

Cindy Murphy Bruno, Democratic Party Registrar

Cindy has been in the registrar's office for twenty-seven years, five as the deputy and twenty-two as the person in charge. She came to Ridgefield at eight months old as part of a very large and loving family. She has only lived outside of town for two years.

Prior to taking the registrar's position, Cindy was a stay-at-home mom with two children, Keith and Colleen. She now has three grandchildren and just wishes she lived closer to her grandchildren in South Carolina.

Even before Cindy became the town registrar she was working as a voting machine tender at age 18. Then several years later she became one of the adults that worked the poll sign-in tables. Elections have always been important to Cindy.

For Cindy's office, the municipal elections are more difficult than the big political elections. She feels that this is due to the fact that the municipal elections are more personal, involve possible caucuses, petitions, and local party members. While the town clerks are usually busier during presidential elections, Cindy finds herself more involved on the local scene.

Nothing brings Cindy more pride than visiting the schools and talking about the importance of utilizing one's right to vote. For this endeavor Cindy works with the League of Women Voters and serves on a variety of panels. Cindy is also involved in the school mock elections and each semester visits politics classes to make students more aware of the voting process. When she visits the lower grades, she utilizes interactive games and role playing activities to help students better understand elections.

The biggest change that Cindy has seen in the voting process in town is going from the old mechanical pull the lever machines to the scantron sheets. This voting process changed in 2007 and was not an easy transition for some of the people in town. Many people like to hold onto their old ways.

In 2020 a major portion of her job changed from foot traffic through the town hall to online and absentee ballots due to the pandemic. It was important that the town's resources were now adjusted from person-to-person services to having the proper materials distributed online and through the mail.

Cindy found that during the pandemic, more people switched to become independents and fewer registered Republicans were in town. Also, while only 1,200 voted in person in the last election, over 7,500 took advantage of absentee ballots. In addition to this, the town had to find people other than senior citizens to work the polls as the older citizens did not want to take the risk without the vaccine.

As for cutting back on voting opportunities in the future, Cindy does not see that we have a problem in our town. We are going to continue to have the ballot box outside the town hall for each election and only one person in the town hall has the key for this box.

Graduating from Ridgefield High School in 1975, Cindy loved school and was particularly active in the Decca Business Club. Her husband, Jim, went to Greenwich High School, but her cousin had Jim and Cindy meet during high school and the magic began.

Cindy and Jim thrive on working with young people and oversee the middle school youth group at Elizabeth Seton Catholic Church in Ridgebury. Cindy has also been a Girl Scout Leader and is

chairperson for the Cursillo Movement at her church. This movement is all about spreading the good news and that is the basis for the life Cindy leads.

During the pandemic Cindy used her baking, writing, and speaking skills to stay connected with her middle school youth group, her neighbors and the community at large. She said that the zoom connection and her personal notes and presents were key to keeping her middle school group on task and her neighbors recognized.

Also, during the pandemic Cindy baked and helped the owners of Wooster Hollow Restaurant to prepare free meals for the people in need in the area. She is so pleased that Wooster Hollow has now become a nonprofit organization and can help even more people find food through pantries and in other ways.

Cindy is all about dedication and good will. She is very content in the career that she has chosen for herself and is also very proud of her family and the town she is able to serve.