

# The Gary A. LaGrange Community Impact Award

## The 2018 Honoree

### Judy Frost, Western Maine Community Action

Sometimes we go through our daily routine overlooking the best things in life; Judy Frost is easy to overlook, as she only stands at four foot two or so, but her 30 plus years of massive positive impacts to our community and the lives of so many cannot go unnoticed any longer. She is an intimidating figure for her height; no one I know will risk getting in her way as she busies herself helping others. She sounds gruff and tough, but her heart melts at every real crisis, and she becomes “Super Woman” in finding assistance to the family or person in need, even after 40 years of service. Over the last ten years, this little Might Moe and her team have been responsible for distributing to our region’s neediest citizens around \$22,500,000 in fuel and emergency assistance, with close to 97,000 instances of services.

A feat that few can claim!

Judy has worked, volunteered, or been associated for over 40 years at Western Maine Community Action (WMCA). First as a volunteer, a Board Member, a Board Chair, a staff member, and then the Community Services Director for decades. In her many hats throughout the years, she not only worked long hours ensuring that our elderly and low-income families throughout Franklin County, Livermore, and Livermore Falls would have emergency fuel to heat their homes, but she also made sure that their heating systems were up and running, that their homes received weatherization, and repairs were done keeping “Gram” and others like her safe, dry, and warm in their homes.

Judy was a long time dedicated WMCA Operation Santa Director and lived by the program originator’s code that at least one present wanted by the deserving child would be under their tree on Christmas morning. Judy would spend long hours gathering gifts from toy runs, donations, and seek support throughout Franklin County, and then work with tribes of volunteers in wrapping and sorting the gifts by towns for delivery by Santa. Although Judy got done this task several years ago, her heart was always on her sleeve for the little ones that might “go without” if it wasn’t for this special program.

Judy has always been a strong advocate for those in need and is a reasonable voice at the State level to try to make our programs friendlier to our rural citizens. Along with Operation Santa, she has volunteered at Western Maine CA\$H – Tax Services. She has also decorated, taken funds, and cleaned up at the many community HEAT dances that raises funds to help those that might not meet the income guidance of the LIHEAP program but find themselves in financial binds and in need of help. The 50/50 or ECU-Share program that is funded in part by those HEAT dances and created by Reverend Susan Crane is managed by Judy. When the Senior Food Program was threatened to be taken away from Franklin County, Judy volunteered her time to ensure it stayed in the county where it currently serves over 270 senior households every month with basic monthly groceries for the elderly.

Judy has mentored many, and is always the first to work (before the sun), and always the last to leave (after sun down). Her dedication to the welfare of her “people,” those in need, is unparalleled by any other I know. She worked and volunteered with Gary LaGrange for many years and it seems fitting that they both drank from the same water fountain, as their spirits are bound at the waist (although Gary was a bit taller) in serving those in need and tough times. We all should be thankful for such a powerful dynamo of a woman being in the corner of those that seldom have a voice at the table. The many families and lives she has changed and positively impacted over those 40 years of service cannot be measured, but our community stands much stronger because of her and what she tends to everyday, from sun up to sun down, and beyond. Thank you so much Judy for all that you do and have done.

# **Gary A. LaGrange Community Impact Award**

## **Nominees**

The following were also nominated for their service in Greater Franklin County.

Congratulations to all for the well-deserved recognition.

**Bob Berry, Main-Land Development Consultants**

**Bobbie Hanstein, Founder, The Daily Bulldog**

**Carroll Corbin, Community Member, Chesterville**

**Dr. Tom Ward, Superintendent of Schools, RSU 9**

**Franklin County Animal Shelter**

**Janet Smith, New Ventures Maine**

**Rustic Roots Farm**

**Shaun Riggs**