

FALL 2011, VOLUME 16, ISSUE 2

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Annual Banquet and Supervisor Elections

Come celebrate the Madison SWCD 64th anniversary by joining us at a delicious breakfast buffet at the Der Dutchman Restaurant in Plain City, Ohio on Saturday, October 29th. The voting for Board Supervisors will be held from 8:00-8:30 A.M. Breakfast begins at 8:30 AM. and includes your choice of pancakes, eggs, biscuits & gravy, pastries and more. Tickets are \$10. To order, a registration form is inside the newsletter. No tickets will be sold at the door.

Once again, there will be a photo contest. Those attending the banquet will vote for the 1st place winners by secret ballot from the top finalists in each topic category, which are: next generation of farming, scenic and wildlife. First prize is a \$50 cash award. Please see *Rules* on back page.

Conservation awards will be presented to the Cooperator of the Year, Ralph Parsons Farm Partnership; the winning Envirothon members: Chloe Lash, Grace Hutchinson, Katy Miller, Tori Ellis, Chelcie Miller and John Riley, Advisor, of Jonathan Alder High School; and appreciation to Earth Team Volunteers, Helen Buck, Mary Cleaver and Tim O'Reilly. The banquet will conclude with a presentation, "West Jefferson in the 1950s," by Earl Ballenger, Madison County Historian.

2011 Banquet Presentation *West Jefferson in the 1950s*

Earl Ballenger, graduate of London High School, worked at the Madison County Municipal Court for 18 years and spent the last 12 years as Clerk of the Municipal Court. He has been giving presentations for the last 8 years.



Earl Ballenger, Local Historian

He started to build a collection of old pictures when he learned how to research from a library volunteer. He did a column in the Madison Messenger, doing stories on the pictures he had. He published a book on the 5 years of doing the columns and is in the process of doing another

See *West Jeff* page 5

Calendar of Events

Madison SWCD Supervisor Election and Breakfast Buffet

Oct. 29, 8:00 AM
Der Dutchman
Plain City, OH

Robert T. Florence Little Darby Scenic River Nature Preserve Open House

Lafayette Plain City Rd.
Nov. 5, 10 a.m.
Monroe Township, OH

Three Running for the Board

We have three candidates running for two open positions as board supervisor. The Board of Supervisors consists of community leaders elected by county residents to represent them in charting the course for local soil and water conservation and natural resource management. They guide the staff to implement a conservation program in the county to address local concerns. They have a three-year term and serve without pay. You can vote in one of three ways: (1) by coming to the banquet, (2) stopping by the office between 8:00 a.m. and 3:30 p.m. on Friday, October 28th, or (3) requesting an absentee ballot by mail or in person. Our candidates are:



Tim O'Reilly is a resident of West Jefferson. He has a B.S. in Environmental and Natural Resources from The Ohio State University. He studied Environmental Science, specializing in Soil Science. He is employed as a packager, so he signed up as an Earth Team Volunteer with the

Natural Resources Conservation Service to gain experience with projects related to his field of study. He is also a board member of his local Boy Scout Troop.

Tim feels that the most important natural resource concern is protecting soil health and preventing soil erosion. Farmland is shrinking and the population is increasing, creating a need to increase yield. In order to increase yield over the years, good soil health and erosion prevention will be essential.

He is interested in becoming a board member because the SWCD protects soil health and assists farmers, both of which are vital to our food supply.



Andra Troyer is a lifetime resident of Madison County. She lives in Monroe Township and farms 1,000 acres of corn and soybeans with her husband, Rick and son, Jared. They no till, maintain grass waterways, and do soil testing.

In the 1960's, the Troyer family planted over 300 trees, which still stand along the Darby.

Andra has been involved with the SWCD through the Darby Creek Watershed Planning Group. She serves on the Ohio Farm Bureau State Board representing 20 counties, the Natural Resources Advisory Team and has served on the Swank Advisory Board at OSU, dealing with rural and urban issues. She served on the committees for the Madison County Comprehensive Plan and 208 Water Quality Plan. and is currently serving on the farmland preservation task force. She also is the liaison between Farm Bureau and the Division of Soil and Natu-

See *Candidates* page 3

Reservation Form for Madison SWCD's Annual Banquet

Please fill out and return to the office by October 21, 2011

(Space is limited—reserve your seats early!)

Name _____

Address _____

Number of people attending ----- x \$10.00 = \$ -----

Please make checks payable to MSWCD. Please mail forms to: Madison SWCD
831 US 42 NE
London, OH 43140

How Do I Vote Absentee?

We ask that you call our office at 740-852-4004 to request proper absentee ballot request forms.

Candidates from page 2

ral Resources. Andra currently serves as chairman of the Madison SWCD.

Land use and drainage issues are very important along with protecting our natural resources. She thinks we can accomplish this through education and forging partnerships. She would like to retain a board seat because she has many contacts in the agricultural community and she would like to continue building those relationships between landowners and the Madison SWCD.



Howard Yoder grew up on a small diversified livestock and grain farm in the Plain City area. Educationally, he graduated from Jonathan Alder, earned an Associates Degree from The Ohio State University's Agricultural Technical Institute, Wooster, OH, and a Bachelor of Arts degree in International Agricultural Development from Eastern Mennonite University, Harrisonburg, VA. Vocationally, he spent six years in Latin America working with the Mennonite Church in water resources/rural development and church relations. He is currently farming 500 acres of corn and soybeans with a small supplemental vegetable enterprise.

Howard sees an important role for Madison SWCD in the current dialogue on farmland preservation, energy sources and zoning that balances conservation and agricultural interests. He foresees a growing concern for soil health in Madison County utilizing the tools of no-till production systems and cover crops.

Howard has served on the Board of Supervisors for three years and has enjoyed the privilege of working alongside a highly dedicated staff. He is married to Louise (27 years). They have three children.

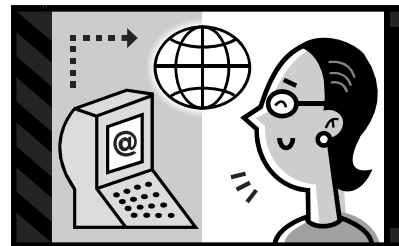
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Budget News

SWCD Requests Funding for an Educator

After the District was cut 50% in 2009, staffing was cut in half. We brought back a part-time educator in 2010-2011 thanks to grants from Martha Holden Jennings Foundation and the Madison Conservation Foundation. Christy Ahnmark, Education Conservationist, worked approximately 300 hours and provided 104 presentations to 2,423 students. Christy is highly qualified and the teachers and students really appreciate her programs. We would like to make this a permanent part-time position with more hours in programs because youth education is very important and the public has requested this service in opinion surveys and planning meetings.

Funding for local government is a big challenge for non-mandated services, such as soil and water conservation districts. But, conservation starts at home and should not be left only in the hands of the federal government. We appreciate county commissioners David Dhume, Mark Forrest and Paul Gross for their continued support and dedication to our local conservation effort. State Senator Chris Widener and State Representative Bob Hackett were instrumental in passing an Ohio budget that strongly supported conservation districts, enabling us to provide conservation assistance, information and education to all Madison County residents. We also would like to thank our affiliate members and customers who utilize our services to improve the natural resources.



Go to the Web!

To save on costs, we have reduced the number of newsletters. Please visit our website at www.co.madison.oh.us/15085 to receive the latest news on programs and current events.

Farmland Preservation Task Force



It was 1999 when the county completed its first Farmland Preservation Plan. The commissioners at that time were David Dhume, Herb Markley and Joe Yoder. Madison County is a well known leader in farmland preservation among townships and county governments across Ohio, and they used the plan as an opportunity for community leaders to look at what was happening in the county and make recommendations on how to improve processes and zoning regulations for the people of Madison County to prosper and enjoy their rural way of life.

In January, the Soil and Water Conservation District board approached the county commissioners to take another look at the Farmland Preservation Plan. The board was concerned that the county residents needed new tools to stay competitive with the changes and challenges facing agriculture. The commissioners agreed and invited officials, business leaders and landowners to participate on a Farmland Preservation Task Force to renew the plan.

One goal is to plan for the growth of nontraditional agricultural operations, such as wineries and agri-tainment, and rural energy production.

The topics covered to date have been Windmills and Biomass Energy, Methane Digesters, Agricultural Tourism and Environmental Policy, Agricultural Easements and the I.R.S., and Zoning for Agriculture. Future topics will include creating a local farmland preservation program, public opinion survey results about farmland preservation, and creating county policy recommendations.

Each meeting has been open to the public and advertised in the paper. The next meeting is October 17th at 7:00 p.m. the Madison County Engineer's Conference Room at 825 US HWY 42 NE, London, in between the Wendy's and McDonald's. Please come to a meeting and see what the Farmland Preservation Task Force is about!

Stewarts Preserve 544 acres in AEPP

AEPP, which stands for Agricultural Easement Purchase Program, is a Clean Ohio initiative that is administered through the Ohio Department of Agriculture (ODA). Once a year, landowners with farmland may apply at the Soil and Water Conservation District for a grant to place an easement on their property to permanently prohibit nonagricultural development. Across the State, 190 farms applied, 41 farms were accepted, and 6,288 acres preserved.

Madison County was fortunate to get Bruce and Steven Stewart's 544 acre farm in Union and Paint Townships,

accepted. The Stewarts were one of eight farms in Southwest Ohio to be awarded.

What makes this year even more exciting is that the commissioners, with assistance from the District, successfully applied for a Farm and Ranch Lands Protection Program grant from the Natural Resources Conservation Service to match the easement dollars up to \$375,000 to start their own farmland preservation program. This means that Madison County farmers only need to compete with other Madison County farmers, rather than with the entire state of



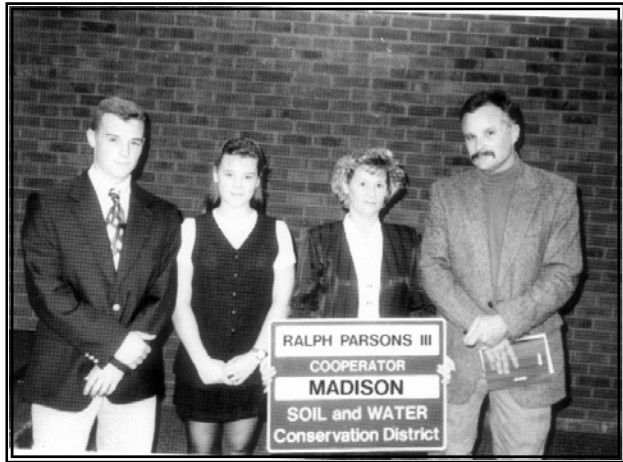
Ohio. A local customized program also means having flexibility and creativity to get the most bang for the buck.

The Madison County Farmland Preservation Task Force will be asked to help formulate recommendations to develop a program that will consider easements as well as funding farm viability or economic enhancement plans.

Outstanding District Cooperator of the Year



(L to R) “Sony” Parsons II, “Tab” Parsons IV and “Chip” Parsons III. Ralph Parsons Farm Partnership will be recognized Outstanding Cooperator of the Year at the SWCD Annual Banquet on October 29. No stranger to conservation, Chip Parsons was the Cooperator in 1994 (below). They have made additional improvements with grassed waterways, buffer strips, nutrient management, and more.



Conservation Corner

By: Mike Retterer, Farm Bill Biologist, Pheasants/Quail Forever

This was a good year here in Madison County for conservation. I met with landowners who were approximately halfway through their contract in the Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) to see how everything is doing. During the land evaluations of more than 430 acres, we found that CRP land is proving to be an asset for wildlife. In and around the field borders, filter strips, and whole fields, there is a definite presence of wildlife. In addition to deer, coyotes, rabbits, and song birds, we saw quail, pheasant, turkey, and a whole host of pollinators. (With the native pollinators on the decline, this is a welcome sight!)

In order to continue to have success with wildlife, management is needed. One common problem we encounter is that the native grass is becoming “too thick,” crowding out wildflowers and legumes. In the past, prairies would be restarted through wildfires caused by lightning or by Native Americans who used fire as a hunting technique. Today, landowners may enhance the CRP acres by burning, disking and inter-seeding, or spraying to reduce the dominance of grass and restore the balance of wildflowers and legumes. The wildflowers and legumes are key food sources for the birds and pollinators.

Not only did we work with currently enrolled CRP landowners, we were able to enroll almost 500 acres of marginal land into conservation practices. We are restoring seasonally flooded areas of wet prairies in key locations to enhance the travel corridors through Madison County for all wildlife. I hope everyone will have the opportunity to get out and see some of these wonderful habitats in Madison County.

West Jeff from page 1

book. It will cover the remaining years of his column along with stories and articles about the Centennial celebration here in Madison County and London.

Ballenger states, “Just looking at the pictures can reveal several interesting historical facts of interest.” For our SWCD Banquet, he will show a film from West Jefferson, which shows it in 1938 and 1952. The film is narrated by John Kile.



Local Work Group Met

The Local Work Group is a group of conservation professionals and public officials called together to identify and address local resource concerns so that Federal Programs such as the Environmental Quality Insurance Program (EQIP) may be objectively and prudently used to solve only the most critical problems. Representing Madison County were Dave Brand, County Engineer; Jennifer Hunter, County Auditor; Bob Hunter, SWCD Supervisor; Andra Troyer, SWCD Supervisor; Joe Howard, Farm Service Agency; Sara Morris, Resource Conservationist; and Julia Cumming, SWCD Program Administrator.

How EQIP works is that Ohio is allocated a certain amount of money from the Federal Government to address resource concerns such as water quality, soil compaction, and invasive species. Applications based on the farming operation are put into categories to determine how much money

See *EQIP* page 7

The excerpt below is from the inaugural Madison SWCD Newsletter dated July 1971. The District was organized on July 25, 1946 and was approved on January 20th, 1947 as the 52nd District in the State. The article looks back at the early promoters of conservation. How many of these names are familiar to you?

Responsibility Accepted

District Supervisors are elected by the landowners and operators in the county. They serve without pay and have the important responsibility of guiding the District work in natural resource conservation.

The following men have served the Madison District since its beginning in 1947. Their years of service are indicated by the number following the name. Fred Beauman (3), Mason Dailey (3), Harry High (3), John H. Buehl, Jr. (7), James Littler (8), Delbert Crouse (15), James H. Miller (6), Harold Friend (2), Austin Harbage (8), Delbert Darn (5), Donald Becker (6), Charles Cecil (12), Jerry Beauman (8), Joe Yoder (13*), Louis Thomas (3), Lewis Overturf (5), Marion Moats (7*), John Jacobs (4*), C. Robert Wilson (3), Alfred Farmwald (3*), Kenneth Miller (1*). *Supervisors now serving.

Paul Bangham, served as conservationist with the District from 1947 until his retirement in 1969.

Affiliate Members

The District Supervisors are happy to have townships, businesses and individuals as affiliate members of the Madison District. These members donate \$25—\$100 to the District to carry out conservation education programs. This newsletter, awards for contests, and camp scholarships are among the uses of the affiliate funds. Listed below are the affiliates for 2011.

B & T Farms, Inc., Neil Babb, Gerald T. Baynes, Attorney; Helen Buck, Karick Farms, Buckeye Ford, Maryann Burr, Burr Farms; David & Rebecca Call, Roger & Pam Call, Chaney & Thomas Insurance, David & Joanna Dhume, Gene & Sue Dougherty, John R. Dunkle, Dwyer Bros. Inc., Dwyer Insurance, Marian Fisher, Robin Green, Hidden Creek; Bob & Sue Hackett, Huntington National Bank, JD Equipment, Inc.; Kiwanis Club of London, L & R Excavating, Inc.; Gary W. Londergan, Attorney; Madison County Fish & Game Association, Merchants National Bank; Madison County Farm Bureau, John & Joanna Mitchell, Murry & Edwards Marathon, O'Connor's, Ralph Parsons Farm Partnership, James Peart, Rising Sun Dairy, State Farm Insurance; James R Slagle, REA Farms; Wayne Snyder, Ned J. Speasmaker, Jim & Sherry Stewart, Stewart Farm Inc., Joe Vick Farms, Clair Zimmerman, Village of Mount Sterling, Paint Township, Village of Plain City, and Village of West Jefferson.



Game Check System

By: Matt Teders, Madison County Wildlife Game Officer



EQIP continued
from page 6

With deer season around the have dedicated deer season, I this article to explaining the new license sale and game check system the Division of Wildlife has introduced. The new system is called the Wild Ohio Customer Relations Management System, WOCRMS for short.

The WOCRMS system is a Web-based license and game-check system. Transactions will occur in real time, unlike our current point-of-sale system. Licenses and permits are able to be purchased at wildohio.com or at any participating license vendor. In Madison County there are 5 license vendors: Dwyer Brothers, K-Mart, Wal-Mart in London, and BP and FASCAR in Mt. Sterling.

The hunting license themselves have not changed much since prior years. The biggest change is a Customer Identification Number, CIN. Every individual that transacts with the Division of Wildlife will receive a unique CIN. The CIN allows the Division of Wildlife to track each individual's transaction history and allows individuals to access all their records using this number. All transactions an individual makes, including; hunter/trapper education, controlled hunts, and license sales, and past harvest records can be viewed by them when they login to their account on wildohio.com.

Checking of deer and turkey

has changed. Each permit has a unique number assigned to an individual's CIN. Checking of deer and turkey will be done using this unique permit number. All harvests are still required to be permanently tagged.

The WOCRMS system offers three different options to check in your deer or turkey:

Option 1: Harvests can be checked via the internet at ohio-gamecheck.com

Option 2: Harvests can be checked via telephone at 1-877-TAG-ITOH

Option 3: Harvests can be checked at a license sales agent

Landowners that are using landowner tags cannot use the telephone method. This method requires the use of a permit number, which landowners are not required to purchase.

Like prior years, deer and turkey are still required to be temporarily tagged immediately upon harvest. Deer and turkey are required to be checked in by 11:30pm the day of harvest. When you check your deer or turkey, you will receive a 12 digit number. This is your permanent tag number, no more metal tags. The permanent tag number must be filled out on your permanent tag, which is printed with your deer permit. This must then be kept with the animal.

If you have question on WOCRMS and see me around town, feel free to stop me and ask, or call me at 614-644-3929 ext 1209. Additional information on WOCRMS can found by visiting wildohio.com or by calling 1-800-WILDLIFE.

is spent on them and how the applications will be ranked. Specialty Crops and Livestock Applications will compete at the state level. Cropland and Pasture will compete at a county level. The Local Work Group focused on Cropland and Pasture resource concerns because they can assign local points to rank which application should be funded first.

For Pasture applications, priority practices are: rotational grazing system; heavy use areas; exclusion fencing from creeks (not including managed watering access points) and exclusion fencing from woods. For Cropland applications, priority practices are: buffers, including waterways; cover crops; hay crop rotation; nutrient management; and continuous no till residue management.

In 2011, twenty-one applications were submitted and four contracts were awarded to implement the following practices in Madison County: Comprehensive Nutrient Management Plans, waste storage facility, animal mortality facility (compost), cover crops, microirrigation, pest management, seasonal high tunnel system for crops, heavy use area protection from livestock and equipment and forest stand improvement.

EQIP applications are accepted year-round, but the first step is to make a conservation plan. Call the office to make an appointment to discuss your short and long term goals to improve your production.

Rules of Photo Contest

Attention amateur photographers! We want more local photographs to help us to promote conservation in this county. The Supervisors are sponsoring a photo contest with a first place prize of \$50 cash award. The photos must be taken at a location in Madison County; however, the photographer is not required to live in the county. The contest is not open to any MSWCD supervisor, staff or immediate family member. Deadline is October 14th at 3:30 p.m.

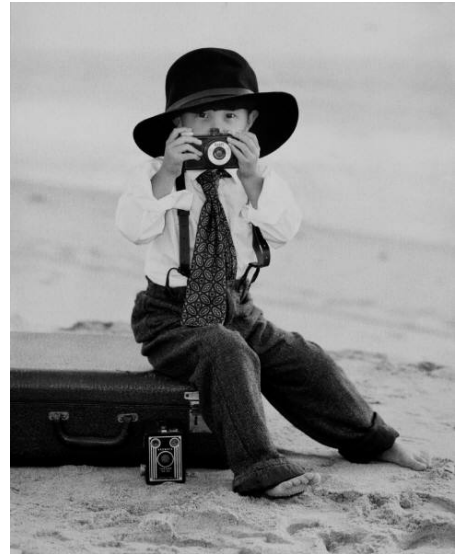
The three categories are:

Next Generation of Farming (ex: kids on the farm; use of advance technology; value-added farming; farmer markets)

Scenic/Pictorial (ex. sunset, urban landscape, farmland view)

Wildlife Photos (note: do not capture or attempt to capture the wildlife subject)

Prints must be 8" X 10" in size. Digital photos must be submitted as prints. There is no entry fee. Choose what you feel is the appropriate category for your print(s). A total of three prints may be submitted per photographer.



Photos will be judged by: (1) technical excellence (sharpness, lighting, composition, exposure); (2) originality/creativity, and (3) interest (photo features a recognizable center of interest in relationship to the category). The first round of judging will select the finalists in each topic. Those attending the Annual Banquet will vote for the 1st place. The winners will be announced by the closing time of this event.

All entrants must agree that any photograph submitted may be used for marketing and promoting purposes directly related to the mission of the conservation district. Credit will be given to the photographer. Please call our office at 740-852-4004 or email julia.cumming@oh.nacdnet.net to obtain an official entry form. Forms also available at www.co.madison.oh.us/15085.



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London, OH 43140

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Bob McCarty, Soils Conservation Technician

Mike Retterer, Farm Bill Biologist

LaRae Baker, Soil Conservationist

Website

www.co.madison.oh.us/15085