

# HALLOFFAME

When **Joan Cowher** took a job with Rush Township in Centre County, she never thought she'd still be there 30 years later. During that time, two of the supervisors say, she has become such a critical part of keeping the township running that they can't imagine the place without her.

## Simply the best

**Joan Cowher**

Rush Township, Centre County  
30 years of service

BY JENNIFER L. FLORER

When Joan Cowher heard that Rush Township in Centre County was looking to hire its first secretary, it seemed like the perfect time to go back to work. Her son was graduating from high school and heading for college, and she thought she could work for a while to help him out.

"He went on to medical school and has been practicing for about 15 years now, and I'm still here," Cowher says with a laugh.

For 30 years, she has been helping township residents, keeping the office running, and, according to supervisors Pat Couturiaux and John Shannon, making their jobs a whole lot easier.

"Joan has a great interest in what she does as secretary-treasurer, and she is good at what she does," Shannon says. "That takes a tremendous load off the supervisors."

Couturiaux knew Cowher in high school and took office just a few months after she started working for the township.



**For secretary-treasurer Joan Cowher, one of her favorite parts of the job is meeting new people. The supervisors say interacting with others is among her many skills that keep the township running smoothly.**

"Joan is the best," he says. "I couldn't begin to name everything she's done for this township."

What seems extraordinary to others is to Cowher just part of doing her job. In fact, after being interviewed for the Secretary Hall of Fame, she suggested that retiring supervisor Couturiaux be featured instead in the Supervisor Hall of Fame.

Cowher's caring attitude has undoubtedly helped her in working with residents, officials, and others.

"In this job, the main thing is to be able to relate to all different kinds of people," she says "I enjoy the work and the different things that need to be done, but I really enjoy working with the people here and meeting new people, too."

Cowher has kept pace with a changing, growing population over the years (*the township is about 25 miles from State College and home to quite a few residents who work there*) and also with changing technology.

"We used to do everything with a typewriter, and now it's all done with computers," she says. "I was OK with that. You just have to keep up with it. If you didn't, you would be lost."

While Cowher is bidding a fond farewell to Couturiaux as he retires after 30 years with the township, she plans to stick around for a while.

"Every year, I think maybe I'll retire next year," she says, "but I have no plans for that right now."

That's good news for Shannon, who says Cowher has mastered her position so well that she should be teaching others who are new to township work.

"I don't know what I would do without her," he says. ♦

**"Joan is the best. I couldn't begin to name everything she's done for this township."**