

# Wisdom House's director is honored

BY JOHN MCKENNA  
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LITCHFIELD — Supporters of the Wisdom House Retreat and Conference Center filled its chapel Sunday in a show of appreciation for the woman who spearheaded the facility's evolution into a vibrant destination for artists, thinkers and those seeking a deeper spirituality.

Sister Rosemarie Greco, Wisdom House's executive director for 27 years until her retirement in October, was recognized during an hour-long program of verbal and musical tributes.

"I'm so overwhelmed, it makes me want to do another 27 years," Greco said at the start of her remarks to the crowd. "The time has gone by so quickly."

Greco, who entered the novitiate of the Daughters of Wisdom in Litchfield in 1963, continues to live at Wisdom House and said she has yet to decide where retirement will take her. For now, she is mentoring her successor as executive director, Deborah Kelly.

Sister Cathy Sheehan, provincial leader of the Daughters of Wisdom, credited Greco with transforming Wisdom House into an inter-faith facility promoting the mission and vision of the international congregation.

"You have truly put Wisdom House on the map and today we acknowledge you for it," Sheehan said in her tribute to Greco. "Wisdom House has thrived under your direction and is a place where all are welcome."

Tomasina Levy of Litchfield, a musician who has presented numerous workshops at Wisdom House, credited Greco with creating an environment of transformation, "where people can fill their souls and spread peace."

"You've touched so many souls," Levy said to Greco.

JoAnn Ryan, president and chief executive officer of the Chamber of Commerce of Northwest Connecticut, was



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Sister Rosemarie Greco, left, the former executive director at Wisdom House Retreat and Conference Center in Litchfield, greets Sandra Roberts of Torrington during a retirement reception held for Greco on Sunday.

one of three past recipients of the prestigious Wisdom Award who spoke at the program. She said Greco had a positive effect on everyone she came in contact with as executive director.

"She never found fault and only offered solutions, and she has an ability to make those around her feel calm and serene," Ryan said. "She taught us that the little things make a difference. She's a trailblazer with an energy that translates through her actions."

With Greco at the helm, Wisdom House became the first retreat house in Connecticut to have an outdoor

labyrinth and a permanent art gallery. It was Greco who introduced the annual Wisdom Award celebration in 1999 as a way to honor local residents for volunteer service.

As Wisdom Award recipient Brian McCormick of Litchfield pointed out, Greco crossed into the community and represented Wisdom House with her service to the likes of the Community Council of Northwest Connecticut, the Litchfield County Women's Network, the Chamber of Commerce of Northwest Connecticut, and Charlotte Hungerford Hospital.

Greco, in her remarks, said

the evolution of Wisdom House was all about timing and a momentum fostered with the help of respected colleagues and resources in the community. The arrival of Sister Jo-Ann Iannotti as coordinator of art and spirituality in the early 1990s accelerated the process, Greco said.

"Whatever we initiated at Wisdom House was guided by the mission of hospitality, inclusiveness, expansion of ideas, reinterpretation of tradition, and sensitivity to our natural surroundings and environment," she said.

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