remind you about some of the projects that have been accomplished in our community with our Community Preservation Act funds. Details of these projects are available at Town Hall.

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. Open space and recreation funds have also been used to purchase a number of parcels of land, for example, three parcels on Leverett Pond which include the Friendship Trail which goes along the shoreline from the channel inlet off Depot Road at the south end of the pond to Cider Mill Lane. In addition, open space funds were used to restore the weed-choked inlet channel and improve public access to the pond.

Historic preservation funds have been used to restore the Town Hall including new clapboards and fresh paint. Restoration projects are currently underway in two Leverett cemeteries. Gravestones are being restored in the North Cemetery near the Public Safety Complex and the metal fence is being restored at the Moores Corner Cemetery near the Coop. In addition, work is in progress to establish National Register Historic Districts for North Leverett, Moores Corner, and East Leverett Centers, to join our Leverett Center Historic District.

Community housing funds have been used to fund the Leverett Affordable Housing Trust. The Selectboard continues to work on a variety of ways for people to obtain affordable housing in Leverett including recent discussions about collaborations with Habitat for Humanity.

We hope these examples will inspire you to propose Leverett's next great project!

The next CPC meeting is at 7:30 on Wednesday, October 3, 2012, at Town Hall when we will be glad to discuss proposals. If you have an idea for a proposal and would like an exploratory meeting before that, or to be on the agenda for October 3, please call Laurel Kahn at (413)548-9158 or email LaurelKahn@aol.com.

*Laurel S. Kahn
for the Community Preservation Committee*

support the library in many ways. Truly, this is a remarkable town.

Linda Wentworth, Library Director

Library News

Leverett Library 75 Montague Rd. 548-9220

www.leverettlibrary.org

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 The library will be closed Sunday,
October 7 (Columbus Day weekend); Sunday, November
11 (Veterans' Day); and Thursday, November 22
(Thanksgiving).

Mon., Nov. 19, 7-8 Matthew Dicks, author of *Memoirs of an Imaginary Friend* will be at the library. "An incredibly captivating novel about the wonder of youth and the importance of friendship, whether real or imagined. Delightfully compelling reading."--*Booklist*. "A fun read and engaging exploration of the vibrant world of a child's imagination."--*Publishers Weekly*. "Quirky and heartwarming."--*Kirkus*. This is a Leverett Cultural Council Event.

Congratulations to the kids who participated in our recent summer reading program. With generous help from the Friends of the Leverett Library, the kids raised \$180 for Wingmasters. Julie Ann Collier reports that the funds will be used toward housing for injured falcons, including, she hopes, a gyrfalcon, the largest falcon in the world.

Art in the community room: Through October, don't miss the exhibit by Steve Wilda: images of landscapes, people, and, animals. In November and December, enjoy Susan Valentine's oil paintings of local flowers and vegetables.

The intermediate level computer class with instructor Shirley Keech has been postponed, and may be held in the spring.

UMass employees: We hope you will consider designating the Friends of the Leverett Library as a place to receive donations through the UMass Amherst Community Campaign.

Farewell and thank you. After almost nine and a half years here, I am leaving. I am taking a position as Head of Collections at the Jones Library in Amherst. It has been a great privilege to serve the community of Leverett. I am grateful to so many folks for their friendship and support—from the library trustees to the Friends of the Library, our wonderful volunteers, town officials, my colleague Sue LaClaire, my predecessor Lorna Rivers, and all of the town residents who have stepped forward to

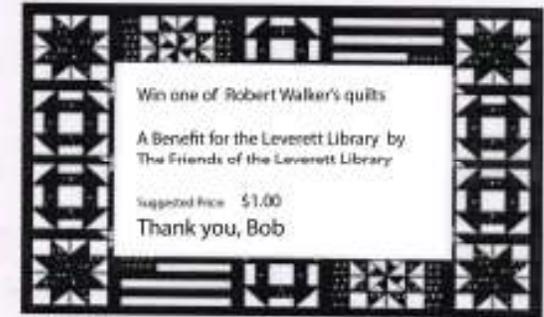
What are the Friends of the Library up to?

There are exciting things happening at the Leverett Library.

First, we are continuing to sell tickets for the quilt raffle. The suggested price is \$1 or 6 for \$5. The drawing will be held at 1:00 at the close of the October 13th Harvest Festival. The winner will choose from one of the 4 quilts donated by Bob Walker. Tickets are available at the library where you can see photos and descriptions of the quilts. Tickets will also be sold at the Harvest Festival.

Second, we have just received a fresh batch of "Roads of Leverett" tee-shirts. The new colors and updated road names have been provided by Lindsay Palermo and Peggy Sanders and the effect is stunning. Your first chance to get these t-shirts will be at the Harvest Festival. Prices and Sizes? Youth, S, M, L, are \$10 and adult, S, M, L, XL, XXL, will be \$15.

We hope to be seeing you soon, Leslie Fiset, Secretary, Friends of the Leverett Library



(More) Friends of Leverett Library

The Friends Annual Meeting will be October 24, at 7 pm in the Community Room at the Leverett Library. After a brief business meeting, we will have a group discussion entitled "Where Were You Ten Years Ago?" Actually, we will be brain-storming ideas for the 10th Birthday Celebration of our library next spring. Judy Ricker will share her pictures of the Building of Leverett Library, Moving Day (old and new libraries), and Dedication Day. The meeting is open to the public and goodies will be served!

The Friends will have a table at the Harvest Festival where we will be introducing our new tee-shirts. The Roads of Leverett have returned with two new colors fresh off the printing presses with two new roads. We will also be selling raffle tickets for one of Robert Walker's quilts. We will draw a winner at 1 pm on Saturday.

If you are interested in serving on the Friends Executive Board, please let D'Ann Kelty (548-9797) or Lorna Rivers (548-9016) know.

Lorna Rivers, President

THE GRAVE SITUATION HAS IMPROVED!

The summer months have seen an improvement in the "grave" condition of the North Cemetery. Many of the stones have been cleaned and reset with a sturdier base of gravel. The workshops we held accomplished a good deal of this work. Many of the monuments have been cleaned, repaired, and reset.

Several interesting finds have happened. Footstones belonging to a certain grave have been found, covered with dirt nearby, and some have been located in another part of the cemetery. The middle part of one stone was found about 125 feet away with the name Jerusha carved on it. Well, there were three ladies named Jerusha listed on the inventory. Luckily the found piece of stone matched, in color and shape, one of the broken stones. She was a Woodbury (actually all three were Woodbury's, some of our earliest settlers).

The number of stones/rocks (when does a stone become a rock—or is it the other way around?) uncovered during the excavations were too numerous to count—and some too heavy to lift without the use of machinery; some were nearly as large as a duffel bag. Seems the grave diggers were saving energy by filling the graves as quickly as possible. Speaking of rocks, have you heard the saying, "Leverett is one part dirt and three parts rock"?

One remaining mystery is that of a small footstone type marker with the initials A.H. and D.H. on it. It was underground with no clue as to where it belongs. Research so far has not solved the mystery. One record indicates that an Avila Hobart and a Daniel Hobart are in the cemetery, but WHERE?

We will be having one, maybe two workshops in September and October. If we finish the work on Montague Rd., we may start work on the Depot Road Cemetery. The work of cleaning is done with water and brushes. If need be, we will use a solution designed to remove the heavier stains. Resetting will take digging around the stones, removing them, filling the hole with sand, gravel and a little water, and replacing the stone in an upright position. We will not be doing the heavier stones, only those we can handle ourselves.

If you are willing to help, please Edie Field at 548-9452 or David Glazier at 367-2174. Leave your name and phone number, please.

A GRAVE DISCOVERY!

In early years, cemeteries were placed on family property. We have several here in town. Thanks to Lynn

Ball's childhood memories of growing up in Moores Corner, one of these seemingly forgotten cemeteries has been "re-discovered" just east of Moores Corner, on property formerly owned by Walter Carey. Lynn gave the information to his son, Silas, and who with his friend, Isaiah, was able to locate the assumed private grave site and clean the area of brush. Silas wishes to dedicate this discovery to the memory of his Dad. Silas says his father remembers seeing a flag at that location. Research has been done and two of the dates on the stone have been verified by town records.

The Cemetery Association wishes to locate the other similar sites and would appreciate property owners calling Edie Field at 548-9452 or David Glazier at 367-2176. We would like permission to visit the lots to record any writings on the stones, for our records. We will, of course, respect your privacy. Philip Johnson of Greenfield is working on putting Leverett Cemetery records on the internet. He is the son of Shirley (Rice) Johnson who grew up here in town on Montague Road.

Leverett Family Museum

The Leverett Family Museum is ready for the chilly days of autumn with about a dozen binders full of interesting facts and figures about Leverett. Topics include: interesting articles about the town—newspaper; The Cider Mill Pasture; Leverett's Lady Station Agent; copies of and original pages from ledgers recorded in Leverett stores as far back as 1810; Leverett's town buildings; writings from Wayne Howard and Dr. Dan Bennett (highlighting the villages of North Leverett and Moores Corner); industries on the Sawmill River and Roaring Brook; souvenir programs from town celebrations (with photographs old and new) just to name a few. Remember the Roads of Leverett contest a few years ago? We have those pictures! Photographs of owls from Julie Grow Collier's collection, paintings by Christine Nelson and framed photographs taken by Tom Stratford will also be on display as well as deeds of land sales (real ones!). By the way, we do have heat in the museum, in case it's a chilly day. Admission is free. Hours are 10AM-2 PM on Saturdays or by appointment. Call Edie Field at 548-9452.

News from the Regional School District Planning Board

The four towns of Amherst, Leverett, Pelham, and Shutesbury are currently involved in a formal process to explore options for possible regionalization. Representatives from each of the four towns are members of the Regional School District Planning Board, with Julie Shively (Selectboard), Kip Fonsh (School Committee) and

Ann Delano (Finance Committee) representing each of the Town's planning committees.

A Regional School District Planning Committee was created in 2011 in all four towns, following Town Meeting approval in each town. All 4 towns' Planning Committees voted to join together as a Planning Board in June 2012. While this action does not commit any town to any plan, it formally allows further exploration.

The four towns of Amherst, Pelham, Shutesbury, and Leverett have been discussing regionalization for almost 50 years. There have been official discussions among the 4 towns about regionalizing in 1968, 1976, 1992, 2009 and currently.

What is the motivation to explore regionalization now? The state has not mandated a regionalization study. At this time all four towns share an interest in exploring fully and thoughtfully the educational and financial benefits that regionalization may bring to our children and our towns.

What regionalization models are being considered? The Planning Board has agreed that any model being considered should involve all four towns. There are two models being studied:

- creation of a new pre-K-6 region to include all six elementary schools in the four towns. This would serve as a companion region to the current secondary (7-12 grade) region; both regions would share a central office and superintendent, and
- an expansion of the current secondary region to include pre-K-6th grade.

What research is being done? The Planning Board has secured some initial funding and is seeking state grants to hire education consultants with school regionalization study expertise. The Dept. of Elementary and Secondary Education (DESE) requires the submission of an Education Plan and a Financial Plan. We will be hiring a consultant to conduct a comprehensive review of the finances of the two models in comparison to the status quo, and another with expertise in education to review the educational benefits either of these two models will offer to our children. We anticipate completed study reports in January 2013.

Who decides? The Regional School District Planning Board will decide whether or not to proceed with a recommendation for any change, based on the information provided by the consultants to the Board and to the public. We anticipate this decision around March 2013. Each town would then need to approve any change either at a town meeting or town election, likely around November 2013. Finally, DESE would need to approve any change that was supported by a positive vote of all four towns. State law would require that the request from the Planning Board be submitted to the state by December 2013.

Will regionalization cost more or less? No one knows, yet. The financial consultant will undertake a professional

and comprehensive review and report the findings. This information will be shared with the public when available, in early 2013 we hope.

When will things change? They will change if the Board seeks to recommend a change, and all four towns vote to support a change, and the state agrees to the change. If so, a new region would begin operations July 1, 2014.

What is our current education structure? There are three "groupings" in which the towns are organized to provide education. On the elementary level (grades pre-K-6th), each town is its own school district with its own school committee. Amherst and Pelham school districts form a governance structure that shares a Superintendent. It is called Superintendency Union #26. Similarly, Leverett and Shutesbury school districts are part of a larger Superintendency union, Union #28, which also includes Wendell, New Salem, and Erving.

All four towns come together at the secondary level (7-12 grade) as part of the Amherst-Pelham Regional School District (APRSD). APRSD has its own school committee with members from each of the four towns, with representation determined by a contract known as the regional agreement.

When were these structures put in place? Union #28 was created in 1901 with the founding members of New Salem, Wendell, Erving, and Leverett. Shutesbury joined in 1902. APRSD was created in 1953 between those two towns. Shutesbury and Leverett joined in 1955.

How do the governance structures differ?

- Superintendency Unions such as Union #26 and #28 were created at the turn of the last century to allow small towns to share a superintendent and central office costs among several school districts. State law requires a Joint Supervisory Committee consisting of 3 school committee members from each member town to supervise the shared superintendent.
- Regional school districts are their own district with their own school committee. A new regional agreement (a negotiated legal document) would define governance and processes for electing school committee members.

How can I find more information?

www.RegionalSchoolPlanning.com. All meetings of the Planning Board are also posted (date, time, and location) with each of the town's clerks and will appear on town sites. Summary information and consultant reports will be posted along with timelines and other progress reports.

In addition to the full board meetings, the committee meetings will also be posted. The committees focus on specific areas of study: Education, Financial & Legal, and Communication & Timeline. Each town is represented on each of the committees. Meetings are held in varying

locations depending on timing and public space availability.

The Board has a strong commitment to collecting information on the needs and interests of all the residents and any other impacted parties in our towns. We are planning a variety of opportunities for public input and information sessions. Stay tuned, and please participate.

Anne Delano for the RSDPB

Broadband Committee Report

The Broadband Committee has been hard at work the past few months, following the vote at the April town meeting to authorize the town to bond for the construction of a town-owned fiber optic network to provide voice and data (internet) services and the subsequent debt exclusion override vote by ballot in June. Please visit our web page at <http://leverett.ma.us/content/broadband-committee> In order to receive information on our progress, please sign up to join a Google Groups listserv at <http://groups.google.com/group/leverett-broadband-project>

We have been doing a lot of research as we prepare to issue our Requests for Proposals (RFPs) for the construction, operating, and maintenance of the network.

To that end, we issued a Request for Information (RFI) in early September to potential RFP respondents, in an effort to gather information about best industry practices regarding the operation and maintenance of the network. For the construction, we will use the network design from G4S, the firm hired by the town, funded through a grant by the Mass. Broadband Institute (MBI). The RFI response period has ended; we received over a dozen responses which the committee and our consultant Communications Media Advisors (CMA) will analyze and digest over the next couple of weeks. MBI is funding our work with CMA; we are quite grateful to MBI for their continued support!

The committee is actively seeking ways to defray the cost of construction by looking for grants and low-cost loans. We are writing applications for an Economic Development Administration (under the US Department of Commerce) grant and loans from the Rural Utilities Service (under the US Department of Agriculture). We will continue to look for other funding opportunities once those applications have been filed.

The MBI “middle mile” is being actively built in town; please see the above broadband committee URL for pictures of the work! To refresh your memory, MBI has funded the “middle mile” to connect towns in western MA that have little-to-no internet connectivity. However, this

expansive project does not provide connectivity to individual residences, and it is up to each town or some other 3rd party to figure out how best to make use of the internet “points of presence” that MBI has provided. The MBI middle mile project should be complete by July 2013, and we expect the Leverett network to be operational some time in 2014. The tentative name for our network domain is leverettnet.net. The series of leverettnet.* domains have been secured by the committee.

In preparation for the construction, the town will require residents who are interested in connecting to the network to sign a “right of entry” document that will permit the town to run fiber cable from the road to your home. This installation will follow the existing route that electricity and phone are connected. That is, if the existing utilities are buried, we will bury the fiber, using any existing conduit if available. If the existing utilities are aerial, the fiber be strung overhead as well.

Also, we will be sending out “statement of interest forms” whereby residents can indicate the intent to subscribe to either voice or data services. It is not binding and no deposit will be requested. The benefit to a potential subscriber is that once the town network becomes operational, respondents will be the first in their neighborhoods to be connected.

The town is a member of the Wired West cooperative effort to bring broadband to western MA and we support their efforts. However, our town-funded network is a separate and distinct effort from Wired West.

The committee meets every Thursday at 7pm at the Town Hall. These are public meetings that are open to everyone, and the committee invites the residents of the town to attend.

Rob Brooks, for the Broadband Committee

LEC: Energy News

(LEC meetings are the 2nd Mondays of the month 7:30, Town Hall)

LEC has a new goal: help every last one of us in town become electric-bill literate. Do you know how to read your bill? Do you know that our enlightened little town ranks embarrassingly low in personal energy efficiency when compared to other Franklin County towns? We hope to change this. Look for us in the usual places—also some unexpected places. We’d enjoy having new energetic members.

Call Portia Weiskel, 548-9737
pweiskel@post.harvard.edu

Les Allen reminds us to save those **aluminum tabs** on cans. Our little efforts twisting them off and saving them and when we have a handful bringing them to Les—at the Transfer Station, Town Hall—add up to a recycling effort that generates profit for the Shriners Hospital. (Teeny effort: big result.)

RATTLESNAKE GUTTER TRUST FALL 2012

“What the Meadow has Taught Us” Sunday, October 7, 2:00 - 4:00 PM. Join us for a walk and 15th anniversary party. Park at the East Leverett Meadow parking area on Cushman Road.

Live Birds of Prey, Julie Collier/Wingmasters, Saturday, October 13, 10:00 – noon at Leverett Elementary School. (Part of the Leverett Harvest Festival.)

What To Look For: A Natural History Hike on the East Leverett Trails, Phil Crafts, Sunday, October 21, 1:00 - 4:00 PM. Park at the 4-H Forest. Sponsored by the Leverett Trails Committee

Pizza and Poetry, Janine Roberts, Tuesday, October 23, 6:00 - 8:00 PM, Leverett Library. See “Pizza and Poetry” below. (Heavy rain postpones outdoor events - see www.rattlesnakeguttertrust.org/events for new date. All programs are free.)

The Leverett Trails Committee is co-sponsored by the Conservation Commission and RGT. If you would like to help build/maintain trails, contact the ConCom (548-1022, or concom@leverett.ma.us)

Community Events:



Leverett Harvest Festival
PASTA SUPPER
Saturday, October 13, 2012

Hosted by the LES Class of 2013, this year’s “spaghetti” is actually **Baked Ziti** – a new and delicious spin on this cherished culinary event.

- **TICKETS ARE ON SALE NOW!** Available from your favorite LES 6th grader, at the Leverett Library or online at the LES website (scroll down to the donate button).
- **Adults \$9** and **youth \$6** in advance; \$10 and \$7 at the door.
- Don’t miss out on scrumptious **Ziti al Forno**. We can even accommodate your vegan, vegetarian, and gluten-free preferences. Just let your ticket seller know of your request or add a note to PayPal when you buy online.
- With your Ziti al Forno, enjoy Insalata Fresca, Italian Pane and Biscotti Assortiti for dessert.
- **The 6th graders appreciate it so much!** They will be working hard as your hosts to **raise funds** for fun & educational field trips as the LES “upper class” as well as, a special year-end excursion and experience.
- Choose the **early seating** (arrival anytime between 5:30 and 6:15pm) or the **late seating** (arrival anytime between 6:30 and 7:15 pm).

Questions? Contact victoriacliche@gmail.com or Stacey at 548-8941.

Harvest Festival Tours of Interest 2-4 PM

Tour Leverett’s water-powered industrial sites along Roaring Brook in SE. Leverett and the Sawmill River in N. Leverett. Tours will be led by John Foster and Dan Bennett. At 2:00 pm assemble at John’s house in Still Corner. At 3:30 pm assemble at the Coop in Moore’s Corner.

Pizza & Poetry, October 23rd, 6-8 p.m.

WHAT: A workshop for parents and children and anyone else in the community to *write poems about nature in Leverett* (facilitated by poet & author, Janine Roberts*).

WHEN: **TUESDAY, OCT 23RD, 6 to 8 P.M.**

WHERE: Leverett Library community room

WHY: 5 poetry boxes with some 90 poems in them are out on Leverett trails, and we would like more of your poems to put into them.

MAPS of the location of poetry boxes are posted at the Town Hall, PO, and Library. Or on the web go to: rattlesnakeguttertrust.org/trails/ltc-events/ click under the photo of the poetry box on the left and print out a map.

Free pizza, veggies, drinks, and dessert provided.

(This program is supported in part by a grant from the Leverett Cultural Council, a local agency which is supported by the Massachusetts Cultural Council, a state agency.)

***Questions?** Or do you have a poem you have written that you would like to go in the boxes now? Email Janine Roberts: janine@educ.umass.edu

The Leverett Cultural Council Needs You!

The Leverett Cultural Council is looking for creative grant ideas with the theme of **Who we are now: The Creative Spirit of Leverett**. This could be dance, music, poetry, art or theater. It could have venues inside town properties or out-of-doors. It can be held anytime during 2013.

So what do you need to do if you have a great idea? Find a venue in town to host you. Figure out your

expenses and write a short grant proposal for the Leverett Cultural Council. The proposal is due October 15th. It's easy!

Things to think about: The Cultural Council receives about \$4000 a year which also goes to Pass Grants at the school (cultural opportunities for students), and library programs. We fund what we can, but love to receive grants that can be partially funded elsewhere. Examples would be tickets at the door and a band willing to give a break on the price, or a group artshow that we provide funds for the advertisement and the opening.

What have we funded? This year we funded Read it Leverett, a lecture series at the library, and the scrolls project on the Leverett trails. Next year we are hoping for a year of events that celebrate what makes Leverett special (all the creative people who live in town).

Have an idea but need to talk it through? Give Ruth West a call (367-2694) and I will help you. The pass grants and all the forms can be found at: www.mass-culture.org/Leverett.

Tax Collector/Treasurer

PLEASE NOTE: As voted at Annual Town Meeting, effective January 1, 2010, the DEMAND FEE for late payment INCREASED from \$5 to \$10. This is in recognition of the additional time and resources necessary to process late payments and applies to Real Estate, Personal Property and Excise bills. **PLEASE** make every effort to pay your bill by the due date since the collector is not authorized to waive or reduce this fee regardless of all the good reasons you have for *not* paying on time: didn't get a bill, out of town, thought it was due the day after it was really due, wrote out the check but forgot to mail it, *mailed* it on the due date (payment must be *received* by the due date), the Town Hall was closed, etc, etc. If remembering due dates is not your forte, sign up for direct pay and NEVER pay another late fee. Or for all you lucky residents with DSL, pay online and your account is immediately credited. Still struggling with dial up? -- call the office and we will process payment for you. We hope the fee increase will provide incentive to pay early rather than just produce additional revenue to meet town expenses.

FISCAL 2013 PROPERTY TAX BILLS have NOT been mailed. They should be in the mail by mid-November and due within 30 days. **VOLUNTARY PAYMENTS (any amount) ARE VERY MUCH APPRECIATED** as we have a serious cash flow problem this time of the year. Town bills still need to be paid. **THANKS TO ALL WHO HAVE ALREADY SENT IN PAYMENT!**

Your tax bill(s) will show 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 the bills 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** appear on the bill, so if you purchased the property after January 1, you do not need to notify us you now own the property. Total amount owed can be paid in one or two payments (bills \$200 or less must be paid in full). Payments received after the due date will be assessed 14% interest *FROM DATE OF MAILING* until the date received (yes, that means "one day late, 30 days interest"; this is still the law for semi-annual payments). 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 the total amount owed. If you have an escrow account, your bank will be notified of the amount due, so keep the bill for your records.

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.

Once bills are mailed, you will have 30 days to pay without penalty, but please remember *it is always the responsibility of the taxpayer to be sure payment is received timely, regardless of when or IF a bill is received.* If you own property and didn't get a bill, contact the Collector's office. Allow at least 3-4 days when mailing payment. DO NOT MAIL THE BILL ON THE DUE DATE, as a postmark is **not** considered timely payment. *If you are making a "Due-Date payment," bring it directly to the Collector's Office (remember, don't mail it at the Leverett PO since ALL mail goes to Springfield first and will be received late).* Better still, become part of the paperless society. Sign up for **DIRECT PAYMENT** and we will automatically debit your account on the due date (or every month): no check, no envelope, no stamp, no trip to the post office or town hall, and no late fee because you forgot the due date! You can also pay your bill online at leverett.ma.us (you initiate a debit to your bank account – no charge for this method; however, there is a charge for credit card payments), or drop off payment in box at back entrance of Town Hall. Office hours: Mon; Tu, Th, Sat: 2:30 – 9:00pm; (**HOURS MAY VARY** so call ahead 548-9666; if you leave a message, I *will* return your call); e-mail: treasurercollector@leverett.ma.us. If you need a receipt, please come during office hours or leave a stamped, self-addressed envelope in the Collector's mailbox. Please do not interrupt other Town Hall staff for tax payments/receipts. **THANK YOU.**

VOLUNTARY CHECK OFF: In April 2000, Leverett voters accepted the provisions of Ch60, sections 3C and 3D allowing the town to designate a place on the tax bill whereby a taxpayer can make donations to the Scholarship Fund and/or Tax Relief Fund (aid to homeowners age 60 and over or disabled persons (any age) of low income for the purpose of defraying real estate taxes). We appreciate your continued support of these programs. Donations can either be made to the Fund or you can request your donation be applied to a specific tax bill. The Tax Relief Committee distributes amounts depending on availability of funds and number of applications received. If you think you may qualify for tax relief, call or email the Collector to request an application.

RESIDENTS OVER 65, widows and widowers, disabled veterans, and the blind *may* be eligible for a reduction in their taxes. Contact the Assessors Office at 548-4945 for more information.

TOWN OF LEVERETT
October 2012 **NEWSLETTER**
LEVERETT, MA 01054

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LEVERETT RESIDENT

LEVERETT, MA 01054

The Library Trustees and the Board of the Friends of Leverett Library invite you to a dessert potluck honoring ***Linda Wentworth on Friday, October 12, 2012 from 7-8:30pm in the Community Room of the library.*** Join us to thank her for her amazing service, her graceful manner and her tireless efforts to make our library the wonderful place that it has become under her guidance. Come and wish Linda well as she departs for a new job at the Jones Library in Amherst.

COUNCIL ON AGING NEWS

Take-It-Easy Yoga - With Nancy Paglia. New 8-week session for \$40, pro-rated if you start later. Class meets Wednesdays at 10:00 downstairs at Town Hall. Yoga has been shown to increase muscular strength and flexibility, improve breathing and cardiovascular function, improve balance to prevent falls/hip fractures, reduce stress and depression, and improve mental clarity. Try a class and see how good yoga can make you feel.

Flu Clinic – Unfortunately, the COA will not be sponsoring a flu clinic again this year. Fortunately, the Mass DPH says there is plenty of vaccine available. Like last year, get your vaccine where you can, but try to ensure you do not have to pay out of pocket for it. Be wary of the new Fluzone High-Dose vaccine that is available specifically for seniors. Consumer Reports writes: “Initially we hoped this high-dose vaccine might particularly help seniors who are very ill or have compromised immune systems, but given the lack of clinical trial data, and that there is a risk of making sick people even sicker, our medical consultants don’t advise it for anyone at this time.”

SHINE Appointments – Open enrollment for Part B Medicare changes runs October 15 to December 7 this year. On November 7th, Lorraine York-Edberg will be available for appointments in Leverett to consult on your health insurance needs. Contact the COA to make an appointment.

Volunteer Nurse Wanted – Once per month on a Friday at 1:00 (after senior lunch), the COA would like to offer free blood pressure readings. Contact us to talk about it.

Friday Lunch: Anyone over 60 is welcome to make a reservation for lunch on Friday, held at noon at Town Hall. Contact Carole King, Meal Site Manager, at 367-2694 for reservations or more information.

Submitted by Tanya Cushman, Chair
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coa@leverett.ma.us 548-