

Ashland Month

By John Petrin, Town Manager

Ashland Day was recently held on September 25. With everything else that has been happening with various great people being recognized, we should acknowledge this period as Ashland Month. As we all know, Ashland is a premier community and a great place to live and work. The people that have been recognized exemplify why that is so.

It started with a truly eventful Ashland Day. What a wonderful day in all respects. Huge crowds showed on a hot day which finished with truly "hot" fireworks. The members of the Ashland Day Committee and the many volunteers and groups that participated put in a phenomenal effort to showcase Ashland.

Michael Duca and Robert Gemma were named Co-Citizens-of-the-Year and the Ashland Fire Explorers Post #1438 was honored as Grand Marshall for the Day. What these people do is unbelievable. Michael is a full-time member of our Fire Department. On top of that, he has his hands in many other aspects of our community. He is the go-to guy for the summer concerts and his talents are utilized in various aspects of our technical operations in Town. Bob is a call firefighter and has been instrumental in starting and maintaining the Fire Explorers Post. Both gentlemen have extraordinary families and are intertwined in the fabric of this community. The young men and women of the Fire Explorers post are omnipresent at various events in Town. Some have aspirations of making the fire service a career and others see opportunity in making a difference. Congratulations to these people for caring and being an integral part of our community.

The Ashland Public Schools inducted their latest members into the Hall-of-Fame. Susan Green Trivelpiece (1975) and Police Chief Scott Rohmer (1981) were honored this year. Susan has made her mark as a scientist researching penguins from the Antarctic region. We all know Chief Rohmer who has stayed in Ashland and has had a highly successful career with the Ashland Police Department, being named Chief in 2006. I do not know Ms. Trivelpiece but certainly can attest to the fact that Chief Rohmer was highly deserving of the award. We are truly fortunate to have a police chief that cares about people as much as Scott does. Congratulations to Susan and Scott as well as their families. They can certainly be proud.

The Lions in Ashland recently pulled off a double victory. The Ashland Lions received the honored distinction of being the best Division 1 club in District 33 and the Greater Ashland Lions garnered the same honor for Division 2. There are 4 divisions in District 33 and Ashland clubs captured two of those. Congratulations to the members of both clubs as we certainly know that they are the best. It is always great when it is confirmed by your peers.

In line with the Ashland Day awards theme, I wish to point out that the Ashland Fire Department had another successful annual open house. What better place than to take the kids, and the big kids as well, to climb around the fire apparatus that so intrigues us all.

A new group in Town, the Ashland Teen Advisory Committee, introduced its first event recently. A bonfire gathering was held at the Community Center on a Saturday evening. 300 teenagers attended the event. The reviews were high for the event. Kudos to all those who organized, planned, and carried out the event. I know that everyone looks forward to the future of the organization. Anyone wishing to get involved can contact Cara Tirrell at 508-881-0140, X. 18.

I do wish to recognize the life of Robert Winterhalter. Mr. Winterhalter passed on September 29th at the age of 81. He devoted his life to his wife, family and Ashland. He was active in Town right to the end. He was honored by the Selectmen with the Ashland Civic Pride Award in July. He truly lived a full life and will be missed. God Bless You Mr. Winterhalter.

In last month's edition, I wrote about the fact that the Town has several affordable housing units available for purchase. These are for sale for \$173,500. Income Guidelines are adjusted according to the number of persons in the household as follows: 1 PERSON: \$46,300; 2 PERSON: \$52,950; 3 PERSON: \$59,550; 4 PERSON: \$66,150. Thus, in general terms, a four person family with income less than \$66,150 would qualify to purchase affordable housing. It should be noted however, that any assessment for eligibility, for individuals or households, depends on a variety of factors including debt and asset levels. Prospective applicants for affordable housing should be pre-approved by a lender. If you think you may qualify and have interest in this opportunity, please contact the Board of Selectmen's office.

The Ashland Emergency Fund conducted its annual Walk-a-Thon recently. Thanks to those who participated. They will next be coordinating the Halloween Drive to assist those in need. Please remember the Food Pantry for donations of food and household goods. Donations can be made by dropping off items at public buildings such as the Post Office. Your consideration is appreciated. Please also consider a financial donation to **The Ashland Emergency Fund**, at P.O. Box 112, Ashland, MA 01721. The Fund supports residents in need and the Food Pantry.

To follow what is happening in your community, follow the events and happenings in the MetroWest Daily News and WACA-TV as they provide superb coverage. Our website at www.AshlandMass.com has been recently revamped. There is much information on the site for you to peruse. We are the recent recipient of the Common Cause Massachusetts 2010 e-Government Award with Distinction for our website. We are proud recipients of their highest award.