

## Newsletter Spring 2018

Octoraro  
Watershed  
Association



Celebrating 51 years  
of preserving and  
protecting  
the natural and  
historic resources of  
the Octoraro.



Pat Fasano & Levi Fisher  
on a Farm Visit

### Upcoming Events (See website for details)

**Annual Dinner  
Meeting:  
Thursday April 26,  
2018 @ 5:30 p.m.  
Memorial United  
Methodist Church,  
Quarryville.**

**Octoraro  
Reservoir  
& Rising Sun Vet-  
erans Park  
Clean-ups:**

**Saturday April 28,  
2018 @ 9 a.m.  
DATE CHANGE**

**Stream Monitor-  
ing: Monthly  
sampling runs  
above and below  
the reservoir.**

### President's Message

Greetings, OWA members and friends! Despite the nor'easters, snow and chills, spring is finally arriving. I am so happy to be able to enjoy the change of season in an area of such natural beauty and ecological diversity as the Octoraro watershed. And I am especially thankful that I can share it with all the wonderful people who make up our Association.

We are very excited to welcome two new members to our Board of Directors. Mary Kay Philips (Sadsbury Township) and Patty Blakeslee (Colerain Township) bring new perspectives and fresh ideas to our mission to preserve and protect the natural resources of the Octoraro watershed. Please join me in thanking them for their dedication to our organization.

The current issue of our newsletter contains information about two great upcoming events. Our Annual Membership Meeting will be held on April 26<sup>th</sup> in Quarryville. Please fill out your membership renewal form and include your purchase of tickets for this great spring tradition. We will also be returning to the banks of the Octoraro reservoir for our Watershed Spring Cleanup. As usual, you can go to our website to get more details.

It is an honor to serve you as your OWA President. I welcome your questions, comments and suggestions about how we can help to grow our organization and continue to have our region's ecology flourish. I look forward to seeing you this spring!

Yours in Conservation,

Anders Alfelt  
President, OWA

### Organize a Clean Up Near You, or Join Us on April 28 at the Reservoir or in Rising Sun's Veterans Park

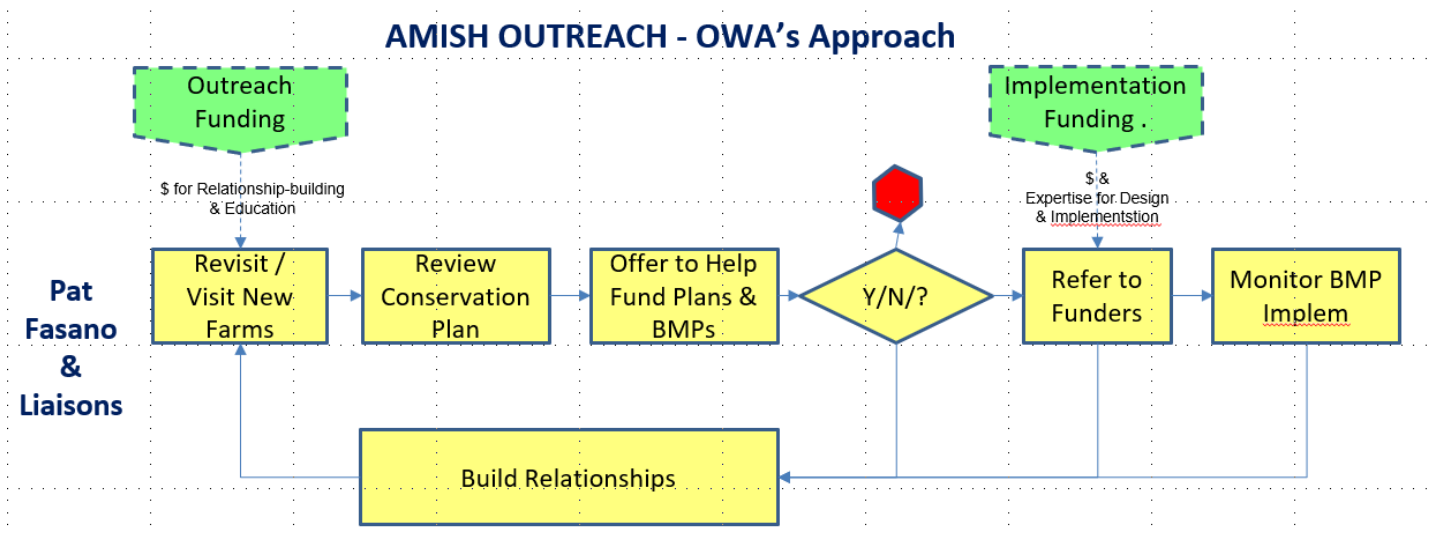
Do you have a stream or roadside near you that needs a clean-up? If you get the volunteers, we can help you with organization and supplies. Drop us an email at octoraro-wa@gmail.com and we'll be happy to work with you.

Not ready to tackle one yourself? Join us at the Reservoir for our annual clean-up at 9 a.m. on Saturday April 28th. This year we'll be working on the Lancaster County side, focusing on the dirt section of Mount Eden Road and, if numbers permit, the edge of the reservoir below Mount Vernon Christian Church.

The Town of Rising Sun will be organizing a clean-up that same day at Veterans Park.

**All ages welcome at both events**

### A focus on Implementation



*OWA's Outreach Approach—still evolving after 15 years*

The goal of our Pennsylvania Amish Outreach program is to help the farmers in our watershed to adopt or install “Best Management Practices” or BMPs that will reduce pollution and restore water quality in the streams, reservoir and groundwater. Pat Fasano and our Amish liaisons visit the farms to talk about the importance of having up-to-date Conservation & Manure Management Plans, to encourage the farmers to implement the recommendations in those plans and to answer any questions they may have about everything from funding to regulations. Over the years they have built lasting relationships with many of the watershed farmers. We rely on grants and donations to enable us to make those all-important farm visits and would like to thank the **Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay**, the **Chester and Lancaster County Conservation Districts**, the **Chester Water Authority**, the **Department of Environmental Protection**, the **Foundation for Pennsylvania Watersheds**, the **Joseph Robert Foundation**, the **National Fish & Wildlife Foundation**, the **Steinman Foundation**, our **Technical Service Providers** and all our **members** for their recent support.

Our goal is for the farmer to adopt practices that conserve soil and restore/protect water quality. Some of these practices require a change in farming methods and others require excavation, construction and/or buffering. The latter practices can be quite expensive, and we look to those of our partners who have capacity & capability and have access to the necessary funding streams. A recent grant from the National Fish & Wildlife Foundation (NFWF), in which we partnered with the Alliance for the Chesapeake Bay, provides \$300,000 for BMPs.

The Alliance received the NFWF Innovative Nutrient and Sediment Reduction (INSR) Implementation grant in Fall of 2016. They organized the first Source Water Collaborative Meeting in Fall of 2016 and began working on the ground in the Spring of 2017. The Source Water Collaborative goals are a Comprehensive Monitoring Plan, Sustainable Financing Development, Plainsect Education and Outreach and BMP Implementation.

For BMP Implementation, the Alliance will offer 50% cost-share for any BMPs. They will cost-share any structure that improves water quality. To date they have worked with 15 farmers, have cost-shared 2 Conservation Plans, installed 10 conservation practices in 2017, and have plans for installation of another 10 conservation practices this spring.

**Photo spread—Recent Ag Implementations using Alliance Cost-Share**

New Barn Roof



New Barnyard Concrete work



New Manure Pit

New stream crossing &  
buffer planting

**DEP Farm Inspections in the Octoraro Watershed Underway**  
**Zack Stepan, Chester County Conservation District & our Board of Directors**



As part of the Chesapeake Bay reboot strategy, compliance visits are currently being carried out among individual farms throughout the Pennsylvania portion of Octoraro Creek watershed. The reboot plan was developed by the departments of Agriculture, Environmental Protection (DEP), Conservation and Natural Resources, and State Conservation Commission under pressure from the federal Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to reduce nutrient and sediment pollution to meet standards by 2025.

Outlined in the plan are six goals to improve water quality, including ensuring **agricultural erosion & sediment control and manure management plans** are being utilized by individual farmers. These plans describe methods for controlling sediment and manure to protect water quality. Although they have been required by law since 1972, little has been done to determine if farmers possess the required documents.

To achieve this goal in Lancaster and Chester Counties, county Conservation Districts partnered with DEP starting in the fall of 2016 to visit farms one by one to check for compliance. If a farmer is found not to have the required plans, he or she is given a 90-day grace period to begin the process of obtaining what is needed. If plans are not developed within a certain timeframe, the farmer can be fined.

If they have not already, agricultural producers in the Octoraro Watershed can expect to receive a visit from DEP or Conservation District staff in relation to plan requirements in the near future. It is hoped this new effort will help improve water quality and land use over our beautiful landscape.

Octoraro  
Watershed  
Association



517 Pine Grove Road  
Nottingham, PA 19362  
717-529-2132

octorarowa@gmail.com www.theowa.org

#### Officers

**President:** Anders Alfelt  
**Vice-President:** Linda Swank  
**Treasurer:** Matt Kehoe  
**Secretary:** Rupert Rossetti

#### Board Members

**Patty Blakeslee**  
**Pat Fasano**  
**Frank Humbert - CWA**  
**Mary Kay Phillips**  
**Zack Stepan**

Newsletter Editor: rupertrossetti@gmail.com

### Welcome to New Board Members Patty Blakeslee & Mary Kay Phillips



Patty Blakeslee is an equine veterinarian and works for Unionville Equine Associates. She is married to Mark Hodgson and they have lived on the west branch of the Octorara for almost 30 years. They have planted

many trees over the years and have seen fox, mink and the track of a bobcat. Patty enjoys foxhunting, kayaking, bird watching and participating in the stream monitoring.

Patty joined the Board in January, replacing Arba Henry.



Mary Kay Phillips attended Franklin and Marshall College, and decided that the Lancaster area would be a great place to settle. She and her husband Jim Harnish have lived in the Octorara watershed since 1980, and raised their daughter Phoebe here.

Mary Kay has worked for many years at Jackson Immuno Research Laboratories, where she is currently VP, Scientific Affairs. Other interests include gardening, birding, travel, music and equestrian activities. Mary Kay is looking forward to helping promote water quality and conservation as part of OWA.

Mary Kay joined the Board in January, replacing Axel Linde.