

Clerks Corner October 2017

Eleanor Roosevelt's Way Today

The Town Clerk's office is ever changing and keeping up to date on all the aspects of the office is necessary. The clerk organizations help us to do just that by offering many different workshops throughout the year. One recent workshop I participated in was an Athenian dialogue which is a 6 hour workshop that goes beyond the usual learn and remember process familiar to all in most training seminars. These dialogues explore leadership principles and practice, drawing on the insights contained in a book that all participants have read.

For our workshop, thirty New England clerks read and discussed the inspirational characteristics of First Lady Eleanor Roosevelt through Leadership the Eleanor Way by Robin Gerber. Eleanor's goals were always humanitarian and egalitarian. Her skills at motivation and leadership are amazingly interesting and would be great to draw from in today's world.

Eleanor Roosevelt was a transformational leader. By definition, a transformational leader works with subordinates to identify needed change, creates a vision to guide the change through inspiration and executes the change in tandem with committed members of a group. Eleanor proved herself to be such a person by delving into any situation that she deemed unfair, inappropriate and in need of improvement. She never decided to make a change, or be an advocate for a change, without some concrete research behind her. Her self-confidence to stand up for what she felt was right was always grounded in the fact that she had done her research and spoken to the people affected. Supported by truths and her heartfelt enthusiasm, Mrs. Roosevelt brought others in to her quest.

This is the type of leader that is needed in government today. When issues arise and situations and people need assistance and /or change, this type of leader would perform their due diligence to get to the bottom of the issue and interact with those affected to come up with a solution that works to improve the situation for all involved parties. We may not always see that Eleanor Roosevelt-type of engagement in all levels of government, but it does exist, especially on the local level. While the executive powers of the town of Wenham are vested in an elected three member board of selectmen, they do not make a decision without reaching out to other residents in a way reminiscent of Mrs. Roosevelt to ensure that they reflect the interests and values of the community. Opportunities for residents to be heard are constantly available through public hearings and the selectman's listening hour. At the start of every Board of Selectman's meeting there is an opportunity for public input.

On another note, Wenham is also celebrating its 375th next year. The kick off event is scheduled for Thursday November 30th at the Wenham Museum. More information on donating and tickets can be found at

www.wenham375.wenhamma.gov. And lastly, Halloween's trick or treating will be celebrated in Town Hall on Tuesday October 31st from 5-7pm.

Dianne Kaplan Bucco was elected the Wenham Town Clerk April 11, 2014 and re-elected on April 6, 2017. Dianne also achieved the designation of certified municipal clerk through both the IIMC and the MTCA. For more information on the clerk's office, please go to www.wenhamma.gov or follow the Wenham Town Clerk on Facebook.