

Clerk's Corner January 2018  
A New Year in Wenham, MA

January is a great time of year everywhere. It's a time to relax after the hoopla of the holiday season and it's a time to look ahead with hope for all that is to come. In Massachusetts, residents get to look over their census form to confirm its accuracy and get it back to the Clerk as soon as possible. The information collected assists in accurate municipal planning, it provides public safety officials with current information, and it allows Wenham to receive the proper allocation of state and federal funds and grants. Filing a census can provide proof of residency for a number of legal requirements such as in-state tuition at state colleges, and housing benefits, veterans' benefits, and insurance benefits. It is essential to include all residents regardless of age on the census forms. It is important to make note of any moves, deaths, military service and even numbers of pets. Those voters who fail to respond to the census can become inactive or even deleted from the voter list which then makes voting a much more time consuming process. Massachusetts is one of the only states that do annual censuses which allows us to keep our resident, voter and jury lists very accurate. Our annual census also assists in the accuracy of the federal decennial census which is coming in 2020.

In January, Wenham dog owners register their dogs. This year marks our first "Cutest Dog in Wenham" contest. All dogs registered during the month of January are eligible to have their picture posted so residents can vote for their favorite. The cutest dog and owner will receive a gift basket donated by Wag's Doggie Day Care. Also in Wenham in January, opportunities to run for elected office are posted and nomination papers become available (Friday January 12<sup>th</sup>). Residents can get their name on that ballot and can actively participate in the Town. Now is the time to step up. The New Year is an opportunity to renew our commitment to ourselves, our community and our families. Don't stop doing what makes you happy but please reserve some time for the community. Become an active part of the process especially at the local level.

2018 is actually the Town of Wenham's 375<sup>th</sup> anniversary. The Committee charged with organizing events to celebrate the Town throughout 2018 began in the fall of 2017 with the design of our logo and event t-shirt. At our kick-off fundraiser, we brought in over \$12,000 with the help of many charitable donors and residents. Mark your calendars for Saturday September 8, 2018 for the Wenham Parade and Activity Day. Although it seems distant, we ask all community groups and organizations to think about their involvement in the parade and day's activities.

Between now and then, the 375<sup>th</sup> Writing Contest is off and running and is open to all residents aged 8 and up. The specifics can be found at the 375<sup>th</sup> Committee page at [www.wenhamma.gov](http://www.wenhamma.gov). A retrospective on Wenham will be presented by Jack Hauck, local historian on Friday January 12<sup>th</sup> at the Wenham Museum. It is the first of the Museum's Brown Bag Lunch series. Participants are invited to bring a sandwich and drinks and dessert are provided. More information can be found at the museum's website; [www.wenhammuseum.org](http://www.wenhammuseum.org)

*Dianne Kaplan Bucco was elected the Wenham Town Clerk April 11, 2014 and has achieved the designation of Certified Municipal Clerk in 2017. For more information on the clerk's office, please go to [www.wenhamma.gov](http://www.wenhamma.gov) or follow the Wenham Town Clerk on Facebook.*