For nearly 30 years, Stanley Fidler has been lending a helping hand in Wayne Township, Schuylkill County. Although pushed into public service, he has grown into the position to become a man others can count on to always help out and deal with residents honestly and humbly.

‘My name is Stanley’

Stanley Fidler
Wayne Township, Schuylkill County
28 years of service

BY BRENDA WILT / ASSISTANT EDITOR

One day nearly 29 years ago, Stanley Fidler returned home to his farm from a trip to Florida to find a petition to get his name on the ballot for township supervisor lying on his table, already filled with signatures. He was taken by surprise, having never considered running for supervisor.

“I never intended to run for it; I kind of got pushed into it,” he says.

Rather than dismissing the idea, Fidler talked to the supervisor who was retiring, leaving an open spot on the board.

That discussion, plus a conflict in a nearby township, convinced him to run.

“A farmer in that township wanted to put in some turkey pens, and people were fighting against it,” he says. “As a farmer, I thought it would be good to have a say in what happens in my township. How can you complain about something if you’re not involved?”

It turns out Fidler was pretty good at the job, good enough that he’s been in it for nearly five six-year terms. He’s also been chairman of the board of supervisors for the last five years or so and has earned the admiration of his fellow supervisors and township employees.

“He’s good to work with,” roadmaster Ralph Fidler says. (Yes, they’re distantly related.) “He’s easy to get along with, and whenever I need anything, he’s always willing to help out.”

Fidler and his wife of almost 54 years live on the family farm where he was born and raised. The former dairy business is now a crop farm with some beef cattle. The supervisor also has an excavation business, although he has handed over the heavy work to two of his three sons.

In case that doesn’t keep him busy enough, Fidler also serves on the board of the Schuylkill County Conservation District, as he has for 31 years, and is a member of the Schuylkill County Agricultural Land Preservation Board and a volunteer for the Friedensburg Fire Company. He served the fire company as president for 20 years and then as a board member. He finally gave up that part of his volunteering to allow younger people to step up, he says. Oh, yeah, he’s also the director of the county fair.

It’s no surprise, then, when Fidler says he likes helping people. Although the township is very quiet — “We’re lucky if we get five people at our super-
visors meetings,” he says — issues with residents do crop up from time to time. “We always try to take care of anything people complain about,” he says. “If we can’t, we explain why. If you tell the truth, it goes pretty easily.”

The practice must work. Roadmaster Ralph Fidler says the supervisor has a good relationship with the public. “I’ve never heard anyone say anything bad about him,” he says.

Fidler the supervisor has not let any of that go to his head, though. When asked what he is proud of having accomplished while in office, he quickly says pride is not part of it. “I don’t even look at it that way,” he says. “When I am among a group of people, I don’t even tell them I am a supervisor. I don’t think I am above anyone else. If someone calls me ‘Mr. Fidler,’ I tell them, ‘My name is Stanley.’”

Fidler’s sixth term in office will be up at the end of 2017. He’s not sure if he’ll run again, but one thing is certain: Whether he’s a supervisor or citizen, he’ll always be willing to lend a helping hand. ♦

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