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Now's the Time to Be "Well" Educated!

Approximately 45 percent of Ohioans and nearly all (98 percent!) of Geauga County residents rely on groundwater wells to provide a constant supply of clean, safe drinking water. Don't miss this unique opportunity to become "well" educated by learning more about Geauga County's groundwater resources and ways to monitor and maintain your well to safeguard your home's drinking water supply.

Geauga Soil and Water Conservation District, Geauga Public Health, Geauga County Department of Water Resources, and Ohio Environmental Protection Agency are collaborating to present "Well Educated: A Deeper Look at Groundwater and Well Maintenance" on Thursday, March 21 from 6-8 p.m. at the Geauga County Public Library Administrative Center, 12701 Ravenwood Dr., Chardon, OH 44024. Free and open to the public, this program will feature an overview of groundwater in Geauga County, our role in maintaining water wells, the importance of testing, and helpful resources that are available. Don't miss your chance to learn from local resource professionals and take the first important steps toward groundwater protection.

Geauga SWCD is also offering free total coliform bacteria drinking water tests to Geauga County residents who register and attend this program! (Limited quantity, one per household, some restrictions apply.) Reservations are required due to limited seating and the deadline to register is Sunday, March 14. To register visit <https://fs12.formsite.com/GeaugaSWCD/WellEducated/index>. For more information, contact 440-834-1122, [gprunty@geauga.oh.gov](mailto:gprunty@geauga.oh.gov), or visit [geaugaswcd.com](http://geaugaswcd.com).



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How Sweet It Is!

Annual maple sugaring festivities return to Swine Creek Reservation

It's hands-on, educational, inspirational and celebrational – it's Geauga Park District's rich tradition of free maple sugaring events at Swine Creek Reservation in Middlefield, and fun in the park doesn't get much more family-friendly than the annual Sap's-a-Risin' celebration!

Festivities on two more Sundays this season, March 3 and March 10, all from noon to 4 p.m., include sap-gathering in the sugarbush with a horse-drawn sap sled, sugar house tours with sample tastes of fresh syrup, and historical stations with costumed interpreters displaying and demonstrating maple sugaring methods from prehistoric to modern day. Visit Swine Creek Lodge to warm up with free maple treats and live music (Mr. Haney String Band on March 3 and The Real Deal String Band on March 10). Plus, download the free Agents of Discovery app on your mobile device and register your account to play the new Maple Madness Mission, learning lots of fun maple facts all along the way and entering to win a free pint of park-produced maple syrup as a reward just for playing! (Learn more about Agents on our website under Activities, then Geocaching & Location-Based Games.)

With a stop at Swine Creek, you can also "make a day of it" to see others' sugaring operations. We're a featured stop on both days of two drive-it-yourself tours: the Ohio Maple Producers' Maple Madness Tour and the local Northeast Ohio Maple Tour. Find tour maps with complete lists of participating sugar houses at [ohiomaple.org](http://ohiomaple.org) and [mpneoh.com](http://mpneoh.com).

For more on Geauga Park District offerings, please call 440-286-9516 or visit Geauga Park District online via [www.geaugaparkdistrict.org](http://www.geaugaparkdistrict.org), Facebook, Twitter, Instagram or YouTube.

Valley Save-A-Pet's Low-Cost Spay/Neuter Begins March 2

The 2024 Have A Heart low cost spay/neuter program sponsored by Valley Save-A-Pet will begin on Saturday, March 2. This program offers cat and dog sterilizations at a discounted rate to pet owners.

Volunteers are available to take calls on Monday, Wednesday and the first Saturday of the month between the hours of 11 a.m. and 2 p.m. Call (440) 232-2287 (PETS) for more information or to apply for a spay/neuter certificate. Modest additional charges are required for any pet not current on vaccinations and for large dogs whose weight might require additional fees.

With the cooperation of local veterinarians Valley Save-A-Pet has been able to offer this vital service to pet owners for over 47 years. The support of the veterinarians in Cuyahoga, Geauga and Portage Counties has been vital to the success of the Have A Heart program and has helped reduce cat and dog overpopulation in Northeast Ohio. Pet owners and feral cat caregivers are encouraged to take advantage of this program.

To learn more about Valley Save-A-Pet's programs and events, visit [www.valleysaveapet.org](http://www.valleysaveapet.org).



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## ***BTHS Hosts Program on Shipwreck***

Scientist Bob Evans mesmerized an audience of about 50 people with his account of discovering the shipwreck of the SS Central America and recovering two tons of gold coins and bars. The ship had been transporting the gold from the California gold rush, and sank during a hurricane in 1857. Mr. Evans, a native of Columbus, Ohio, was the lead scientist on the expedition during the late 1980's to find the ship which was 170 miles off the Carolina coast and 7,200 feet under water. The program was sponsored by the Bainbridge Twp. Historical Society.

## **Geauga Co. Master Gardener Classes**

**Composting and Vermiculture** March 20 from 6:30-8:30 p.m. Free

Composting is an easy, economic, and essential practice to convert organic waste from your kitchen and yard into nutrient-rich soil. Join Geauga County MGVs Geauga Soil and Water Conservation District to learn composting basics and benefits, and a step beyond with vermicomposting. We will also discuss how to avoid common composting problems. Participants will have the chance to win a free kitchen compost pail! Registration information below.

**Gardening 101 Series Part 2: Seed Selection & Planting Plan** March 23 from 10 a.m.-12 p.m. Free

You're working on getting your garden site ready, it's time to make your seed, plant selection, and planting plan. Selecting your own seeds is exciting. Growing the food your family enjoys is fulfilling. MGVS Kelly Morgan will cover the basics of selecting and starting your own seeds, what works best directly planted in your garden, and when to start planting. Kelly is an avid native flower and vegetable gardener, and a beekeeper who loves sharing her interests and experiences with gardening. Registration information below.

**Common Yard & Garden Weeds** April 6 from 10 a.m.-12 p.m. Free

Now that spring has sprung those pesky weeds will be popping up in your gardens and yards. However, you are determined to battle the unwanted weeds. MGVS and botanist Judy Barnhart will help you determine what weeds you have. Several families are notorious for becoming aggressive, noxious, or even invasive; learn the differences. An ID matching activity will be included. Registration information below.

Each class will be held at the Geauga County Extension Office, Patterson Center (at the northwest end of the Burton Fairgrounds), 14269 Claridon-Troy Rd., Burton, OH 44021. Registration required. Please call for more information and registration at 440-834-4656.

Complete 2024 Class descriptions can be found on our website: [geauga.osu.edu](http://geauga.osu.edu)

**New for 2024**

**Gardiner High 5 Hall Walkers**  
 Gardiner Center, 9421 Bainbridge Road  
 Tuesdays and Thursdays  
 8:30am to 3pm

Registration is required,  
 (online, by calling 440-543-2552 or stop in the KCE office.)

## *How Sweet It Is Maple Tour*

March 2, 3, 9, 10 10 a.m.-5 p.m.

This drive-it-yourself free tour features sugarhouses across NE Ohio. Each sugarhouse and operation is unique to the maple producer. Visit as many as you can. Learn all about this pure natural sweetener and taste the products. Educational and fun for the whole family. If you haven't seen how maple syrup is made, you will be amazed. Geauga County has the most maple syrup producers in the State of Ohio. Visit [www.mpneoh.com](http://www.mpneoh.com) for locations and more information on the producers on tour.

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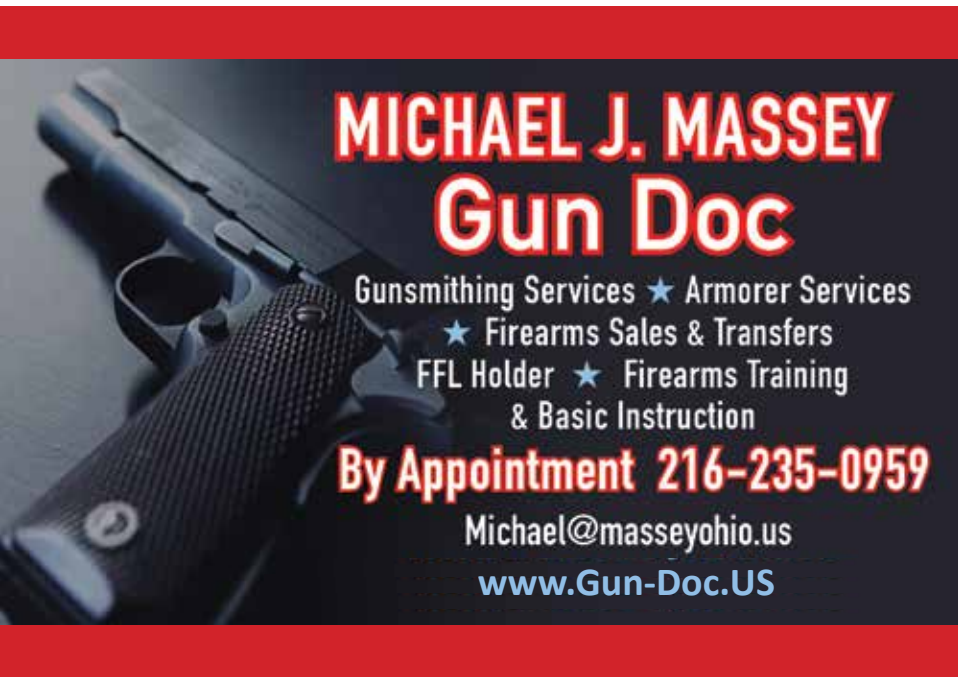


## Branch Out with Scholarship to Camp Canopy

The Geauga Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) is pleased to offer scholarship funding for the 2024 Camp Canopy, held Sunday, June 9-Friday, June 14 at FFA Camp Muskingum located on the shores of Leesville Lake in Carroll County.

This weeklong camp is sponsored by the Ohio Forestry Association and open to incoming high school freshmen through graduating seniors this year. Students will explore many branches of forestry and wildlife including tree identification, wildlife species management, forest products, insects, amphibians, dendrology, and fungi, to name a few. Campers will have the opportunity to learn firsthand about Ohio's forests and natural resources through engaging activities, woodland hikes, demonstrations and outdoor experiences taught by resource professionals. Camp Muskingum provides clean, comfortable accommodations and delicious meals, along with recreational activities such as swimming, fishing, challenge courses, boating, paddleboarding, kayaking, and entertaining evening programs.

Applicants must be a current Geauga County resident and enrolled in high school or homeschooled at the time of camp. Students who have completed eighth grade through seniors graduating this year are welcome to apply. Scholarship applications are due to the District by Friday, May 3. For more information and the scholarship application, visit [geaugaswcd.com](http://geaugaswcd.com) or contact [gprunty@geauga.oh.gov](mailto:gprunty@geauga.oh.gov) or (440) 834-1122. Don't miss this experience of a lifetime offering college scholarships, career interest opportunities, and lasting friendships and memories!



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## Spring Turkey Hunt

Applications due March 18 for youth hunt, April 1 for regular hunt

Gauga Park District is pleased to offer a turkey hunting opportunity again this spring within its Longo and Farley properties.

For the option to participate, applicants must complete the form located at [www.geaugaparkdistrict.org/activity/hunting](http://www.geaugaparkdistrict.org/activity/hunting) and email it to [permits@geaugaparkdistrict.org](mailto:permits@geaugaparkdistrict.org) or drop it in the mail.

Applications are due March 18 for the youth hunt taking place April 13 and 14, and are due April 1 for the regular hunt taking place April 27 through May 26.

Hunters will be selected by random drawing and notified via email of their acceptance and hunt location. Permits will be sent electronically and include hunt and location information. Details about submitting an application can be found on the form as well. Please note that ODNR rules and regulations apply to all hunting conducted on park property.

"Spring turkey hunting season is approaching soon," Ranger Mike Benesh said. "This is a great opportunity for hunters of all ages to be able to get outside, enjoy the outdoors, and explore some of our undeveloped properties."

"Immerse yourself in the outdoor experience," Chief Ranger Dennis Sloan said. "We're happy to offer another experience that hunters can enjoy in the spring."

For more on Geauga Park District offerings, please call 440-286-9516 or visit Geauga Park District online via [www.geaugaparkdistrict.org](http://www.geaugaparkdistrict.org), Facebook, Twitter, Instagram or YouTube.

## Scout Days at Geauga Parks

Dress for the weather and explore Geauga parks to earn scouting credit

Scout Day: Wolf Scout "Call of the Wild Adventure"

Saturday, March 23, 9-10:30 a.m.

Swine Creek Reservation, Lodge

Wolf Scouts, join us to work on your "Call of the Wild" Adventure.

Scout Day: Cadette "Trees Badge"

Saturday, March 23, 1-3 p.m.

Swine Creek Reservation, Woods Edge

Join us in the sugarbush as we work toward your Cadette Trees Badge (not provided).

To register, visit [www.geaugaparkdistrict.org](http://www.geaugaparkdistrict.org) and click Programs & Events, then the dates on the calendar, or call 440-286-9516. For the Scout Days programs, please just note registration is required for scouts only, but an adult must also attend.

For more on Geauga Park District offerings, please call 440-286-9516 or visit Geauga Park District online via [www.geaugaparkdistrict.org](http://www.geaugaparkdistrict.org), Facebook, Twitter, Instagram or YouTube.

## Geauga & Portage SWCDs Offer Educator Workshop to Explore our Wetland Gems!

For over 25 years, the Geauga and Portage Soil & Water Conservation Districts have offered the Wonders of Watersheds (WOW) workshops as valuable, affordable, and rewarding teacher trainings. Brand new and just for you, this summer's workshop will take an in-depth look at the wetlands within our watersheds, with the chance to see some of our most pristine local gems. We'll explore our intimate link to wetlands, our increasing dependency on them, and ways to effectively integrate natural resources topics into your classroom. Join us Monday, June 24 through Wednesday, June 26 as we rally for wetlands through outdoor investigations, hands-on activities, guest speakers, new resources, field exploration, and time to connect and rejuvenate! Each day will take us on new adventures throughout Geauga and Portage Counties. Open to educators of all grades and disciplines and one or two optional graduate credit hours are available through Ashland University. Registration is required by June 1. For more information visit [geaugaswcd.com/education/](http://geaugaswcd.com/education/) or contact Gail Prunty at [gprunty@geauga.oh.gov](mailto:gprunty@geauga.oh.gov) or 440-834-1122.

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