

Clerks Corner, July 2017

“Things that make you go hmmm”

You are applying for a passport and need a certified copy of your birth certificate. You bring a copy from your baby book issued by the hospital where you were born. Not acceptable! Uh oh! It is time to visit your Town Clerk. Birth records are kept on file in the community where the birth occurred. A duplicate record of the birth is also on file in the community where the parents reside, if they agreed to that in the hospital discharge paperwork.

Death records are similar in that they are held where the death occurred. If the death did not occur in the decedent’s resident community, there are documents to complete to ensure that it does.

Marriage records follow a different process. In Massachusetts, a couple can file their intention to get married in any community regardless of their residences or the location of the wedding ceremony. For that reason, certified copies of the marriage license will only be available in the community where the couple filed the intention.

Your Town Clerk is also responsible for issuing business certificates and raffle permits. Any business being conducted in the community not under the owner’s name is by law, MGL 110 §5, to have a DBA (doing business as) certificate from the Clerk.

Massachusetts General Law 271 §7A states that to hold a raffle, a permit must be obtained from the Clerk in the community where the raffle is to be held. Permits may only be issued to non-profit organizations that have been organized and actively functioning in Massachusetts for at least two years and fall under one of the following categories: veterans' organization chartered by Congress; religious organization; fraternal or fraternal benefit society, educational or charitable organization; civic or service club; or other club or organization operated exclusively for nonprofit purposes.

Perhaps you want to know more of these interesting facts? The Town of Wenham is offering the second annual Citizen’s Leadership Academy this fall. It is a series of ten sessions held Wednesday evenings from 6:30-8pm where Wenham residents will learn about the functions and services of all Town departments, meet the staff, tour the facilities and perhaps find ways to get more involved within the community. There is more information on the website, www.wenhamma.gov and you can sign up in the Clerk’s office.

Did you know that the Town of Wenham will be 375 years old in 2018? The Anniversary Committee is working hard putting together a schedule of events for all that will include opportunities for celebrating and learning about our community all while enjoying the Town of Wenham together. Please be on the lookout for more information.

The Wenham Museum’s Wenham Day is scheduled for Saturday August 26, 2017 and will include among other things crafts, food trucks, music, entertainment, fire and police demonstrations as well as an open house at Town Hall.

Dianne Kaplan Bucco was elected the Wenham Town Clerk April 11, 2014 and re-elected on April 6, 2017. For more information on the clerk’s office, please go to www.wenhamma.gov or follow the Wenham Town Clerk on Facebook.