

CONSERVATION NEWS

Newsletter of
the Defiance
Soil & Water
Conservation
District



In Cooperation with the Defiance County Commissioners

Spring 2014

Inside this Issue

Page 2

- * Poster Contest Winners
- * Area I Envirothon
- * Word Puzzle Winner

Page 3

- * Backyard Composting
- * Upper Maumee
Volunteer Opportunity

Page 4

- * Ditch Maintenance
Annual Report

Page 5

- * Ditch Maintenance
Annual Report
- * Waste Tree Materials
Available
- * Manure Stockpiling

Page 6

- * Composter & Rain Barrel
Sale

Page 7

- * Word Search

Page 8

- * NRCS Easement
Programs



Ag Appreciation Breakfast Held

The OSU Extension Office, Defiance Chamber of Commerce, and the District partnered to host the Ag Appreciation Breakfast on March 25 at the Defiance K of C Hall with 260 in attendance. The featured speaker was Hallie Sue Hiser, FFA District 9 President, who engaged the audience with her life-long ties to agriculture and the important responsibility that the ag community has in spreading the good word about agriculture. In addition, Mark Seger, ODNR Conservation Engineer, presented an overview and the results of the Western Lake Erie Basin Nutrient Reduction Program.



Ag Hall of Fame inductees (left to right): Waldo Imbrock, Catherine Cline accepting the posthumous award for her husband Richard, and Don Rethmel.

Highlighting the event was the third annual induction of three members to the Defiance County Ag Hall of Fame. The new inductees included Richard Cline (posthumous), Waldo Imbrock, and Don Rethmel. These inductees were nominated and selected by members of the community for their outstanding contributions to agriculture. In their honor, plaques will be added to the Ag Hall of Fame display in the main ag hallway of the Evergreen Lane Office Complex at 06879 Evansport Road. Congratulations to the inductees and thank you for everyone who turned out to make this event a success!

District Open House Scheduled

The District will be hosting an open house and an election at the Evergreen Lane Office complex, located at 06879 Evansport Road, Defiance, on Wednesday, September 10, 2014. The open house will begin at 2:00 pm and will run through 7:00 pm. We will have brief, scheduled award and informational sessions for guests throughout the afternoon. There will also be hands-on activities for children of all ages. In addition, a barbeque dinner will be available throughout the open house free of charge.

The election will commence at 3:00 pm and will end at 6:00 pm to elect two District Board of Supervisors. Open house schedule details will be provided in the summer edition of *Conservation News* as well as on the District's website at www.defiance-county.com/swcd.

Poster Contest Winners

This year 863 posters were submitted by Defiance County students in grades K-12 for the annual poster contest. This year's theme, "DIG DEEPER: Mysteries in the Soil," encouraged students to take a closer look at the nature of soil including the complex of minerals, air, and water in addition to the micro-organisms and decaying remains of once-living things. Congratulations to each of the winning students!

Kindergarten and 1st Grade

- 1st Emily Elston, Grade 1, Hicksville Elementary
- 2nd Ashlyn Stoury, Grade 1, Hicksville Elementary
- 3rd Jory Greer, Grade 1, Hicksville Elementary

2nd and 3rd Grade

- 1st Meling Bond and Tristen Frederick, Grade 3, Ayersville Elementary (tie)
- 2nd Morgan Bybee, Grade 3, Tinora Elementary
- 3rd Emma Pry, Grade 3, Holy Cross Elementary

4th, 5th, and 6th Grade

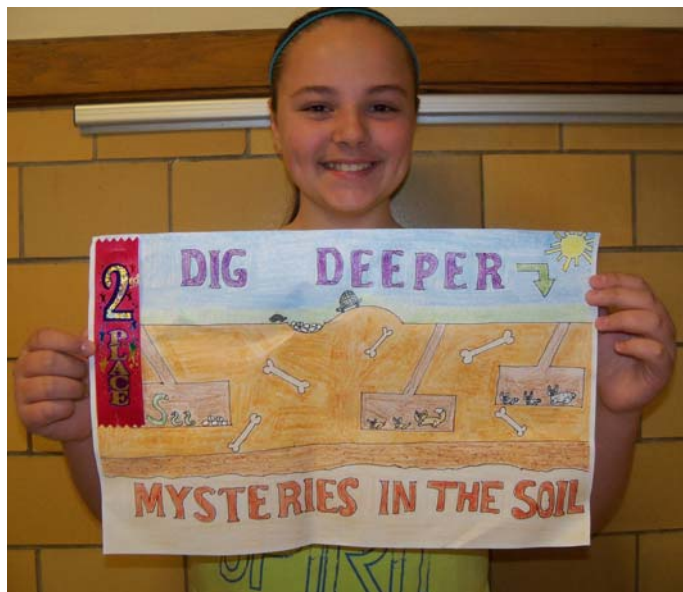
- 1st Sydney King, Grade 6, Ayersville Middle
- 2nd Anna Ankney, Grade 5, Fairview Elementary
- 3rd Gavin Askins, Grade 4, Tinora Elementary

7th and 8th Grade

- 1st Loryn Wright, Grade 7, Ayersville Junior High
- 2nd Amanda Addington, Grade 7, Ayersville Junior High
- 3rd Logan Smith, Grade 7, Ayersville Junior High

High School

- 1st Emily Culler, Grade 10, Fairview High School
- 2nd Alexis Grant, Grade 12, Fairview High School
- 3rd Madison Skinner, Grade 11, Fairview High School



Amanda Addington's poster was selected by the District as this year's overall winner. This poster was printed on placemats and distributed throughout the county.

District Hosts Envirothon at Auglaize Village

Fifty-three teams competed in this year's Envirothon at Auglaize Village on April 23. High school teams of up to five members were tested on soils, aquatic ecology, forestry, wildlife, and current events. Sponsored by the Ohio Federation of Soil and Water Conservation Districts and Ohio Department of Natural Resources, the Envirothon is designed to stimulate, reinforce, and enhance high school students' interest in the environment and natural resources.

First place was awarded to Fort Jennings Team 1, second place to Sylvania Southview 1, and third place to Fort Jennings Team 2. Congratulations!

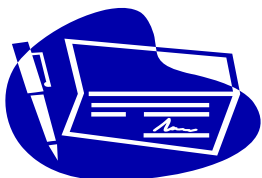
The District greatly appreciates all the effort provided by Auglaize Village as well as the use of their facilities in addition to our generous sponsors, volunteers, ODNR, and Area I Districts in making this year's Envirothon a success.



Students in soils pit analyzing characteristics for a Roselms soil.

Congratulations

The winter edition word puzzle prize giveaway was awarded to Ray Burzyck of rural Defiance County. Ray's puzzle was randomly selected from the hundreds entered into our drawing. As a result, Ray received a twenty dollar gift certificate to the Northtowne Mall. You could be our next puzzle winner! Be sure to complete and return this edition's puzzle for your chance to win!



Ray Burzyck receiving his gift certificate.

Backyard Composting Programs

As we entered into our spring thaw, a composting program was held at each of the three Defiance County Libraries-Defiance, Sherwood, and Johnson Memorial in Hicksville. During the composting class, Stephanie Singer, Upper Maumee Watershed Coordinator, described the basics of composting along with the many benefits to soil and water quality.

Did you know that one teaspoon of compost enriched soil contains one billion bacteria and several yards of fungal filaments? For those of you wondering if this is a good thing -YES, great for helping your plants grow! Did you know that grass clippings stockpiled near waterways can cause algal blooms and fish kills? Did you know that the average household sends 650 pounds of compostable material to the land fill every year? Why not take your grass clippings, leaves, yard waste, and kitchen scraps and turn them into valuable soil?



Composting is easy! If it is a plant or was once part of a plant, it can be composted. Techniques vary from the very basic compost piles, to homemade bins, to commercial plastic bins. Successful and odor free composting involves weekly turning and watering along with a correct mix of 'browns' (leaves, straw) and 'greens' (fruit/vegetable scraps, grass clippings). The brown to green ratio should be about 25:1. For more detailed information, please refer to our composting brochure on our website at www.defiance-county.com/swcd.

Workshop participants were offered cost share on compost bins through a Healthy Soils grant. Many of your neighbors will be new composters this year. Sandi Brown, a teacher from Hicksville Elementary, attended the workshop and plans to use her composter with the school gardening program. Susan Mack, another participant, already had a home composter but graciously donated a composter to the school! Thanks to all of the participants.

The next composting workshop:

Lunch Workshop: Bring your lunch and join us for Composting 101 on Tuesday, June 3 from 12-1 pm at the Defiance County Public Safety Building, 22491 Mill Street, Defiance. The workshop is free but registration is required! The first ten registrants will receive \$30.00 off one of our compost bins.

Upper Maumee Watershed Volunteer Monitoring

Through an Ohio Lake Erie Commission grant, a voluntary stream monitoring program will begin this spring! We are looking for 16 volunteers to monitor designated waterways leading to the Upper Maumee.

Volunteer monitors will:

- Attend a two-hour training session at the Defiance SWCD.
- Once a month on a designated Sunday or Monday, work with a partner to gather stream data. This will include a few simple stream-side tests and gathering a water sample. Water samples will then be shipped by the District to Heidelberg University Lab for nutrient analysis. Project time period is May 2014 to April 2015.
- Have fun enjoying the great outdoors while learning more about our local streams!



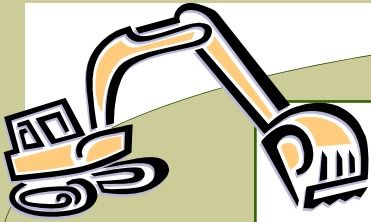
This project will be a fun way to get outdoors with family and friends while contributing to our understanding of the Maumee River tributaries. Please register by calling Stephanie Singer at 419-782-1794 or email at ssinger@defiance-county.com

SWCD Office Hours

Mon.-Fri. 7:30 a.m. – 4:00 p.m.

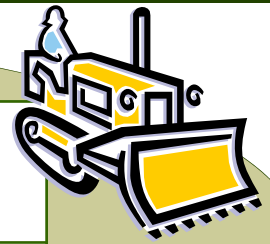
The SWCD Board of Supervisors typically holds its regular monthly meeting (open to the public) on the 3rd Tuesday of each month at 7:30 a.m. Any changes to this date/time will be posted in the local newspaper.

The Defiance SWCD and the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) prohibits discrimination against its customers, employees and applicants for employment on the bases of race, color, national origin, age, disability, sex, gender identity, religion, reprisal, and where applicable, political beliefs, marital status, familial or parental status, sexual orientation, or all or part of an individual's income is derived from any public assistance program, or protected genetic information in employment or in any program or activity conducted or funded by the Department. (Not all prohibited bases apply to all programs and/or employment activities.)



2013

Ditch Maintenance Annual Report



Administered by Defiance Soil & Water Conservation
District in cooperation with the Defiance County
Commissioners & Defiance County Engineer

Ditch Maintenance Report

In December of 1989, the Defiance County Commissioners and the Defiance County Engineer entered into an agreement with the Board of Supervisors to manage and operate the Defiance County Ditch Maintenance Program as required by the O.R.C. Since that time there have been 70 improvements added to the program. Currently, we have 198 improvements under maintenance, totaling 351 miles. The Soil and Water office also has 14 requests for new Conservation Works of Improvement projects.

The Defiance County Ditch Maintenance Department treats drainage improvements as vital infrastructure to Northwest Ohio. Agricultural producers and rural landowners in Northwest Ohio have been concerned with the need to dispose of excess water. For agricultural



Work Completed in 2013

- 5.0 miles bottom cleaned
- 150 miles brush and cattail control
- 1,070 ton of rock for bank protection
- 2,515 pounds grass seed and fertilizer
- 49 improvements repaired
- 754 feet of tile/pipe repairs
- Leaning tree/log jam removal

producers, excess water means delays in plantings, replanting, soil compaction, reduced yields and delay in harvesting. For homeowners in the urban area, excess water can mean damage due to flooding of dwellings and property.

The cost of new construction or the reconstruction of drainage improvements greatly exceeds the cost of maintaining the improvement once construction is completed. That is why, once a project is constructed, the County Commissioners are required by law to place the improvement under the Defiance County Ditch Maintenance program.



DITCH MAINTENANCE ANNUAL REPORT cont.

2013 Revenue

Local	\$405,676.69
Other Counties' Taxes	\$45,441.47
Equipment Maintenance/Other	\$9,369.62
Total Revenue	\$460,487.78

2013 Disbursements

Salaries	\$110,553.12
Benefits	\$23,349.75
Materials/Supplies	\$58,757.69
Equipment	\$108,537.80
Fuel	\$25,577.92
Contracted Services	\$56,968.17
Contracted Repairs	\$3,720.57
Utilities	\$2,294.62
Advertising/Printing	\$3,000.00
Other Expenses (Jt. Projects)	\$14,823.19
Workers' Compensation	\$1,232.79
Prior Year Receipts Refund	\$8,600.40
Total Disbursements	\$417,416.02

Ditch Maintenance Steering Board

Warren Schlatter
Otto Nicely
Tom Kime
James Harris, Jr.
Mike Zeedyk
Louis Shiningier
Gary Mavis
Dan Vetter
Keith Schroeder
Tom Beck
Bill Moats
Roger Zeedyk IV
Paul Nusbaum
Leonard Siebenaler
Lynn Davis
Dale Krill
Jeff Green
Jason Roehrig
Ben Gerken

Waste Tree Materials Available



The Ditch Maintenance Department occasionally has situations where waste tree debris needs to be removed from a jobsite. If you are interested in obtaining the material for firewood, etc., a waste agreement form can be filled out. Once the waste agreement form has been submitted, you will be put on a list and will be contacted when waste materials are available. Please call Kevin Hancock, Ditch Maintenance Administrator at 419-782-1794 to obtain a form or for more information.

Manure Stockpiling Guidelines

As we move closer to wheat harvest, many producers will begin to utilize manure and biosolids to meet soil fertility requirements. Often times, these products will be hauled and stockpiled in fields until conditions become fit or a custom applicator is available to field apply. Be mindful of where you locate these stockpiles, keeping in mind the proximity to adjacent properties/residences, wells, field surface drainage, and subsurface drainage systems. NRCS has a very useful manure stockpiling worksheet that provides recommended setback distances and additional items to consider when deciding when and where to stockpile. Also, before applying, be sure you are familiar with setback distances pertaining to the field application of manure that are included in NRCS's nutrient management standard. These documents are available online and at our office. They can also be mailed/emailed upon request.



Compost Bin & Rain Barrel Sale



Why Compost?

More than one-quarter of our household waste is composed of biodegradable organic material. Composting is a very efficient way of recycling yard waste and kitchen scraps through decomposition. Composting helps protect water quality while providing excellent compost for your garden and yard! There are many effective ways to compost with and without the purchase of a bin. However, the bins simplify the process and ensure a tidy composting area. Please contact our office for composting tips and other backyard conservation techniques for your home!

Tumbling Composter \$100

Stationary Compost Bin \$55



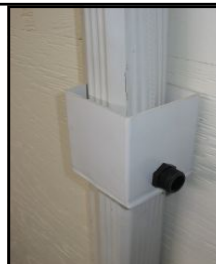
55 Gallon Gray Rain Barrel \$75



Rainwater Harvesting

Water usage can increase by up to 30% during the summer months! Rain barrels are a great way to harvest and store water for reuse in your own backyard! Using a diverter makes it easy to connect the barrel to your downspouts.

Please contact our office for diverter options to fit a variety of rain barrels!



Oak Rain Barrel \$150

Includes 3" x 4" Automatic Diverter



Wooden rain barrels are made from used bourbon, wine, and beer barrels. They are tested, rinsed & converted.

1 inch of rain on a 1,000 square foot roof yields 625 gallons of water!

Nutrient Management Word Search

Proper nutrient management is key to crop production and protecting water quality. Search the puzzle below for terms relating to nutrient management. Once completed, return the puzzle to the District by June 13. An entry will be randomly drawn and the winner will be awarded a set of gardening hand tools. Thanks for reading *Conservation News* and good luck!

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AMOUNT

COMMERCIAL

CROP YIELDS

EROSION

FORAGE

IMPROVEMENT

MANURE

ORGANIC BY PRODUCTS

PRODUCTIVITY

RECOMMENDATIONS

RIGHT SOURCE

RUNOFF

SURFACE WATER

WATER QUALITY

APPLICATION

CONSERVATION PRACTICES

ECOSYSTEMS

FARMING

FUTURE

LOGISTICS

NON POINT SOURCE

PLANTS

PROTECTION

RIGHT PLACE

RIGHT TIME

SOIL PH

TILLAGE

WEATHER FACTORS

CHALLENGES

CONTAMINATION

ENVIRONMENT

FERTILIZER

GROUND WATER

MANAGEMENT

NUTRIENT

POLLUTANTS

PUBLIC

RIGHT RATE

ROOT ZONE

STEWARDSHIP

VARIABILITY

Name: _____ Phone Number: _____

CONSERVATION NEWS

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swcd@defiance-county.com
www.defiance-county.com/swcd

Board of Supervisors

Tom Beck
Bill Moats
Dan Vetter
Keith Schroeder
Roger Zeedyk IV

District Personnel

Jason Roehrig
Terri Agler
Ben Gerken
Tyler Miller
Stephanie Singer
Bill Grimes
Jake Mahnke (Intermittent)

Ditch Maintenance Personnel

Kevin Hancock
Ed Walters
Dave Sines

NRCS Personnel

Steve Snyder
Lori Shank
Mike Boff

NRCS Signup for Farmland and Wetland Conservation Easements

USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service is now accepting applications for its new Agricultural Conservation Easement Program (ACEP). The Agricultural Conservation Easement Program consolidates three former NRCS easement programs – the Farm and Ranch Lands Protection Program, the Grasslands Reserve Program and the Wetlands Reserve Program.

“This is an exciting new opportunity for even more people to get involved in conserving natural resources,” said Ohio State Conservationist Terry Cosby. “We encourage State and local governments, non-governmental organizations, and private landowners to contact their local NRCS office to find out how to apply.”

The ACEP, created through the 2014 Farm Bill, has two components, one for agricultural land easements and one for wetland reserve easements.

Entities with the ability to purchase agricultural land easements that would prevent productive working lands from conversion to non-agricultural uses are encouraged to apply for ACEP. NRCS will give priority to applications that maximize protection of land devoted to food production. Cropland, rangeland, grassland, pastureland, and nonindustrial private forestland are eligible land uses.

Individual landowners may apply for wetland reserve easements and restorations. NRCS will fund restorations that have the greatest potential to protect and enhance habitat for migratory birds and other wildlife, improve water quality, reduce flood damage, and encourage outdoor education and recreation. Eligible lands include privately owned farmed or converted wetlands with the potential for successful and cost effective restorations.

Those interested in applying for ACEP must submit an application to Ohio NRCS by June 6, 2014. Applications are available at local [USDA Service Centers](#) and at www.nrcs.usda.gov/GetStarted. NRCS will begin evaluating agreements in late August.