

CLERK'S CORNER 10/2018

Educated Voters for the Midterm Elections 2018

The Wenham Clerk's Corner missed submitting a September 2018 article being so wrapped up in the JOY of the September 8, 2018 Anniversary Parade and Community Day that writing more than THANK YOU was impossible. The celebratory event was such a wonderful community day that came about through the organization of the 375th Anniversary Committee with amazing amounts of help and support from tons of people. It was truly a community day that we will all cherish for years to come.

But now it is October 2018 which means election time. On November 6, 2018 the United States will be voting in mid-term elections. In Massachusetts, registering to vote and voting has never been easier. Even without instituting automatic voter registration yet, anyone eligible can register to vote by mail, through the clerk's office or even online. Voting is also easier than ever with absentee voting available for all elections, early voting periods prior to all State and Federal elections as well as thirteen hours on Election Day. There are really no excuses left not to vote!

In Wenham, our ballot contains thirteen races, thirty one candidates and three ballot questions. Voting takes place at Town Hall, 138 Main Street from 7am -8pm on Election Day, November 6, 2018. Early voting takes place in the same location from Monday October 22-Friday November 2 during Town Hall hours which are Mondays, Wednesdays and Thursdays from 9am-4:30pm, Tuesdays 9am-7pm and Fridays from 9am-1pm. In addition to those seventy three hours, 9 special early voting hours for Wenham voters have been added starting at 6am on Thursday October 25th and November 1st and from 10am-1pm on Saturday October 27, 2018.

The most difficult part of voting is not registering or casting your ballot but deciding for whom and what to vote. How does one make that choice? Voters need to do their due diligence to learn about the candidates and the consequences pro and con for each ballot question. The "red books" that review each ballot question have been mailed to

each residence, public library and city/town hall by the office of the Secretary of State. This booklet and their website, www.sec.state.ma.us are both great resources for the voter.

Each voter needs to decide what issues are most important to them and which candidates can support those principles. Where can you learn the truth about each question and candidate looking for your vote? It must be stated that social media platforms and other publicity outlets are not reliable sources. Voters need to research reliable sites to learn about the offices and candidates. Non-partisan organizations, newspapers and television often run debates and forums that may be local or aired on tv or radio. Talk to others about their thoughts on the candidates, offices and questions. Find out their views and why they feel that way. It is a great way to learn about all sides of each issue and it often helps to confirm one's own opinions. Becoming an educated voter is by far the hardest but most important responsibility of any voter. Election Day is fast approaching; take the time now to do your research.

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 or follow the Wenham Town Clerk on Facebook.