

Municipal Corner - Barbara

Barbara Allaire's home was Stowe and Town Hall was her second home. We are all the better for her love of both.

I don't remember if it was the first day that I started working for the Town that Barbara first walked into my office, but if not, it was pretty darn close to it. She didn't come right out and say it, but my sense was that she had not voted for the council / manager form of government and was a little suspect of this person from away. However, she was curious enough to stop by and introduce herself. Little did I know at the time that she would stop by nearly every day from that point forward for many years to come until her body grew too tired to do so. She would also become one of my biggest supporters both on the job and a source of personal strength as we face the trials and tribulations that life inevitably brings.

Barbara was born and raised in Stowe. My understanding is that she was away for a short time while her husband was in the service, but Stowe was always her home. She loved Stowe and she loved her country. I think the only thing she liked better was her family, a hug and maybe the UVM men's basketball team. Most people can't wait to retire, but that was the farthest thing from her mind. She loved to work the front desk where she could visit with people and smile so that someone would give her a hug.

As far as official duties, Barbara started out in the listers office. Later she worked as the Clerk to the Listers, Cemetery Commission, Recreation Commission and Development Review Board. She also served as one of the Town Auditors when the Town still had such a position and was on the Cemetery Commission. In all, Barbara worked in one capacity or another for 44 years.

Barbara loved the tradition of the Town Meeting and she was responsible for the lunch for many years. She could often be seen in the audience at Selectboard meetings. She didn't always speak but her presence was always felt. One of the most powerful memories is seeing her stand up with assistance at the 2020 Town Meeting, where she was honored as having the Annual Report dedicated to her. The audience gave her a standing ovation.

She was also not shy about telling me what she thought about what was on their agenda or anything else going on in town. In addition, she was not bashful about telling me to take care of my health or advise me on what was going on in my personal life. However, Barbara mostly just liked to talk and laugh when she came to visit me in my office. She had a great sense of humor.

Towards the end, Barbara would contemplate the end of life, which is something it was clear that she didn't want to face. I told her that she would always live on through others, which seemed to give her comfort. May you rest in peace.

If people want to honor Barbara, I can think of no better way than to vote, honor your veterans, love your community and your family, and care. Also, attend Annual Meeting. Barbara loved the idea of citizens getting together as a community to decide their future.