

## HALLOFFAME

Even after 40 years as secretary in Limestone Township, **Jeanne Engel** is not slowing down. Over the decades, as supervisors have come and gone, she remains an unwavering, dependable force keeping the township up to date and on task.

## Four Decades and Still Going Strong

**Jeanne Engel**

Limestone Township, Lycoming County  
40 years of service

BY AMY BOBB / CONTRIBUTING WRITER

Jeanne Engel really has only one complaint about her job as Limestone Township secretary.

"I wish it were full-time," she says.

For 40 years, Engel has been employed at the small, rural township in Lycoming County where she was born and raised, and her part-time position has remained as rewarding today as it was the first day she was hired.

"I love my job," she says. "I like interacting with the residents and the supervisors, and I like the work itself."

As township supervisors have come and gone during her tenure, she has kept the township chugging along.

"I've been lucky in that I have worked alongside many supervisors through the years and have gotten along with all of them," she says.

Dale Winter has worked with Engel the longest: 27 years as roadmaster and eight years as a township supervisor. He likes to joke with her that she is not allowed to retire until he does.

"She is just so very good at her job



**Jeanne Engel served 40 years as Limestone Township's secretary before attending her first PSATS Conference last year. She came home armed with knowledge and new friends and is making plans to return in 2017.**

and knows her stuff," he says. "She stays on top of things and always keeps us supervisors updated with reminders of what is coming up."

When she finally does decide to retire from the township, he says, a lot of knowledge will leave with her.

"She will need to take a full year to train the person who replaces her," says Winter, who is chair of the board. "To most people, she is the go-to person in the township."

## From typewriters to computers

When Engel started with the township in 1976, the nation was celebrating its bicentennial, and she was the young mother of two small boys.

"The job was great because it was part-time, and I could work out of my home," she says.

Not long after she was hired, the township built an office, and over the years, Engel has transitioned from a typewriter and hand-written minutes to a computer and online reports.

"When I started, the former secretary told me to hold out my hands, and she handed me a box basically containing all the township records," she says.

Back then, Engel had no computer, no office, and nowhere near the amount of paperwork that the township must comply with these days. Other than that, she says, "A lot of what I do today is really the same kind of work, just on a larger scale."

Over the decades, as new regulations were passed or mandates came along, she says she would educate herself and learn what to do to comply.

"I've done this job for so long now that I take it in stride when something new occurs," she says. "I either will work on it myself to figure it out or will call someone and ask questions.

"Usually, I end up figuring it out myself," she says, adding with a chuckle,

## “I love my job. I like interacting with the residents and the supervisors, and I like the work itself.”

“As long as I can remember my passwords, I’m fine.”

### Always learning

At the age of 70, Engel shows no signs of slowing down. Since she retired from a full-time job as personnel assistant to a real estate agency in 2013, she has more time to spend with the things she’s most passionate about: her family (*two sons and four grandchildren all live within two miles of her*), travel (*she takes two weeks every February to go on a cruise*), and her position as township secretary. Last year, she finally found the time to attend her first PSATS Conference.

“When I worked full-time, I couldn’t get off to go,” she explains. Now that she made the trek to Hershey, she wonders why she waited so long.

“I learned so much,” she says. “It was a great experience.”

Admittedly a bit apprehensive about attending, she quickly made friends with some fellow secretaries at a QuickBooks session the first day, and they hung around together the rest of the conference.

“I may have been a secretary for 40 years, but I learned so much and brought lots of new ideas back to try,” Engel says. “I will be in Hershey again this year, and the other secretaries and I have already planned out our week.”

Since returning home last year, she and her newfound friends have kept in touch, and her only regret is not developing these relationships earlier in her career.

“For so many years, I was on my own,” she says. “I am so grateful I have gotten to know these other secretaries and am able to call them and ask for input and advice on how to do something.”

In fact, she plans to recommend to whoever eventually replaces her as secretary to go to the conference and seek out peers who can provide guidance and act as mentors.

“Find someone you can call and ask

question after question,” she says.

Not that Engel is planning on retiring anytime soon.

“As long as my mind works fine, I hope to continue doing the job I love so much,” she says.

A woman she met at the conference last year gives her hope that she will be able to continue her work as secretary for many years to come.

“She was 81 and still a township secretary,” Engel says. “If that’s any indication, I have a long way to go yet in my career.” ♦

Want to suggest a township secretary for the Hall of Fame? If the person has been in that post for at least 20 years, contact Brenda Wilt at (717) 763-0930, ext. 123, or email [bwilt@psats.org](mailto:bwilt@psats.org).

## How PSATS has helped this Hall of Famer

Over her 40 years as township secretary, Jeanne Engel of Limestone Township has learned to appreciate the resources and answers that PSATS provides. In addition to telephoning the association for advice, she says, “I like the discussion group questions and answers I receive every day, and I look forward to receiving the *News* magazine and reading the articles each month. I always turn to the Q&A page in the back of the magazine.”

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