

SECRETARY

HALLOFFAME

For almost four decades, **Maxine Meteer** has been behind the scenes of Wyalusing Township quietly taking care of important business on behalf of the board of supervisors and the municipality's roughly 1,400 residents.

Dedicated and Devoted

Maxine Meteer

Wyalusing Township,
Bradford County
38 years of service

BY AMY BOBB / ASSISTANT EDITOR

If you live in Wyalusing Township, Bradford County, you most certainly would have heard the name Meteer. After all, Marvin Meteer has been a township supervisor for 42 years, and his wife, Maxine, has served as the township secretary for nearly as long.

This dynamic duo has devoted most of their adult lives to serving the community where they grew up, married, and raised a family. Maxine, who has worked for the township for 38 years, considers it an absolute privilege to do so.

"I feel the job of a secretary is to work on behalf of the constituents of the township," she says. "I enjoy being able to work with the residents and supervisors and make a difference in our community."

A natural fit

Meteer became the township secretary in 1983 when the previous person, who was retiring, convinced her to take over the part-time position.

"Marvin was a supervisor, and once the secretary job became available, it



Maxine Meteer has served as Wyalusing Township secretary for 38 years. She and her husband, PSATS President Marvin Meteer, are celebrating their 55th wedding anniversary this month. "We've been mates since fifth grade," she says.

"Every day, I'm down there doing something," she says.

During the span of 38 years, her job as secretary has evolved as technology changed and local government became more complex. In the early days, everything from payroll to audit reports was done manually by hand. In recent years, computers and specialized software have helped to make the work go easier.

"One of the best things to come along has been QuickBooks," Meteer says. "It's been a godsend."

Still, she quickly realized that any time freed up by technology would soon be filled meeting the increasing demands and responsibilities placed on local governments.

"It's a whole different workload today than it was 30 years ago as the township has grown and unfunded mandates have been handed down," she says.

Over the years, she has learned to adapt to whatever issue comes her way, whether it was the adoption of flexible zoning, constant updates since to the

seemed like a natural thing for me to do," she says.

At the time, she was already juggling her responsibilities as the mother of two with the demands of a full-time job — she worked at a bank for 25 years and prior to that, at a hardware and gift shop that she and Marvin used to own — but she found time to handle the township's books, records, and other administrative tasks. What helped was being able to set up an office in a small shed on her property, which provided the convenience to tackle the township work whenever her busy schedule allowed.

zoning ordinance, the arrival of the natural gas industry, or the aftermath of a major flood. One of her more challenging moments occurred recently when she had to meet the quick turnaround to apply for American Rescue Funds in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic.

“That just about made me want to throw my hands up,” she says.

Kind and courteous

As time marches on, what hasn't changed throughout Meterer's many decades of service are her devotion and dedication to the job.

“It feels like Marvin and I have been connected to the township forever,” she says.

As a supervisor and Maxine's long-time mate (*the two began dating in high school*), Marvin is proud of her commitment to the township and the way she deals with residents.

“She is very dedicated and always working on some part of her job to make sure things get done right,” he says. “I also really like how she talks to people when they reach out with questions. She's so kind to them, and it leaves a good image of the township.”

Meterer appreciates working with kind and courteous people herself, and she has come to value the good working relationships that she has developed with the township supervisors and employees.

“Working with agreeable people is what makes this job work,” she says. “The supervisors have always respected and worked well with each other, and that sure makes my job a lot easier.”

She also enjoys working alongside her fellow employees and consultants, including the zoning enforcement officer, two full-time road employees, the auditors, and the solicitor.

“To make the job work well, you need good people beside you,” Meterer says.

On the flip side, what she doesn't like about public service is hearing complaints from residents, especially because she knows firsthand how the township strives to help people, keep taxes low, and remain accountable.

“It bothers me if someone is not happy,” she says. “When I hear people say, ‘But I pay taxes,’ it makes me think that maybe we should send out three tax bills — the municipality's, the county's, and the school district's. Then, perhaps people will realize the small amount of taxes they actually pay to the township.”

The value of PSATS

During her tenure as a township official, Meterer has come to value the State Association, especially as her husband has become more involved and worked his way up the organization's leadership ranks. Last year, Marvin was elected PSATS president.

“PSATS has grown a lot since I became secretary,” she says. “It's a big help to townships. There is not much of anything that someone from PSATS can't either answer directly or connect you to the right answer.”

She appreciates, too, how the Association treats every member equally, no matter the township's size or location. “We are a small township, and a lot of state organizations do not give us the time of day,” she says. “We have never seen that attitude with PSATS. No matter how small you are, they respond and take your question as seriously as anyone else's.”

As summer winds down and the pandemic is on the wane, Meterer is looking forward to life becoming more normal again, particularly with a return to in-person meetings and visits.

“I did the online meetings and town halls this past year,” she says, “but I find that meeting in person and having discussions face-to-face is far more beneficial.”

How PSATS has helped this Hall of Famer

Maxine Meterer can't say enough positive things about the State Association.

“I know some people will think I'm only saying that because my husband is president, but it's true,” she says.

The services she values the most include the Grassroots Network, the Trustees programs, and the online discussion group.

“I check the discussion group every day,” she says. “A lot of times what people are asking is what I'm thinking about, too.”

With pandemic restrictions lifted, she and Marvin, who became grandparents for the first time in March, hope to be able to visit more with their twin grandsons, who live in New York City. They are also excited to gather once again with township officials at the PSATS Centennial Celebration Dinner and Annual Business Meeting scheduled for October 14 and 15.

“We haven't met with all those people in a couple of years now, and I'm anxious to see everyone again,” she says.

The always dedicated township secretary and devoted wife is also looking forward to supporting Marvin and seeing him in action as he convenes the meeting in Hershey.

“The gathering will be an opportunity for Marvin to serve as president, something he hasn't been able to do much yet,” she says. “I'm excited about that.” ♦

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