

Pat wrote this acceptance speech for her inauguration as the 2003 President of the County Commissioners Association of Ohio held at the Hyatt Regency Ballroom in Columbus on December 3, 2002.

It's a Privilege to be a Leader
(Acceptance Speech)

My sincerest thanks to all of you for attending tonight and thank you, my fellow Commissioners for the honor you have given me to serve as President of this prestigious organization the County Commissioners Association of Ohio.

I want to thank Pete Rademacher (Olympic Gold Medal Winner 1956 -Boxing) for swearing me in tonight. Pete has been a tremendous friend and mentor for over 20 years. My husband and I are truly blessed, for we have a large treasure chest of family and personal friends that wanted to be here tonight for this special occasion. I'd like to introduce them to you. (Introductions)

I have had many distinguished honors and privileged experiences in my life. On a wall in my office is an array of pictures,... reflections of endearing special occasions. I'd like to mention just two....Hanging there you will find a picture of Bob Hope with a young lady sitting on his lap. That young lady was me more than 30 years ago, when I was a Bob Hope Girl and performed on stage with Mr. Hope. An exciting and memorable experience in my life! I've had the privilege of meeting President George W. Bush and having my photograph taken with him, which, also proudly hangs in my office. Few of us get that privilege. My constituents in Medina County have shown me their support and approval by electing me to public office four times,....but to be recognized by one's peers, the Commissioners of Ohio, is the highest honor of all! Thank you!

As a professional group it is easy to assume that most people understand how complex our jobs can become and how much we contribute to the improvement of society, but that's not really true. I want to take this opportunity to lead us all to reflect on our accomplishments as a group of professionals. Think about all that we have had to deal with over the past few years...Welfare Reform, the Workforce Investment Act and new annexation laws to name just a few. We've taken the challenge and we're doing the job, and we'll continue to do our best no matter what the next challenge may be. And we certainly have some challenges ahead of us...the spiraling costs of Indigent Defense, Health Insurance costs, and with the continuing poor economy in many areas of our state we'll be working hard just to attain county financial security. In a time when almost any profession finds itself under fire and there's little consensus on where our country is headed, isn't it comforting to know we have each other and the strength of our professional organization to rely on? I'm confident we will continue to be strong - Accomplishments, that make our county governments better, for the people we serve, stand within our grasp, as together we keep learning, growing and working.

Ohio will turn 200 on March 1, 2003. On that day Ohio will kick-off a dynamic eight-month

celebration. Many of our counties have already cast Bicentennial bells, painted barns and received historical markers in preparation of this special year. Certainly, a memorable year of leadership for Ohio and it's counties. If your county has a special celebration planned and would like to have your President of this organization in attendance, just let me know. If I can, I'll be there..... Have car, Have driver! Will travel!

Have you thought about what a privilege it is to be a leader during Ohio's Bicentennial year? I have! And I wonder what will be written in Ohio's History Books about this time in history and this leadership? What will we place in the time capsule for future generations? Will it be a great-grandchild of ours that will have this opportunity next, to serve as a leader at the turn of the next century and help Ohio celebrate its Tri-centennial!

I love what I do. Many of you in this room, my family, friends, fellow commissioners, CCAO staff, Medina County staff have been with me from the beginning, ten years ago. I have appreciated your help and encouragement. I want each and every one of you to know how grateful I am for your support and confidence in me. It's truly a privilege to be a leader, I'll do my very best as the President of the County Commissioners Association of Ohio! Thanks again for coming tonight!