

Teaching Your Children Well

Kelly Crout, District Director

This year Butler SWCD was given the opportunity to participate in Adopt a Class, a program where organizations come into a local classroom for a whole year and share what they do. Adopt a Class gives children the chance to learn all about career opportunities and the skills needed to achieve those positions. With hands-on learning, presentations, as well as a field trip, the students are exposed to a career field they may never have had the chance to experience otherwise. Butler SWCD was fortunate enough to be placed with Linden Elementary in Ms. Sharon Berger's 3rd grade class.

While we have our own educator on staff, this program gave other staff members the opportunity to talk about their positions and what we do. Some of the topics that we covered included: native wildlife, soils, composting and worms, water quality, fossils, and forestry. For each lesson, we discussed the importance of those natural resources, what we do at Butler SWCD that directly connects those topics, and similar careers within the same field.

To see the excitement in the kids' faces when we arrived for our monthly class meeting was worth it. For our final visit, we went on a field trip to Rentschler Forest MetroPark; the day included a nature walk, completing a nature journal, and fun outdoor activities. The value of conservation and educating our youth on the topic is important, even more so is showing and teaching them that a career in the conservation field can also be fun and rewarding.



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Election Legal Notice

The Ohio Soil and Water Conservation Commission will cause an election of Supervisors of the Butler Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) to be held in accordance with Chapter 940 of the Ohio Revised Code. Individuals who own or occupy land within the Butler Soil and Water Conservation District and are 18 years of age or older may vote for Supervisor.

There are 5 ways an eligible voter can cast a ballot:

- 1.) At the SWCD office, 1802 Princeton Rd., Suite 300, Hamilton, Ohio 45011 from July 24, 2025 until August 22, 2025 during normal business hours Monday—Friday 8:00 AM—4:30 PM; **or**
- 2.) At the Butler County Fair Livestock Auction, which will take place at 1715 Fairgrove Ave., Hamilton, Ohio 45011 on July 26, 2025 from 9:00 AM—12:00 PM; **or**
- 3.) At the PUPS in the Park event, which will take place at the Bark Park, 20 New London Rd., Hamilton, Ohio 45013 on August 7, 2025 from 6:00 PM—7:00 PM; **or**
- 4.) At the SWCD Annual Meeting, which will take place at Izaak Walton League of America—Hamilton Chapter, 450 Beissinger Rd., Hamilton, Ohio 45013 on August 13, 2025 from 5:00 PM—7:00 PM; **or**
- 5.) Voting absentee from July 24, 2025 until August 22, 2025, by requesting the ballot application and election ballot from the SWCD office at the following address 1802 Princeton Rd., Suite 300, Hamilton, Ohio 45011, by calling (513)887-3720, or emailing butlerswcd@bcoho.gov. All absentee ballots must be requested by August 11, 2025. Absentee ballots must be received by the SWCD office by August 22, 2025 at 4:30 PM.

Two Supervisors will be elected to a three-year term commencing January 1, 2026 and ending December 31, 2028.

Nominees are:

- 1. Nathan E. Gillespie
- 2. Meridy Glenn
- 3. Linda M. Peters

Board Responsibilities

The term of current Supervisors, Nathan E. Gillespie & Linda M. Peters, will expire December 31, 2025.

The five member board of supervisors is responsible for developing and administering the conservation assistance programs offered through the Butler Soil and Water Conservation District conducted in Butler County. They are public officials, serving without pay, responsible to the people of the district and state.

Candidates:



Incumbent, **Nathan E. Gillespie**, is a 4th generation farmer in Milford Township, and has lived in Butler County all his life. He and his wife Angie have three children, Austin, A.J., and Morgan. Nathan is a full-time farmer and owns 65 acres, which have been in his family for over 100 years. He farms corn, wheat, soybeans, hay, and also does custom farming. Nathan owns and operates Gillespie Feed and Farm Supply. Nathan enjoys raising registered Herefords and showing them with his family. He also has a cow/calf operation selling freezer beef.

Nathan has installed 4,810 feet of waterways, a 40x58 dry stack animal waste facility, a 40x96 waste storage facility, and a comprehensive nutrient management plan on his farm. 75% of his crop is no-till and the rest is minimal tillage. He and his family plant cover crops on 25% of their ground and also use variable rate fertilizer.

Nathan graduated from Talawanda High School and Hobart Institute of Welding Technology as a combination welder. His family attends the Stock Yard Cowboy Church in McGonigle, Ohio. Nathan is a lifetime Talawanda FFA Alumni member and served on the board of the Butler County Cattleman's Association for many years. Nathan also served on the Milford Township Fire Department for 25 years and has been on the Butler County Farm Bureau Board.

"After completing my fifth term I have learned a lot about conservation and how Soil and Water Districts operate and make a positive impact on our county. I have also met some great people not only in our county, but around the state, and even nation. I would like to continue serving the county representing rural and urban residents alike. With the current and future environmental issues facing agriculture on the horizon, I feel my knowledge and input can continue to be an asset to the board."

Meridy Glenn, is a longtime West Chester resident, small business owner, and passionate environmentalist with a degree in biology (BA, Brown University) and an MBA from the University of Cincinnati. Meridy is a retiree of the University of Cincinnati, where she served as Head Women's Soccer Coach and later as Development Director for the UC Foundation. In 2024, she was inducted into the Ohio College Soccer Hall of Fame.



species removal, rain garden maintenance, and water quality monitoring. As a certified Master Rain Gardener and active volunteer, Meridy has

worked on local projects involving invasive species removal, rain garden maintenance, and water quality monitoring. As a member and past Chair of the West Chester Board of Zoning Appeals, Meridy values responsible land use and conservation.

Her personal commitment to conservation is reflected in her home landscape. Meridy has planted more than fifteen species of trees and shrubs on her property sourced from the Butler SWCD and Taking Root sales to help restore native habitat and control soil erosion.

Meridy shares her life with her husband, a retired U.S. Air Force civilian engineer, their two now-grown children, and a large pony mare. She enjoys hiking and walking as a way to stay connected to the outdoors.

“I’m running for the Butler SWCD Board of Supervisors to help guide the important work of preserving and restoring the natural resources of Butler County. Thank you for your consideration.”



Incumbent, **Linda M. Peters**, is a 48-year resident of Liberty Township and a lifetime resident of Butler County. She and her husband Frank have two grown daughters, Laura and Sara. Linda has a B.S. in Elementary Education and Library Science, and a M.A. in Education. Linda retired from teaching, having taught for 25 years first at Middletown City Schools and then

at Lakota Local Schools.

During her teaching career she was chair of her department, served on several building and district committees, and helped develop curriculum for the science and social studies departments. Linda’s community activities included 4 years as PTA president, opening two new schools and 30 years with Girl Scouting. She served as troop leader where she helped 20 of her scouts achieve their Gold Award. Several of their projects centered around pond building and outdoor learning centers within the Lakota Schools. Linda also served as District Manager and for 9 years she coordinated and ran Girl Scout Day Camps and camporees that were attended by over 2,000 scouts. Many of the camp activities Linda developed instructed scouts about outdoor education and conservation of the land. Currently she is actively involved with the Mason Ohio Star Quilting Guild and Quilts of Valor.

“Completing my third term as a supervisor for the Butler Soil and Water Conservation District, the workshops, tours, and seminars taught me how impactful Soil and Water Districts can be for their counties. I have met many people in our area, state, and country that have helped me learn more about the impact rural and urban soil and water decisions affect our county. My main goal in seeking reelection is to assist Butler SWCD’s educational and outreach programs. By using my educational background, I want to help strengthen and develop programs that help future generations understand that conservation of our natural resources is important to all Butler County residents.”

Resident Request for Absentee Ballot - Butler

I, _____, hereby request an absentee voter ballot and envelope from Butler Soil and Water Conservation District. If requesting a ballot for other members who reside in the same household (spouse, partner, children, etc.) please print each name below.

I am an eligible voter of Butler SWCD, being 18 years of age or older and reside within the District:

Print Name(s)

Please mail absentee voter ballot(s) and envelope to the following address:

Resident Name (Please Print Clearly): _____

Address: _____

City: _____

State: _____

Zip: _____

Buying a home? What to not overlook

Ashlee Widener, Water Resource Specialist

When buying a home, many place their focus on the inside of the house, where the house is located, the school district, etc. While these are all important, many homeowners overlook vital aspects of a property that could potentially cost them a great deal of money in the future. Here at Butler SWCD, we receive many calls from residents that buy a house or property, only to find out that the basement floods regularly or that a stream is eroding and they are responsible. There are several things as a homebuyer that you should be paying attention to before putting in an offer.

One of the main problems our office gets calls on are drainage issues surrounding the foundation and in the yard. When you tour a house, it is important to look at the grading of the lot. Is the lot graded away from the foundation to provide proper drainage? Is the yard extremely flat or bowl shaped to where water could pond? Is the yard on an extremely steep slope where water runoff could cause erosion problems? If you are looking at a house in the spring, are there areas of ponding water or saturated soils? If the yard is not graded properly, you could run into standing water and potentially flooding. It is important to consider these issues and if they can be easily addressed before purchasing.



Water pooling next to foundation.

Another major issue many homeowners run into are foundational issues. If the water runoff is not properly flowing away from the house, the water can seep into the basement and foundation. This can result from poor yard grading, gutter or downspout issues, high water tables, or just natural drainage from other properties if you are downhill. It is first important to check if the gutters are

maintained, clear of debris, and properly attached to the house. Also, check to see if they are extended at least 10 feet past the foundation. The same goes for the sump pump drain. If there is a sump pump, check to see that it is properly working and that a backup battery is present. For the basement itself, check for signs of water damage including but not limited to: mold growth, peeling paint, water stains, discoloration, and foundation cracks. If water is actively seeping through the foundation or basement, you may need to consider waterproofing or other remediation before placing an offer.

It is also essential to find out if there are water features on the property that would be your responsibility. Water features can include wetlands, ponds, and streams. Are you in a floodplain? If there is a stream, pond, or wetland, are they far away from the house? Have the streams or ponds been maintained? Is there erosion? Is there algal growth or sediment built up in the pond? Do you know what you legally can and can't do within the water features? Typically, with water features like streams, the private landowner is responsible for erosion, clearing debris, or any other maintenance needs unless it is within a public drainage easement under certain circumstances.



Private drainage easement, concrete lined.

Easements, retention/detention basins, and other stormwater infrastructure may be present on the property. It is really important to check on any maps that may be associated with the property, including plat maps and subdivision drawings. These can be accessed by visiting the Butler County Recorder's Office (plats) and Engineer's Office (subdivision drawings). Some of the maps will indicate if these features are present on the property and can help you figure out who is responsible, whether it be the county, the township/city, the HOA, or the private homeowner. If you have any questions prior to buying a property or about responsibilities in general, please do not hesitate to contact our office for more information and resources - or attend our Homeowner's Workshop this fall.

Why Big Tree?

Dakotah Zimmer, Natural Resource Technician

By now, you’ve probably seen our advertisements in search of the biggest oak trees in Butler County. For those of you who haven’t seen our call outs, we are hosting a Big Tree Contest this year to educate and promote big tree preservation in our communities. Butler County is unique, in that, we have varying degrees of land use, from ultra-urban areas to acres of row crop. Most people don’t think of big trees or heavily forested areas when they think of Southwest Ohio, but that doesn’t mean they don’t exist. Our southern neighbors in Hamilton County claim over a dozen Native Ohio Champion Trees and two National Champion Trees!

Big trees provide more than just beauty for the landscape. Mature trees can support hundreds of wildlife species, intercept stormwater runoff, sequester carbon and combat climate change, and provide nutrients and stability to the soil. Along with the many environmental and wildlife benefits big trees provide, they also support human life and development. Trees provide humans with beauty, shade, improved public health, lower energy costs, increased property value, and numerous timber products used in everyday life.

According to USDA’s Tree Benefit Calculator, a 264 inch diameter Bur Oak (*Quercus macrocarpa*) can intercept over 600,000 gallons of water runoff, sequester 21lbs. of carbon, and remove 290 oz. of ozone from the atmosphere over a 20-year period. An oak tree of this size is estimated to be between 300-400 years old; that’s about 12 million gallons of intercepted water runoff over the course of this tree’s life! This big Bur Oak has been providing environmental benefits and supporting thousands of species, including humans, for centuries.

So, why do we want to know about your big oak trees? Oak trees are everywhere, literally! The oak genus (*Quercus*) is present on 5 continents and contains over 400

known species worldwide, with over 90 oak species native to North America alone. In North America, trees in the oak genus are considered to be keystone species, or organisms that are vital in supporting entire ecosystems. Keystone species are recommended for conservation due to their contribution to overall biodiversity and critical ecosystem functions. When an ecosystem loses its keystone species, the entire ecosystem changes and many even cease to exist. Worldwide, oak trees provide food and habitat for thousands of wildlife species and benefit millions of humans every day.

With as many big oak trees we see around, and as many acorns we trip over in the woods, we’d think oak tree populations are doing just fine. If we were to go out into the woods, or a natural area, we would find plenty of big, mature oaks trees filling up the forest canopy. However, if we were to look a little closer to the ground, we would find hardly as many oak seedlings within the forest understory. This

means that when the mature oak trees eventually die, there will be very few oak saplings ready to replace them.

According to recent studies by the International Union for Conservation of Nature, it is estimated that 31% of all oak species are threatened by extinction, 16 of which are native to the United States. Multiple factors have contributed to worldwide oak population declines, including the historical suppression of indigenous cultural burning, invasive species dominance, introduced insects and diseases, deer browsing, habitat loss, and climate change; just to name a few.

As humans, it can be easy for us to overlook the importance of mature oak trees in our landscapes. Although, it may not be so easy for the thousands of species of fungi, moss, lichens, insects, mammals, and birds that depend on oak trees for survival. If we lost 31% of all oak species tomorrow, we would notice significant decreases in wildlife diversity, dramatic changes in forest species composition, and lasting economic impacts. The oak genus is one of the largest, most widespread, and most significant contributors to global biodiversity. Big trees provide big benefits, but if we lose those big trees, we’ll be reaping even bigger consequences.



White Oak at Spring Grove Cemetery & Arboretum.

MyTree Benefits

Over 20 years.

Bur oak, (*Quercus macrocarpa*)

Serving Size: 264.00 in. diameter
Condition: Good
Location: Fairfield, Oh, United States
Expected i-Tree benefits over 20 years: \$7,404.10
[Discover benefits of all your community trees!](#)

Carbon Dioxide Uptake	\$4.61
Carbon Sequestered ¹	21.3 lbs
CO ₂ Equivalent ²	78.11 lbs
Storm Water Mitigation	\$6,139.69
Runoff Avoided	687,074 gal
Rainfall Intercepted	3,761,746.81 gal
Air Pollution Removal	\$28.35
Carbon Monoxide	15.83 oz
Ozone	290.82 oz
Nitrogen Dioxide	72.4 oz
Sulfur Dioxide	19.89 oz
PM _{2.5}	5.02 oz
Energy Usage ³	\$581.45
Electricity Savings	2,211.87 kWh
Heating Fuel Savings	32.79 MMBtu
Avoided Energy Emissions	\$650.00
Carbon Dioxide	10,870.55 lbs
Carbon Monoxide	44.5 oz
Nitrogen Dioxide	29 oz
Sulfur Dioxide	889.58 oz
PM _{2.5}	15.34 oz

Benefit estimates are based on USDA Forest Service research and are meant for guidance only. Visit www.itreetools.org to learn more.

Do you have the biggest oak tree in Butler County? Participants can nominate native Red or White Oak species for a chance to win. For more information on contest rules, nomination forms, and Red vs White Oak identification visit www.butlerswcd.org/bigtree.

Rain Garden Making A Difference in Morgan Township

Brady Smith, Rural Specialist

In late May, Butler SWCD's BEST volunteer's completed the planting of a rain garden installation at the Morgan Township Community Park. Volunteer's braved the rain and wind to install over 300 native plants to help manage runoff in the park. Funded by a Duke Energy Community Foundation Grant, this rain garden will not only capture stormwater runoff but also help pollinator species and encourage other residents to install similar practices on their property.



Native plants purchased for rain garden.

While the park is still developing, residents have donated thousands of dollars to help plant trees, install a picnic shelter, and construct a playground. The park boasts an ADA accessible trail loop with other more challenging paved sections. The park is open to the public and can be visited at 3141 Chapel Road, Okeana, Ohio 45053. The township is rolling out a Memorial Tree Program where residents can have a tree planted in memory of an individual or as a donation. If you have questions regarding the Memorial Tree Program contact Darrin Cliffe at (513)717-0399 or zoningenforcement@morgantownship.org.

Butler SWCD would like to extend a thank you to the Duke Energy Community Foundation and the Morgan Township Trustees for supporting the rain garden installation and the BEST volunteer's who braved the elements to get the plants in the ground.



Rain garden after planting - now let's watch it grow!

OUTDOOR ADVENTURE & PICNIC

**CELEBRATE
CONSERVATION & THE
OUTDOORS WITH THE
ENTIRE FAMILY**

AUGUST 13

5 - 8 PM

FREE

Activities:

- ✓ Food
- ✓ Outdoor Fun
- ✓ Fishing
- ✓ Crafts
- ✓ Conservation Awards

**Izaak Walton League of
America - Hamilton Chapter**

450 Beissinger Road
Hamilton, Ohio 45013

Register by August 1

513-887-3720

butlerswcd@bcchio.gov



Regenerative Ag Field Day

Join Butler, Clermont, Hamilton, and Warren Soil & Water Conservation Districts for an informative day exploring the world of regenerative ag, cover crops, and value added products to help boost your profitability.

- Learn about managing soil health on a 3000 cow dairy
- Learn about glyphosates effect on soil nutrients
- State & National Farm Policy Update from Ohio Farm Bureau
- All Star Panel featuring no tillers and cover croppers from across the state

**TUESDAY
AUGUST 26TH
8:30AM - 3PM**

**4445 OXFORD
MIDDLETOWN RD
TRENTON, OHIO
45067**



Registration: <https://tinyurl.com/nhcz486s>



<p>Gail Lierer Crop Ins. Agency Gail Lierer Crop Insurance Agent 1487 Chapel Road Okeana, Ohio 45053 513-738-9973 home 513-615-9257 cell lierer.1@gmail.com</p> 	<p>THEODORE JUNG, EA Tax Advisor, Certifying Acceptance Agent BLOCK Advisors Tax & Business Services 110 Boggs Lane, St 101 Cincinnati, OH 45246 Office: 513.771.5611 Fax: 513.771.5514 theodore.jung@blockadvisors.com www.blockadvisors.com</p>	<p> Butler Rural Electric Cooperative, Inc. Your Touchstone Energy Partner 3888 Stillwell Beckett Road Oxford, Ohio 45056 Business Hours Monday through Friday • 7:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. 513-867-4400 @butlerrural butlerrural.coop</p>
<p>Clean Sweep of the Great Miami River Date: September 20 Time: 9 AM - 12 PM Find a location near you & sign-up: cleansweepofthegreatmiamiriver.org</p>	<p>Interested in volunteering? Butler SWCD hosts BEST Volunteer Events throughout the year at locations all across the county. Visit www.butlerswcd.org/volunteer for more information and to sign-up.</p>	<p> D. Mike Schenck (513) 424-0183 Schenck Land Improvement Contractors LLC Pond Building My Specialty Member of  PO Box 233 Middletown, OH 45042-0233</p>
<p>Do you have questions about stream erosion and potential solutions? Check out our newly updated streams website at www.butlerswcd.org/streams. Also keep an eye out for the Butler County Stream Maintenance Guide and a potential homeowner's workshop to discuss common stream concerns.</p>	<p> Mike Rack 513-265-6360 Clearing Grading Basements Driveways Water Lines Drain Tile Building Pads Waterways Ponds Footers Located in Okeana Ohio - Fully Insured</p>	<p> 5096 US Rt. 127 South Eaton, OH 45320 937-286-0407 agdatasolutions@gmail.com www.agdatasolutions.com Don Garrett Certified Crop Advisor Trimble Ag Software Technical Service Provider for NRCS CNMP and NMP Certified-Ohio (Farm Works) Support</p>

Butler SWCD

Mission: To promote the conservation, restoration, and responsible use of our natural resources through technical assistance and education.

<p> COOMBS EXCAVATING & DRAINAGE, INC. FOR YOUR DRAINAGE, WATERWAY AND EXCAVATING NEEDS Richard L. Coombs 5037 Hamilton Eaton Road Collinsville, OH 45004 Ph: 513-726-6124 Fax: 513-726-4816 Cell: 513-623-7072 Email: RC3156@aol.com</p>	<p> Janae Arno MSN, APRN-CNP (513) 717-4333 (office) info@myfrontierwellness.com 3763 Hamilton Cleves Road Hamilton, OH 45013 www.myfrontierwellness.com</p>	<p>Combs Group Realty Courtney E. Combs Broker  One Donna Avenue Hamilton, Ohio 45013 Business (513) 829-8222 Residence (513) 894-5258 Cell (513) 470-1995 CombsGroupRealty@gmail.com </p>
<p>Butler County Farm Bureau Federation Serving Butler County since 1918!  117 E. Walnut Street Farmersville, OH 45325 513-844-8371 butler@ofbf.org BUTLER COUNTY</p>	<p>Sponsor this newsletter \$125 Contact Butler SWCD to find out more 513-887-3720</p>	<p> Algae & Aquatic Weed Control Nutrient Remediation Gamefish Stocking Fish Population Surveys Fountain & Aeration Installation Free Proposal: 800.662.3474 JonesLakeManagement.com</p>
<p>Save-the-date Homeowner's Workshop Saturday, October 4 Location TBD Updates will be added to website</p>	<p>BATH STATE BANK Farm Real Estate Mortgage FSA Guaranteed Loans Beginning Farmer/ Young Farmer Mobile Banking & Remote Deposit Personalized Service & More! Member FDIC Equal Housing Lender 765-732-3022 www.BathStateBank.com</p>	<p>513.892.116 mona.lisa@monasmakeup.com www.monasmakeup.com 24 S. Second St, Hamilton \$100 permanent makeup procedures (during any class) with Mona Lisa </p>

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Contact our office today (513) 887-3720



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The Butler SWCD and the NRCS prohibits discrimination in its programs on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, religion, age, disability, political beliefs, and marital or familial status.
USDA: An Equal Opportunity Provider, Employer, and Lender.

Upcoming Events

- Big Tree Contest:** July 1 - October 31
- Butler SWCD Election:** July 24 - August 22
- Creeking in the Park:** July 24
- BEST Volunteer, Rain Garden Clean-Up:** July 28
- Creeking in the Park:** July 31
- PUPS in the Park:** August 7
- Outdoor Adventure & Picnic:** August 13
- Regenerative Ag Field Day:** August 26
- Pollinator Fest:** September 6
- BEST Volunteer, Clean Sweep:** September 20
- Garden Series #4:** September 29
- Homeowner Workshop:** October 4
- BEST Volunteer, Invasive Removal:** October 29

To find out more information on any upcoming events, please visit www.butlerswcd.org or call our office at (513) 887-3720.

PUPS in the Park

Date: Thursday, August 7

Time: 6:00 PM - 8:00 PM

Location: Bark Park
20 New London Road, Hamilton 45013

Cost: Free

Come out to Hamilton's Bark Park to enjoy an evening at PUPS in the Park and take the PUP (Picking Up Poop) pledge.

Learn how you can keep our water clean while checking out local community and pet businesses, receive giveaways, and participate in dog contests. Get your tail wagging and your poop bags ready! It's going to be a fun time.

Vendors Needed:

Email us at butlerswcd@bcoho.gov if you're interested in taking part in this event. Acceptable vendors could include: pet supply stores, dog clubs, pet groomers, dog training, veterinarian, dog daycare & boarding, dog shelter, and all other local businesses. No cost for a vendor space.

