

# Conservation Notes

Winter 2024

*"Local leadership for soil and water conservation"*

Newsletter for the  
Medina County Soil & Water Conservation District

## 2024 Big Tree Contest Announcement

The Osage Orange (*Maclura pomifera*) was chosen for the 2024 Medina County Big Tree Contest!

The Osage orange tree is a small-medium sized, shrub-looking deciduous tree. They were planted around old field edges and along property lines to be used as a natural fence for livestock. Most people would recognize them from their green, bumpy fruit that grows to be about the size of a softball.

The bark on this short-trunked tree is deeply furrowed and tight with a brown-orange color within the furrows. The branches grow erratically and have stout thorns. This tree has simple, alternate oblong leaves that taper toward the end. This tree has been widely planted in Ohio, but is not native.

To participate in the big tree contest, eligible trees can be located on either private or public property. It is not a requirement for the tree to be situated on your own property. However, if you come across a noteworthy tree on someone else's property, it is imperative to secure permission to access their land and measure the tree you intend to submit. For additional details, please refer to our website or feel free to reach out to our office for any inquiries regarding the contest. The winner will be announced and receive a plaque at our Annual Meeting.



For more information about the Big Tree Contest and to view the Nomination Form, visit our website [medinaswcd.org](http://medinaswcd.org) or our Facebook page in the coming months!

# 79th Annual Meeting & Election

Our 79th Annual meeting was held on November 9, 2023 at the Medina County Career Center. It is always a pleasure to gather with the community and share in our love for conservation.

There is no better way to show appreciation than to award outstanding members in the community for their conservation efforts. Here are the Medina SWCD's 2023 award winners.

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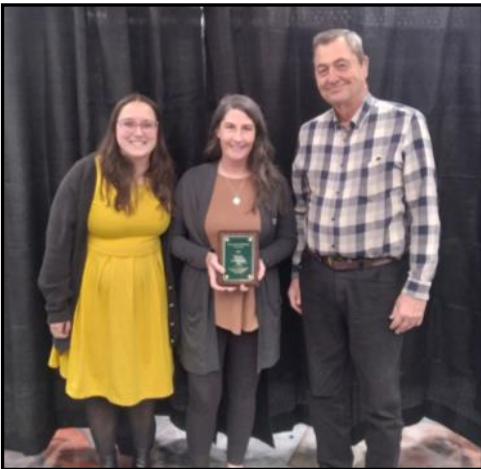


The 2023 Conservation Steward of the year was awarded to Ramsier's Willow Spring Farm, of Rittman.

The Ramsier family farm was established in 1943. It is a dairy milking facility with 140 cows that are milked automatically by robots. The family has been improving the quality of their soil for over 40 years with no till farming practices and more recently cover crops.

The Ramsier Family are excellent stewards of the land and are two time winners of this award because of the wonderful work that they are doing. Congratulations!

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The Medina County SWCD Conservation Educator of the Year was awarded to Shelley Tender.

As a Medina County Park District Naturalist, Shelley works to educate the public, through programs such as, the Tales for Tots program, where she works with children ages 3-6 and the Native Plant Specialist Program where she educates the community on plant identification and ecosystems. Shelley goes above and beyond spending her free time growing plants in her own nursery, Camel Creek Natives, where she raises native plants to sell. Proceeds are donated to the Friends of the Park. She has raised over \$20,000.00 in three years!

Thank you Shelley for all you do for Medina County and its ecosystems!

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The Medina County SWCD Conservation Community member of the year was awarded to John Sandora.

John volunteers countless hours advocating for improving water quality in Chippewa Lake. He spends time looking for ways to resolve the issues including the harmful algae bloom problems. He helped acquire bioreactors to test their benefits to the lake and gathered data on water quality. He then shares the results with our office and the Park District.

Thank you John for all your efforts to improve the world we live in!

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Congratulations to the Medina County Park District, our 2023 Big Tree Contest Winner!

The Cucumber Magnolia tree was nominated by Medina County Park District Employee, Travis Morton.

This tree measured in at 203 inches in circumference, 116 feet tall, with an average crown spread of 58 feet, totaling 333.5 points.

This makes the third straight win for the Medina County Park District!



This year's guest speaker was, Dr. Aaron Wilson, an Assistant Professor and Ag Weather and Climate Field Specialist with OSU Extension in the College of Food, Agricultural, and Environmental Sciences at The Ohio State University.

He is the State Climatologist of Ohio and a Research Scientist at the Byrd Polar & Climate Research Center. Aaron's research focuses on observed and projected changes in climate and impacts from global to local scales.



This year's Supervisor candidates included Tom Miller and Peggy Garnes. Tom Miller was re-elected to a three year term as Board Supervisor, starting January 1, 2024.

A Soil & Water Conservation District Supervisor has the important task of guiding our organizations efforts to promote sustainable management of natural resources, ensuring long term health and productivity within our community.

Thank you to all candidates. We appreciate your dedication to protecting Medina County's natural resources.

Regular Board Meeting are held on the 3rd Wednesday of each month at 1:30 p.m. in the conference room at the office of the Medina County Soil & Water Conservation District located at 6090 Wedgewood Road in Medina.



Photo courtesy of brunswick.oh.us

**Press Release from the City of Brunswick:**

**City of Brunswick to Temporarily Close North Park for Dredging Project**

City of Brunswick announces the temporary closure of North Park to facilitate a dredging project that will improve the health and safety of the park's waterways. The dredging project will remove accumulated sediment and debris from the lake, restoring its depth and enhancing its recreational value.

The closure will begin on January 2, 2024 and is expected to last for approximately twelve months. During this time, the park will be inaccessible to the public for all activities, including walking, jogging, biking, and fishing. We apologize for any inconvenience this may cause.

[...] Dredging the lake will vastly improve water quality in the downstream waters of Healey Creek. The water depth has been reduced to approximately one foot due to this accumulation, significantly reducing the flood storage capacity within the basin. Dredging also helps to control aquatic vegetation, which can overgrow and impair recreational use.

We understand that North Park is a beloved community asset, and we appreciate your patience and understanding as we work to improve the park for future generations. We will keep the public updated on the progress of the dredging project and will reopen the park as soon as it is safe to do so.

For more information about the dredging project, please visit our website at [www.brunswick.oh.us](http://www.brunswick.oh.us) or contact the Brunswick Parks and Recreation Department at (330)558-6838 or [tptkovsek@brunswick.oh.us](mailto:tptkovsek@brunswick.oh.us)

Thank you for your cooperation.

Sincerely, Taylor Petkovsek  
Parks and Recreation Director

For more information about North Park, reach out to the City of Brunswick.



## Protecting waterways starts at home

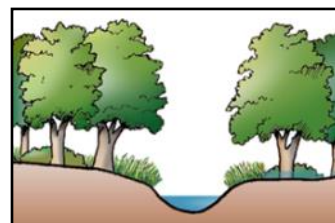
Abby Costilow, Watershed Education Specialist for Medina SWCD

The dredging of the North Park pond in Brunswick may come as a surprise to some Medina County residents. However, ponds often become a settling area for pollutants and sediment from the landscape that surrounds them, known as their watershed. Whatever happens within a watershed affects the body of water to which it drains.

So what can be done to help ponds, streams, and lakes from needing such drastic measures as dredging? The answer is to reduce pollution on the land and protect soil from eroding or being washed away. Some of the leading pollutants that are seen entering waterways like North Park pond is sediment, phosphorous, and salt.

Here are a few tips you can follow to protect water quality.

Tips for protecting against sediment pollution: Let water soak in at a natural rate instead of speeding it up: disconnect downspouts and drain water to a rain garden or install a rain barrel. Stabilize waterways' edges with planted buffers of native plants, shrubs, and trees. Cover bare soil in gardens with cover crops and install silt fences during construction, so soil isn't washed away.



Tips for protecting against phosphorous pollution: Phosphorous can be found in fertilizers, yard waste, and pet waste. Soil test every three years, so fertilizer can be applied accordingly. When applying fertilizer, follow the 4R's: use the *Right Nutrient* in the *Right Rate* at the *Right Time* in the *Right Place*. Cut grass high and keep clippings and leaves out of storm drains. Always pick up after pets and have a manure plan if you raise livestock.



Tips for protecting against salt pollution: Salting for winter keeps walkways safe for use. However, it only takes one mug of salt to cover 10 sidewalk squares (250 sq ft). Salt works best only above 15° and when applied before it snows. Since it only takes 1 tsp of salt to pollute 5 gallons of water, salt only where and when necessary.



For more information of what you can do to help, reach out to our office.



## Welcome Jeremy Liechty!

Jeremy grew up in Spencerville, Indiana just north of Fort Wayne, and has worked for NRCS for 4 years as a Soil Conservationist in Burlington, Colorado.

A District Conservationist from NRCS is vital for local communities in a county. They assist in conservation and land management, working with farmers and landowners to promote sustainable practices, protect natural resources, and support the local economy.

Their expertise helps ensure the long-term health of the environment and agriculture in the region.

You can contact Jeremy at 330-722-2628.



Meet Michael Mohn, your dedicated apiary inspector in Medina County. Appointed by the county, Michael plays a vital role in ensuring the health of local bee colonies. His thorough inspections not only benefit individual beekeepers but also contribute to the broader agricultural community by submitting reports to the Ohio Department of Agriculture.

County-appointed inspectors like Michael provide essential hands-on interaction with beekeepers, fostering a proactive approach to hive health. This interaction is a key component of the current program, aiming to increase the likelihood that bees are free from diseases and pests. By scheduling an appointment with Michael, you take a proactive step towards maintaining disease-free hives.

For all your beekeeping needs and concerns, reach out to Michael at 330-591-5035 and contribute to the well-being of your bees here in Medina and Northeaster Ohio.



### Medina SWCD needs your feedback!

Help us serve you better.  
Take our five minute survey, by visiting our  
website at [www.medinaswcd.org](http://www.medinaswcd.org)  
or scan the QR code.





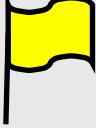




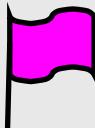
### Want to help conserve resources!

Think about making the transition from a  
mailed copy of the newsletter to email.

The benefits to receiving the newsletter via  
email include receiving the correspondence  
instantly as well as reducing our carbon foot  
print. Email communication is a greener  
alternative to traditional mail, contributing to  
a healthier planet.

Ready to make the change?  
Update your preferences at our website  
[medinaswcd.org](http://medinaswcd.org) or give us a call  
at 330-722-9322. Start enjoying the perks of  
a digital connection!

## Know before you dig!

	Red: Electric power lines, cables, conduit and lighting cables		Blue: Potable water
	Yellow: Gas, oil, steam, petroleum, gaseous materials		Green: Sewers and drain lines
	Orange: Communications, alarm or signal lines, cables or conduit, traffic loops		White: Pre-marking dig site
	Purple: Reclaimed water, irrigation, slurry lines		Pink: Temporary survey marks

These marks are approximate. Dig carefully near them.

Here are a few facts you should know:

- Call 3-10 days before you dig to give the utility owners enough time to get out there and mark their lines.
- Be sure to provide detailed location information and/or mark the proposed excavation area with white paint or flags.
- After calling, wait at least 3 business days before beginning to dig.
- Maintain a minimum clearance of 18-24 inches from a marked underground utility and the cutting edge or point of any power-operated earth moving equipment. As you get closer to the marked utility, use hand digging or vacuum excavation to properly locate the utility line(s).
  - If the proposed excavation site changes after the lines have been marked, you must call to have them re-marked.
- If excavation equipment is removed from a work site for more than two business days, you must notify the one call center again.
  - Always maintain the marks. Marks that have been removed, moved or otherwise tampered with are not accurate.
- If there is ever a question, call the center and ask. It's always better to be safe, than sorry.
  - Always call 811.com prior to starting any excavation work.

**Medina County Soil & Water  
Conservation District**

6090 Wedgewood Road  
Medina, Ohio 44256  
330-722-9322  
[www.medinaswcd.org](http://www.medinaswcd.org)

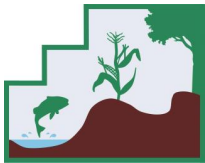
**Seedling Sale  
Information Enclosed**

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Permit 62

**CURRENT RESIDENT or**



**Board of Supervisors**

Zach Albrecht  
Steve Fulton  
Tom Miller  
Jacob Newcomer  
Jeff Van Loon

**District Staff**

Eric Hange—*District Manager*  
Mary Aungst—*Administrative Assistant*  
Abby Costilow—*Watershed Education Specialist*  
Kellie Docherty—*Conservation Educator*  
Jim Smith—*District Technician*

**NRCS Staff**

Jeremy Liechty—*NRCS District Conservationist*

**Member of:**

Medina County Township Association  
National Association of Conservation Districts  
Ohio Federation of Soil & Water Conservation  
Districts  
Rocky River Watershed Council  
Central Lake Erie Collaborative  
Northeast Ohio Public Involvement Public Education

6090 Wedgewood Road, Medina, OH 44256

**Phone:** 330-722-9322

**Office Hours:** Mon.—Fri. 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.

**[www.medinaswcd.org](http://www.medinaswcd.org)**

**Farm Service Agency:** 330-722-2628 option 2

**NRCS:** 330-241-6428

*Find us online:*

