

Summer Is Finally Coming **By John Petrin, Town Manager**

It has been a long winter. It seems like it lasted forever this year. Spring was slow to take hold but I think that we will transition quite fast to summer. Many parts of the Country have experienced very difficult weather. Our hearts goes out to those people who have been hurt by these terrible weather conditions. I am always grateful for New England's weather. It can change very quickly but it usually does not bring the extreme weather patterns to our door steps.

The transition to summer also means that Memorial Day is fast approaching. Please remember to mark your calendars for Monday, May 30 for Ashland's Annual observance. Our veterans groups do a great job in organizing this event. It is one of those events that define the character of our community. This day is set aside to honor those who have died in the service of their country. The day was first known as Decoration Day and dates back to the end of the Civil War. On this day, we honor all veterans and recognize veterans who have passed away during the prior year. Ashland pays its respect through the Memorial Day Observance and Parade starting at 10:30 am. It starts at Wildwood Cemetery with a ceremony and concludes at Gordon Green Square. Various organizations participate to pay honor. Thank you to all who serve and have served. Congratulations to Joe Norton who will serve as this year's Grand Marshall. Joe has been Ashland's Veterans Agent and will be retiring soon from the position.

This year's Cleanup Ashland/Earth Day on April 30th was a great success. The weather held in the morning before getting nasty in the afternoon. This allowed the volunteers to get down to earth and cleanup many areas. Thanks to the Board of Health and their staff, Mark Oram and Diane Mortensen for coordinating the event. Several Town departments and organizations set up information booths. Thanks to the DPW Department for picking up the trash bags scattered around Town.

Memorial Day also means the opening of summer season. That means Summer Concerts, sponsored by the Ashland Day Committee, are right around the corner. I can't wait for the weekly Tuesday night event. I always enjoy the evening activity with great people and music.

There is an old New England joke that goes there are only two road seasons, winter and construction. With that, you have seen the bridge project begin on Route 135 near Chestnut Street. Instead of closing the bridge and creating a road detour while they constructed the whole bridge we were able to get the State to work on ½ of the bridge at a time so that the other half can remain open. This makes it tight in travelling that section, but it also is better than the alternative detour. Please use caution when travelling that section. Framingham will be having major renovations completed on bridges in the Route 135 section near Ashland. To assist with traffic having to find temporary routes, which will include Ashland roads, the State has erected temporary traffic lights at either end of the Fountain Street Bridge. These lights will operate as needed to assist with the traffic being rerouted. Our DPW, Fire and Police Departments will be working with State officials to maintain some semblance of order as this area gets busy. We ask for your patience and understanding as these projects progress. These projects are under State authority so we will be working with them to minimize impacts to us.

Town Meeting & Elections are over. It feels like we set a record in completing the Annual Town Meeting by 10:00 pm. The discussion seemed to go smoothly during the evening. Thanks to Tom Waldstein for his 22 years of service as Town Moderator. Tom was first elected in 1989 and every year since. His devotion certainly did not go unnoticed as 400 residents gave him a rousing applause of thanks. Kudos to the elected and appointed officials who spend a lot of time in preparing, reviewing and negotiating all the items that goes to Town Meeting. The Board of Selectmen, School Committee, and Finance Committee in particular put in an enormous amount of free time to make sure this goes smoothly.

Town Election was a little different this year with all precincts voting out of Ashland High School. Kudos to Tara Ward and her election folks for a smooth transition. Also thanks to Kevin Johnson and his folks for the assistance they provide. It is sad to think that we can only get out 11% of registered voters in a local election. I do want to thank all the poll workers who spend their time ensuring a smooth process during the day. I know they would appreciate more voters to help pass the time of day. And last but not least please

take the time to thank anyone who was a candidate. Successful or not, these folks at least were willing to put themselves out there for the greater good.

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 recipient of the Common Cause Massachusetts 2010 e-Government Award with Distinction for our website. We are proud recipients of their highest award.