

# CONSERVATION COMMENTARY

## *Meigs Soil & Water Conservation District*

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www.meigsswcd.com

Fall 2017

### *Annual Meigs SWCD meeting, banquet to be held Oct. 3*

POMEROY - Drones, more formerly known as unmanned aerial vehicles, and their everyday applications, including agriculture, will be the topic of this year's annual Meigs Soil and Water Conservation District's annual meeting and election to be held Oct. 3, 7 p.m. at Meigs High School.

John Bentz, a civil engineer employed with Pickering Associates, will be the guest speaker and give a presentation entitled "The View from Above, the Use of Unmanned Aircraft Systems in Everyday Life."

Drones, while controversial and oftentimes viewed in a negative light, have the potential to change our way of life, according to Bentz. From simple and cost-effective, high-definition aerial photography to scanning open pastures in an effort to determine crop health and soil conditions to structural inspections, Bentz says the applications are endless.

The emergence of technology is even being seen to be used, in conjunction with thermal imaging, to assist in search and rescue operations amidst some of the worst natural disasters seen in history.

In his discussion, Bentz will provide a brief background on the development of drones, some regulations currently in place,

as well as their currently implemented safety features.

The majority of the presentation, however, will focus on interesting case studies and research regarding the use of drones in various fields of study (including agricultural). Along with the applications mentioned, a brief explanation and demonstration of the 3D mapping capability of these systems will be presented.

Bentz is a 2006 graduate of Southern High School and received a Bachelor of Science in Civil Engineering from Ohio University in 2011. His efforts focus on the design and delivery of projects within the Energy/Oil and Gas Industry, as well as Commercial Site Development sector. He also serves on a Multi-discipline team within Pickering Associates as the Civil Engineering BIM (Building Information System) Specialist. He is the son of Keith and Becky Bentz of Racine.



### **Bentz, Hunter, Warner running for SWCD Board of Supervisors**

Eligible voters will select two of three candidates for the Meigs Soil and Water Conservation District Board of Supervisors at the Meigs SWCD annual meeting and banquet October 3. The candidates are as follows:

#### **Keith Bentz**

Bentz is currently a full-time mechanic for Karr Contracting, and he and his wife, Becky Lee Bentz, operate the Lee Farm located on Bashan Road near Racine. The Lee Farm has been in the same family since settlement times. The farm is used in the production of beef, hay and small grains. Bentz has participated in U.S. Department of Agriculture-Natural Resources Conservation Service programs including the Environmental Quality Incentives Program and stewardship programs. He is a former Outstanding Cooperator of the Year for the Meigs SWCD.

#### **Tonja Hunter**

Tonja was raised in Meigs County around the Racine area and has been associated with farming all her life. She is a 1983 graduate of Southern High School, and is the daughter of Ronald and Janice Salser of Racine and married to Dr. Douglas Hunter. They reside on a 180-acre hay farm on Bashan Road. Tonja has participated in the Conservation Reserve Program and the Forestry Environmental Quality Incentives Program.

As a teenager Tonja worked on the Wayne Roush Farm and developed a love for farming and the outdoors. She is hardworking, honest, and dedicated to her family. She is a member of the Racine Area Community Organization.

In addition to farming Tonja enjoys sports, gardening, hunting, and spending time with her busy family.

#### **Michael Warner**

Warner is an insurance agent and part-time farmer. He and his wife, Sheila, also reside in the Forest Run community in Sutton Township.

Residents or landowners, firms, and corporations that own land or occupy land in Meigs County and are 18 years of age or older may vote for supervisor. A non-resident landowner, firm, or corporation must provide an affidavit of eligibility, which includes designation of a voting representative, prior to casting a ballot.

There are three ways an eligible voter can cast a ballot: at the annual meeting, at the SWCD office until 3 p.m. on October 3 or via absentee ballot by requesting an absentee ballot from the SWCD office at 113 E. Memorial Dr. Suite D, Pomeroy, OH 45769.

Absentee ballots can be requested until September 29th by calling the office at 740-9924282 or stopping in the office.

Supervisors serve staggered three year terms. The winner will be announced the evening of October 3 at the annual meeting and banquet.

***The mission of the Meigs Soil and Water Conservation District is to provide assistance for the wise use of our natural resources for present and future generations.***

# Sept. 30 deadline nearing for fertilizer certification

## OSU Extension to host certification classes

Ohio Senate Bill 150 signed in May, 2014, created a certification program for applying commercial fertilizer in Ohio. The bill requires farmers applying commercial fertilizer to more than 50 acres to attend a course on fertilizer application. The Ohio Department of Agriculture (ODA), The Ohio State University (OSU), and several state agricultural organizations are encouraging farmers to attend a training course.

**The certification is required if you apply fertilizer to more than 50 acres of agricultural production grown primarily for sale.** This does not include manure. Included in the certification requirement are broadcast, side dress, sub-surface, and knifing application types. It also includes dry and liquid fertilizer that contain nitrogen, phosphorus, or other plant nutrients. Lime and limestone are not considered fertilizers.

If you raise hay, silage, corn for use on your farm and have questions about fertilizer certification, please contact the Ohio Department of Agriculture at 614-728-6987 or check the ODA website.

An uncertified person is allowed to apply fertilizer if they are under the direct supervision of a person who is certified. OSU will hold training sessions all across the state this winter. The sessions will focus on best management practices (BMP) and the latest research to keep nutrients in the field and available to crops, and reducing nutrients leaving the field.

To become certified a person must fill out an application form, pay an application fee, and attend a training session. The fee for fertilizer certification will be \$30. The initial fertilizer application certification training requires a three-hour course. A person who already has a valid commercial or private pesticide applicator license must apply for the fertilizer certification, but will not be required to pay the application fee. The fertilizer training session will also be included in the pesticide license training. All certifications will be valid for three years, at which point the applicator will need to be recertified.

A warning will be given to those not certified by the Sept. 30, 2017 deadline and those that receive a warning will also be asked to stop applying fertilizer until their certification is completed. Failure to complete certification could result in fines being levied by ODA.

The bill requires certified applicators to maintain records including, date, place and rate of application of fertilizer, type of fertilizer, name of person applying fertilizer, soil conditions, temperature, precipitation, and weather forecast for the day following the application. Records must be maintained for three years after.

This fertilizer certification requirement is in response to concerns that phosphorous from farm fields contribute to blue-green algal blooms in Lake Erie and escaping nitrogen contributing to the hypoxic zones in the Gulf of Mexico. Reduction in nonpoint source pollution of excess nutrients in both rural and urban areas will continue to be a focus of the ODA, and the Soil and Water Conservation Districts across the state.

Best management practices will be the basis of the agricultural fertilizer training with a focus on the 4Rs. 4R nutrient stewardship provides a framework to achieve cropping system goals which include: increased production, increased farmer profitability, enhanced environmental protection and improved sustainability.

The 4Rs incorporate the Right source at the Right rate at the Right time and in the Right place. The goal of fertilizer BMPs is to match nutrient supply with crop requirements and to minimize nutrient losses.

Other conservation practices such as no till farming and the use of cover crops, play a valuable role in supporting 4R nutrient stewardship.



## Land Judging Contest held Sept. 13

Land Judging teams from Southern High School won both urban and rural competitions at the annual Land Judging Contest held Sept. 13 in Athens county at the Brooks Family Farm on September 13. The Athens-Meigs contest is a learning experience for the FFA students to prepare them for the District Land Judging contests.



The contest is an educational activity where students evaluate land and soil and make decisions based on land use. Students evaluating for rural land use determine best management practices, including preventing soil erosion, compaction, water quality, and soil fertility, for crops and livestock. The urban test considers building with basements, sewage treatment systems, driveways, and landscaping.

Southern Urban Soil Judging Team



Southern Rural Soil Judging Team

# SWCD Upcoming Events

## Save the Monarch!

Milkweed Pod Collection through Oct. 30

It's that time again!

The Ohio Pollinator Habitat Initiative is calling on Ohioans for a second year of Milkweed pod collections!

This project started in 2015 as a seven-county pilot and last year hundreds of Ohioans worked together last fall to collect approximately 200 lbs of common milkweed seeds, totaling over 19 million seeds!

Milkweed is the only host plant for the Monarch butterfly for egg laying and caterpillar rearing. It also serves as a food source for Monarchs as well as many other

pollinator species.

The disappearance of milkweed across the U.S. has contributed to the 80% decline of the eastern monarch butterfly population over the last 20 years. We are working hard to change this and you can help! Lets make our collection efforts in 2017 even better by following these simple tips!

- Make sure that before you collect seed, you become familiar with the common milkweed to avoid harvesting pods from similar plants such as hemp dogbane and swamp milkweed

- It is best to collect the pods when they are dry, grey, or brown. **IT IS IMPORTANT TO CHECK THIS**

- If the center seam pops with gentle pressure, they can be harvested.

- Store the pods in paper bags; plastic bags collect unwanted moisture.

- Put the date and county collected on the bag when you turn them in.

- Keep the pods in a cool, dry area until you can deliver them to the Meigs Soil and Water Conservation District at 113 E. Memorial Drive Suite D, Pomeroy, OH.

Collections goes until October 30th.

If you have questions regarding milkweed collection, please contact the Meigs Soil and Water Conservation District at 740-992-4282 or Marci Lininger at [marci\\_lininger@fws.gov](mailto:marci_lininger@fws.gov) or Lori Stevenson at [Lori\\_Stevenson@fws.gov](mailto:Lori_Stevenson@fws.gov).

For more information on Milkweeds refer to this video!

<http://u.osu.edu/beelab/milkweed-seed/>

Thank you for your help!



## Now Accepting Applications for the Conservation Activity Plan Initiative

Sign-up Deadline is October 20, 2017

**COLUMBUS** – The U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) will offer technical and financial assistance to Ohio farmers, agricultural producers, and private forest landowners who want to better manage their agricultural and forest land resources.

Having a plan is always the best place to start in any endeavor and the Conservation Activity Plan (CAP) Initiative will help to develop a systematic plan that details the best approach to address natural resource concerns on farms and private forest/woodlands.

With CAP Initiative funding, landowners contract with a certified Technical Service Provider (TSP) to identify conservation practices needed to address their specific land use or natural resource need. A CAP could focus on a land use resource concern involving grazing land, forest land, or transitioning to an organic operation. A CAP could also address specific resource needs such as managing nutrients, on-farm energy improvements, or an air quality concern. For additional information on TSPs, visit the NRCS TSP website.

Once a conservation activity plan is completed with a certified TSP, producers can then apply for NRCS financial assistance to implement the conservation practices identified in their CAP. All NRCS financial-assistance programs are offered in a continuous sign-up; however, to be considered for CAP funding in the first collection period for the 2018 fiscal year, applications must be received by **October 20, 2017**.

Applications for NRCS programs submitted by entities, such as agricultural producers applying as a corporation, must have a DUNS (Data Universal Numbering System) number and an active SAM (System for Award Management) registration status when applying, a process that may take several weeks. Applications cannot be processed without this information.

To learn more about technical and financial assistance available through NRCS conservation programs, visit [Get Started with NRCS](#). In Meigs County, you may contact District Conservationist Carrie Crislip at 740-992-6646.

In Ohio, NRCS helps to provide financial assistance through the Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP). While we do not yet know what the funding will look like for Fiscal Year 2018, now is the time to begin thinking about signing up. Although applications are accepted on a continuous basis, NRCS establishes application cut-off deadlines throughout the year. Being proactive and having an active application on file, will prevent you from missing this deadline.

EQIP is aimed at providing financial assistance for conservation practices that address identified resource concerns. Eligible practices include, but are not limited to brush management, fence, access roads, heavy use area protections, spring developments, pipeline, watering facilities, a high tunnel system and pollinator habitat.

Individuals in Meigs County interested in applying for EQIP should make an appointment with Carrie Crislip, District Conservationist with NRCS to begin the application and conservation planning process as soon as possible. Additional information is available on the Ohio NRCS websites at [www.oh.nrcs.usda.gov](http://www.oh.nrcs.usda.gov). The Meigs County USDA Service Center is located at 113 East Memorial Drive Suite D., Pomeroy and the phone number is 740-992-6646.

# Support our affiliate members!



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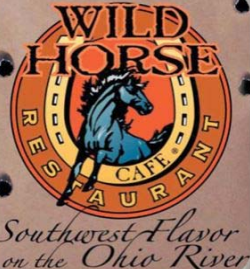


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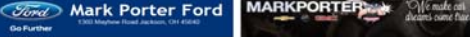

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If you would prefer to receive our newsletter by email, please call the Meigs SWCD at 740-992-4282.

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Rutland

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**Your ad could be here!**  
**For more information**  
**please call the Meigs**  
**SWCD at 740-992-4282.**

## **SWCD equipment for sale, rent**

### **The following items are available for sale:**

Marking Flags — \$.10 each  
Topographical Maps — \$8 each  
Ohio Pond Management Handbooks — Free  
Digital Soil Survey CD—\$10 each  
'Leading from the Past—Stories of Leading Creek' Book—\$15  
SWCD Hats— \$10

### **The following equipment is available for rent (subject to scheduling and availability):**

John Deere No-Till Drill (10-foot)	\$90 min. plus \$9/acre over 10 acres	70 HP tractor min.
Tye No-Till Drill (7 foot)	\$80 min. plus \$8/acre over 10 acres	45 HP tractor min.
Brillion Seeder (8-foot)	\$80 min. plus \$8/acre over 10 acres	40 HP tractor min.
Lime Spreader	\$50 min. plus \$2/ton over 25 tons	60 HP tractor min.
Forester Tree Planter	\$50 per day	25 HP tractor min.
Planter Bars	<b>Free</b> with \$50 returnable deposit	
Box Trap	<b>Free</b> with \$30 returnable deposit	



**A \$100 delivery/  
pickup fee will be  
assessed for  
equipment rentals  
outside of the county.**

*All equipment rentals must be scheduled through the Meigs SWCD office at (740)992-4282 during regular business hours for delivery Monday through Friday between the hours of 8 a.m. and 4 p.m. **The minimum fee will be assessed if equipment is delivered and not used. A \$10 charge per month will be added to all bills after 60 days.***



**Meigs SWCD**  
**113 E Memorial Drive**  
**Suite D**  
**Pomeroy OH 45769**

Bulk Rate  
 U.S. Postage Paid  
 Pomeroy OH 45769  
 Permit #101  
 Non-Profit

Return Service Requested

[www.meigsswcd.com](http://www.meigsswcd.com)

**Meigs Soil and Water Conservation District**  
**113 E Memorial Dr., Suite D**  
**Pomeroy OH 45769**  
*Est. 1943*  
[www.meigsswcd.com](http://www.meigsswcd.com)

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**Meigs SWCD Calendar of Events**

Regular meetings of the Meigs SWCD Board of Supervisors are generally held at 11:30 a.m. the fourth Thursday of each month at the SWCD office, 113 E Memorial Drive, Suite D, Pomeroy. Dates and times are subject to change.

- Sept 28— SWCD regular board meeting
- Oct 3— Annual Meeting and Banquet
- Oct 9 — Office Closed-Holiday
- Oct 26 — SWCD regular board meeting
- Nov 10— Office Closed-Holiday
- Nov 16— SWCD regular board meeting
- Nov 23-24— Office Closed-Holiday
- Dec 25— Office Closed-Holiday
- January Look for Annual tree sales information

Keep up with what's new at the Meigs SWCD! Like us on Facebook at "Meigs SCWD Conservation Area" and "Meigs Soil and Water Conservation District" or visit us at [www.meigsswcd.com](http://www.meigsswcd.com)

**Conservation Commentary is a publication of the Meigs Soil and Water Conservation District.**

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