

Conservation Crier

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Newsletter of the  LANCASTER COUNTY CONSERVATION DISTRICT
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Gerald Heistand Retires

If you have ever worked with the Conservation District over the last 40 years, you may have likely talked with Gerald Heistand about something from conservation plans to E&S plans. After 40 years of service to the Lancaster County Conservation District, Gerald Heistand decided to retire in October.

Initially hired in 1976 as an Assistant District Administrator to Henry Hackman, one of his first duties was to work with the newly established Erosion & Sedimentation program. Gerald has probably changed job titles more than any other District employee and has worked with six different District Administrators.

You may think the math doesn't add up to 40 years subtracting 2022 – 1976. Gerald was able to fulfill two 3-year mission trips to Chad and Somalia in the late 1970s and early 1980s. He brought the impact of that experience to the District when he returned and sustained his dedication to District. Gerald had the opportunity to accompany directors to annual National Association of Conservation District (NACD) meetings, and he served on the NACD Soil & Water Stewardship Committee.

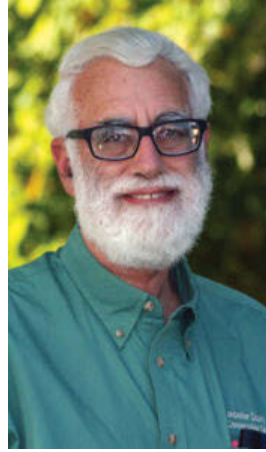
When it comes to technology, Gerald is best-dated when he tells you that in 1975 he passed the Engineer-in-Training exam using a slide rule (engineering calculators were just emerging). He was present when the District purchased its first computer, and assisted with installing the first computer network system that was supported by Radio Shack. He was elected chair of the Pennsylvania Association of Conservation Districts (PACD) State Computer Committee during a time when Districts obtained computers that were setup on a Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) shared network along with the federal phone system. Personally, Gerald likes using old technology as he waited until 2016 to park his VW Bug, and he did not get a cell phone until he was 70 years old.

Gerald says that his most interesting project with the District was to work with the PA Department of Environmental Protection's promotional efforts to get several methane digesters installed on farms in Lancaster County. This led to an opportunity to go with a group on a scientific exchange to see methane digester projects in China. On his way home, he detoured to Africa to visit friends living at Shirati, where a hospital was established by Eastern Mennonite Missions many years ago.

Gerald makes a conscientious effort to minimize his carbon footprint by limiting his use of fossil fuels. He installed solar panels that supply the energy needed to run his electric car. During retirement, Gerald plans to support organizations that subscribe to the philosophy that we are not here to build little empires of ourselves but to glorify God by making the world a better place. At some point in retirement, he plans to get involved in some type of volunteer work.

The Board of Directors and staff share many thanks to Gerald for his continued service and recognize his dedication to all the different aspects of the work of the District. We will all miss seeing him daily and look forward to hearing about the new trail journeys in retirement. Thank you, Gerald, Happy Retirement!

—Gerald Heistand/Sallie Gregory



As we get ready for Gerald's retirement, we thought we'd take a look at what was going on in the world in 1976!

- Happy Days was the most popular TV show
- NASA Viking 1 Lander was the first spacecraft to touch the surface of Mars
- A Big Mac cost 75cents
- The Cincinnati Reds won the World Series
- America celebrated the Bi-centennial with events and activities throughout the year
- "Rocky" hit theaters
- A gallon of gas averaged 59cents
- The Summer Olympics took place in Montreal Canada
- Ford Pinto the year's best-selling car was \$2,895
- The first floppy disk was invented and was 5.25 inches
- Steve Jobs founded the Apple Computer Company
- Average household income was \$16,000
- The \$2.00 bill was issued, perhaps because the country was 200 years old
- Top food trends for the year included: jello salads, hamburger helper, carrot cake, and deviled eggs

1976

New Faces with the Conservation District



Tyler Keefer

Tyler Keefer is a Watershed Resource Technician in the watershed department at Lancaster County Conservation District. Tyler has been busy performing maintenance on properties that have been planted with riparian buffers, as well as working with land owners to implement more buffers this fall. Tyler graduated from Kutztown University in 2019 with a B.S. in Environmental Science with a focus on biology. Since graduating, he has worked as an educator at Wildlands Conservancy in Emmaus, a Media/Buffer technician at J&J's Springhouse location, and as an associate Scientist at Eurofins Scientific. In his free time, Tyler cares for seven different reptiles/amphibians and enjoys fishing, cooking, and messing with his cat Spatula.

Jason Reuter is an Agricultural Conservation Technician covering Manor, Pequea, Providence, Eden, Bart, Salisbury, and Colerain townships. Jason graduated from Millersville University with a degree in Environmental Geology with a minor in Geography. He has worked for the last three years as a geo-technician in York. Jason's free time generally consists of golf in the summertime and skiing in the winter.



Jason Reuter



Lauren Brodbar

Lauren Brodbar is an Agriculture Conservation Technician focusing on east central Lancaster county. She grew up in Bucks County, PA, where she graduated from Delaware Valley University with a degree in Crop Science. Previously, Lauren was an Ag technician for PACD in Lebanon and was involved in agriculture research. In her free time, she enjoys spending time with her horse, Rudy, taking dance classes, and cooking.

Andrew Pauls-Thomas is the Grants Coordinator at the District. Andrew grew up in Paradise Township, just down the road from his grandparents' farm. He's excited to help landowners preserve wildlife habitat and ensure that all Lancastrians have access to clean water for drinking and recreation. Andrew graduated from Goshen College with a B.A in Peace, Justice, and Conflict Studies and minors in music and religion. Before joining the District, Andrew managed the Program Compliance & Impact department at Community First Fund, a nonprofit business lender serving south-central Pennsylvania. When he's not managing grants, Andrew enjoys writing and performing original songs, riding his bicycle, and spending time in the woods with his spouse and rescue pup.



Andrew Pauls-Thomas



Emma Findeisen

Emma Findeisen is an Agricultural Conservation Technician covering Rapho, Penn, East, and West Hempfield. Emma Grew up in Carroll County Maryland and recently moved to the York area. She graduated from McDaniel College with a degree in Environmental Studies with concentrations in environmental biology, policy, and management. She also graduated with a degree in history. During her time in college, she focused on sustainable agriculture and how to make sustainable options more widely available to farmers. Emma has spent the last three years working as a farm manager at a sheep dairy in Maryland. This has given her firsthand experience working on farms. In her free time, Emma likes to travel, garden, read, and find new restaurants to try. She is looking forward to using her experience and education here at the Lancaster conservation district.

Patrick Kidd is an Ag. Compliance Specialist working at the Conservation District. Patrick joins us from serving in the public water and wastewater industry. Patrick has a Law enforcement and Military background. He lives in the Lititz area and he enjoys blacksmithing and walking in the woods.



Patrick Kidd



Steve Wyld

Steve Wyld is a Resource Conservationist in the Erosion and Sedimentation Department. He grew up in Hummelstown, PA, where he attended Lower Dauphin High School. Steve is a graduate of Penn State University, where he studied as an undergraduate in the Public Policy major and in the Master's Program of Public Administration. Steve worked as an Asst. Borough Manager, Zoning Officer and Code Enforcement Officer for the Borough of Hummelstown for over 23 years. In his free time, Steve enjoys any activity involving his wife Dani and loves playing golf with his son Derek.

Fall into easy Buffer Maintenance in Preparation for Winter!

With fall officially upon us and winter just over the horizon, it's time to consider what maintenance can be done on our riparian buffers. As weeds start to die down, we can look forward to easy strolls around our properties along with fewer insects to swat away. Take advantage of this time, and visit each tree individually. In October and November, replant dead or dying trees and replace damaged tree protectors. Use this opportunity to do some of the more strenuous work – digging and planting – in cooler temperatures. Finally, late fall mowing can do wonders in preventing voles from taking up residence inside tree-protector tubes. Additionally, this will discourage voles from eating your trees' roots as a winter meal when food is scarce.

Once winter rolls around, keep an eye out for freeze/thaw cycles as this will loosen up stakes and tubes. As needed, straighten out fallen tubes and re-pound tree stakes. Be sure the stakes are about one foot into the ground! Remove netting from tubes with trees likely to outgrow their tubes in the spring, and remove any dormant wasp nests from your tubes. Mark trees that you'll want to replant in spring, and remove tubes from trees that are nearing two inches in diameter at the top of the tube. Fall and winter are great times to get buffers back into shape without having to fight weeds, grasses, and bugs, so take advantage of this time, and enjoy the changing scenery!



–Tyler Keefer

Manure Injection Incentive Program Update

The Lancaster County Conservation District is actively advocating manure injection instead of surface application, when possible. Injection allows farmers to harness nitrogen which may reduce the need for additional fertilizer, and greatly reduces manure odors, which your neighbors appreciate. Manure injection reduces compaction if using a dragline, and eliminates concentrated layers of phosphorus near the soil surface, reducing the threat of phosphorus runoff. The District is administering an incentive program to encourage the use of manure injection. The incentive program is currently in the 3rd year of a 3-year grant. The grant wraps up in June 2023. Anyone who would like to apply for the first time for a partial incentive reimbursement please contact Shelly Dehoff at shellydehoff@lancasterconservation.org or 717-880-0848. There are two different incentive programs depending on if the farmer hires a custom applicator or rents a horse-drawn, dragline unit from ELS Manufacturing in Kinzers.

If you have used the program in the past, there isn't a need to apply again, but please contact Shelly with copies of the invoices. Noteworthy is that payments using the Campbell Foundation funds cannot be made after the end of June 2023. Please submit invoices for Spring 2023 spreading as soon as possible. There is a potential for additional funds from the non-profit Sustainable Chesapeake that would be available later in to 2023, but the farm operation must fall in certain watersheds within Lancaster County. Please contact Shelly with specific questions.



All applicants must have a written Conservation Plan or Ag E&S Plan and the appropriate Nutrient Management Plan or Manure Management Plan. If a farmer is interested in the incentive program, but doesn't have a Conservation Plan or Ag E&S Plan, or a Manure Management Plan, contact Shelly. There is the possibility of the Conservation District writing the plan to help you meet eligibility.

–Shelly Dehoff

‘Injection allows farmers to harness nitrogen which may reduce the need for additional fertilizer, and greatly reduces manure odors, which your neighbors appreciate.’

Lancaster County Conservation District 69TH Awards Banquet

The Lancaster County Conservation District recognized outstanding efforts in natural resource conservation in Lancaster County at the District's 69th Awards Banquet held this summer. The setting sun spread a warm light over the yellow barn floor at the Landis Valley Farm Museum. The celebration of conservation was extra special after a two-year hiatus.

Lee Hawley, an Environmental Science teacher at Hempfield High School received the Conservation Educator Award for his dedicated teaching, commitment as an Envirothon Advisor, and his support of student projects and authentic learning experiences. Fellow educator, Dan Lynch, retired PA Game Commission Education Specialist was honored with the Youth Conservation School Service Award for his many years of wildlife instruction at the summer field school.

The Low Volume Road Award was presented to Lititz Borough. The award recognized the municipality's commitment to the environmentally sensitive maintenance of Low Volume Roads and the protection of water resources in the process. Rain gardens, bioswales, permeable pavers, and streambank stabilization have been used by the borough making a huge impact on the watershed.

Ashley Spotts, a Stream Restoration Biologist for the Pennsylvania Office of the Chesapeake Bay Foundation was honored to receive the Watershed Service Award. For more than 16 years, Ashley has been actively working to protect the natural water resources of Lancaster County through her work and service as the county's Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program (CREP) biologist. All of the watershed accomplishments of the Lancaster County Conservation District would not be possible without assistance from dedicated partners like Ashley Spotts and the valuable resources she provides.

Brad Gochnauer, owner of Vortex Environmental, Inc. received the Conservation of Natural Resources award for the building industry. Vortex conducts wetland and stream delineations on behalf of land developers and consultants. Brad was recognized for his consistent and timely work with clients that supports the Conservation District's efforts in reviewing plans.

Jeff and Susan Mitchell of Mitchell Farms were presented with the Outstanding Cooperator Award. This distinction is given to farm operations that have a well-developed working relationship with the Conservation District and have demonstrated a commitment to conserving the natural resources on their farm.

Since the 1990's a wide range of best management practices have been installed on the farm including water diversions, a concrete barnyard, two stream crossings, streambank fencing, grassed waterways, roof runoff structures, two animal trails, and a pasture rotation plan. A well-deserved recognition.

The Lancaster County Conservation District is pleased to have the opportunity to honor these outstanding conservation efforts making a difference and sustaining a future for Lancaster County's natural resources.

—Sallie Gregory

Congratulations!

Ag Conservation Assistance Program (ACAP)

The Ag staff is pleased to announce that a new funding source, called the *Ag Conservation Assistance Program* or ACAP will soon be available for best management practices (BMPs) to be installed on agricultural operations within the county. This funding source was recently passed in this year's PA State Budget, in the amount of *\$154 million*. Of this, *\$141 million* will be distributed across the state to each County Conservation District to be used over the next 3 years for water quality projects. The money that each county will be receiving is determined by using 4 specific criteria measures; the number of impaired streams, total crop acres, number of farms along with total animal equivalent units (AEUs). With Lancaster ranking high in each of those 4 areas, we will receive 10% of the budgeted \$154 million to spend to get practices on the ground. Details are still not finalized but *look for more information in the early months of 2023*. If you have a resource concern on your operation, whether it be field erosion, barnyard areas, or manure storage/handling problems, don't hesitate to call us. Our technicians and engineers are always happy to help in any way we can and will work to get you signed up for the best funding option that fits you and your operation. Any questions regarding funding or to request technical assistance, don't hesitate to call our office at 717-299-5361x5. More information is also available by clicking the Agriculture tab at www.lancasterconservation.org.

—Sam Adams



A 50th Anniversary

America's surface waters used to be so polluted they caught on fire. The Cuyahoga River in Ohio caught fire at least 13 times up until the Clean Water Act (CWA) became federal law 50 years ago. Before that time in 1972, polluted water was accepted as a sign of economic success, and it wasn't just the Cuyahoga. The Chesapeake Bay also began to show signs of poor health as a result of industrial growth in the region. When the CWA came into effect, it meant direct discharges of pollutants into surface waters became unlawful without a permit under the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES). These permits protect surface waters by regulating the type and amount of pollutants allowed to be discharged.

There are many types of NPDES Permits for activities including agriculture, industry, and wastewater treatment. Another type is for discharges of stormwater associated with construction activities. Under the PA Clean Streams Law, Chapter 102 of the PA Code, also enacted in 1972, requires anyone proposing or conducting earth disturbance activities to develop, implement, and maintain controls to minimize the potential for accelerated erosion and sedimentation (E&S). Sediment is just one type of water pollution, but it is the single most common pollutant in U.S. waters. Stormwater runoff from construction sites has a high potential to create erosion due to the bare soil surface being exposed. This means it carries a high risk of sediment pollution. Under Chapter 102, an E&S Plan is required to be developed for any earth disturbance activity over 5,000 square feet, and a construction stormwater NPDES Permit is needed for activities over one acre. Generally, these plans and permits are reviewed and approved by the District E&S Control Department.

Thanks to the CWA and the dedicated groups enforcing it, U.S. waters are no longer coated in oil slicks or catching on fire. We can swim, boat, and fish in many of our waters and enjoy all that they have to offer. However, there is still work to be done to improve water quality, and many of our streams are still "burning" with other more inconspicuous pollutants beneath the surface. We've come far in the 50 years since the CWA, and it is with hope and determination that we look toward the next 50 years at what the next generation will be entrusted with to both protect and enjoy.

—Alex Flurry



Dirt & Gravel/Low Volume Road Program

Lancaster County's Dirt & Gravel/Low Volume Road Program will have an open grant round at the beginning of 2023. Grant round includes more than \$100,000 for Dirt and Gravel Road projects and more than \$200,000 for Low Volume Road projects. For municipalities interested in applying for potential Dirt & Gravel Rd. or Low Volume Rd. projects please reach out to the Conservation District to discuss your projects before application submittal. The grant round will open on January 1, 2023, and applications will be due to the Conservation District by February 17, 2023.

The Dirt & Gravel/Low Volume Road Quality Assurance Board will review applications at their March 1 meeting @ 5:30 PM before providing their recommendations to the Conservation District Board that same evening @ 7:30 PM.

If you have any questions about the Dirt & Gravel/Low Volume Rd. Program please feel free to contact the Conservation District to answer your Dirt & Gravel or Low Volume Road questions at 717-299-5361 x.5.

—Matthew Kofroth

Clean Water Partners Update



Dave Salley

Dave Salley

Dave Salley joined the Lancaster Clean Water Partners as the Technical Coordinator in March. Previously, Dave worked at the Borough of Mount Joy for five years as the Assistant Public Works Director, Stormwater Coordinator, and Building Codes Official. He has an A.A. in Drafting and Design from Keystone Technical Institute and is currently enrolled at Southern New Hampshire University to obtain his B.S. in Environmental Science focusing on Conservation and Natural Resources. Dave lives in Elizabethtown with his wife and daughter. He enjoys hiking, camping, music, sports, and spending time with his family and friends.

Farmers Part of the Solution for Clean Water in Lancaster County

Lancaster Farmland Trust (LFT) was awarded funding through the Lancaster Clean Water Fund in 2021 to work with three farms in the Pequea Creek Watershed to implement agricultural best management practices, including manure management, barnyard improvements, animal walkways and fencing, and more. Jonas Fisher, one of the three farmers having conservation practices installed, is excited about the tremendous improvements he's already seen on his farm since the project was completed earlier this year. In a [video produced by LFT](#), he shares that he's eager to pass along the farm to his sons and for the conservation practices to be an example to the next generation of dairy farmers. His project, along with the 14 other projects funded in 2021 through the Clean Water Fund, significantly contributes to Lancaster County's regional efforts (known as the [Lancaster Countywide Action Plan](#)) to reduce pollutant loading and positively address the environmental needs of both Lancaster and those of the Chesapeake Bay.



—Emily Smedley

District Receives ARPA Funding

This past June, the Lancaster County Commissioners awarded the Lancaster County Conservation District \$3.4 million in American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA) funding for eleven water quality projects. These projects include installing best management practices (BMPs) on farms to curb nutrient and sediment laden runoff into streams, urban forest planting in Lancaster City, and installation of water quality monitoring units, to name a few. The District is grateful for the commissioners' commitment to clean water work; these funds will be a great help in making strides toward Lancaster County's water quality goals.

—Andrew Pauls-Thomas

Winter Preparedness and Food for Thought

Few watch the weather quite like a farmer. Rain doesn't always come at the right time and in amounts, we'd like it, which makes planning and preparing important as we work with the weather we are given. Having a large enough manure storage helps to plan spreading times when weather and soil conditions are ideal. This has become important to any nutrient management plan as a way to best use those nutrients at the right time for the crop needs. Spreading manure on the frozen ground when it has a greater chance to run off instead of reaching the roots where it is needed in the spring also makes less sense as fertilizer prices continue to rise. Having a large enough storage to stretch through the winter and provide enough cushion to wait for good soil conditions after the spring thaw allows farmers to use the nutrients at the right time when the soil is fit to accept those nutrients.

Lancaster County Conservation District has funds available in 2023 for adding manure storages, cleaning up barnyards, and fixing erosion issues in fields and pastures. Let us help you not only improve your farm field production and prevent possible pollution events in support of the broader community watershed but also keep those valuable nutrients on your farm where the crops can best use them for improved yields.

—Steven Reiff