

Why everyone's favorite mayor won't run for re-election



Mayor James Gingrich

justice to his new job and to also being mayor of Mount Joy. He wrote a letter of resignation as mayor effective last April 1.

The election committee of the borough asked him to reconsider. He consulted with the management of Raub Supply; they said they didn't want him to resign as mayor. He talked it over with his family, and decided to stay on and complete his term which runs out at the end of 1981.

He does not anticipate running again for what would be his third term.

At the time he was first elected in 1973, he was only 29 years old, the youngest mayor in Lancaster County and the youngest mayor Mount Joy ever had.

He still is not 35. When he reaches that venerable age he will have to leave the Jaycees as an "exhausted rooster."

In addition to being mayor and managing the Lancaster office of Raub Supply and being an active Jaycee, Mayor Gingrich is an active member of Friendship Fire Company, answering calls and getting up in the middle of the night to fight fires. He also played on the slow-pitch baseball team for the fire company. He is secretary-treasurer of the fire police and works at fund raising for the company.

He also, somehow, finds time to sing in the choir at St. Mark's United Methodist Church and even play some golf.

As mayor his chief responsibility is for the police department. He sits at meetings of the borough council to which he can make recommendations, and also cast the deciding vote in case of a tie.

Understandably, what he misses most in all his activity in various places, is time with his family. The week before Labor Day his family didn't see him all week. He didn't eat one meal at home that week. On the average, he is away from home three nights every week.

Wanting to spend more time with his family is a major reason why he does not intend to run for mayor again. Another reason is, as he says, "It's time for some new blood, new ideas."

He finds his job at Raub Supply very satisfying, without having additional jobs. "I do a lot down there that is personally satisfying, and not just financially."

So far as borough government is concerned, Mayor Gingrich says, "I think it is sometimes better if you go out and help someone else get elected."

Speaking of concerns of the borough, he says he is glad that the Creekside apartments for low income families did not come into the borough. About the subsidized housing he says, "If you keep giving people things they will lose their incentive to work."

"We keep paying money into the government, they keep giving it away—that's

why recession and inflation take place. We don't give people the chance to manage their own money."

Mayor Gingrich has seen various projects carried out in Mount Joy with federal money. The federal government put up half the money, the borough had to match the federal funds. But on some of these projects it took so long to get approval that meanwhile costs went up so much that the borough would have saved money by paying for the entire project itself in the first place. For example, a project might cost \$10,000 today. Four years from now it might cost \$30,000. If the borough would go ahead and carry out the project on its own now, it would cost the borough \$10,000. But if it waits for federal co-funding, it will cost the borough \$15,000 and the federal government another \$15,000 in four years.

He thinks the borough council is getting "a little gun-shy" at accepting

federal aid. There are little strings attached to every federal grant that aren't so apparent at first.

Federally funded projects require paying union wages, thereby raising costs too.

The perennial problem for the borough of Mount Joy is, of course, the railroad bridges, which are deteriorating. They were a problem when Mayor Gingrich came into office and remain so. It seems to be impossible to get the four involved parties together to divide up their responsibilities: PennDOT, Amtrak, PUC, and the borough of Mount Joy. Mayor Gingrich certainly does not believe that the bridges are the responsibility of the borough nor that the residents of Mount Joy should be taxed for their reconstruction.

Mayor Gingrich favors various tax reforms. He would like to see the county income tax increased from 1 to 2 percent and then the real estate tax abolished. The schools should get

1 per cent of the 2 per cent tax. This would be more fair than the present real estate tax which has many inequities. For example, people living on old properties are assessed far less than people owning new properties. Moreover, apartment dwellers, who benefit from schools, do not pay their fair share when real estate taxes are used to support schools.

Mayor Gingrich also favors a uniform income tax of, say, 20 per cent for everyone, including corporations. That would supply more revenue than the current income tax—and would reduce the cost of government by making the income tax people obsolete.

Mayor Gingrich would like to reduce the power of the government and increase the role of the private sector. Limiting the power of the government is what distinguishes us from Russia. Limiting the power of the government is what freedom is all about, he thinks.

Four years ago when *The Susquehanna Times* interviewed James A. Gingrich, Mayor of Mount Joy, he described him as having two outstanding characteristics, a liking for people and a competitive spirit, both characteristics important for a successful politician.

These two characteristics are also essential for success in business. In a little more than four years Jim has risen from being a sales manager in the industrial division of Raub Supply Co., Lancaster, to becoming branch manager last winter.

At the time he was appointed manager, he decided that he could not do

...teacher of the week (continued)

[continued from front page] good teacher: he is kind but also firm.

As a student said: "Mr. Depoe is not only a fine teacher, he is also a great person. As a former student put it, 'He'll do anything for anybody.' Nothing ever seems to be too much trouble for him. He's always there and willing to help. He doesn't get upset over things; he faces them calmly and takes them as they come."

"Mr. Depoe's easy-going manner enables him to handle all types of kids. Because he has a way of disciplining a student without being harsh, the student usually reacts positively. The students like and admire him. Mr. Depoe is an honest person who is everybody's friend."

In addition to being a nice guy, Ken Depoe is hard-working. The list of his achievements is staggering:

Head of the department of industrial arts at Donegal;

Assistant director of athletics at Donegal;

Assistant coach of the Midget-Midgets team;

Former basketball coach, Donegal, named "coach of the year;"

Former wrestling coach; Vice-chairman of the administrative board at St. Mark's United Methodist Church;

Vice-chairman of the administrative board and chairman of the stewardship committee at St. Mark's Methodist Church;

President of the Donegal Fish and Conservation Association, in charge of trout hatchery from which the Donegal Creek is annually stocked, a stream which Ken and his students prepared for fly-fishing;

Teacher of classes in fly-tying;

Urban director for Lancaster County Conservation District;

Member of I.U. 13 Advisory Council on Environmental Education.

Author of articles on fishing, conservation;

Appearances on "Call of the Outdoors" on Channel 8 TV;

Winner of awards from Izaak Walton League, Lancaster County Conservation District, FFA, Boy Scouts, Jaycees, etc.;

Printer of school and community material;

Former president of the Grandview PTA;

The list goes on, but the above is sufficient to provide a picture of Ken Depoe's wide-ranging activities as teacher and conservationist. One notable omission from the above list is his work in producing sets for dramas at D.H.S., much appreciated by many but especially by Mrs. Peraro.

Sometimes people aren't fully appreciated until they are missed. Good people like Ken Depoe are sometimes taken for granted. Ken doesn't often get sick, but last year he was ill for a while, at a time when he was responsible for junior class play scenery, printing tickets for the play, and supplying such essentials for the wrestling team as gator-ade, mat cleaner, etc. According to Dennis F. Iezzi, "His absence caused utter confusion...I have never seen one man's absence cause such confusion, and one person being so sorely missed by so many."

Ken Depoe is an extremely open and straight forward person. Hence, it is not difficult to understand so remarkable a man. He says, "My feelings toward youth today can be traced to my growing up in the

seventh ward of Lancaster. Most families at that time had very little, so it was difficult for young people to get the help from parents during the early educational years. I never got into any serious trouble, but was in the type of environment in which trouble flourished.

"When entering high school, a small group of us was very fortunate to have Sherman Hill (the state representative), who at that time was in charge of recreation for Lancaster City, decide to start a boys club basketball team."

The Boys Club basketball team was good. Millersville State College was interested in having the whole team enroll at M.S.C. Ken was the only member to attend M.S.C., where he was a star center on the basketball team and majored in industrial arts. His career as a future teacher was set.

Ken Depoe says, "My philosophy toward my students for years has been very adequately put into words in a paragraph which I keep in my sight in the classroom at all times. It was taken from the preface of *Teachers and Child* by Haim Ginott. It is as follows: "I have come to a frightening conclusion that I am the decisive element in the classroom. It is my personal approach that creates the climate. It is my daily mood that makes the weather. As a teacher, I possess a tremendous power to make a child's life miserable or joyous. I can be a tool of torture or an instrument of inspiration. I can humiliate or humor, hurt or heal. In all situations it is my response that decides whether a crisis will be escalated or de-escalated and a child humanized or de-humanized."

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