

Celebrating Conservation
On April 2, 1947, the Adams County Board of Commissioners made a declaration at the request of local farmers and county citizens to create the Adams County Conservation District.

Around that time, 65 other county governments across the state made similar declarations. These declarations gave county conservation districts the authority to be the primary local government entity responsible for the conservation of natural resources in Pennsylvania and authorized the Conservation District Board of Directors to direct and determine priorities for implementing programs, projects, and activities to prevent and control nonpoint sources of pollution in their respective county.

Seventy-four years later, the Pennsylvania State Senate and House of

Representatives, as well as the Adams County commissioners, have or will be declaring April 18-24, 2021, "Conservation District Week." Typically, this week would be full of community programs and projects, but like most things, Conservation District Week will look a little different this year. The pandemic has thrown a monkey wrench into many things including Conservation District Week, but it has not kept the conservation district from working with our community to make significant improvements in Adams County.

With increasing pressure from the state and federal government to improve the Chesapeake Bay, Adams County Conservation District staff continue to focus on the implementation of practices that reduce sediment and nutrient runoff to our local streams. More than ever, we are work-

CONSERVATION DISTRICT

Adam McClain



ing with landowners to reforest the streams on their properties through contractors, smaller volunteer groups, or by providing the landowner with the essential planting tools and supplies they need to do it themselves.

We continue to work with our farmers to share techniques on ways to improve soil health, gain compliance with state erosion and nutrient planning requirements, implement tradi-

tional best management practices, and share innovative ways that to keep more soil and nutrients in their fields.

A few of our townships and boroughs have been utilizing our Dirt, Gravel, and Low Volumes Roads Program. This program provides technical and financial assistance to create more environmentally and economically sustainable gravel roads and paved low volume roads.

Some of these roads are improved through re-grading and re-crowning, installing a more compact road material or improved drainage, or replacing undersized culverts. Also, I think it is fair to say that more residents have been enjoying the outdoors and Adams County's natural resources due to COVID restrictions.

To reduce the risk of mosquito-borne diseases like West Nile Virus, we treated 168 sites for mosquitoes.

Our newer tick program, which is only surveillance at this point, recently found that approximately 50 percent of the deer ticks that were collected tested positive for the bacteria that causes Lyme Disease, so please check yourself often for ticks when outdoors.

To learn more about the Adams County Conservation District, please consider reviewing our 2020 Annual Report at www.adamscounty.us. Whether we would be highlighting an achievement in our annual report or a challenge that we as a community need to overcome, I hope it will help you understand how your local conservation district works within our community to promote the voluntary conservation and good stewardship of Adams County's natural resources.

Adam McClain is the district manager of the Adams County Conservation District.

Domestic violence task force 23 years old

This is part of Healthy Adams County's 25-year anniversary monthly *Gettysburg Times* column.

Healthy Adams County was created in 1996 and conducted its first Community Health Needs Assessment that year. Family Violence was listed as a top ten need by the community and the Domestic Violence Task Force was one of the first task forces created by the organization to address this need. The task force started in 1998 and is still going strong today.

Before I took the position of executive director of Healthy Adams County I worked at Survivors Inc., the local domestic violence agency. At the time I was the medical advocate for the agency and worked closely with the Gettysburg Hospital to train its nursing staff and Emergency Department staff how to screen patients for abuse. I also had the privilege of being the first chair of the Domestic Violence

Task Force and continued with the task force until 2006.

The initial goal of the task force in the beginning was to involve the community in addressing domestic violence. We brought together other agencies that wanted to partner on this issue such as the Adams County Office for Aging, Gettysburg Hospital, Adams County Children and Youth Services, NOVIS (Non-Violence Intervention Services) and many more. We also worked to form relationships with local police and the court system and eventually brought them to the table. We planned events to raise awareness in the community including our annual Domestic Violence Awareness Night which included speakers, Gettysburg Dance Center, the Empty Place at the Table display from Survivors, Inc., and our annual community award. We also brought in presenters such as Lt. Mark Wynn, a nationally

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Kathy Gaskin and Wade Laue



renowned speaker on police investigation of Domestic Violence and brought a play called "The Yellow Dress" to our local high schools and the Gettysburg College which addressed the topic of Dating Violence.

The task force then worked closely with the STOP Grant Committee which guided the work of the Federal Grant that provided a framework for Victim Services, Law Enforcement, and the District Attorney's office to

develop county wide protocols to address Domestic Violence, Sexual Assault and later Human Trafficking.

Most recently, new statutes related to Strangulation, and Relinquishment of Firearms requirements in Protection From Abuse Orders, added additional processes for the Domestic Violence Task Force to integrate.

In 2019, Safe Home became the service provider for victims of Domestic Violence in Adams County, and most recently the Adams County Sexual Assault Services has become the service provider for victims of sexual assault.

Presently the Domestic Violence Task Force includes members from Safe Home, the Adams County District Attorney's Office, Adams County Sexual Assault Services, Wellspan Gettysburg Hospital, Mid-Penn Legal Services, Gettysburg College, the Adams County Victim/Witness Office, Thrive-

Victim Services, Adams County Office on Aging, Keystone-Services for Farm Workers, and several law enforcement members. Presently, Detective Wade Laue, with the Adams County District Attorney's Office, is the chairman of the task force.

Preventing Family Violence is still such a need in our community and unfortunately, we have not come to the point where this task force is no longer needed. I am glad that it continues to be a presence and has such a strong membership of dedicated service providers, law enforcement and court system representatives that are passionate about helping those who are abused in our community.

Kathy Gaskin is the executive director of Healthy Adams County; Detective Wade Laue, is with the Adams County District Attorney's office and chair of Healthy Adams County's Domestic Violence Task Force.

Abuse and another man

Dear Annie: I'm a mom and have been married for nearly six years. But for the past few years, my husband and I have not been on the same path. We can't communicate without fighting, bickering, arguing, etc. Our sex life has been nonexistent. And I have tried talking and suggesting that we do more things together. I have even tried losing weight because I thought maybe the problem was that I was no longer attractive. I tried everything that I could think of. And some days, I just lay in a different room, balled up and crying.

About a year ago, I started a new job and met a man with whom I clicked almost instantly. Eventually, this co-worker gave me his number and asked if I wanted to go fishing sometime. That night, I told my husband that another man had offered me his phone number and wanted to take me fishing. I hoped he would see

that he needed to step up to the plate before something happened. Instead, he flipped out and started accusing me of trying to control him. He started throwing things around the house — something he does a lot when things don't go his way, often leaving me with bruises and/or him with bruises due to my trying to defend myself. His tantrum that night was the final straw. I decided to take my new colleague up on the fishing trip.

We became close friends but never did anything physical. Then, one day, I found out my husband had been exchanging racy messages with women online. That's when I decided to go ahead and give my body to this new friend. It was nice. It made me feel like a woman again, not like a jacket that's sitting in the closet waiting to be worn.

We continued seeing each other and sleeping together for a few months.

DEAR ANNIE

Annie Lane



But last month, after a night out with him, I confessed everything to my husband. He was upset, of course, but in due time he came around and said he wanted to work things out. Well, that was three months ago, and my husband and I still haven't been intimate. I see no signs of things changing between us. In fact, they've gotten more distant, and I've noticed he now uses a lock code on his phone and computer.

My lover, meanwhile, is waiting in the wings for me to make my decision. — Between a Rock and Hard Place

Dear Between: More than anything, I'm concerned about your husband's physical aggression. No matter your differences, it is unacceptable for him to hurt you or even knowingly endanger you as he does when he hurls things around the house in a rage. But rather than further engage him right now, I encourage you to reach out to the National Domestic Violence Hotline at 1-800-799-7233 for guidance in planning your next steps.

Dear Annie: April is National Alcohol Awareness Month. While I've seen some friends and family really helped by AA, for others, a different approach is needed. I hope you will print these recommendations in your column.

One is SMART Recovery (<https://www.smartrecovery.org>), which offers

a network of resources and is not just focused on alcohol abuse but addiction in general. LifeRing Secular Recovery (<https://lifering.org>), like AA, is an abstinence-based anonymous organization that provides safe meeting spaces. Then there are also programs for people who have a nonsevere drinking problem but would like to cut back on their drinking or take a break: Moderation Management (<https://moderation.org>), CheckUp and Choices (checkupandchoices.com), and One Year No Beer (<https://www.oneyearnobeer.com>). Wherever people are, there are tools available.

"Ask Me Anything: A Year of Advice From Dear Annie" is out now! Annie Lane's debut book — featuring favorite columns on love, friendship, family and etiquette — is available as a paperback and e-book. Visit <http://www.creatorpublishing.com> for more information. Send your questions for Annie Lane to dearannie@creator.com.