

CONSERVATION NEWS

Newsletter of
the Defiance
Soil & Water
Conservation
District



In Cooperation with the Defiance County Commissioners

Winter 2017

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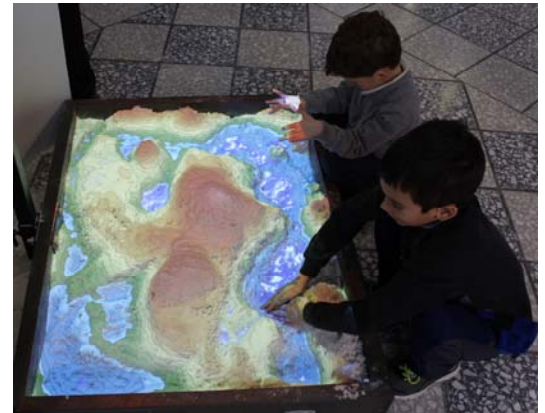
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- Upcoming Events

Farm Fair 2017

Virtual Watershed

The 'Virtual Watershed' was a big hit at the 2017 Farm Fair attracting kids of all ages to the Defiance SWCD booth. This interactive display combines playing in the sand, state of the art technology, and real-time feedback to teach about our natural resources. Farm Fair attendees could not resist the light images displayed on the soft sand. As people moved the sand to form mountains, valleys, ravines, rivers and lakes, a projector/Xbox camera changed the display of topographic lines. The most exciting feature is the ability to create rain so participants can see the 'water' flowing to low spots on the model.



The Defiance SWCD is excited to use the 'Virtual Watershed' to teach about important conservation topics.

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Tree Sale Order Forms Inside Due March 10th

Cletus Vetter Memorial College Scholarship Fund Grows

The District has partnered with the Defiance Area Foundation in introducing a fundraising



Thank you to the Vetter family for their generous gifts to the Cletus Vetter Memorial College Scholarship fund. Jason Roehrig (left) and Chris Yoder (right) with Dan and Alice Vetter.

campaign for the newly formed *Cletus Vetter Memorial College Scholarship Fund*.

During Clete's lifetime of being a farmer, he loved to nurture the soil and watch his crops grow. Clete gave endless hours of volunteerism and was very active in many organizations.

He was elected to the Defiance SWCD Board of Supervisors and served from 1961 – 1981. He was also an Area 1 SWCD Director from 1979 – 1981. Clete received numerous awards and distinctions, not only at the local level but at the county and state level as well. He definitely had an impact on soil and water conservation through his farming practices

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Thank You Defiance County Commissioners & SWCD Board

The District would like to welcome two new members to the Defiance County Board of Commissioners, Mick Procratsky and Gary Plotts, who join Commissioner Ryan Mack. We greatly appreciate your continued program and financial support. We would also like to thank past Commissioners, Thomas Kime and Otto Nicely for their service to Defiance County. The District greatly appreciates the opportunity to maintain and improve the natural resources of Defiance County.

Congratulations to Keith Schroeder who was sworn into office on January 17, 2017. Reelected to a three year term, he will continue his Supervisor position with Board members Bill Moats, Roger Zeedyk IV, Jeff Hange, and Terry Behnfeldt. Thank you to Keith and the entire Defiance SWCD Board of Supervisors for their leadership of the District.



Keith Schroeder, reelected SWCD Board member, is sworn in by Commissioner Mick Procratsky

Farm Fair 2017

Continued from page 1 “The watershed concept is difficult to teach” says Stephanie Singer, Defiance SWCD Educator, “but the model gives students the ability to build a watershed from sand and experience water movement based on the topography they created.” This tool will be key in helping students understand the interface between our land, soil and water while fostering an appreciation for conservation of these natural resources.

Besides the Farm Fair, the ‘Virtual Watershed’ has made a debut at one county school. The students at St. John’s Lutheran School in grades K-8 got a chance to use the model as part of a week-long lesson on rocks. The ‘Virtual Watershed’ along with a collection of rocks and fossils, gave the students an interactive geology lesson. Mrs. McGhee, a 1st grade teacher, said “the model was amazing and the kids really enjoyed the virtual experience.” Defiance SWCD has plans to offer the model to all of the schools in the county as part of their education programs on watersheds, water quality and soil conservation.

The ‘Virtual Watershed’ was built by Defiance SWCD & Ditch Maintenance staff with guidance from UC Davis and Fairfield SWCD. The model was funded through a generous donation from the Fairview Young Farmers and a Healthy Soil grant from the Ohio Department of Agriculture.

A Chance to Drive a Combine

Another big hit at the 2017 Farm Fair was the addition of a Combine Simulator that was rented from Flowers Farm. Kids lined up for their chance to ‘drive’ a combine in a real cab using farm simulator technology to enhance the experience. A big thank you to local Future Farmers of America clubs from both Fairview High School and Tinora High School for volunteering to staff this fantastic exhibit.

The students from Tinora included Kacey Wilkerson, Rayann Clevenger, and Allison Flory. Students from Fairview included Rose Zeedyk, Dru VanDeVoorde, Eric Culler, Garrett Bennett, Tristan McGuire and advisor Jessica Nagel. The high school students commented, "the kids really enjoyed the experience; once kids saw what was happening everyone wanted to experience it."



Above: Fairview FFA student helping at the Combine Simulator.

Below: Left– Kids enjoy the Tinora Young Farmers Pedal Pull, Middle– Jamie & Dee Walters promote pollinators, Right—Tinora Jazz Band gave a beautiful performance under the direction of Colleen Crayton & David Middleton.



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 basis 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.

“Do The Right Thing” by Tyler Miller

In college I took a class on cinematography because I thought it would be neat to watch movies in a class rather than read books or look at scientific studies from decades earlier. When I started the course and looked at the movies we were to watch, I was disappointed because I only knew one movie that we were watching for the seventeen week semester (one movie watched per week). One of those movies that I had no prior knowledge of was a Spike Lee film “Do the Right Thing”. I was told it was one of the best cinematographic movies of all time, but I had my doubts after reading the storyline. Nonetheless, I went and watched the movie. I thought it was good but not the best film I had ever watched. In the movie, a local business owner has a confrontation with a customer in the heat of summer that highlights race relations in Brooklyn, New York. As the day progresses, tensions continue to mount until they meet a boiling point. At that point violence and acts of civil disobedience take over as frustrations bring out the worst in everyone involved. I soon tucked the movie back in the deep recesses of my brain for no potential future use.

Fast forward, a very quick, ten years and here I am as a Technician at the Defiance Soil & Water Conservation District. At the District we always try to do the right thing. Now trying and accomplishing are two different things, but I think everybody has those moments when someone tells you, “it is the thought that counts” when something unravels in your hands. At the District, much time is spent on design of nutrient and sediment saving projects such as waterways, ditches, grade structures, tile control structures, and manure storage facilities. District staff spends considerable time working on grants that fund cover crops, gypsum, no-till, riparian buffers and saturated buffers. You may not know what all these things are; that is why we are here. The important thing to keep in mind is that we are trying to do the right thing and put conservation first. Putting conservation first allows the District to better inform you; the true conservationists that put these practices on the ground.

Much like the movie there is never a more important time to do the right thing. Grand Lake St. Mary’s has been named a distressed watershed in recent years by ODNR. Recently, Michigan has declared its portion of the Lake Erie watershed as impaired. In the past few years, extremely large harmful algal blooms (HABs) have created areas in Lake Erie where water was no longer safe for drinking or bathing. New laws and regulations such as Senate Bill 1 and Senate Bill 150 along with all sorts of groups are pushing legislators for more or less regulation. All of this has led to tensions that could be cut with a knife between groups that use these waters as some part of their lives or livelihoods. You and I both want and need these waters to be used for our livelihood and to be part of our beautiful landscape. Now you ask, can we accomplish this before tensions boil over, before more regulations, or before Lake Erie is compromised to a point of no return. This is why we all

have to do the right thing.

I believe that we can change, we can settle the tensions, ease the regulations, and keep Lake Erie as a valuable asset to our environment. But, we cannot continue to do the same things and expect different results. I want to be honest and tell you that I do not have all the answers. But we do have a lot of information that can be filled in our algebra equation that leads to a cleaner Lake Erie that has minimal algae blooms in nine out of ten years.



Farmers learn about innovative cover crops planters.

Here is what we know to help us figure out what the right thing is. Recently, our climate has been warmer leading to higher water temperatures in Lake Erie. Increased heavy rains in spring and early summer has caused increased phosphorus loading. Lake Erie has had clearer water, which is caused by different mussels and less sediment from agriculture which allows the sunlight to penetrate deeper into the lake stimulating algae growth. There is more dissolved reactive phosphorus reaching the lake which spurs algae growth quicker than particulate phosphorus. Okay, take a deep breath; that is enough information to make your head spin, at least it does mine. Sometimes it feels very daunting to think about solving any or all of these issues. As I said, I do not claim to have all the answers but I do know one thing. None of these issues will be resolved by blaming other groups or people because they are the “problem”. All you can do is to do the right thing at every opportunity. You can’t take on the problems of others or push your issues on to them, but do what you know how to do and do it to the best of your ability.

To do the right thing usually involves following the rules. There are rules for everything we do in life; written laws and unwritten rules that are just common sense. Farmers are getting more and more of the written laws to follow. The simple tip is to follow them, they just make sense. Senate Bill 1 restricts the application of fertilizer and manure on frozen, snow covered, and saturated soils. Countless research has been done that shows applying at these times will result in huge nutrient losses. This will result in an algal bloom and a lighter wallet. Remember you

paid for that fertilizer. Why do you want it to leave your field? The second piece of legislation is Senate Bill 150 which requires anyone who applies fertilizer to 50 acres or more to become certified and keep fertilizer records. This legislation also provides a defense in case of civil lawsuit for people that follow the rule and have a nutrient management plan. The certification just helps you to better understand your soil tests and when to, when not to and how to apply fertilizer. These pieces of legislation tell you when and how to apply. That is where the Tri-State Fertility Guide comes into play. This document written by The Ohio State University, Michigan State University, and Purdue University explains how much to apply in relationship to each type of crop. This document is only about twenty pages long, it is good to have at your disposal and it's not too difficult to read. You don't know how many times I have seen people shake their head or scoff at these rules. But, the fact is that they are the rules and they are in place to help us to do the right things. As I said before, we cannot do the same old things and expect different results, so let's make some small changes for a huge benefit.

After just outlining the rules and legislation that need to be followed to keep our waterways clean, let's go over ways you can be proactive to be a good conservationist. Start implementing conservation practices on your own farm. There are tons of practices that can be utilized. I can't go over all of them but I will hit on some major ones. First and foremost, follow Conservation Standard 590 on Nutrient Management. This document creates the definitions for nutrients that are applied and how government programs view those applications. This standard also outlines and highlights the four factors that make up the 4R's program. Soil testing, variable rate application (VRA) and fertilizer placement are all responsible practices to a good nutrient management plan. Then, to make sure that those nutrients don't run off the surface, you could add cover crops, filter strips, and no-till farming into the batch of conservation practices. These practices will increase your soils' water holding capacity and allow more water to infiltrate to your tile. This is why you should add drainage water management (DWM) to your bag of practices to keep nutrients in your field. I know reading this seems like you just cracked open a can of alphabet soup but that is why we are here to help you understand and implement these practices and others on your farm. All of these practices are small steps that will lead to big changes. You can make a difference; your small steps are what will create the results. We can't do it without you, so do your part and start today!

Farmers are not the only group that holds stock in keeping a healthy Lake Erie. For all homeowners, there are steps that can be taken to be a better conservationist. Reduce lawn fertilizer. Many times no fertilizer is needed and who honestly wants to mow their lawn any more than they already do. Fix outdated or inadequate septic systems.

All of your flushes go somewhere. Find out where and what can be done to improve your situation. Contact the county health department to find out if your system needs to be updated. Hold on to the water that is given to you. Start using rain barrels and rain gardens to reduce runoff from downspout drains. These are great ways to add some outdoor beauty to your landscaping and with a rain barrel you may not have to bucket water to your thirsty plants. Take soil tests on your garden to find out what nutrients you really need to raise those homegrown vegetables. Remember, we are all in this together. If we all take the small steps to doing the right thing big results will follow.

There are so many theories out there about what is causing our HABs and many people believe there is a silver bullet that will solve everything. If this one group of people would take care of that one thing it would solve everything. It is their fault. There is nothing I can do to change it. That is why we are here with thinking such as that. There is still a lot of low hanging fruit that can help us reach our goal. Municipalities need to stop sewer overflows by separating storm water runoff. Fertilizer dealers need to not send fertilizer out of their bins when conditions are wrong, take that as an opportunity to educate someone about proper timing. Manure applicators need to keep their product in the storage facility until conditions and weather are right for spreading. These are all doable tasks. Let's not make this more difficult than what it needs to be.

It's never wrong to do the right thing
-Mark Twain

The great Mark Twain once said "It's never wrong to do the right thing" and I believe that everyone reading this article would agree with that statement. Sometimes the lines get blurred on what is right or wrong, but our conscience has a way of letting us know. All I am asking of you is to follow that feeling, to take one more step towards conservation every day. If you don't know whether what you're doing is right or wrong, then ask. Here at Defiance Soil & Water we are more than willing to sit down with you and answer questions about conservation. That is what we are here for. If we don't know the answer, we will find someone who does. We can achieve great things, but it all starts with small steps. In order to accomplish great things we can't blame others for the problem. Also, it does no good to just keep doing the same thing over and over. Things need to change to make sure that Lake Erie and other great bodies of water are available for future generations. You have a choice to make. You can keep doing what you are doing and the problem can persist until we are at a point of no return. The other option is to help us help you, by taking steps towards conservation. That is the only way that we can solve this problem. We are all in this together and together we need to step up and do the right thing.

2017 Tree Seedling Sale

Defiance Soil & Water Conservation District

419-782-1794

www.defiance-county.com/swcd

	<u>Packets</u> <u>Ordered</u>	<u># Per</u> <u>Packet</u>	<u>Packet Description</u>	<u>Price</u>	<u>Total</u>
Coniferous Trees		10	American Arborvitae 8" - 14"	\$9.00	
		10	Bald Cypress 12" - 18"	\$9.00	
		10	Blue Spruce 9" - 15"	\$8.00	
		10	Norway Spruce 10" - 18"	\$8.00	
		10	White Pine 10" - 16"	\$8.00	
		10	White Spruce 10" - 18"	\$8.00	
Deciduous Trees		10	Bur Oak 12" - 18"	\$9.00	
		10	Flowering Dogwood 12" - 18" *	\$9.00	
		10	Ohio Buckeye 12" - 18"	\$10.00	
		10	Prairie Crabapple 12" - 18" *	\$10.00	
		10	Red Bud 12" - 18" *	\$9.00	
		10	Red Maple 12" - 18"	\$9.00	
		10	Sugar Maple 12" - 18"	\$9.00	
		10	Swamp White Oak 12" - 18"	\$9.00	
Deciduous Shrubs		10	Common Lilac 6" - 12" *	\$8.00	
		10	Highbush Cranberry 6" - 12"	\$8.00	
		10	Steeplebush 12" - 18" *	\$10.00	
Misc.		10	Flowering Tree Variety Pack 2 of each asterisked species above (*)	\$11.00	
		10	Marking Flags	\$1.00	

Name: _____

Total

Street Address: _____

City, State, Zip: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Order Deadline
March 10, 2017

Tree Shelters Available for Purchase.
Contact District for Pricing.

Please make checks payable to: **Defiance SWCD**, 06879 Evansport Road, Suite C, Defiance, OH 43512.
All orders must be paid in full. You will be notified in early April via postcard or email when your order will be available for pickup.

For Office Use Only: Order Number _____

Receipt Number _____

Nutrient Management Plans Can Protect You

The Ohio State University Extension has four Nutrient Management Plan Writers working to assist farmers in developing free Nutrient Management Plans in the Western Lake Erie Basin of Ohio. Plans provide both fertility recommendations and an environmental site risk for fields that help identify resource concerns impacting nutrient and sediment loss. So far, they have done 33 plans with 17,877 acres in Allen, Defiance, Fulton, Henry, Lucas, Ottawa, Paulding, Putnam, Van Wert, Williams, and Wood Counties in Ohio and Lenawee Co, MI.

Plan Writers will work with you on preparing a free NMP or CNMP; dates, times, locations listed below. They will work with any grain/vegetable/crop producers, and/or non-CAFO livestock producers who have the following information available:

- Soil tests from no later than 2014 in less than 25 acre zones**
- Complete farm maps and/or FSA maps**
- Fertilizer program, complete with amounts and N-P-K products
- Implement details and information, and operation timelines
- Crop rotations and yield goals for 2016-2022
- Water locations in operation, artificial drainage practices, and type of surface drainage
- Manure: storage capacity, acres to spread on, number of animals, feed information
- NRCS EQIP program information (if planning to apply, or already applied)

**bring printed copies or electronic

Nutrient Management Plans are a great way to see if your fields are using the nutrients you are applying. Plans can be used to apply for EQIP through NRCS, create an affirmative defense through your local SWCD, and give a guideline for nutrient application and possible savings. Farmers are welcomed at any county program, regardless of your county of residence. Please plan about two hours for your meeting.

Meeting Locations

- ⇒ **Defiance-** March 29 @ 6879 Evansport Road, Defiance
- ⇒ **Fulton-** February 7 @ 8770 State Route 108, Wauseon
- ⇒ **Henry-** February 15 @ 104 E. Washington Street, Napoleon
- ⇒ **Paulding-** February 1 @ 503 Fairground Drive, Paulding
- ⇒ **Putnam-** February 9 & March 15 @ 1206 East Second Street, Ottawa
- ⇒ **Williams-** March 7 @ 1425 East High Street, Bryan

Please **RSVP** by contacting Jessie Schulze at 419-782-4771 or schulze.72@osu.edu and provide your name, county, phone number, date, and AM or PM for your arrival. First come, first served basis in the AM (9-12) and PM (12-3). Questions can also be addressed per contact information above or visit go.osu.edu/nutrientplanners for more information.

This program is sponsored by a grant through the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation with partners: Ohio Soybean Council, Ohio Corn Marketing, Ohio Small Grains Marketing Program, Ohio Farm Bureau Federation, and Ohio State University.

Cletus Vetter Memorial College Scholarship Fund Grows

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and his leadership.

This annual \$1,000.00 college scholarship is meant to bring back into focus the vital necessity and passion for resource conservation by encouraging college-bound students to consider a career in conservation, natural resources, agriculture or a related field. Your willingness to contribute

towards this scholarship fund will be deeply appreciated. Together, we can ensure that the legacy of love and respect to not only his family but to the many people Clete Vetter selflessly gave himself to lives on forever through Defiance County. Please contact the District or the Defiance Area Foundation if you are interested in contributing.

Eye on Conservation



"Eye on Conservation" is Defiance SWCD's newest way to reach the public with natural resource topics. The radio program airs every other Wednesday morning at 8:40 a.m. on 105.7 The Bull. Tune in on February 15 when we will be featuring John Mueller, Service Forester for Ohio Division of Forestry, who will be discussing effective tree seedling planting techniques and maintenance activities to ensure tree survival.

Congratulations to the Word Search Winner

Congratulations to Holly Garmyn! Holly was the autumn edition word search victor for the Turkey Word Search. She won a holiday gift basket including canned turkey from Cooper Farms and numerous other holiday food items. Be

sure to complete this edition's word search for a chance to two bare root fruit trees!



NEW THIS YEAR: BARE ROOT FRUIT TREE SALE

Fruit trees are only available in a four-species variety pack at a cost of \$48.00 per pack. The trees will be available for pickup in early April of 2017. Due to limited availability, please call 419-782-1794 to place an order. Due to limited supplies, do not send payment without first contacting the District.

Word Search: The District would like to thank our **2017 Affiliate Members** for their generous financial support. Each have contributed immensely to our education program, allowing us to extend our conservation efforts to both students and teachers throughout Defiance County. Have fun finding their names below and return to our office by March 24, 2017 to be put into a drawing for 2 bare root fruit trees seedlings.

K A A M D Q L Y X W Y N A P M O C D R A B B U H E H T L Y W
X S K W A C I R E M A D I M T I D E R C M R A F W E F G U Q
L W B S V B T N X M S I U F R I A O Z J L U U P S A N Q I J
J R V E N T E E T U A L V X T S R C R O O C P Q M T L H W Y
D C T S I Y R H R G I I A U H L R T F B W E W H U J I U P Z
O X M A A Q I S L N R A G K A A E K V T H G H F Y Q E Q G U
J V W O R O D A C I V A P X T T N F E I K U T B M R B T T S
O Q R J G J G M O T G J V Y X T L E B N B I M W Y J R U J L
K P Q R E E E O I A S N O P R E B U S O N L K H I F E W Q B
S E J J L W V H N V R W A I F R O V V T E F G E O Y C F N V
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U N L M I L L M L C M A R K M O A T S F O R D L P A T D Y S
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D R S S S G E X O E Y T M S U L C U Z W A R M G C G A B W U
O U S G K R E Z E S S A M S W I T Z E R R E A L T Y R O Y O
Y S M C C A L L A E X C A V A T I N G X D A P H W K M O F J
F N T H I I E Y B N V S F B O H O B X D P L N V U M D K U P
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A T U L T R O F K J L E D P E R R Y E X C A V A T I N G D F
N R N N H A R C H B O L D E Q U I P M E N T Z G C S A Q Y I
F A R M E R F A B R I C A T I O N A N D W E L D I N G I V H
R P I H Y V P F C S M E T S Y S G A L A I T A P S T E W P R
I S S T L R Z F Q R K T S P O U H A Z W N D L N O B T L H R

AGCO
ARCHBOLD EQUIPMENT
BRUCE GUILFORD REAL ESTATE
DARREN L BOK AUCTIONEERING
ED PERRY EXCAVATING
FARM CREDIT MID AMERICA
FARMER FABRICATION AND WELDING
FARMERS AND MERCHANTS
HICKSVILLE GRAIN
JEWELL GRAIN
KENN FELD GROUP
LIEBRECHT FARM DRAINAGE
MARK MOATS FORD

MCCALLA EXCAVATING
MIDWEST COMMUNITY FCU
NESTER AG
RIDGEVILLE ELEVATOR
SAM SWITZER REALTY
SINES EXCAVATING
SLATTERY OIL
SPARTAN INSURANCE
SPATIAL AG SYSTEMS
STATE BANK
THE HUBBARD COMPANY
THOMAS HENRY

Name: _____

Phone Number: _____

CONSERVATION NEWS

Defiance Soil and Water Conservation District

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Kevin Hancock
Ed Walters
Josh Limber
Dave Sines

NRCS Personnel

Steve Snyder
Lori Shank
Mike Boff
Cristhian Carrasquillo
Daniel Francis

Upcoming Events!

- **Maumee River Water Trail public comment** See the map, learn more, and comment online: [metroparkstoledo.com/Water Trail](http://metroparkstoledo.com/WaterTrail)
- **Conservation Tillage Technology Conference** March 7, 8 at Ohio Northern University
- **TREE SALE DEADLINE** is March 10-order form inside.
- **Ag Appreciation Breakfast** March 21 at 8 a.m. at the K of C Hall. Call OSU Extension to RSPV (419) 782-4771 \$4.00
- **Maple Syrup Festival and NW Ohio Woodland and Wildlife Family Festival** March 25 from 8 a.m.-12 p.m. at Williams County Fairgrounds.
- **Nutrient Management Plan Development workshop** March 29 from 9 a.m.-3 p.m. Defiance OSU Extension.
- **Photo Contest** is open to all students in kindergarten through 12th grade who are residents of Defiance County or attend a Defiance County school. Students may submit up to four entries, with one entry for each category of wildlife, people in agriculture, trees and plants, and landscapes. Photos must be taken in Defiance County. All entries are due by April 10.
- **Poster Contest** theme is "Healthy Soils are Full of Life". Grade levels are broken down into five categories: K-1, 2-3, 4-6, 7-9, 10-12. Posters must be on 11" x 17" paper and must have the words "*Healthy Soils are Full of Life*". The posters are due to the Soil and Water office by April 10.
- **Kid's Outdoor Science Camp** June 5-8 at Camp Palmer
- **Nature Camp at Penney Nature Center** June 13, 14, & 15 from 9 a.m.-11:30 a.m.
- **Black Swamp Educators' Extravaganza** June 20, 21, 22 at Sauder Village & Historic Inn from 8 a.m.-4 p.m. daily.
- **RiverFront Gathering** June 23, 24, & 25

Follow us on Facebook and sign up for our electronic newsletter.



*More information about contests
and events at:*

defiance-county.com/swcd

