

Town of Greenburgh
**ASSISTANT
TOWN HISTORIANS**



———— felicia barber + riley wentzler ————



From Mopping The Floor of One Institution to Managing Three at Once: The Amazing Story of Former Westchester County Commissioner of Public Welfare Ruth Taylor

By: Riley Wentzler & Felicia Barber

Ruth Taylor was born on July 1st 1886 in Cedar Rapids Iowa (New York Times Obituary of Ruth Taylor March 12 1986 p.B-6). At some point, she moved to the State of New York. She enrolled in Vassar College in 1905. She played on the school's hockey team, sang in the school's chorus, and played double-base in the school's orchestra. In addition to her extra-curricular activities, she also worked as the school's janitor in order to pay her tuition. She lived in Hartsdale while attending Vassar. After graduating, she worked with the New York State Charity's Aid Association in Rockland County from 1913-1931. Her position in the organization was Personal Assistant to Westchester County's Superintendent of the Poor, Everit Macy, who was a close friend and a political ally of "Boss" (William) Ward (Folsom 1949 p. 24). See our article "When Greenburgh Went "East Bound and Down" Greenburgh During Prohibition for more information on Boss Ward (<https://greenburghny.com/DocumentCenter/View/5992/When-Greenburgh-Went-East-Bound-and-Down-Greenburgh-During-Prohibition>).

In 1932, she ran for Westchester County Commissioner of Public Welfare. She won, becoming the first woman to hold county wide elected office when she did so (Marchant 2019 p.115). This position required her to manage: Grasslands Hospital, The Westchester County Penitentiary, and the "County Home" (the largest nursing home in the county) simultaneously (Folsom 1949 p.24). She served in this capacity until 1951 when she retired (Greenburgh Public Library Archives). She died on March 12th 1986 of pneumonia (New York Times Obituary of Ruth Taylor March 12 1986 p. B-6).

In recognition of her nineteen years of outstanding public service, the Ruth Taylor Geriatric & Rehab Center was founded in her honor in 1987. Today the former Grasslands Hospital is now Westchester Medical College and the former Westchester County Penitentiary is now called Westchester County Correctional Facility.



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<https://greenburghny.com/DocumentCenter/View/5992/When-Greenburgh-Went-East-Bound-and-Down-Greenburgh-During-Prohibition>

About the Authors:

We are both Assistant Town Historians at Greenburgh Town Hall and we are engaged to be married and are currently looking for permanent employment.

Riley Wentzler:

I was born and raised in a small rural town in central Pennsylvania. In high school, I took every honors course available including four years of Spanish. I received A's in all of them. I graduated third in my class of 146 students. This brought me to Edinboro University of Pennsylvania. Once there, I continued my trend of academic excellence. I graduated summa cum laude in Political Science with a minor in Spanish and a Master's in Communication Studies, with a G.P.A of 3.94. It was also there that I met my lovely fiancée, Felicia Barber. My Master's in Communication has promoted public speaking, teamwork, and customer service. My Political Science degree has developed my research skills using computer-based tools and provided me with experience using the Microsoft Office products. My minor in Spanish has facilitated my bilingual capabilities. During my internship at Greenburgh, I created the petition for the State Roads project using website tools. My diverse education and areas of interest have provided me with a wide range of skills. I look forward to finding a career opportunity in business or government. **To suggest a topic for next week's article, you can contact me at assistanthistorian@greenburghny.com, or to help me find employment, you can contact me at rjwentzler413@gmail.com**

Felicia Barber:

I was born in New York City and raised in Hartsdale, New York. I graduated from Ardsley High School. I recently earned a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree in Graphic Design at Edinboro University of Pennsylvania. It was here that I met my fiancé, Riley Wentzler. As a result of my academic excellence, I won a scholarship every year. I learned and applied many graphic design skills to projects during my summer internships and at school. I am proficient in using Adobe graphic design applications including Photoshop, Illustrator and InDesign. For my Identity/branding course at Edinboro, I created logos to appear on the tee-shirts of Physical Education majors. For a veteran's upcoming event, I used a typeface to focus the reader to the soldier in the poster. For the State Roads Legislative Campaign project, I created the embedded graphic-photo that accompanied the petition I am looking for a job to utilize my skills as a Graphic Designer in an agency, print shop, company or government **To suggest a topic for next week's article, you can contact me at assistanthistorian@greenburghny.com. To learn more about my artwork or to help me find employment you can contact me at feliciadbarber@gmail.com.**

Two Interviews with the authors:

<https://riverjournalonline.com/around-town/a-love-of-history-and-each-other/13708/>

<https://wchs880.radio.com/articles/news/stories-main-street-couple-cerebral-palsy-brings-manytalents-town-greenburgh>

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