

Summer Opportunities

By John Petrin, Town Manager

There have been numerous opportunities this past summer to enjoy some nice weather, gather with friends, and to seek different experiences. We can start with the annual Tuesday night Summer Concert Series. Summer would not be same without the Ashland Day Concerts. We are now down to three concerts as I write this column. The concerts to date have been phenomenal. We wish to thank the Ashland Day Committee for continuing to put these concerts together. A very special thanks goes to Michael Duca for being a volunteer extraordinaire. He puts a lot of time in coordinating the bands and making sure that the gazebo is ready for them. The award winning Ashland Lions are always there to meet your food and drink needs. They were able to spice up the menu this year with some new offerings. You can also satisfy your cravings for a good chance at winning a lottery. The Friends of the Council on Aging are at their booth weekly selling raffle tickets. They provide so much to keeping our elders needs in mind. We are fortunate to have all these folks giving to the Town. Thanks to all those who financially support the series.

Fire Lieutenant Lyn Moraghan organized a new summer camp program for females who think that the fire service may be an option in their future. The camp drew 10 teenagers who wanted to explore their future options in emergency services. Lyn was able to put together a tremendous cadre of instructors who put a lot of time into the program. The young ladies were kept busy all week and had a tremendous experience. Thanks to Lt. Moraghan and the volunteers that will staff the program for their dedication and leadership. Lt. Moraghan is truly a great example of a successful person in the fire service.

Sheriff Peter Koutoujian's Middlesex Sheriff Youth Public Safety Academy once again taught 9, 10 and 11 year old children about public safety. This year's academy for Ashland youngsters took place July 18-22. We had over 50 youngsters participate in the program. Thanks to Sheriff Koutoujian for continuing this great program at no charge to our families taking part. I also want to highlight our own police officers and firefighters who assist. We are always commended on the great participation from the members of the Ashland Police and Fire Departments. This is another area in which they have set high standards. We are told year-to-year that our participation and planned activities are the best in comparison to the other towns.

WACA-TV continues to provide great coverage. Barbara, Paul, Will and all the other folks at WACA-TV are committed to bringing the very best of Ashland to you. There is a lot of information that comes across on their local programming channels. I cannot tell you how often people talk about things that have been presented on WACA-TV. Thanks for the continued high level of production. Don't forget to watch the most recent Town Manager's Corner dealing with water issues and the initial Sitting with Selectmen programming addressing the Boston Marathon and Ashland.

Got a great tour of the Community Garden this summer. They needed to pat me down on the way out to make sure I only took what was offered. This little square of Ashland has turned out to be a great way for people to meet as well as to grow veggies and flowers.

We have had a lot of kudos on the new "Welcome to Ashland" sign at Oak and Cordaville. It really has added to the aesthetics of the Town. We will look to continue adding some great signage in the near future. It blends in well with all the work being done by the Ashland Garden Club in Town. The Ashland Coalition of Teens also added by recently making some improvements to landscaping at Montenegro Square and the island at Oak and Cordaville. Thanks to all who care and are willing to give of their time.

Speaking of Ashland Coalition for Teenagers, these teenagers, with some adult mentors, have really taken off. They have run some very successful programs this past year as well as working to give back to their community. Thanks to all who have been involved in working with these young people by being great role models and mentoring them in a way that helps our community.

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.