

# Lifestyle

## Secrets of the farmland soil

Farmland soil is more than just an inanimate object to produce crops. What people don't usually know is that soil is a living ecosystem that requires care. To take care of this complex ecosystem of soil on farmland we should try to follow the "Four Soil Health Principles" provided by the Natural Resources Conservation Service or NRCS. These four principles are to minimize disturbance, maximize living cover, maximize biodiversity, and maximize continuous living roots.

Disturbance on a crop field can degrade habitat for soil organisms and ruin healthy soil structure. Some common disturbance on farm fields can be the use of excessive tillage, overusing pesticides and/or fertilizers, and over grazing by farm animals. Limiting

disturbance on crop and pasture fields is an important first step into having a positive impact on soil health. Methods such as reduced tillage or no tillage systems, integrated pest management and nutrient management systems, and prescribed or limited grazing are all ways to help minimize disturbance of farm fields.

Soil cover on farm fields is important for many different reasons. Without living or dead plant matter on our crop and pasture fields year-round, or most of the year, fields may suffer consequences. Uncovered fields may see an increase in erosion, higher soil temperatures, and a greater loss of water content through evaporation. When fields are covered with a crop or cover crop, water infiltration into the soil will increase. The cover also pro-

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vides habitat and food for soil organisms and helps to mitigate the compaction of heavy equipment and farm animals, not to mention hopes for less erosion, and a better soil temperature control. Methods to improve soil cover are planting cover crops on off-season, mulching areas as needed, limiting grazing, and many more practices.

Without biodiversity plants are more prone to damage by insects or diseases. Also, without living roots in the soil, fields are more prone to erosion, and a poorer soil structure with reduced habitat for beneficial soil organisms. Increasing the biodiversity of crops and living roots in the soil can improve nutrient cycling, break pest cycles, facilitate growth in plants, and increase pollinator populations as well as stimulate diversity in the soil organisms. Best Management Practices which farmers can do are rotating crops, having a conservation crop or permanent vegetative cover, cover cropping, prescribed or limited grazing, and again controlling pests.

As all four soil health principles are implemented on a farm, an increase in biological activity in the soil should

take place. Soil ecosystems may flourish with better root infiltration, more pore spaces for water to infiltrate, and more earthworm activity. None of these outcomes are guaranteed but giving the soil a chance is important to the success of crops.

What we need to understand is that each farm has its own way of farming. One way is not more correct than another, and no way is the best way to farm, but what is important is that each farm makes sure to take care of its soil today, so that we can continue to have food tomorrow. As Franklin Roosevelt said, "The nation that destroys its soil destroys itself."

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## Celebrating 20 years of accomplishments

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

Congratulations to Healthy Adams County (HAC) for almost 20 years of accomplishments noted through the Physical Fitness Task Force (PFTF). The PFTF was formed in Adams County in 2002 to address the rising health concern of obesity in the US. This community driven task force has had many partners and contributors throughout Adams County; to name a just a few: The Gettysburg Hospital, YWCA, Gettysburg Rec Park, Gettysburg College, Gettysburg Times, Penn State Extension, (and others) including numerous community members and organizations who contributed much to this task force's success.

The main objective of the PFTF continues today: "to increase community awareness and involvement regarding physical fitness". Reviewing many years of annual reports for HAC, many programs and initiatives have occurred. It is noteworthy to mention these accom-

plishments: PFTF coordinated Shape Up PA where over 1,100 participants engaged in a competitive program that promoted healthy lifestyle through diet and physical activity. During this time, PFTF also developed a directory of fitness and recreation facilities in Adams County, participated in the Adams County Green Ribbon Commission and was involved in advocacy for alternative transportation pathways/safe areas for fitness at the municipal, county, and state levels of policy development. The PFTF participated in advocacy and grant opportunities to assist in the completed renovation of the Biser Fitness Trail located at the Gettysburg Rec Park. A subcommittee of the PFTF was formed, named the Healthy Adams Bicycle/Pedestrian Committee, which is known now as HABPI. The formation of the Gettysburg Inner-loop bicycle trail was a priority mission for this group.

The popular 'Walking Parties' (held in the spring and fall) were developed (2006) to provide safe walking trails and encouragement for commu-

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Holly Cookerly



nity participants to engage in physical activity. "TOE TOKENS" were a valued incentive! The walking parties continue today! In coordination with several partners, the "Keystone Active Zone Passports to Good Health" was provided to every child (9,000) in kindergarten to seventh grade in six public schools in Adams County. Several intergenerational events were held at Gettysburg Rec Park that linked a senior citizen with a kindergartner to walk on the newly renovated Biser trail. A Fitness Challenge was held at the Health and Safety Day for Kids,

Community Poker Walks were held for the community and several workplaces, including Hospital employees, to encourage fitness and fun! Family Fun Festivals were held through HAC with the PFTF offering stations of physical activity. Woman's Fitness Day was celebrated for several years with special programs for women to encourage fitness. Media was utilized by submitting articles in the Gettysburg Times monthly. In 2008, the PFTF developed and printed a "Running/Walking Trails of Adams County" guidebook, that has been reprinted many times using grant funding. These guides were distributed to many local Hotels, Tourist venues and a variety of other places in Adams County.

Led hikes during winter and summer months have been held since 2015 and have become very popular. Hikes regularly attract upwards of 35 participants and have had over 100 if the weather is nice. Free, fully-supported 5K races twice per year (Memorial Day and Labor Day) also began in 2015 and

have grown to 150 to 200 participants per race. In 2020, with the help of the Adams County Office of Planning and Development, the PFTF developed an on-line library of 20 of our most popular walks, with downloadable maps. This online development is intended to replace the Walking Trails guidebook mentioned above.

Whew, in reviewing the past records of the PFTF, the memories are returning of the many initiatives and activities that have occurred. There are accomplishments that could only have occurred with the support and involvement of the community. Many people were involved in the success of this task force which has resulted in increased awareness and increased opportunities to promote physical fitness in Adams County. Best wishes to the success of the PFTF for another 20 years.

Holly Cookerly is the former chair of Healthy Adams County's Physical Fitness Task Force and Betsy Meyer is the current chair of Healthy Adams County's Physical Fitness Task Force.

## Bring on the smiles after wearing masks

How many of us missed seeing the smiles under our masks for the past year?

Last month, I wrote about patients with "mask mouth," and this month many of us are taking our masks off, and both situations involve our dental health.

While many of us are cheering this momentous occasion, and ready to lose the mask, others are cringing. Why? Here's what I'm hearing from patients.

Now that masks are no longer required in many locales, many patients are realizing they are "behind" on their dental cleanings. Safe, dentist-administered teeth whitening can give many patients a mental boost.

I've also been seeing patients who, amid an increase in Zoom and other virtual meetings, want to address issues with their smiles, to touch up their appearance.

As a result of these scenarios, my practice is seeing an increase in patients requesting elective services.

So today's column is designed as a "how to" guide, filled with dental advice as we navigate this next chapter in our pandemic journey.

First, I encourage everyone to make a dental appointment now, rather than later, if you've been holding off through the pandemic. Regular dental checkups are recommended every six months. Many dentists are seeing patients with dental health issues that can still be successfully treated and addressed.

Second, in terms of cosmetic dentistry, I want to recommend a fantastic resource: YourSmileBecomesYou.com is a website developed by the American Academy of Cosmetic Dentistry (AACD).

What is the AACD? This organization is the world's largest international dental organization. With about 4,000 members in more than 80 countries, it is dedicated to advancing excellence in the art and science of cosmetic dentistry.

Why am I telling you this? I truly

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Dr. Rita Tempel



believe that learning never ends. That's why I'm a 15-year member of the AACD. In 2020, I became an accredited member of the AACD, which means that I completed the world's most recognized advanced cosmetic dentistry credentialing program. It's a rigorous process, but I truly believe in giving my patients "my best."

So here are three pieces of advice for anyone thinking about cosmetic dentistry, whitening, straightening, and other smile-enhancing procedures:

1. Do your research. Cosmetic dentistry is not a recognized specialty, so any dentist can call himself or herself

a "cosmetic dentist." But I highly recommend that you take time to research and choose an AACD-credentialed dentist for cosmetic procedures, so that you can feel confident about your future smile. You can use the "Find a Dentist" feature on YourSmileBecomesYou.com.

2. Ask for before-and-after photos of past patients. "Just as an artist would showcase masterpieces in a gallery, a skilled cosmetic dentist will show off their best work. Ask to see examples of cosmetic dental work. Many dentists also post before-and-after photos in online Smile Galleries. Be aware that retouched photos and stock before-and-afters do exist," advises the AACD.

3. Ask questions. Make sure your dentist addresses your questions and that you feel comfortable before you move forward with any cosmetic dentistry. Again, as a resource, there is free advice on 13 different areas of cosmetic dentistry on YourSmileBecomesYou.com. Those 13 areas

include dental implants, dentures, direct bonding, implants vs. bridges, implants vs. dentures, orthodontics and aligners, periodontal plastic surgery, porcelain crowns, porcelain fixed bridges, porcelain veneers, repairing chipped teeth, teeth whitening, and tooth-colored fillings. This is all valuable information from the most trusted source in worldwide dentistry.

I wish all area residents the very best in dental health and overall health. Let's all prepare to share our smiles.

Dr. Rita Tempel is an accredited member of the American Academy of Cosmetic Dentistry and owner of Gettysburg Smiles Cosmetic & Family Dentistry as well as a diplomate of the American Board of Dental Sleep Medicine and owner of Sweet Dreams Gettysburg, 2018 York Road, Gettysburg. For more information, visit GettysburgSmiles.com, follow @ritatempeleds on Instagram or like her Facebook page @Gettysburgsmiles or call 717-339-0033.

## Sharing as an access to happiness and connections

Dear Annie: Lately, I find myself thinking a lot about old roommates, friends and co-workers. I'm talking about

people from over 30 years ago, whom I haven't spoken to in decades. I think I would like to tell them how they have

impacted my life in positive ways. Should I reach out to them or would that just be self-serving and weird? I mean, if I were to reach out, I'm not sure what the follow-up would be: "Nice catching up with you,

goodbye forever"?

Tell me, Annie. Is this sort of feeling normal as we age, and should I act on it or just forget about it? — Too Much Time to Think

Dear Too Much: Reminis-

ing more with age is not only common; it can be hugely beneficial, provided it's positive/productive in nature, which yours is. A 2016 study of 47 people living in senior care facilities found that after sharing memories, family history and personal accomplishments, participants experienced fewer feelings of loneliness and depression. So, keep taking those laps around Memory Lane.

And to the question of whether or not you should reach out to these old friends and acquaintances, my answer is a resounding yes! Too often it's not until after people are gone that we express how much they meant to us. Drop them a line today. Let them know you've been thinking of them lately and that you're glad for the time you knew them. There's a good chance you'll make their day.

Dear Annie: I've been friends with "Remy" for six years. We both play the same computer game on the same platform, and we always enjoy chatting as we play. A little over a year ago, I was single and found myself developing feelings for Remy. We'd always just been friends, but gradually, an attraction grew. Before I knew what was happening, we both found ourselves falling in love. We have so many similarities and shared interests. It's so easy to talk to each other. It's been over a year of our sharing this intense, romantic connection.

But there's a catch. I knew that she was technically married and had a kid, but I always thought that she was separated from her husband. It turned out

that wasn't the case. She insists she's going to separate from him, though, and is just waiting for her new house to be done so that she can move. Meanwhile, I'm in limbo, not knowing what's going to happen.

Annie, what do you do when the woman you love is unhappily married? She says she loves me and wants to be with me. And I'm so excited to have found someone who connects with me so deeply. Our only clashes come on the weekends when she has to play house and can't write to me. I've mostly been understanding up until now, but it's starting to get a bit frustrating. — Lover in Limbo

Dear Lover: What you call "playing house" is her living her real life. Your digital rendezvous are her playtime — a way for her to escape the day-to-day drudgery, blow off some steam and avoid having to make any substantial changes to her situation. She might not be conscious of the fact that this is what she's doing, but it doesn't make it any more acceptable. The bottom line is that if she were going to leave her husband, she'd have done so already. Pull the plug and free yourself up to connect with a loving, available woman — one you can meet in person.

"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.creatorspublishing.com> for more information. Send your questions for Annie Lane to [dearannie@creators.com](mailto:dearannie@creators.com).

**Happy 50th Anniversary**  
**Ed & Lilly Keller!**  
**Married on June 19th, 1971**  
**in Gettysburg**

**Congratulations on your 50th from Paula Keller-Bamford, Mark Keller and wife Sandy, and grandchildren Megan, Josh, Madison, and Nathan Keller.**

**Their love hasn't lost a beat - the only thing lost is some of Dad's hair, and a few marbles along the way!**

**Congrats & We love you Mom & Dad!**

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