

## **REPORT OF THE TOWN ADMINISTRATOR**

This busy time of year is always a chance to be reflective and look at our accomplishments, our losses, and the overall health of the community. This year as we enter what they now admit is a recession, we have much on our minds, as community leaders and as individuals.

Our budget season, which began last July, was wrapped up in late December, with our public hearing held in January 2009 for the first time on the earlier schedule for SB2 meetings. We had our Department of Revenue Administration (NH DRA) Auditor in last June for a workshop to begin learning the nuances of a SB2 Annual Meeting. The schedule was earlier, and we worked our way through the process with guidance from DRA and the Statutes. Our deadlines for budgeting were pushed up by approximately two months. It has been an interesting learning process, and we have learned much that will help us even more as we prepare even now, for next year.

The year was marked with sadness in our losses, many of whom are noted in our Annual Dedication. We were deeply saddened by the loss of our former employees and Town Officials Barbara Baker, who died on March 6; and Ruth Anderson, who died on September 8. I personally worked with both women throughout my entire career in Fremont and losing them was heartbreaking.

Several people resigned their service to the community including Deb Genthner who did not accept reappointment to the Parks & Recreation Commission; Mark Pitkin, Scott Boisvert and Dan Daley left the Planning Board. Rick Butler and Brett Hunter both resigned from the ZBA as they assumed positions as the Town's Fire Chief and Selectman respectively. Joe Gottlich and Chris Braid each stepped down from positions within Emergency Management. Peter Bearse resigned from his position as Rockingham Planning Commission representative. While all of these resignations are felt on the particular Board, we are also pleased to have many of these folks in their new roles; and we welcomed some new faces to volunteer services. Joe Dreyer returned to the Board of Selectmen in March, to resign shortly thereafter with a career opportunity that presented itself as too good to pass up. Brett Hunter filled his position and has been a welcome addition to the Board.

Long-time Fire Chief Dick Heselton retired this fall, a notable change in Fremont history. As you can see in the Fire Department report, Dick served the Town as Fire Chief for 32 years; and has been a member of the Fremont Fire Department for more than 50 years. His truly notable length of service is marked by many improvements and upgrades within fire and emergency services. His dedication to the Department and to this Town should never be forgotten. I miss seeing Dick every day and we all wish him the very best in a well-deserved retirement!

Our Memorial Day services were marked by a special sight when an eagle flew over during Pastor Loker's Benediction - sign of hope for all Our Troops. We were pleased to have former Fremont resident Sgt Grant Mason (son of residents Troy and Kimberly Dunbar) join us with remarkable words of wisdom that began:

*“We have assembled here today to commemorate a day that in its origins was instituted by general order in so that soldiers may decorate the graves of their comrades who died in defense of their country.*

*Since its provenance, there has been a shift in dynamic in how Memorial Day is observed. Presently due to the successful inheritance from previous generations; teaching well to their children to hold Memorial Day in reverence and exemplifying the brave men and women of our past. Who selflessly laid down their lives to perpetuate and preserve the ideals of our forefathers in so that they may know what bravery is and the cost of freedom.”*

Our Memorial Day Parade and Ceremony is always an opportunity for the Community to come together and share remembrances of our war dead; pay tribute to the men and women bravely serving the Country past, present, and future. It is an important tradition to continue.

Eagle Scout Mark Prescott worked much of the year on his Eagle Scout project. He constructed and installed information kiosks, which were dedicated and presented to the Fremont Conservation Commission on Saturday 09/13/08. Mark created the kiosks for the Glen Oakes Conservation land and the Oak Ridge Conservation land.

The Veteran’s Open House in November was again well attended, and a fitting tribute to our men and women in the Armed Services. These community events highlight the importance of our unique “small town” atmosphere. Many thanks to Jeanne Nygren, who organizes both events on behalf of the Town.

Once again the members of our Emergency Services and Highway Department were instrumental in protecting life and property during Ice Storm of December 2008. This was even more devastating than our recent annual flooding events due to the wide-spread damage and nearly two week period that some residents were without power and heat. There were well-being checks completed; and an emergency shelter set up at the Complex for more than a week. Our volunteers and employees are to be commended for their vigilance and dedication to Fremont and its residents.

Our Police Chief Neal Janvrin will celebrate being Fremont’s Chief 20 years as of the 2009 Annual Meeting; and in February 2009 has been a police officer in New Hampshire for 40 years. Guerwood Holmes has been the Road Agent for 22 years; and we will bid farewell to Selectman Gene Cordes in March after 18 years as a member of the Board. We are served well by these community servants, whose experience has helped to see Fremont through many projects, in good times and in bad. If you have never been involved in local government, it is difficult to understand the depth of dedication required to serve in these roles. The well-being of the community is your reason for being, and it can be a challenge.

I am thankful to have good working relationships with all of our town officials, volunteers, and employees, and know that all of them work hard for the Town on a daily basis. Thank you to all of these people who help to make this a special place to live. A special thank you at this challenging time of year to all of the folks in the Town Hall who are great proofreaders and helpers with regard to the Town Report and the many challenging tasks of

budget “season”, including Jeanne Nygren, Meredith Bolduc, Lori Holmes, Kathy Arsenault, and Thom Roy; and to Dick and Betty Rand for all their help with warm meals and gracious smiles to keep us all going!

Growth is extremely slow. The Town’s requests for services continue to remain constant, and we have seen an increase in requests for abatements and assistance, much of which is due to the changed economy. This time gives the land use boards time to plan for the future and continue work on important mapping and resource inventories. We continue to see and service many residents daily at the Town Hall in the various offices. The Clerk’s Office mail-in programs have seen increased use, a convenience for all. Assessing records and a greater depth of town information are available on the web. These resources are available through the Town’s web site at [www.Fremont.nh.gov](http://www.Fremont.nh.gov).

We continue to look for interested volunteers to serve on various boards, committees, and commissions. The local volunteer is an ever-precious commodity, and one that helps to keep costs down, and preserve the small-town character that Fremont is known and loved for. Virtually all board and committee minutes are available on our website, and meetings are posted in a variety of town buildings and on the web. We continue to produce the monthly newsletter as well. Please consider getting involved in one of the many organizations that serve the community. We need volunteers on all of the land use boards, are still short one member of the Parks & Recreation Commission, and can always use additional ideas and input within groups such as the Open Space Committee and Energy Committee. There are a wide variety of needs for volunteers, and if you have interest in becoming involved, it is an important time for the community.

We do like to get feedback about what you might be looking for. We are getting more forms and information to the website and the Comcast channel, in an effort to reach additional members of the community. We have no way to gauge how many folks have internet or cable access, but hope that those of you who do, get some value from the additional resources and information.

We need your help, and community service is one of the most rewarding things you will ever do. You meet people you might not otherwise meet, cultivate friendships and learn things you might not otherwise learn. Get involved in making Fremont the place you want to live and raise your family.

Respectfully submitted,

Heidi Carlson  
Town Administrator

*“Fear less, hope more; eat less, chew more; whine less;  
breathe more; talk less, say more; hate less, love more;  
and all good things are yours.”*

~ Swedish Proverb