



December 2008 The Conservation Express

Fayette Soil and Water Conservation District

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Fayette SWCD Holds Annual Elections

The Fayette Soil and Water Conservation District (FSWCD) recently held their Annual Meeting and Election on September 23, 2008 at the Fayette Agricultural Service Center. Gordon Conn FSWCD Board of Supervisors Chairman welcomed 50 guests. Liz Cline, ODNR Program Specialist went over voting rules and opened elections. Three candidates were vying for one spot on the board of supervisors, Gordon Conn, Ralph "Skip" Mitchell and David Sever were the local candidates on the ballot this year. Supervisor Fred Melvin led the prayer and guests enjoyed a catered meal from McCoy's Catering from Wilmington, Ohio.

After dinner several introductions were made, State Representative John Schlichter was present along with Fayette County Commissioners, Tony Anderson, Jack and Carolyn DeWeese, Bob Peterson; Fayette County Auditor, Mike Smith; Fayette County Engineer Steve Luebbe; Fayette County Sheriff, Vernon Stanforth; and Pat Ernst NRCS Area Engineer were in attendance as well. At the conclusion of all the introductions it was

time to call on our guest speaker for the evening, Dr. Jerry Holt. Dr. Holt presented a program of "Strange Stories from Southern Ohio," including Fayette County. Dr. Holt is currently with Purdue University and has previously served as the Dean of Antioch College as well as Shawnee State University. Dr. Holt's program was very well received by all of those in attendance.

The 2008 James E. Waddle Memorial Scholarship recipient was Kyle Amore. Kyle was a 2008 graduate of Miami Trace High School and is currently enrolled at The Ohio State University, majoring in Extension Education. Due to freshman orientation at OSU Kyle was unable to attend tonight's program and sent a letter to the board of supervisor's thanking them for the scholarship. The annual Cooperator of the Year Award was given to the Jesse Eyman Trust, which is a local youth educational trust.

Chairman Gordon Conn also honored two Soil and Water employees for their years of dedication and service in the district office. Ashley Wilson

with five years and Bob Groff with ten years, were presented plaques during the meeting.



The evening was closed by the results of the supervisor election, incumbent Gordon Conn was re-elected to a three year term beginning January 1, 2009.



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2008

Board of Supervisors

Chairman-Gordon Conn
Vice Chair-Fred Melvin
Secretary-Richard Davidson
Fiscal Agent- Gary Reiterman
Education Coordinator- James Garland

Staff And Supervisors

Ashley Clark-
Outreach Specialist
Scott Cormany-
GIS Coordinator
Bob Groff-
Drainage Coordinator
Chet Murphy-
District Administrator
David Payne-
District Technician

Mark Lucas-CET
Kevin Kaltenbach-
Wildlife Biologist
Sara Morris-
District Conservationist
Amber Parker-
Soil Conservationist
Technician

Recycling Drive Huge Success!

By Ashley Clark



On September 20, 2008 the Fayette Soil and Water Conservation District and the Ross, Pickaway, Highland, Fayette Joint Solid Waste District (RPHF) held two separate recycling drives. The first was an electronics collection and the second was a scrap tire collection.

The electronics portion of the event was sponsored by the RPHF Joint Solid Waste District and coordinated locally by Toni Penwell, Recycling Outreach Specialist. Approximately 500 pieces of electronics equipment were collected, consisting mainly of computer equipment and televisions. This was the third year for the electronics drive and their will be one scheduled for sometime next year.

The tire collection was put on by the Fayette Soil and Water Conservation District and coordinated by Ashley Wilson-Clark, Outreach Specialist. Over 150 tires including passenger, racing and large tractor tires

were brought in. The soil and water conservation district hopes to make this an annual event.

Both agencies would like to thank all of the volunteers from the transfer station, FSWCD Staff, Scott Cormany, Bob Groff, Eric Lamb, Chet Murphy, and the RPHF Joint Solid Waste District.

For more information about any programs offered by either agency, you can contact Toni Penwell at 740-333-8220 and Ashley Wilson-Clark at 740-636-0279.



What's going on at the FSWCD By David Payne, District Technician

Fayette Soil & Water, has many projects being completed or slated to be completed from grassed waterways to a proposed ditch project to a new natural gas pipeline crossing Fayette County. The new natural gas pipeline REX (Rockies Express Pipeline) crosses 26 miles of Fayette County, from areas near Marchant Luttrell Road to Deer Creek Lake and many farms in between these area's will be affected so slow down and give the construction crews some attention.

This happens every year about this time in November and early in December the white tailed deer are really moving heavy, so please slow down a couple miles per hour this may just save you a body shop repair!

The Thanksgiving holiday is a great time to spend with family and friends, be safe if you're traveling and from every one here at Soil and Water have a nice holiday season!

LEAP Training On-Line



The Ohio Livestock Coalition is now offering Ohio Livestock Environmental Assurance Program (LEAP I) training online. LEAP I offers livestock producers an opportunity to take a proactive approach in blending sound production economics with concern about environmental quality. The goal of the program is to minimize government regulations by providing producers with an educational program that addresses relevant environmental issues.

The program's curriculum and educational materials are designed for beef and dairy cattle, sheep, swine and poultry producers. It is being coordinated by the Ohio Livestock Coalition (OLC) in cooperation with the Ohio State University Extension (OSUE), Menke Consulting, the Ohio Department of Natural Resources' (ODNR) Division of Soil & Water Conservation, Natural Resources Conservation Service

(NRCS), Ohio Environmental Protection Agency (Ohio EPA), and various commodity and farm organizations.

The LEAP curriculum includes the following:

- Introduction to the environment – covers the importance of a sound environment to the livestock industry and how improved environmental practices can help consumers view the industry more positively.
- On-farm inventory – provides a quick checklist to rate environmental priority areas on individual farms.
- Key environmental management information – discusses management of nutrients, facilities, air quality, odor and community relations.
- An environmental plan – uses the on-farm inventory and local expertise, such as OSUE, NRCS, SWCD professionals, and private consultants, to develop an environmental management plan.
- State and local regulations – discusses what is required for environmental compliance and how to reduce liability.
- Cost-share programs – covers programs, such as Environmental Quality Incentives Programs (EQIP), that can help pay for environmental improvements on farms.

To register for LEAP I online: 1) Please send a check for \$25 made out to THE OHIO STATE UNIVERSITY, 2) Along with the check, include a note with your name, address, e-mail address, and phone number to the following address:

Stephen Boyles, The Ohio State University, 2027 Coffey Rd., Columbus, OH 43210-1094

Upon successful completion of the program, OLC will be notified and the participant will receive their certificate of completion.



New face at the District Office

Amber Parker is the new Soil Conservation Technician for the Natural Resources Conservation Service in Fayette County. A native of Dallas, Texas she received her Bachelor's degree from the University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff. She has worked with NRCS for four years. She is excited about the opportunity to work in Fayette County. The staff of NRCS, Fayette Soil and Water Conservation District and the Farm Service Agency have already welcomed her with open arms. Amber is looking forward to making a positive impact for conservation in her new location.



Ponds Need Winter Care, ODNR-DSWC



Even in the worst Ohio winters, fish aren't likely to freeze in a well-built pond because they can retreat to deep water when the surface freezes. Still, each year many pond owners find dead fish when their ponds thaw. The problem isn't the cold; it's a lack of dissolved oxygen.

Most of the oxygen in pond water is produced through photosynthesis by aquatic plants. When the surface freezes, photosynthesis continues if the ice is clear enough to let light through. But when snow covers the ice and blocks the sunlight, photosynthesis stops. If light is blocked long enough, aquatic plants die and, instead of producing oxygen, they use it as they decompose. Gradually, the oxygen in the water is depleted and fish, bacteria, and other aquatic creatures suffocate. In some ponds, especially shallow ponds with high nutrient levels, this can happen in just a few days, but kills occur even in large, deep ponds when nutrient levels are too high.

Even if only some of the fish die, a winterkill can permanently upset the balance of fish species in a pond. For instance, if too many largemouth bass are killed, less desirable species might become over-populated because the bass aren't eating them. Sometimes the only way to return a pond to a balance of species that will provide good fishing is to kill off all the fish and re-stock the pond.

A better option is to prevent winterkill in the first place. Aerating the water through the winter can help. So can controlling excessive aquatic vegetation during the growing season and removing heavy layers of snow from at least a third of a pond's surface. If you try to remove snow, be especially cautious of thin ice.

If a pond seems especially prone to winterkill, it might need to be drained and deepened. If excessive nutrients are causing too much vegetative growth, try to find and eliminate the nutrient source. Another alternative for very shallow ponds is to let the fish die off and manage the pond as wetland habitat for wildlife other than fish.

The Fayette SWCD, a political subdivision of the State of Ohio, is funded by ODNR and the General Assembly and the County Commissioners. The District is assisted by many local, state and federal conservation agencies. The District is administered by a board of five locally elected supervisors which helps ensure that the efforts of all of these agencies are coordinated to address the resource issues that local people feel are important.