

## SECRETARY

# HALLOFFAME

Helping people is what **Linda Spoharski**, secretary for Richland and Salem townships in Clarion County, does best. “All the residents know my name, and they think I can fix anything,” she says with a laugh. And you know what? She wouldn’t have it any other way.

### Everybody knows her name

**Linda Spoharski**

**Richland and Salem Townships, Clarion County**  
**32 and 9 years of service, respectively**

BY JILL ERCOLINO / MANAGING EDITOR

Three decades ago, Linda Spoharski was a stay-at-home mom with an ideal job.

As the secretary for Richland Township in Clarion County, she could work from home with the municipal building in view of her back porch. Even better, the part-time position allowed Spoharski to be there waiting when her four children arrived home on the school bus.

Since then, her kids have grown up, moved away, and had children of their own, but one thing hasn’t changed: She is still working for the township.

“In the beginning,” she says, “I took the job because I could work from home — it fit my lifestyle at the time — but it’s turned into much more than that.”

Now, public service is a significant part of her life.

### Lending a hand

A self-described “people person,” Spoharski is a retired special education teacher who enjoys helping others. In fact, her willingness to lend a hand led to another part-time position in neighboring Salem Township nine years ago.

“I knew the supervisors over there,



**Linda Spoharski, the secretary for Richland and Salem Townships in Clarion County, loves working for two rural communities. “I couldn’t imagine working in a bigger place like Philadelphia,” she says. “Places like that have lost the personal touch.”**

and one of them called me up and said they needed help,” she says, adding that the township’s newly hired secretary of just two days had quit, and officials were in a bind. “I agreed to do some work for them and have been there ever since.”

Today, the secretary splits her time between the two municipalities, where she has taken on additional responsibilities over the years. In Salem Township, for instance, she not only handles much of the paperwork but also serves as the municipality’s emergency management

coordinator and code enforcement officer.

The right-hand woman to the supervisors and the only office employee in each of these small townships, which have about 1,200 residents between them, Spoharski is happy to be their “go-to” person. That may mean attending meetings with the county commissioners on behalf of the supervisors, ordering blacktop, or preparing bids.

Usually, though, she’s fielding calls from residents, who have learned to rely on her.

“The other day a lady called with a problem, and she really needed to talk to our tax collector,” Spoharski says. “I asked her if the collector’s name was on the form she had, and she said, ‘Yes, but I don’t know her. I know you.’”

The secretary pauses for a moment and laughs. “My kids joke with me all the time. They say, ‘Mom, everywhere you go, you know someone.’ All the residents know my name, and they think I can fix anything.”

And you know what? Spoharski knows many of their names, too — an advantage, she says, of living in a small township.

“I couldn’t imagine working in a bigger place like Philadelphia,” she says. “Places like that have lost the personal touch. Our residents love being able to stop by the township office to talk and pay their taxes without having to send it to the county.

“And I enjoy making people happy,” the secretary adds. “Those moments are priceless.” ♦