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October–December, 2022

Newsletter



**VAN WERT**  
**Soil & Water Conservation District Newsletter**

1185 Professional Drive, Van Wert, OH 45891

Web site: [www.vanwertswcd.org](http://www.vanwertswcd.org)

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# Cows and Plows

As the new school year begins we very excited to be in the schools once again. Education coordinator, Tammy Campbell, has a wide variety of educational programs that she teaches to students in Van Wert County. Our most recent event was “Not Just Cows and Plows” that is put on at the Van Wert County Fairgrounds for all area 4th graders.

-The SWCD, in cooperation with Crestview Local Schools, Lincolnview Local Schools, St. Mary’s Parochial and Van Wert City Schools presented a day-long session for students to acquaint them with the primary industry in the county, AGRICULTURE. While some of the students do live on farms, most of them do not have an opportunity to experience what modern-day farming is all about. More important is that the field trip reinforces the social studies and science state standards and curriculum for this age group.

-Local supporting agencies for the event include: Agrauxine Corporation, Ag Credit, Cooper Farms Cooked Meats, D&D Ingredient, Farm Credit,

4-H Council, Heritage Farm Equipment, Kenn-Feld Group, Lincolnview Young Farmers, Maumee Watershed Conservancy District, Ohio State University Extension Office, Save-A-Lot, Van Wert County Fair Board, Van Wert County Farm Bureau, Van Wert Soil & Water Conservation District, Wrenco Trophy and the Van Wert County Foundation.

-The speakers cover a broad range of topics, including livestock, crops, marketing and production of agricultural products, soil basics, water, and equipment with an emphasis on how technology has changed the way we farm and how agriculture effects our daily lives.

A huge thank you to the presenters for taking time out of their busy schedules to teach our local students. Also, to the sponsors for supporting this event and understanding the importance of teaching our youth.

**Thank you to everyone who made this day successful!**

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## Upcoming Dates and Events

October 10	Columbus Day—Office Closed
October 12	SWCD Board Meeting @ 8 am
November 6	Daylight Savings Time ends
November 11	Veteran’s Day—Office Closed
November 9	SWCD Board Meeting @ 8 am
November 24/25	Thanksgiving—Office Closed
December 14	SWCD Board Meeting @ 8 am
December 26	Christmas—Office Closed
January 2	New Year’s—Office Closed

## Board of Supervisors

Craig Pohlman, Chairman  
 Kris Young, Vice-Chair  
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 Dave Kemler, Fiscal Agent  
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## SWCD Staff

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 Seth Owens, District Technician  
 Kady Fuhrmann, Special Program Technician  
 Tammy Campbell, Education Coordinator

## NRCS Staff

Ken Kottenbrock, District Conservationist  
 Tinina Hale—Civil Engineer  
 Noel Morris—Soil Conservation Tech  
 Jeff Carlson—PF Farm Bill Biologist



## Pictures from Cows and Plows



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### Special points of interest:

- ✧ Help save the Monarch Butterfly’s by saving milkweed plants
- ✧ Cows and Plows
- ✧ Water Testing



# Annual Meeting

The Van Wert SWCD held their 73rd Annual Meeting by co-hosting with the Van Wert Farm Bureau at the Ag Banquet on Tuesday, August 2 at Life House Church, Van Wert, OH. A SWCD election was held for two supervisor positions on the SWCD Board of Supervisors five member Board. Craig Pohlman and Ryan Mohr were elected to serve a three year term commencing January 1, 2023.

Dinner was provided by More To Love Catering.

Jayden Black was the SWCD Scholarship recipient. Adam Brothers was recognized by the SWCD and received the Conservation Farmer Award. This award is given to honor individuals for their conservation achievements. Farm Bureau honored their scholarship recipient.

Farm Bureau presented Membership Ag Awards. The Van Wert Ag Hall of Fame Award was presented to George Ropp for his many agricultural accomplishments.

Van Wert County Foundation spoke about the ways they are helping in Van Wert County through scholarships and grant programs. Sarah Noggle was the

guest speaker and addressed mental health issues that many farmers face. Ag Credit provided centerpieces of flower arrangements that were given as door prizes.

Sponsors for the evening were: Van Wert County Foundation, Farm Bureau, and the Van Wert Soil and Water Conservation District. We would like to thank everyone who attended the meeting and are looking forward to next year's meeting.



Craig Pohlman, Brian Adam, Donald Adam, Dave Kemler

Craig Pohlman, Sandy Ropp, George Ropp, Dave Kemler, Darryl Ricketts



## Statewide Milkweed Pod Collection Runs Sept 1 –Oct. 31

Due to the drastic decline in monarch butterfly (*Danaus plexippus*) populations, the Ohio Pollinator Habitat Initiative (OPHI) and local Soil & Water Conservation Districts are again seeking public involvement to collect common milkweed (*Asclepias syriaca*) seed pods from established plants September 1 through October 31. This is an annual event and we hope you can participate!

The seeds will be used to establish new plantings and additional habitat for the monarch butterfly throughout the buckeye state. These future plantings will increase the food source for the caterpillar stage. Seed pods from common milkweed should be collected **ONLY WHEN THE PODS ARE DRY AND BROWN-GREY** in color. If the center seam pops with gentle pressure, they can be picked. The seeds in green pods will not be viable and won't be able to be used. Be patient and don't collect too soon!

It is best to collect pods into paper bags. Avoid using plastic bags because they can allow mold to develop. It is recommended to wear disposable gloves when picking the handling pods. Ideally, it is recommended to leave at least 50 percent of the seed crop at a given site to allow for natural regrowth of the native population the next growing season. There are situations where total collection can occur. For example: If the field or area will be mowed completely or the area will be converted for crop or development. A collection container is located outside the door of the Van Wert SWCD, 1185 Professional Drive, Van Wert.

For more information on milkweeds refer to this video!  
<http://u.osu.edu/beelab/milkweed-seed/>



# Adventure on Lake Erie by Kady Fuhrmann



toured the islands and went fishing. While on the lake they pulled water samples and showed us what's in the water.

A big question that everyone asks is 'Is H2Ohio working?' I wish I could have a simple straight forward answer, but it is not quite that simple as there are a lot of factors and contributors that take place. The effects of BMP (best management practices) incentivized by H2Ohio are always supporting better water quality of course, but we are not going to see the true change

Back in August I was given the opportunity to travel to Lake Erie and learn about the lake and our impact on the lake's ecosystem. Put-in-Bay and Bass Island left me in an absolute awe. From attractions like the Board Walk, Cooke's Castle, and simply the relaxing boat/ferry rides it is an experience I would highly recommend taking. Not only were the views worth going, but I was able to learn and understand so much about soil & water conservation. We started the day off visiting the OSU water quality lab where students demonstrated how they test the lake's water and how they track the cleanliness of the lake. We then

in lake for a long time. I learned at the lab and during their presentation that a big contributing factor to the harmful algal blooms is weather. Farmers are more familiar than anyone how much of an impact weather has on our ecosystem. I have provided an insert within this newsletter, "Western Lake Erie Harmful Algal Bloom Season Projection" which helps explain/describe the correlation with weather and discharge of phosphorus in the lake. The insert has tables and graphs explaining the algal bloom projection based on data collected taken this summer. In November they will accumulate final data from the lake

and be able to determine the severity of the algal blooms in the lake for 2022. H2Ohio is still a key tool to help deplete/control the harmful algal bloom crisis. To decrease the development in harmful algal blooms, it is important to only apply nutrients that are needed (specifically Nitrogen and Phosphorus) and apply them in an appropriate manner to avoid any of it going into the water system.

Pictured is my Grandpa Stanley who joined me on the trip to Lake Erie. I absolutely loved sharing this experience with him! He enjoyed searching for mermaids in the lake (they must have been asleep that day) and learning how much of an impact his farming practices have on Lake Erie and water quality in general.



## Water Testing

The Van Wert SWCD will once again be partnering with Heidelberg University to offer at-home water testing kits. Nitrate, phosphate, and bacterium test kits will cost \$25 dollars, while the more involved heavy metals kit will cost \$125. As of this writing, there is no set date for the samples to be turned in as Heidelberg requires a certain number of tests before they will accept them. If you have any interest, please contact the Van Wert SWCD or stop in anytime so we can put you on our list.

The Van Wert SWCD is also now offering pesticide test kits for homes or ponds. The kits are for sale at our office for \$15.