



LYNN MONTY, Free Press

Westford Assistant Town Clerk Sue Adams (left) and Town Clerk Nanette Rogers.

The phone rang and the copier hummed as hands busily folded flyers to be sent to Westford residents announcing a joint budget meeting.

The level of activity is typical in Westford's town offices. The town's clerks are, just as typically, at the center of that activity.

There is a huge learning curve for the behind the scenes running of a small town, said Assistant Town Clerk Sue Adams, who started her job just prior to election season last year.

"My position here started with a real bang. I ran a federal election," she laughed. "All of the requests for absentee ballots poured in and I had to maintain the checklists and prepare for Election Day itself.

Westford is home to about 2,200 residents and several businesses, said Westford Town Clerk Nanette Rogers.

"We are sometimes referred to as the forgotten town of Chittenden County," said Rogers, who will celebrate her eighth year on the job in March. "We are a small community on the outskirts and off the beaten path."

Westford's rural character is a draw for many and the overall sense of the community is one of togetherness, Rogers said.

"It's very close-knit and everyone seems to come together to help and to have fun," Rogers said. "We have a lot of volunteers ... too many to mention. We never

have many vacancies on boards or commissions because people here want to be involved."

Westford is comprised of dirt roads, two partially paved roads and two state highways. A trail system is groomed for cross-country skiing, and in the summer, it's available for walking, biking and bird watching. An ice rink is maintained in the heart of town all winter, Adams said.

"This is a big year. It's the 10th anniversary year for broomball, and the tournaments will be held in February," she said.

Rogers remembered the highlight of her first year. "The covered bridge had been taken off of the abutments and stored at the

town garage for 14 years, and in 2001 they restored it and moved it back," she said. "That was one of my favorite moments."

Rogers said keeping up to date on issues and changes in the laws is her biggest challenge, but it's certainly not a burden.

"Nanette is a walking encyclopedia," Adams said. "Anything from taxes to elections to the Selectboard ... she has a lot of knowledge in that head. I am in awe of her."

Rogers said it comes with the job. "That's something you gain and I think Sue will one day have just as much knowledge as I have."

— Lynn Monty, Free Press