

# 2017 ANNUAL REPORT



BUSINESS, INDUSTRY AND TOURISM  
217 Elm Street - Oil City, PA 16301  
814-677-3152 or 800-483-6264  
[www.oilregion.org](http://www.oilregion.org)

September 20, 2018



Dear Friends of the Oil Region Alliance:

The Board of Directors and Staff of the Oil Region Alliance thank you for your ongoing support in managing and enhancing the Oil Region National Heritage Area. Your memberships and project specific donations for current and future projects involving economic advancement, heritage enrichment, tourism promotion, and recreational development are absolutely vital. Working on an asset-based approach to economic development is the overarching goal of every initiative and endeavor the Alliance undertakes; you make the achievement of that goal possible.



As we reflect on 2017/18, we are proud of the projects that have been completed, the partnerships that have been strengthened, and the new relationships that have been forged. As we move forward, you will see expanded emphasis on our management of the Oil Region National Heritage Area through the National Park Service of the U.S. Department of the Interior; this Congressional designation has brought significant federal resources into the region. We are expanding our outdoor recreational initiatives and projects and expect some exciting developments as a result.

The Alliance has established a vital presence in our region and we have worked hard to foster strong relationships with other non-profits, private businesses, municipalities, neighboring counties, the commonwealth, and the many dedicated people who live in the region to provide a welcoming environment for our visitors and potential residents as well as a favorable business climate for existing and new industries.

The Alliance's foundational principles reflect integrity, transparency, and respect for all as we strive to enhance the quality of life through our economic development as well as our many and varied heritage, tourism, and recreational programs. Recognized at state and national levels for the quality and implementation of our projects, it is clear to us that the standards of excellence that characterize our work as well as our success would not be possible without the support of our partners and members.

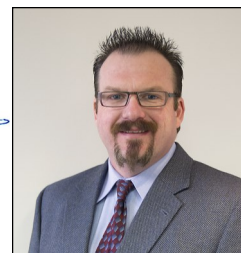
We welcome your assistance in helping us to achieve our mission to increase the prosperity of the Oil Region by enticing people to live, work, learn and play in *"the valley that changed the world!"*

Sincerely,

Barry E. Cressman, Chair



John R. Phillips, II, President



## 2017 - 2018 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Dr. Barry Cressman, Chair - Retired Clergy  
Emily Altomare, Vice Chair - Titusville Area Chamber of Commerce  
Neil McElwee, Secretary - Oil Creek Press/McElwee Associates  
Debra Sobina, Treasurer - Clarion University, Venango  
Rodney C. Griffin, Assistant Secretary/Assistant Treasurer - Specialty Fabrication & Powder Coating

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Matt Beith - Beith Associates  
Jerry Brosius - Cranberry Township  
Leah Carter - Titusville Renaissance, Inc.  
Jessica Hilburn - Benson Memorial Library  
Lance Hummer - Keystone Community Education Council  
Maureen James - Artist/Oil City Main Street Program  
James O. "Jimmy" Johnson - City of Franklin  
William P. Moon, Jr. - City of Oil City  
Cinda Richards - Komatsu  
Vincent Witherup - County of Venango

## In 2017 – 2018, the Oil Region Alliance ~

- Became a participant in the National Park Service “Passports to Your Parks” program, partnering with Drake Well Museum, the Venango Museum of Art, Science & Industry, DeBence Antique Music World and the Pumping Jack Museum to offer NPS Passports to the public.
- Dedicated the Cornplanter Mural and Historical Marker in Oil City in October, 2017.



*Trolley with Welcome Center Employees in Oil City*

- Hosted “The Context and Celebrity of Coal Oil Johnny” Oil History Workshop led by Neil McElwee at the Oil City Library.
- Working with Franklin Industries, Inc. on a major multi-year expansion plan.
- Hired two new full-time employees for Heritage Development activities.
- Attended the inaugural Family Travel Fair presented by “Where & When”, Pennsylvania’s Travel Guide, in Lancaster, PA.
- Held three musical concerts at the historic Neilltown Church Building.
- Developed the Allegheny Wild and Scenic River website, [www.wsallegheny.com](http://www.wsallegheny.com)
- Hosted 17 staff members from the PA Welcome Centers on a FAM Tour of the Oil Region.
- Administered Oil and Natural Gas History and Preservation mini-grants

within the Oil Region National Heritage Area, resulting in an original children’s book being published, “Oil Tales of the Early Days” by Carole E. Hall, and other projects.

- Hosted the 2018 PA Outdoor Writers Association Annual Conference in Franklin in May.
- Repainted the Tarbell House and continued to host educational and special events at this historic property in Titusville.
- Sponsored and helped facilitate a PA Industrial Development Authority low interest loan for \$687,000 on a \$1.6 million new production line for Matric, Limited, Inc. This has realized more than 80 new full-time positions.
- Redesigned and printed waterproof Allegheny Wild and Scenic River Water Trail Maps.
- Hosted Titusville Historical Society’s History Camp at the Tarbell House.
- Installed new replica bay windows on the second floor of the Downs Building in Oil City.
- Hosted two public open houses at the McClintock-Steele-Waitz (Coal Oil Johnny) House attracting more than 250 people to the site.



*Re-enactors at the Tarbell House*

- Conducted Historic Preservation Workshop and Awards in Pleasantville.
- Revised and reprinted the Titusville Walking Tour Brochure.
- Assisted Oil Creek State Park with revisions to interpretative signage along the Blood Farm walking trail.
- Received 2017 “Partner of the Year” Award presented by the Northwest PA Heritage Center.
- Managed Preservation Plans for six historic buildings in Emlenton, Franklin, and Oil City.
- Continued to market and show property in the Alliance-owned industrial parks: Sandycreek, Sugar Creek, and Seneca, to prospective companies.
- Received PA and Regional Preservation Awards for rehabilitating the Tarbell House.
- Created and distributed two new rack cards - one promoting the NPS Passport Program and one promoting the Oil Region National Heritage Area.
- Continued to assist in development of the Erie to Pittsburgh Trail.

- Working with Clarion University, local school districts, and other partners to address skilled workforce shortages across multiple sectors in the region.
- Continued partnership with Venango Regional Airport and Southern Airways to enhance and market our regional commercial air service, resulting in a tremendous growth in usage.
- Printed and distributed 60,000 copies of “Your Guide to Pennsylvania’s Oil Region” (aka The Oil Region Visitor Guide.)
- Partnered with Ben Franklin Technologies to bring video conferencing availability and educational sessions to the region’s businesses. The equipment is now installed in the Oil Region Alliance office in Oil City.
- Hosted Summer Public Tea Series at the historic Tarbell House, featuring local experts presenting on vintage clothing, with 95 guests participating.
- Selected the Franklin Area Chamber of Commerce as the partner site for the next Oil Region Visitor Center.
- Hosted the 175th Anniversary of the Neilltown Church building in September, 2017.
- Represented the Erie to Pittsburgh Trail at Trail Nation, a national trail conference, in Milwaukee, WI.
- Seated on the PA Water Trail Executive Committee.
- Responded to 5,000+ requests for tourist information, including more than 500 from Canada.
- Negotiated the pending acquisition of the William H. Scheide House in Titusville.
- Managed the operation of the Crawford Center in Emlenton.



*NPS Passport Cancellation Station*



*New rack card.*



*Dr. Barry Cressman, Cong. Glenn Thompson, John Phillips and Cong. Mike Kelly at the Tarbell House.*

## Oil City Main Street Program

The Oil Region Alliance serves as the fiscal agent and provides office space and staff support for the Oil City Main Street Program (OCMS). OCMS is a volunteer-driven initiative dedicated to the revitalization of downtown Oil City.



Highlights for the past year include:

- Facilitation of ARTS Oil City Initiative (artist relocation/revitalization program) since October, 2017.
- Oil City Murals Program: "Chief Cornplanter and the Oilmen" completed October, 2017. Three new murals are under contract for 2018.
- Completion of Façade Improvement Grant funding round #2 (\$49,069 awarded for 22 storefront improvement projects).
- Recipient of 2018 Townie Award by PA Downtown Center (Community Partnerships, for the Center Street Bridge Illumination).
- Coordination of a focus group for the statewide strategic plan of PA Council on the Arts.
- Additional events: Oil City Uncorked Wine Walks, Music on the Square, Farmers Market, BridgeFest and 2018 O.C.toberfest.

OCMS follows the Main Street Four Point Approach® and is nationally accredited by Main Street America.

## STAFF

*John R. Phillips, II - President and CEO*

*Dan Twombly, Executive Vice President*

*Marilyn Black, VP of Heritage Development*

*Jenn Burden, Historian/Educator*

*Chris Clifton, Office Administrator/Finance Assistant*

*Kim Harris, Project Manager*

*Juliet Hilburn, Analyst/Educator*

*Toni Kresinski, Project Manager*

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*Kathy Bailey, Oil City Main Street Manager*

*Stewart Armstrong, OCMS Artist Liaison/Marketing Coordinator*



County of Venango

# 2017 MAJOR MEMBERS

## KOMATSU



**Cranberry Township**



**National Fuel**

### Photographs Courtesy of

*Kathy Bailey, Marilyn Black, Jenn Burden, Kim Harris, Juliet Hilburn & Michael Henderson*

### Our Mission

"The Mission of the Oil Region Alliance of Business, Industry and Tourism is to manage the Oil Region National Heritage Area and to increase the prosperity 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."

Based on 2017 audited financial statements

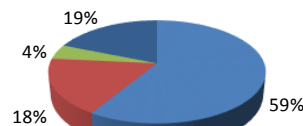
## FINANCIAL SUMMARY

Year ending December 31, 2017

| Revenue               |                    |
|-----------------------|--------------------|
| Grants                | \$777,705          |
| Hotel Occupancy Tax   | 142,860            |
| Membership Dues       | 90,874             |
| Contributions         | 104,479            |
| Rentals               | 64,564             |
| Fees                  | 24,813             |
| Other                 | 63,287             |
| <b>Total Revenues</b> | <b>\$1,268,582</b> |



| Expenses              |                    |
|-----------------------|--------------------|
| Program               | \$650,334          |
| Management            | 196,349            |
| Fundraising           | 51,367             |
| Property Manag.       | 208,642            |
| <b>Total Expenses</b> | <b>\$1,106,692</b> |



| Assets                        |                    |
|-------------------------------|--------------------|
| Cash and Equivalents          | \$41,376           |
| Accounts, Rents & Grant Rec   | 650,908            |
| Building & Improvements       | 213,654            |
| Office Equipment              | 124,513            |
| Buildings Held for Investment | 929,709            |
| Development Projects          | 1,174,754          |
| Other                         | 44,922             |
| Depreciation & Amortization   | (235,615)          |
| <b>Total Assets</b>           | <b>\$2,944,221</b> |

| Liabilities                 |                    |
|-----------------------------|--------------------|
| Accounts Payable            | \$18,624           |
| Payroll Liabilities         | 9,068              |
| Unearned Revenue            | 1,053,736          |
| Other Long-term Liabilities | 345,500            |
| Notes Payable               | 286,758            |
| Other                       | 1,774              |
| <b>Total Liabilities</b>    | <b>1,715,460</b>   |
| <b>Net Assets</b>           | <b>1,228,761</b>   |
| <b>Total L &amp; NA</b>     | <b>\$2,944,221</b> |

The front cover photographs depict (clockwise, beginning at top, left): John Phillips & Debra Sobina of the Oil Region Alliance pose with Ben Choffil, VP of Marketing & Jonathan Niles, Safety Director for Franklin Industries; Local Boy Scouts visit the McClintock-Steele-Waitz (aka the "Coal Oil Johnny") House; Display of tourist information distributed at the Family Travel Fair at Lancaster, PA; Kristy, Kaitlynn and Adyson Moore show off their NPS "Passports to Your National Parks."