

2013 ANNUAL REPORT



**Oil Region
Alliance**
BUSINESS, INDUSTRY AND TOURISM

217 Elm Street
Oil City, PA 16301-1412
814-677-3152 or 800-483-6264
www.oilregion.org

February 27, 2014

Dear Friends of the Oil Region Alliance:

The board and staff are committed to performance with integrity. As members of our mission you provide significant resources needed to focus on projects involving economic development, heritage development, tourism promotion, and recreational development throughout the Oil Region. We believe we are a mission-driven organization combined with member enthusiasm that ensures the highest compatible standards that are mutually reinforcing. We are working toward a positive future for the citizens of this region.

We have stayed on a path of asset-based economic development and will continue building on the regions assets as we actively market the region throughout the country as well as globally. The Oil Region's economic viability will increasingly depend on innovation. We intend to continue to encourage the development of entrepreneurial businesses, development and retention of current companies, as well as aggressive marketing for our economic prosperity.

In 2014, we look forward to working with our partners to complete the infrastructure enhancement project in Sandycreek Industrial Park and plan to aggressively market the park to growing and expanding companies. We made great progress with the Parkland Woods total senior living and assisted living project in 2013 and will continue to work to move that project forward. We will continue our efforts to work with Brownfield reclamation projects that were started in 2013 as well as our historic preservation and recreational developments.

It is imperative that we provide a welcoming environment for our visitors and potential residents as well as a favorable business climate for existing and new industries. Our partnerships with the region's industries, educational institutions, municipalities, and members enable us to combine resources and achieve our common goals.

At the Alliance we embed honesty and civility in the operating culture as we work for the region. The projects we work on are recognized at the state and national levels. It is clear to us: High standards are the only way we do business. We live in a new day and work diligently to provide improved quality of life to the region made possible by your support.

Sincerely,



Warren K. Thomas, Chair



John R. Phillips, II, President



Our Mission

“The Mission of the Oil Region Alliance of Business, Industry & Tourism is to increase the prosperity and population of the Oil Region by enticing people to live, work, learn and play in “the valley that changed the world” through the preservation, promotion, development and support of historical, educational, natural, recreational, residential, commercial and industrial destinations.”

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Warren Thomas, Chair - Baytree Farm

Susan Smith, Treasurer - NW Commission

Betsy Kellner, Assistant Secretary/Treasurer - Venango Museum of Art, Science & Industry

Janet Aaron - Executive, Retired

Harold Best - Cranberry Township

Barbara Crudo - City of Oil City

Terry A. Danko - First National Bank

Edwin “Bud” Deal - OCP Warehouse

Frank Hajduk - SCORE

Dr. William Hallock - Venango College of Clarion University

James Krellner - Joy Global

Linda Lusher, Vice Chair - Galaxy Federal Credit Union

Thomas Surman, Secretary - Vantage Holding Company

Neil McElwee - Oil Creek Press/McElwee Associates

Marcia D. Miller - First National Bank

Mary Nicklin - DeBence Antique Music World

Joseph “Joe” Pastor - Barr’s Insurance

John Peterson - Retired Congressman

Dr. Chris Reber - Venango College of Clarion University

Linda Routzhan - First Energy

Cecile Stelter - DCNR, Bureau of Forestry

Vincent Witherup - County of Venango

Economic Development Update

- Sandycreek Industrial Park project got underway late in 2013 and will be completed by the third quarter of 2014. Plans include extending DeBence Drive approximately 1000' and installing all needed infrastructure. Aggressive marketing strategies will be developed.
- The 'Get on the Trail!' Entrepreneurial Business Plan Contest for along the Erie to Pittsburgh Trail was launched in May of 2013. Winners were announced in December. The contest will continue in 2014.
- 2013 saw the first CNG gas station open in Venango County.
- Horizontal drilling activity continued in the Oil Region in 2013 with four permits filed.
- Alliance staff received recertification through the Pennsylvania Economic Development Association and the Department of Community and Economic Development so that we can continue to be eligible to offer industrial development loans.
- Along with the NW PA Oil & Gas HUB group we hosted several forums, including 'Fueling our Economic Growth with Natural Gas Conference', a 'Supply Chain Basics – Business Development Opportunities within the Natural Gas Industry' and 'Market Entry for the Shale Gas Industry.'
- Staff conducted 75 outreach calls that entailed assisting local businesses with recruitment and workforce issues.
- Partnership for Regional Economic Performance (PREP) activities continued throughout the year. The Alliance co-hosted a Regional Financing Workshop and an Affordable Care Act forum with regional partners.
- The Alliance hosted a visioning session with the Emlenton and Foxburg communities in August, bringing together state, regional and local officials to discuss collaborative projects.
- Focused on identifying several Brownfield projects and will be securing those properties for redevelopment in 2014.
- Obtained 85 acres of land for development of an independent/assisted living project.
- Hosted Marcellus Shale Coalition President, David Spigelmyer at Drake Well Museum in December. Mr. Spigelmyer discussed the future of the natural gas industry in Pennsylvania.



David Spigelmyer, President of the Marcellus Shale Coalition at Drake Well.

Destination Marketing

- A new website www.grabtrails.com was created to showcase our many trails – biking & hiking trails, water trails, arts & culture trails, history trails, and geocaching trails. The website was featured in our print advertising, as well as on wraps that were placed on trucks traveling cross country, and on sail flags that were strategically placed at events throughout the year.
- T-shirts, water bottles and bumper stickers sporting the new website were distributed at the GNCC race in Foxburg, and at events held during the year and to groups requesting promotional items.
- Regional water trails and biking/hiking trails were located on a map printed by the Venango Area Chamber of Commerce. It is now being distributed.
- The Allegheny GeoTrail was promoted in window displays and at events throughout the region, encouraging "Free, Family, Fun."
- The 2013 GeoTrain event was expanded to encompass an entire weekend.
- The Oil Region Visitor Guide is now distributed at ten locations along the interstate, as well as three PA turnpike rest areas.
- The Oil Region is marketed at the Grove City outlet mall, in the Cleveland, Ohio area, and in Chautauqua County, New York.
- We offered cash matching grants for the printing of Tourist Destination brochures and rack cards and offered a generous discount to non-profit tourist destinations for advertising in the 2014 Visitor Guide.
- The Alliance hosted the annual conference of the Pennsylvania Outdoor Writers Association in May.

Heritage Highlights

- Constructed south half of the paved McClintock Trail (from McClintock Well #1 to Dollar General in Oil City). Hosted Dedication Ceremony/Inaugural Ride September 17. Installed Erie to Pittsburgh Trail logo signs along Queen City Trail and McClintock Trail. Detailed engineering is underway for the new Oil Creek Memorial Landing, to serve as a trailhead for the Erie to Pittsburgh Trail as well as canoe/kayak access in Oil City.
- Rehabilitated interior of the Neilltown Church Building, thanks to grants by PHMC, County of Forest, and private families. Hosted four live musical concerts at that site.
- Purchased the 1894 Downs Building in downtown Oil City in March. A Preservation Plan is in underway. Received DCED grant toward its interior rehabilitation, and Oil City Main Street Façade Improvement grant; construction work is slated for spring 2014.
- At the Tarbell House, installed HVAC, received donated furnishings and china. Hosted public open houses and private guided tours at Coal Oil Johnny House and Tarbell House.
- Partner organizations conducted nine different Oil/Gas Educational/Preservation Mini-Grants ranging from assessment of the Civil War Monument in Franklin, to student tours of area museums, to the monthly "Teas at the Tarbell House" served by high school students.



Construction on the McClintock Trail.



The Downs Building in Oil City.

- Updated and printed "Victorian Architecture in the Oil Region National Heritage Area" brochure and the "Titusville Walking Tour" brochure.
- In preparation for the new Oil City Visitor Center, upgraded lighting at the Venango Museum of Art, Science & Industry and added outdoor signage. Completed installation in January, 2014.
- Installed and dedicated historical marker recognizing P.C. Boyle.
- Staff provided historic preservation consultation services to multiple private property owners and municipalities throughout the Oil Region National Heritage Area.

Council on Greenways and Trails

- The Council on Greenways and Trails (CGT) is a partnership working together to build and enhance the outdoor recreation infrastructure of the region, protect our natural resources and capitalize on the economic benefits that are tied to both.
- CGT hosted the statewide PA Greenways & Trails Summit in September in Franklin, bringing 200 park and recreation enthusiasts to the region, many for the first time.
- The Rails-to-Trails Conservancy (RTC), with the assistance of the Greenways Coordinator, conducted a *2013 Trail User Survey and Economic Impact Analysis* on the trail between Titusville and Parker through the Oil Region. Electronic counters were placed along the 70 mile system to count the number of users each day. A paper questionnaire was collected and will determine trail user demographics and attitudes about the trails, how much money trail users spent because of the trail and their possible impact on local businesses.
- In 2013, the CGT Awards recognized those in the region that are realizing the value of our natural and outdoor recreational resources and partnering to protect and/or develop those resources for the benefit of our citizens and visitors.
- Other highlighted projects include: The Borough of Foxburg is enhancing the trailhead that transitions trail users between the trail and their business district and the City of Titusville completed a Trail Town Master Plan detailing not only the physical layout of connecting the trail to the business district but also several marketing and economic development recommendations.
- The 2014 Work Plan includes helping more communities to become Trail Towns, increasing the visibility of these green assets and implementing more projects in the Greenways Plans.



A trail user deposits her survey.

Oil City Main Street Program

- In 2013, the Oil City Main Street Program achieved national accreditation by the National Main Street Center for the second year in a row.
- Façade Improvement Grant Program: 17 projects have been approved to date since 2012: over \$38,000 in grants (matched by nearly \$70,500 in private investment) translate to over \$108,000 in downtown storefront improvements.
- Downtown Oil City was one of 15 Main Street communities to be featured on the PCN (Pennsylvania Cable Network) series, "Discover Main Street PA" (August 2013).
- New website launched December 2013: www.oilcitymainstreet.org features a listing of all downtown businesses, upcoming events, Main Street information and connection to resources for prospective businesses and visitors.
- Business Resource Guide: "Opportunity Oil City" explains how to find commercial space, obtain permits and utilize incentives, where to find guidance on starting/expanding a business, & more.



Scene from Indie Fest in June.

- Sidewalk Planters & Hanging Baskets: Volunteers planted annuals in sidewalk planters and hanging baskets along various downtown Oil City streets. Several downtown businesses and members of UCIP's Springboard Program partnered with Main Street by watering the plants daily.
- Downtown Murals Program: Guidelines have been established and funding is now being sought for the installation of original artistic murals on the exteriors of downtown buildings.
- Best Dressed Windows: An initiative to encourage creative window displays is sparking action by a number of downtown businesses and organizations, with more momentum planned for 2014.
- Town Square Project: Main Street is working with the Oil City Civic Center and other groups to transform an empty downtown lot into a town square.
- Promotional efforts included Cash Mobs, Independents Week, Jingle Bell Run 5K, Oil City's Christmas Past, and more.

STAFF

John R. Phillips, II - President and COO

Kathy Bailey	Chris Coxson	Toni Kresinski
Marilyn Black	Debra Frawley	Deb Lutz
Mary Cochran	Kim Harris	Dan Twombly

Photographs Courtesy of

Kathy Bailey *Debra Frawley*
Marilyn Black *Kim Harris*
Friends of the Oil Region Alliance

Based on 2013 unaudited financial statements

FINANCIAL SUMMARY

Year ending December 31, 2013

Revenue		Expenses		Assets		Liabilities	
Membership	\$77,780	Program	\$1,713,111	Cash	\$148,817	Accounts Payable	\$81,309
Municipal Contributions	44,306	Management	206,408	Accounts Receivable	276,257	Other Short-Term Liabilities	95,635
Fees, Sales and Other	123,901	Property Manag.	195,076	Other Short-Term Assets	10,543	Long-Term Notes Payable	60,402
Contributions	46,869	Fundraising	75,617	Loan Funds	105,079	Other Long-term Liabilities	345,500
Property	40,056	Total Expenses	\$2,190,213	Land, Buildings & Equip.	1,240,899	Total Liabilities	582,846
Grants	1,809,036			Other Long-Term Assets	11,138	Net Assets	1,209,887
Total Revenues	\$2,141,948			Total Assets	\$1,792,733	Total of Both	\$1,792,733

