A Conversation With Former Senator Marian Walsh

by Hana Janjigian Heald

Marian Walsh first won a seat in the Massachusetts House of Representatives in 1988 as a political unknown. She won. She won a second term in the House in 1990. In 1992, she was elected to the Massachusetts State Senate, where she served nine consecutive terms.

She never lost an election.

That’s a vivid image, and it brings home that Marian Walsh was the very best candidate that she could be, and she knew how to win.

As senator, she represented the Town of Dedham for 18 years.

When she stepped down after deciding not to seek reelection in 2010, she immediately knew what she wanted to do - to help people run for office.

“I did not come from a political family, so I learned from my own experience, but it was very difficult,” she said. “I didn’t understand what people did to run for office, but I did know that I wanted to be helpful, and I did know that I would figure it out and learn.”

She was smart enough to listen, to study, to seek advice, and to act on what she learned.

She also knew the contributions she had made over the years as an elected official reflecting the needs and concerns of the citizens who lived in the communities she represented.

“I thought that if I had a book with information about being a candidate when I was starting out I would have been a better candidate,” she said.

Because of that, she chose almost immediately to write a book for candidates, and for those who aspire to be candidates. Titled “RUN: Your Personal Guide to Winning Public Office,” by Senator Marian Walsh was published in 2012.

She writes in the Foreword, “If you love politics and are searching for the best way to get more involved in the political process - possibly by running for public office - this book will show you how to be the best candidate you can be, and how to win.”

Her book is also for those who care about someone running for office who want to acquire knowledge to better to support their candidacy.
And the book will empower the voters who desire to make their voices heard every time they vote.

Her website, www.marianwalsh.com carries the information that she is a public affairs consultant and a certified life coach with a specialty in leadership skills. She works with individuals who want to develop strong leadership skills either for themselves in their own life or for their organizations.

Walsh is also involved in a new idea which she thinks will have long-lasting contributions to the political process.

“It is called the American Campaign School and Leadership Camp (ACSLC), and it’s a non-partisan training program which is designed to lead to winning public office, whether you are running for the first time, running for re-election, or are simply thinking you might want to run in the future,” she said.

(Above): Former State Senator Marian Walsh.

Photo contributed to The Dedham Times

An expert faculty and supportive staff will teach, coach and inspire participants, as they develop their campaign skills with confidence. ACSLC Certificates are awarded at the close of the training program.

The American Campaign School and Leadership Camp will take place on November 15 and 16 at the Commonwealth Museum, (7:30 - 3 p.m.) on Friday, and at the Commonwealth Museum, (8-12:30 p.m.) on Saturday.

For more information and registration for ACSLC, visit www.marianwalsh.com.

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