

SUPERVISOR

HALLOFFAME

Over nearly three decades, **Richard Small** has dedicated his time and energy to helping the people of Perry Township in Mercer County. A fun-loving guy, Small takes his job very seriously and is ready to do whatever he can to help residents and neighboring municipalities.

The PR man

Richard Small

Perry Township, Mercer County

29 years of service

BY **BRENDA WILT** / ASSOCIATE EDITOR

Perry Township is a quiet community in Mercer County, home to a lot of farms and a few businesses. Richard Small ran for supervisor in the township where he has lived all his life after finding himself out of work when Westinghouse closed nearly 30 years ago. For the past three decades, he has been the full-time roadmaster.

"All three of us [supervisors] are roadmasters," he says. "That way, if only one of us is available and something needs to be done right away, he can make the decision."

Although the supervisors work for the township, they are very conservative with public funds. In fact, Small says that they are so intent on trying to save the taxpayers' money that they don't always record all of the hours they work.

"We're here to help the taxpayers," fellow supervisor Lawrence King says. "We're taxpayers, too. It's our money that we're managing, and I think Richard does that well."

Small and his colleagues also help neighboring municipalities. "One winter, another township's plow truck broke down, so we plowed their roads until they got the truck fixed," he says.

Keeping the township's roads in good



Richard Small may enjoy joking around, but he's serious about caring for the taxpayers of Perry Township in Mercer County. He must be doing something right because the residents have kept him in office for nearly three decades.

shape is the supervisors' primary task in Perry Township. A little less than half of the community's 26 miles of roads are paved; the rest are dirt and gravel.

"Our roads are getting better and better," Small says. "I'm proud of getting the roads in good shape. Whenever we can, we try to add blacktop."

Although all three supervisors maintain the roads and run equipment, Small

readily admits that he is not great when it comes to working on the equipment.

"I'm not a great mechanic; the other two are the mechanics," he says.

"I can bring them a wrench or something," he adds with a laugh.

Small's sense of humor is apparent, and King says that while the supervisors have fun and enjoy working together, Small takes his position seriously.

"I've known Richard since high school; we graduated together," he says. "We've always had a good relationship."

"He's a good PR man," he adds. "He gets along with people. Everybody in the township knows Richard, and anything he can do to help he will do."

Small says being able to help people is the best part about being a supervisor. "If I can help people, it makes me feel good," he says.

That's why the longtime supervisor isn't sure whether he will be able to walk away or will run for re-election next year. "I might walk. I'm getting too old to run," he quips.

Although retiring would give him more time to spend with his five children, 11 grandchildren, and 10 great-grandchildren, Small says he would miss working at the township.

"I love working here," he says.

"Maybe they'll have to hire me back if I retire." ♦

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