

**Norfolk County Registry of Deeds 2008 Annual Fiscal Year Report to the
Town of Wellesley
William P. O'Donnell, Register**

The Registry of Deeds, located at 649 High Street, Dedham, Massachusetts, is the principal office for real property records in Norfolk County and operates under the supervision of the elected Register, William P. O'Donnell. The Registry receives and records hundreds of thousands of documents each year, and is a basic resource for title examiners, mortgage lenders, municipalities, homeowners, and others with a need for land record information. The Registry of Deeds has been a vital component of Norfolk County government since 1793 when Governor John Hancock signed the act creating Norfolk County. Four United States Presidents, John Adams, John Quincy Adams, John F. Kennedy, and George H.W. Bush were born in Norfolk County, the County of Presidents. Registry operations are effectively self-supporting and generate significant surplus revenues which support other operations and contribute to the General Fund of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts. Registry revenues also subsidize county and state public safety and corrections costs. In over two hundred years of continuous operation, the Registry has gone from the days of scribes with quill pens to computers, scanned documents and off-site access. However, in all that time our objectives have remained the same: accuracy, reliability and accessibility for the residents of the twenty eight communities that comprise Norfolk County.

Fiscal Year 2008 Highlights

- The completion of the Registry's Hall of Flags with all 28 communities represented.
- Free public viewing of every document, including land plans, recorded by the Registry since its inception in 1793 is now available on the internet at www.norfolkdeeds.org.
- The expansion of the internet accessible indexing system back to 1956. Remote access over the internet for complete printing of Registry documents is steadily expanding among a growing number of account holders.
- An investment in computer terminals at the Registry itself now insures that anyone wanting to access the records can do so here.
- A full service telephone (781-461-6101) and walk-in customer service center and the addition of closing rooms and tables encourage the citizens of Norfolk County to feel comfortable in using their Registry.
- The Registry's internet website www.norfolkdeeds.org is regularly updated and enhanced to include recent news, trends, press information, and answers to frequently asked questions.

Wellesley was one of the Norfolk County communities to show decreased real estate activity in Fiscal Year 2008 recording a total of 671 deeds, 10.7% fewer than in Fiscal Year 2007. The average price of a Wellesley sale (greater than \$1,000 - *residential and commercial* properties) fell only 3% to \$1,218,054 reflecting a much smaller decrease than that experienced by many other area communities. Total dollar volume of real estate sales in Wellesley totaled just under \$535 million which was off 14% from the previous year. There were 1,580 mortgages recorded for Wellesley real estate in this fiscal year, 15.3% fewer than last year. August was the busiest month for real estate activity accounting for 11.6% of all Wellesley related recordings.



Register Bill O'Donnell presents the Registry's collection of Toys For Tots to Marine Sgt. Daniel Sampson



Norfolk County Registry of Deeds Hall of Flags