

SECRETARY

HALLOFFAME

Full-time dedication to a part-time job means that **Linda Greenland's** presence looms large in her rural community, where in addition to duties as the Clay Township secretary, she serves as secretary of the Huntingdon County Association of Township Officials and treasurer of the county council of governments.

Part-Time Secretary, Full-Time Public Servant

Linda Greenland
 Clay Township, Huntingdon County
 31 years of service

BY AMY BOBB / CONTRIBUTING WRITER

When Linda Greenland was 22 years old, she answered an advertisement in the newspaper seeking a part-time township secretary. The year was 1985, and she and her husband had just returned to their hometown in Huntingdon County in need of jobs after both serving a tour of duty with the U.S. Air Force.

"The township supervisors hired me over the phone," she recalls. "A couple of days later, they brought some boxes and a filing cabinet to my house and said, 'Here you go.'"

"And that is how I got introduced to township government," she says with a laugh.

The funny thing is that she hasn't looked back since. Even after getting that full-time job she was seeking and then becoming mother to two girls, Greenland continued her part-time stint as township secretary, first for seven years at Cass Township and now for 25 years at adjacent Clay Township, where she and her family had moved in 1991. *(She even spent one year holding*



Linda Greenland may be a part-time secretary for Clay Township, but she puts full-time effort into her role as a public official.

down both township secretary jobs.)

"I just got interested in my township and had the time invested, and I liked the processes involved with the secretary job so I stayed on," Greenland says.

Dedicated professional

The job may be part-time, but Greenland puts full-time effort into her role as a public servant. She is also secretary of the county association of township officials *(from 1994 to 2000 and currently since 2010)* and treasurer of the county council of governments.

"Linda is very dedicated and professional in everything she does," says

L. Stewart Neff, a Warriors Mark Township supervisor who, as a past president of the county association, has worked alongside Greenland on many projects. "She is a key figure within her township and the county, and she is very knowledgeable and loyal to any task she undertakes and the people involved in it."

As examples, he points to the county conventions she has organized, including the extra effort she put into making last year's 100th anniversary celebration memorable.

"She did a bang-up job putting that together," he says. "She organized three different workshops for supervisors/secretaries, auditors, and tax collectors. She and her daughter decorated the facility, and she visited all the townships to get photos of township officials for our annual booklet."

Greenland also plans joint educational meetings for members of the county association and COG, and she organized recent seminars on road bonding and meth labs.

"You just know that when Linda takes on a task, it's going to get done and get done right," Neff says.

Memorable meetings

Greenland has been a township secretary for more years of her life than not, and she sometimes feels as if she has grown up alongside the townships she has served.

"When I first took the job at Cass Township, someone asked me if I knew that the township meetings would be held in my house," she says. She didn't, but for several years until the township constructed a municipal building, she warmly welcomed township supervisors, other officials, and residents into her kitchen on meeting night.

"I can remember at one of our meetings, a tiny lady squeezed into my daughter's highchair so that she had a place to sit," Greenland says. She also recalls the supervisors smoking during the meetings. "This was back in 1985 and '86, and everyone did back then. I didn't think anything of it."

Meetings would prove to be just as memorable when she moved to Clay Township in 1991 and discovered its supervisors met in a little shack of a building that doubled as a polling place during elections.

"The building wasn't insulated or heated, and before each meeting, we had to build a fire in a stove in the middle of the room," she says. "The township also had no place to store equipment at the time, so the people who worked on the roads kept the equipment at their houses."

Informed and up to date

Today, Clay Township has a more modern facility with office and meeting space along with an equipment shed, but all of its employees remain part-time. Greenland, who works full-time as secretary of the Huntingdon station of the Pennsylvania State Police, says she performs most of her township secretary duties in the evening, on weekends, and anytime she can fit them into her schedule.

"We are very small and rural with only 926 residents," says Greenland, who lives on a 100-acre farm. "Most residents who have questions know to call me at home. There's no point phoning the township building anyway because they'll only get the answering machine.

"In our community, people are still mainly concerned about the roads," she notes, "so as long as we do a good job with that, we don't really hear from anyone."

Greenland is one of the few non-

elected township secretaries who participate in road inspections, Neff says. In addition to being involved at the local level, she strives to remain current on regional, statewide, and national issues that may affect the township. She takes vacation time to attend the PSATS Conference in Hershey and serve on the association's Secretary-Manager Committee.

"I try to stay informed and up to date," she says.

Perhaps that's why in three decades of service, she has only missed two township meetings: the first in 1987 because she had just given birth to her oldest daughter, and the second in 2013, when she went to visit her daughter who was stationed in Korea. (*Like their parents, both daughters and their husbands are serving in the Air Force.*)

Several years ago, Greenland thought she might hang up her township secretary hat once she reached 30 years of service and had helped the county association celebrate its 100th anniversary. However, her husband passed away in 2012, and the two milestones came and

went last year, and now she isn't so sure she wants to walk away from what has helped to define her for so long.

"Who knows?" she says. "Maybe one of these days I'll even step up to the plate and run for township supervisor myself."

That, Neff says, would be an excellent idea.

"She devotes a lot of her time to various organizations and has knowledge about so many things," he says. "In my opinion, she would make an outstanding township supervisor." ♦

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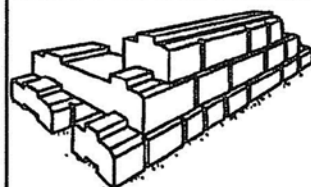
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