

SUPERVISOR

HALLOFFAME

Life in a small, rural township suits **Wayne Kahler**. The long-time supervisor for East Cameron Township in Northumberland County enjoys the fact that he knows just about every resident personally. The feeling must be mutual, because he's been in office for nearly three decades.

Small-town life

Wayne Kahler

East Cameron Township,
Northumberland County

28 years of service

BY BRENDA WILT / ASSOCIATE EDITOR

A supervisor of a small, rural township may not have all the headaches that his counterparts in larger, more urbanized communities do, but some concerns are universal to all local governments. Money, for instance.

Wayne Kahler has been a supervisor for nearly three decades in East Cameron Township, Northumberland County. Despite the fact that the township of 656 residents has only a little over three miles of roads, it still has to deal with the escalating costs of road repairs. The community's most recent project, the complete reclamation of about a mile of roadway, cost the township more than \$200,000, he says.

"We used PEMA money that we got for flood damage to help do the road," he says. "We took out a loan so we could do the entire road, rather than just a section."

Local government's constant focus on the bottom line is what prompts Kahler to attend the PSATS Educational Conference and the county convention each year.

"I like to learn what other supervisors are doing in their townships, how they're saving money," he says.

One of the ways East Cameron Township saves money is by having only one piece of heavy equipment: a



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skid-steer loader. All of the mowing, plowing, and cindering are contracted out, Kahler says. The only township employee is a part-time secretary.

"The supervisors do pretty much everything else themselves," he says, "including minor repairs and blowing leaves."

Getting to know you

Kahler got involved in township government when his neighbor, a township supervisor who wanted to resign from the board, asked Kahler if he'd be willing to replace him. He said yes and was appointed to fill the vacancy. When the next election rolled around, Kahler earned a seat on the board and has been there ever since.

It was just the beginning of Kahler's involvement with his community and local government. He has been treasurer of the local fire company for 26 years and currently serves as vice chairman of the board of supervisors. He is also first vice president of the Northumberland County Association of Township Officials and a member of the PSATS Resolutions Committee.

Although retired from 37 years as a truck driver hauling fuel oil, gasoline, and propane, Kahler still works part-time for the local water company.

When the *News* went to press, the long-time supervisor was looking forward to his unopposed re-election in November, barring any unforeseen write-in candidate. The widower believes his congeniality and easy-going nature contribute to his lengthy tenure at the township.

"I try to maintain my cool," he says. "I like to reason with people and talk things out."

Kahler says he particularly enjoys the camaraderie he shares with his fellow supervisors, with whom he has been working for quite a few years. He also likes the fact that because the community is small, the supervisors know almost every one of the residents.

"If we don't, we try to get to know them," he says. "If someone sells their house, we will go and introduce ourselves to whoever moves in. My wife and daughter always said we couldn't go anywhere without my running into someone I know."

No doubt Wayne Kahler would agree that that's one of the best things about a small, rural township. ♦