

HALLOFFAME

When **Susan Liuzza** moved to rural Moreland Township more than three decades ago, she found country living agreed with her, both at home and on the job as township secretary-treasurer.

Making a Life in the Country

Susan Liuzza
Moreland Twp., Lycoming Co.
29 years of service

BY AMY BOBB / ASSISTANT EDITOR

Susan Liuzza and her family moved to Moreland Township in Lycoming County 32 years ago in search of rural life.

“We wanted to live in the country,” she says.

In 1988, she and her late husband joined with her parents and her sister’s family to purchase a farm, which they subdivided to build and create homes for themselves. Not only did Liuzza find a wide, welcoming place to have animals, enjoy the outdoors, and raise two children, but she soon discovered her vocational calling as well.

“I was pumping gas at the local station when I ran into one of the supervisors who knew I took care of the books for my husband’s car shop,” she recalls. “He asked if I would be interested in the township secretary job.”

Three years after settling into the agricultural community, she became the township’s secretary-treasurer, a job that has perfectly suited her skills and needs over the past three decades.



Rural life in Moreland Township suits Susan Liuzza quite well. “I live in the kind of place where if there’s a problem, all you have to do is call a neighbor and someone will be there to help,” she says.

“I learned a lot that way, but I was basically self-taught, even on the computer,” she says.

The work, at first, was done by hand, but it soon transitioned to the computer, and Liuzza developed efficient processes to keep things humming along.

“Anyone who knows me understands that that’s just the kind of person I am,” she says. “Everything has to be organized, prepared, and perfect.”

She believes most people do not really understand the important role a secretary-treasurer plays in a township.

“They think we are a clerk or just answer phones,” she says, “but without me, we wouldn’t get one penny into the township.”

While the job’s demands have increased over the years, Liuzza’s organization and attention to detail have ensured that the township never skips a beat.

“I love doing paperwork, and I have the job down to a routine,” she says.

‘Like family’

Throughout her township career,

Learning the job

When Liuzza started with the township in 1991, she soon discovered the job of secretary-treasurer was very different from what she did for her family business.

“There are different rules and regulations and so many accounts to manage,” she says. “There are also various reports, some monthly and some annual. You have to be on your toes.”

To better understand her new responsibilities, she attended a variety of secretary-treasurer training offered by the state Department of Community and Economic Development and PSATS, including the Annual Conference, and sought advice from a nearby township secretary.

Liuzza has appreciated the flexibility of the part-time position, especially while raising two children, caring for a mother with dementia, and playing “Nana” to her four grandchildren for the past 14 years.

“I may not get a pension from working here, but there are other perks,” she says. “The office is three miles from my house, and I could bring my kids and grandkids with me if I needed to.”

In addition to her duties as secretary-treasurer, Liuzza also serves as the township’s permit officer, and both roles put her in contact with the township’s roughly 950 residents.

“I know almost all our residents,” she says.

While she enjoys the tight-knit feeling of the community, she occasionally hears complaints, most often from newcomers who gripe about the dirt roads. Three-fourths of the township’s 62 miles of road are dirt and gravel. Rural roads can take some getting used to, she admits, sharing how she herself recently had a flat tire on a newly regraded gravel road.

She understands, however, that the township prioritizes care of its roads, receiving \$1.2 million in grants from the state’s Dirt and Gravel Roads Program over the past few years to make improvements. Therefore, she finds herself feeling protective of the supervisors and road crew whenever residents voice complaints. In fact, although she likes practically everything else about her job, she doesn’t enjoy township meetings for that reason.

“I still get nervous before meetings,” she says. “I am very protective of ‘my men,’ which is what I call the supervisors. I am afraid that someone will come to the meeting and yell at them. Some people don’t appreciate all that the supervisors do.”

Over her 29 years with the township, the various supervisors she has worked with become almost like family to her. They have supported her through good times and bad, including the deaths of her husband 19 years ago and her fiancé four years ago.

“They were so wonderful and supportive of me during those trying times,” she says. “I feel like I’m like a mom to these guys.”

Country living

Zoned completely agricultural, Moreland Township still maintains the rural feel that originally attracted Liuzza and her family to the area. She thrives on the farm and through the years has owned horses, raised goats, grown hay, planted trees, and gardened. Her property is currently home to 20 chickens, a 27-year-old cockatiel, and many cats.

In her spare time, Liuzza likes to kayak, fish, snowmobile, and travel, most recently visiting Italy last year with some sorority friends. She also spends as many hours as possible with family, including her daughter and three grandkids who live nearby and her son and young grandson who live out of state.

“Tuesdays are Nana days,” she says, describing the memories she makes swimming, cooking, collecting eggs, and riding four-wheelers with her grandchildren, who range in age from 14 to one.

As her 30th anniversary with the township looms on the horizon, Liuzza thinks about retiring in a couple of

years but has made no final decision. “I like almost everything about the job,” she says. “I was a tomboy growing up, and I work so well with all the guys. At this point, I’m not sure I will retire in two years. Maybe I’ll just keep working.” ♦

How PSATS has helped this Hall of Famer

Whenever Susan Liuzza has a question, PSATS is one of the first places she turns.

“I will go to the website or call in,” she says. “Robin [Haring], the receptionist, is so great and efficient. She always directs me to the right place, and I find Melissa [Morgan] and Holly [Fishel] to always be so helpful when I have questions.”









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