

Winter 2014 Issue

Thank you, Spence!

By Betty Gordon, Chairperson New Garden Board of Supervisors



Spence Andress standing quietly in the background holding County, State and Federal Citations for the Township's 300th Anniversary Ceremony.

Spence Andress began serving New Garden Township in 1989 as a consultant. The BOS at that time recognized his broad expertise and depth and breadth of experience which gave him the ability to be helpful to the Township in numerous ways. For example when the Township Secretary, Joan Kelleher, became ill November 2001, the Board asked Spence if he would step in and perform her duties as (de facto manager) through June 2002 and he did. When the Township Manager left in December 2011, that Board felt comfortable to reach out to Spence for help, asking him to serve as interim manager. He said, "of course", not realizing all the challenging situations he would have to face which would result in what he expected to be one year turning into three. The first year and a half presented him with difficult issues, which included personnel, overall morale and becoming more familiar with the day to day operation of the departments.

That accomplished, he was able to move ahead in a constructive manner in other areas such as updating the budget process. He began to involve the staff in ways that they had not previously been which included everyone having an opportunity to brainstorm alternatives and building consensus. There had been dissatisfaction on the part of some residents with the attitude and response time of the Township. Spence made it a priority to interface with the public and be supportive. He guided the staff in the importance of a spirit of service. All the while he maintained his own business in Oxford. This was a Herculean task but he did it because he really cares about New Garden Township.

Spence is a stickler for detail. For the past three years New Garden Township has been run by the book "The Code of the Township of New Garden". Spence is dedicated to doing everything according to the rules that apply to the task at hand. He is infinitely honest and courteous to all.

While Spence is stepping down as Interim Manager, he will continue in his role as Director of Planning and Projects. One of his tasks will include being of assistance to the Township as we begin work on updating our Comprehensive Plan. Our new Township Manager will be on the scene beginning January 5, 2015.

It is an honor for me on behalf of the Board of Supervisors, the Township Staff and the Township residents to thank you, Spence, for your years of dedicated service to the residents of New Garden Township.