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PENNSYLVANIA STATE ASSOCIATION OF TOWNSHIP SUPERVISORS

news release

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Late PSATS President Bill Hawk Honored with Organization's Highest Honor

HERSHEY – The Pennsylvania State Association of Township Supervisors honored its late president, William B. Hawk, with the posthumous presentation of its highest honor, the Founder's Award, today at the 97th Annual Educational Conference and Exhibit Show.

Hawk's wife of 56 years, Billie, accepted the award, which is only given to those who show exceptional commitment to townships. The longtime supervisor for Lower Paxton Township in Dauphin County died July 14, 2018, just months after being elected PSATS president.

"Bill loved his community, and he loved PSATS," Billie Hawk said, "and he was so proud to serve as its president and represent townships. He may not be here physically, but if he were, Bill would be grinning and as honored as I am to accept this award."

“Bill’s positive impact on this association cannot be overstated,” PSATS First Vice President Marvin Meteer said, “nor can his legacy of working for years to strengthen and preserve local government in Pennsylvania.”

Bill Hawk’s trademark was a warm smile and a firm handshake. He was candid, too. Once, he said that although he loved public speaking — he taught Dale Carnegie courses — he valued listening over talking.

“Sometimes,” he said, “to be truly effective, you just have to shut your mouth.”

In 1996, Hawk was elected to the Lower Paxton Township Board of Supervisors. The funny thing is, he never aspired to be a public servant. “That wasn’t on my bucket list,” he said.

Soon, however, Hawk began to understand the value of local government. He lobbied lawmakers on behalf of townships statewide, quoted Thomas Jefferson, a fellow township advocate, and got involved in PSATS, where he was elected to the Executive Board in 2004.

“Not many people know this,” Meteer said, “but in early 2018, Bill had major heart surgery. He was 78, and even that didn’t slow him down. A week after the surgery, he was back at the township building — as dedicated as ever ... doing what he loved for a community he loved.”

Meteer noted that one of Hawk’s last trips was to Washington, D.C., where he lobbied federal lawmakers on behalf of townships.

Hawk was also active in his church, Faith Immanuel Presbyterian in Harrisburg, and numerous other community organizations.

Past recipients of the Founder’s Award have included Govs. Dick Thornburgh, Robert P. Casey, and Tom Ridge, Lt. Govs. Mark Schweiker and Jim Cawley, and Sen. John Eichelberger.

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The Pennsylvania State Association of Township Supervisors represents Pennsylvania’s 1,454 townships of the second class and is committed to preserving and strengthening township government and securing greater visibility and involvement for townships in the state and federal

political arenas. Townships of the second class cover 95 percent of Pennsylvania's land mass and represent more residents — 5.5 million — than any other type of political subdivision in the commonwealth.

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