

Wendy Gannon Lionetti

As the Ridgefield Town Clerk Wendy is an elected official and must live in town. Although she has only been in her present position for two years, she has lived in town for 56 years. Born in Portchester, N.Y., Wendy's roots have always been in Ridgefield.

Prior to becoming the town clerk, Wendy was the assistant to the First Selectman for many years and before that worked part time in the assessor's office. In 2009 Wendy was named Ridgefield Town Employee of the year.

Wendy loves the challenge that her job provides. She likes that she is involved in so many special town projects and is continually learning about how the town functions and her role. Helping others has always been important to Wendy and her present job requires her to continually address new concerns of the public, take courses to keep updated, and keep meticulous records on land/housing, veterans, licensing, town ordinances, meetings and employees, elections (along with developing the municipal ballots), town's vital statistics, historical documents, businesses, and numerous other areas.

In addition to record keeping, Wendy is responsible for registering liquor permits (for businesses and fund raisers), trade names, working with people who are justice of the peace or notary public, and all town officials. She must also maintain records on petitions and claims against the town and provide service to the community for licensing for hunting, fishing, and trapping. Wendy enjoys administering the oath of office to new elected and appointed officials as well as new police officers and firefighters.

Since working as town clerk, Wendy likes to refer to herself as the town librarian, for if you need a record, going back to 1708, her department will find it. Helping Wendy with the multitude of records kept by the town are her deputy, Caitlin Bartolo, and two assistants, Ann McCarthy and Victoria Gasperino.

In a special fire-resistant vault at the town hall is the original deed from Chief Oroneca of the Ramapoo tribe deeding land in Ridgefield to 25 colonists, for what would be \$19,000 today. There is also the original town seal and today's seal that was designed by Robert Mailin of Harding Drive in 1972. Residents, may enter the vault to obtain research on genealogical information, town financial records, or other data.

In the early days, the town hall was more interested in records on livestock, but today it is all about dogs and rabies shots. Early on, owners who did not get a license for their dog, could have the dog shot. Roaming dogs could also be shot. Today there are 1890 licensed dogs in town, all well cared for.

A 1980 graduate of Ridgefield High School, Wendy went on to attend Katherine Gibbs Business School and then Western Ct. State University. She knew her husband, Mark in high school, however, they did not start dating until later in life. Mark and Wendy have three grown children living in Colorado and California.

Wendy loves to make jewelry from beads and "found items" and shares this skill with disabled adults through her jewelry-making class with SPHERE members. The jewelry and pottery creations made by the artists are sold to help raise funds for new materials. The Ridgefield Thrift Shop has been helpful in giving Wendy old, broken jewelry that can be repurposed into new pieces of art.

Working with the SPHERE Community (people with special needs) has brought much meaning to Wendy's life. If Wendy had a superpower it would be for people to learn to be more accepting of each other.

Athletically, Wendy loves to play hockey on Sunday nights with her husband at the Ridgefield Hockey Rink. She has also skated in the Olde Crabs Hockey Tournament in Danbury but now prefers an informal scrimmage to the pressure of tournament hockey.

Ridgefield has offered so much to Wendy regarding her career, volunteerism, friendships, family, education and athletics, and she has returned the favor by helping so many as the town clerk. Wendy does not see her job as just 8:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. each day. She sees it as a commitment to the community to be the best that she can be and serve anyone that needs help.