

Joanne Land considers herself fortunate to live and work in a caring community

Joanne Land has had only two full-time jobs in her life. One was a relatively short tenure in the communications department of the Texas Department of Public Safety. The other 24 years have been spent with the City of Round Rock.

She started in 1970 as city secretary and still holds that title, although it has evolved over the years. In the interim she has also served as tax assessor/collector and assistant city manager.

A native of Georgetown, Land comes by her Legend role by blood as well as talent. Her father, the late Henry Matysek, was Williamson County sheriff from 1954 to 1974. This may or may not have cut her some slack with law enforcement in her youth.

"One Halloween when we were in high school we were riding around in a pickup throwing water balloons and syrup balloons and we got pulled over by one of the deputies," Land said this week. "He said, 'Joanne, what in the world are you doing here?' and I said, 'We weren't doing anything wrong. Just riding around.'"

Land thought she had pulled a fast one but confessed her dad found out about it and told her so later.

"If you're going to print that story," she said

Monday, "mention that Jon Sloan (now a Round Rock banker) was with us, too."

After graduation from high school, Land enrolled in Southwest Texas State University and majored in special education.

"But after a couple of years I got tired of studying and went to work," she said.

Then she and James Land got married. They have two children, Julie and Joe.

Land said her long service with the city has been a happy time, despite at-times tumultuous growth and its attendant problems.

"It's really been great," she said. "There's nothing that hasn't been positive, and being able to be a part of what's happened in the city has been unbelievable."

There was one time, though, when the people running city government were especially challenged.

"In 1978 we ran out of water," Land recalled.

"We were using wells at that time and they practically ran dry."

The city council scheduled a public hearing on the water problems as part of a regular session. Also on the agenda was the first reading of the annual budget.



Joanne Land has seen much change in her 24 years with the City of Round Rock. She says it's all good.

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Land knows the terrain of modern Round Rock

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"When the council heard a lot of people were going to attend, they moved the meeting to the Girls

Gym at Round Rock High School," Land said. "We all sat on stage and had 600 people shooting jabs at us. After the water people got

through speaking, everyone left and no one spoke on the budget."

Asked what she's proudest of about her public service, Land said it was working with good people.

"I know this sounds trite," she said, "but it's really an honor to work with these people. I think the individuals who have worked for the city and the city councils in the early 1970s had foresight, such as hiring Jim Hislop as our first professional city manager. And he hired Bob Bennett as our first professional planner."

Land has "trained" four city managers during her tenure, including Bennett, the incumbent, twice.

Land said she hopes Round Rock will always have a caring, small-

town atmosphere, regardless of how much it grows.

"I hope we'll always be a giving, volunteer community that pulls together."

Land said she gives only fleeting thought to retirement.

"Some people tell me I'm gonna die sitting in this chair," she said, adding one of James' and her favorite off-duty things is traveling to New England in the fall.

"Round Rock is home," she said. "I just want to stay here and be involved."