

Deckman honored for 40 years of service

CHELSEA ORNDORFF The York Dispatch Posted 12/28/2005

The Mount Wolf Borough Council thanked solicitor Michael Deckman for his many years of service to the community. Deckman, 77, retired from his position after 40 years with the borough. Council President Ronald Walker presented Deckman with a gold clock engraved with a special message of gratitude. "You really took care of us," Walker told Deckman. "I'm flattered to have worked with you."

Members of the council expressed their feelings of appreciation of Deckman's work for the borough. Councilman Lester Jordan said, "Mike is not only a fellow council member, he's my neighbor. He's been a gem to work with. You can't ask for a nicer solicitor." "It's been a pleasure," said borough treasurer Steven Kehler. "He's a great asset to the community," said Mount Wolf Mayor James Kinder. "I hate to see him retire but love to see him enjoy his time." John Brenner, a Mount Wolf resident, also came to enjoy the celebration. Brenner served on the council during the late '70s while Deckman was the solicitor. "I'm proud to have served with him," said Brenner.

Deckman was born in York and moved to Mount Wolf area in 1957. He attended York College and Penn State University for two years and majored in government. Afterwards he attended and received a degree from Dickinson School of Law. Deckman served in the Army for two years from 1950 to 1952. He was stationed in Germany when he met his wife, Renate. The Deckmans were married in January of 1954. They have two daughters, Ingrid and Lisa.

Deckman worked for the Pennsylvania Department of Highways for 30 years, 15 years as deputy chief counsel and almost 20 years in the Pennsylvania Legislative Reference Bureau. In 1955 Mount Wolf was searching for a solicitor. Deckman took the position and was able to continue working at his regular job. He worked for the borough for 15 years, until 1980. At that time the Department of Highways made a decision not to allow its employees to work anywhere else, and Deckman was forced to resign as the Mount Wolf borough solicitor. In 1990 Deckman once again took the position as borough solicitor.

As the solicitor, Deckman was responsible for attending meetings and giving advice on legal situations dealing with the borough. Deckman was also the zoning officer. Deckman said he's happy "with just about all aspects of this job." He enjoyed listening to and discussing borough business. "It's quite interesting," said Deckman.

Of his many achievements during his service in the borough, Deckman said his proudest was also the worst experience. Deckman said he spent a lot of time and energy convincing a company that prepared the borough's new borough code that the requested changes were the company's fault and not the borough's.

Deckman has worked with numerous people over the years, but his most memorable was former Mayor Edwin A. Greiman. Greiman started as the borough secretary in 1923 and finished his service as mayor in 1962. Deckman said his retirement decision is "just following Mayor Greiman's good decision to quit after many long years working for the borough."

On the same night the Mount Wolf Borough Council celebrated Deckman's retirement, it also appointed Joe Gothie as Deckman's successor. Deckman suggested Gothie to the council as his replacement. He met him a few months ago and was pleased to find that Gothie lives in the borough. Gothie, 33, has lived in Mount Wolf since 2000. He said he took the job as solicitor because he'd "like to help out." "It will be impossible to fill Mike's shoes," said Gothie. "He's been the solicitor longer than I've been alive."