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BARB UNELL CELEBRATES 40 YEARS AT BOYLAN CODE

A dynamo with no plans to retire

By **BENNETT LOUDON**
Daily Record Staff

Barbara A. Unell on Wednesday marked 40 years as a paralegal at Boylan Code LLP.

That's her identity. She has no hobbies, gets to the office at 6 a.m. and works most weekends.

"I love my job. I love my work. I truly love everyone that I work with. That's what keeps me going," said Unell.

Partner Alan R. Feldstein said: "That's reciprocated. Everybody here just loves Barb."

Unell is "integral to everything and everyone here, making sure everyone else is taken care of," said partner Cassandra C. Rich, who works closely with Unell.

Unell, 76, is godmother to the children of many staffers and the person who never forgets birthdays and milestones. She rarely uses more than a few of the 20 vacation days — a "swear word" to her — she has coming each year, and she has no plans to retire.

"When I stop breathing I'll retire," declared Unell, the longest-serving staff member, except for founding partner Buz Code.

Code called Unell "the hardest working person I've ever seen."

"She's here more than anyone else in the firm," he said. "She's just a dynamo. It's hard to keep up with her."

"She loves working and that's clearly how she identifies herself — her work ethic and her capabilities," Code said.

Unell said that the day she started at Boylan Code she made a commitment to herself "that I would stay here as long as they would let me and I would do everything I possibly could to be a good employee."

"The people and the staff — this is my family, this is my home. That's what I consider it," she said.

Unell, who now lives in Webster, was



BENNETT LOUDON

Barbara A. Unell joined Boylan Code in 1978 after previously working at Harter Secrest.

born and raised in Canandaigua. She studied accounting at the Rochester Business Institute and worked for three years at Superba Cravats in Rochester. After a few years as a stay-at-home mom, she went back to Rochester Business Institute to become a legal secretary and got a job at Harter Secrest.

Seven lawyers from that firm formed Boylan Code in 1973, and Unell joined them in 1978.

"I would have preferred to work for the FBI but they didn't hire women," she said. "I thought it would be the most interesting fascinating job any woman could have."

Unell is married to David Unell. She has a son, Christopher Simmons, and two daughters, DeAnna Simmons and Karen Ann Idler.

She started her legal career working on

collection litigation cases but has been working mainly in real estate since 1989. She's in charge of a staff of paralegals and clerks who handle residential closings, from beginning to end, including all the interaction with lenders and buyer's counsel and getting all the documentation in order.

"She's incredible in what she does in terms of managing the files and keeping the clients and the buyers' counsels all in the loop and up to speed," Rich said.

Unell said she enjoys the challenge of her work.

"Getting from A to Z and doing it so that when you sit down at a closing table it's going to run smoothly, that you're not going to have people get upset because this didn't get done, or they've got to sit there and wait for things to get done," she said.