

MADISON TOWNSHIP

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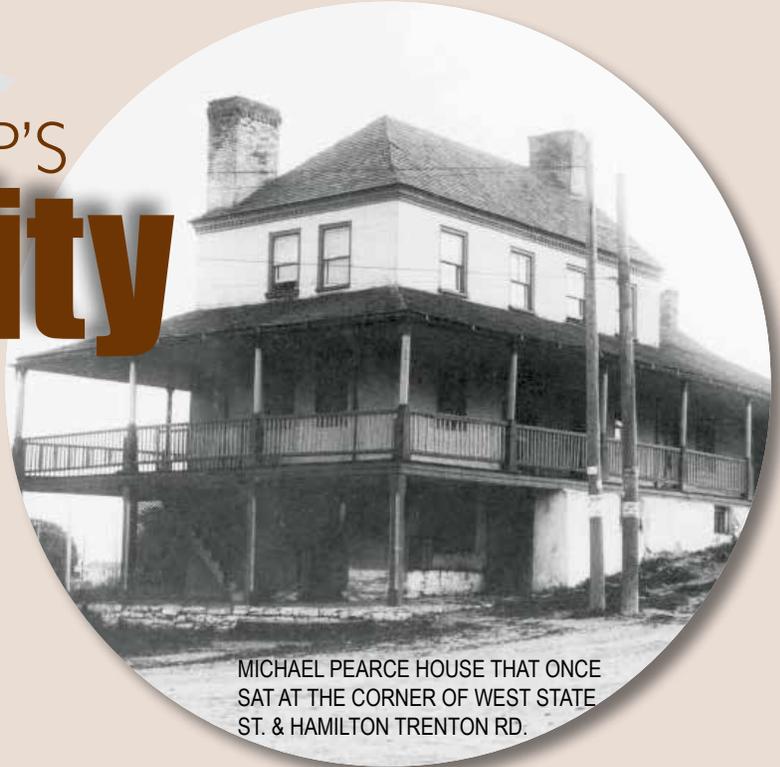
By J. Larry Helton, Jr.

MADISON TOWNSHIP'S Only City

Following the close of the Revolutionary War, many New Englanders were seeking out a better way of life and richer farmland, as was the case of Trenton's founder, Michael Pearce. Born in 1749 in Scotch Plains, Essex County, New Jersey of English, Scottish, and Irish descent, he went on to be a merchant for 18 years in Morris County, New Jersey.

Pearce married his hometown sweetheart, Phebe Squier, born c.1760. Records indicate they had ten living children – eight daughters: Mary Littell, Rachel Gard, Rhoda Taylor, Sarah Taylor, Phebe Gard, Elizabeth VanPeet, Susannah Urmstron, and another daughter who died young; and two sons: John, who died young, and Squier, who died in LaPort County, Indiana. The daughters of Michael and Phebe were much sought after because of their fine manners and upbringing, according to New England tradition.

Michael Pearce was in his forties when his quest for new land in the Northwest Territory began. Leaving New Jersey and crossing Pennsylvania, then traveling by flatboat on the Ohio River, the family stopped near Fort Miami in Columbia at the mouth of the Little Miami River in 1798. Michael left his family for a short time to scout out new and unsettled land in the southwest Ohio Valley. He found that not only did the Great Miami River provide better travel, but that the land around it would be rich for farming. It is quite possible that he stopped at Morrell's Station, now Excello, at the confluence of the Great Miami River and Dick's Creek. It is here where his path may have crossed that of Middletown's founder, Daniel Doty. They may have met before. Both men were from New Jersey and both resided at Columbia before settling their own land.



MICHAEL PEARCE HOUSE THAT ONCE SAT AT THE CORNER OF WEST STATE ST. & HAMILTON TRENTON RD.

In a land deed dated 1799 and signed by President Thomas Jefferson and Secretary of State James Madison, Michael Pearce, by 1801, had purchased 1,500 acres of land at \$2 an acre. The boundaries of this land, a parcel a mile wide, was State Road, the Great Miami River, and toward Wayne-Madison Road. Having been a Revolutionary War veteran, it is surprising that Pearce did not receive some of this land through a warrant for service to his country. It is possible he may have already been rewarded land or money while still in New Jersey. The only requirement of his purchase was that the land be cleared or developed within seven years or it would be forfeited back to the United States Government. Retrieving his family and others at Columbia, and while in transit to his newly acquired land, Phebe gave birth to at least one child during this trek, c.1801-1802. Records state that the group arrived here on July 10th, 1802. From 1802 to 1816, much clearing of the land and farming was taking place. Many other pioneer families who came to the area homesteaded on Pearce's land, as did all of his children, who lived within visiting distance of their parent's home. Aside from the

Continued on page 5.

YOUR Township Administrator...

By Todd Farler,

Madison Township Administrator



A decade came and gone...In the last eleven years since I became the township administrator, a lot has changed in Madison Township, but do you remember...

- 2008**
 - O.J. Simpson found guilty of charges of kidnapping and armed robbery
 - Gas went from \$3.99/gal to \$1.61/gal
 - Hurricane Ike makes landfall on the Texas Gulf Coast of the US.
- 2009**
 - Captain Chesley Sullenberger lands US Airways Flight 1549 on the Hudson River, with all passengers and crew members surviving.
 - The movie "Avatar" is released
 - The Statue of Liberty's crown reopens to the public after 8 years, due to security reasons following the World Trade Center attacks
- 2010**
 - Super Bowl XLIV; New Orleans Saints defeated the Indianapolis Colts 31-17 to win their first super bowl.
 - The 54 year run of the soap opera As the World Turns ends as its final episode is broadcast
 - The Deepwater Horizon drilling rig explodes, killing 11 and causing the rig to sink, causing a massive oil discharge into the Gulf of Mexico and an environmental disaster.
- 2011**
 - Wikipedia, the free internet encyclopedia, turns 10 years old.
 - Space Shuttle Discovery makes its final landing after 39 flights.
 - Osama bin Laden ,the FBI's most wanted man is killed by US special forces in Abbottabad, Pakistan
- 2012**
 - Toyota recalls 700,000 vehicles over safety concerns.
 - Apple unveils its iPhone 5 and iOS 6.
 - Google's Gmail becomes the world's most popular email service.
- 2013**
 - Lance Armstrong admits to doping in all seven of his Tour de France victories.
 - Boston Marathon bombings: 3 people are killed and 183 injured after two explosions near the finish line.
 - The United States ends its 16-day government shut down and avoids default in a Bi-partisan deal in the Senate.
- 2014**
 - Dale Earnhardt, Jr. wins 56th Daytona 500.
 - The US Supreme Court rules that police cannot examine the digital contents of a cell phone without a court order.
 - New York's 104-storey One World Trade Center officially opens 13 years after the September 11 attacks.
- 2015**
 - 1st time 1 billion people logged into Facebook
 - David Letterman, after 33 years, hosts the "Late Show with David Letterman" for the last time.
 - Real estate mogul Donald Trump launches his campaign for President.
- 2016**
 - Record Powerball lottery held in America - \$1.6 billion, (3 winners).
 - Harambe, a gorilla from Cincinnati Zoo, is shot after dragging a 3 year old boy who had slipped into its enclosure.
 - Republican Donald Trump is elected President of the United States of America, defeating democrat Hillary Clinton.
- 2017**
 - Rock and Roll Hall of Fame inducts Journey
 - Collision at sea between U.S.S. Fitzgerald and ACX Crystal, a Philippine cargo ship kills 7 US sailors in Japanese waters
 - O.J. Simpson released from Nevada's Lovelock Prison after ten years.

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Butler County Health Department.....	513-863-1770
Butler Rural Electric Cooperative.....	513-867-4400
Southwest Regional Water.....	800-232-5330
Duke Energy.....	800-634-4300
Dayton Power and Light.....	937-224-6000
Middletown Public Library	513-424-1251

MISSION STATEMENT OF MADISON TOWNSHIP

The mission of Madison Township is to serve the best interests of our residents by providing and maintaining a safe, healthy, and enjoyable community in which to live, work and play. To protect the general welfare of our rural community by utilizing efficient and effective public services and being dedicated to increasing the quality of life for our residents.

HOUSEHOLD

SEWAGE TREATMENT SYSTEMS OPERATION AND MAINTENANCE PROGRAM

The Butler County General Health District has begun locating and evaluating all household sewage treatment systems (HSTS) as required under O.R.C. 3718.02. This program began with an evaluation of sewage nuisances and stream contamination data. This information was used to determine which areas to inspect first.

The inspections are conducted in waves; letters are sent to homeowners informing them that they have 90 days to determine how their system will be inspected.

The Homeowner has the option to hire a service provider or request inspections from Health District staff Sanitarians. After the first and second notice a final notice will be mailed to the home owner stating that they have 20 days left to respond. Should they not respond at all, a Sanitarian will visit the property to inspect the household sewage treatment system (HSTS).

Inspections consist of a visit to the property to determine the location, components and operation of the HSTS. This information is gathered by an evaluation of the topography, probing of the soil in the area, and walking across the soil absorption area to ensure sewage is not rising to the surface or illicitly discharged elsewhere.

Should a public health nuisance be discovered a notice of violation will be issued that shall require that the H.S.T.S be maintained free of nuisances.

The health department environmental staff will be available to guide home owners on the necessary steps towards system repair, alteration or replacement.

Butler County General Health District has access to an Ohio E.P.A. grant to provide financial assistance for a home owner that may qualify based on need.

Once a property has passed inspection and fee payment has been received, the property will be issued an operation permit. Operation permits for on-site sewage absorption systems are valid for ten years; upon expiration another inspection will be conducted to verify the continuous safe operation of the HSTS.

Surface discharging systems require annual inspections and an operation permit to ensure environmental safe operation to surface discharge.

Please contact the Director of Environmental Health; Jeff Agnew (513-887-5239) with any questions, comments or concerns.

Q: What is household sewage?

A: "Sewage" is liquid waste from humans containing animal or vegetable matter.

Q: Why is the Ohio Dept. of Health requiring an inspection and an operation and maintenance permit for my sewage system?

A: It is estimated that 25% of sewage systems are failing, causing polluted waterways. Ohio Revised Code Section 3718.02 (A) (7) requires this program be carried out in each county.

Q: Does this mean that my older household sewage treatment system will have to be replaced?

A: Sewage treatment systems that were in operation prior to 1/1/15 are not required to be replaced with a new sewage system, unless the system is causing a public health nuisance.

Q: What is a public health nuisance?

A: A public health nuisance includes but is not limited to, the presence of odors, untreated or poorly treated liquid sewage discharging to the ground, streams, water ways, or ground water.

Q: Is it required for the Health Department to make this inspection?

A: No. An inspection is required, however the homeowner has options: 1. Contract with a service provider for an inspection, or 2. have the Health Department conduct the inspection. Homeowners that meet testing requirements and registration may become a service provider and inspect their own H.S.T.S.

Q: What if I can't afford to repair my system?

A: A fund may be available to assist low income persons with system repair, alteration or replacement.

Questions & Answers:

Q: How much does an inspection and an operation and maintenance permit cost the home owner?

A: The inspection fee, if done by the Health Department, is \$31.00. The operation and maintenance permit fee is \$27.00. The permits are good for TEN YEARS.

Q: What is the process when the health department makes an inspection?

A: The Health Department will let you know when we will be in your area. You can schedule an appointment if you wish, but it is not required. You do not need to be home for the inspection.

Q: Does this apply to mound systems, aerobic systems, and drip irrigation?

A: No, these systems already require annual inspections. This has been in place since 1975 for aerobic systems, and since 2007 for mound and drip irrigation systems.

Q: What do I do if I disagree with the inspector's decision?

A: You can appeal the decision with the Board of Health, an appeal board, or the court system.

Contact:

Who can I contact for more information?

Jeff Agnew, Butler County Health Department
513-863-1770
agnewJB@butlercountyohio.org

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Continued from cover page.

hardships of pioneer life, small bands of Indians roamed the area causing the settlers to be in constant watch of their livestock and property.

In 1807, Pearce received deeds for sections 5, 6, and a portion of 4, of what would become Madison Township of Butler County. Then in 1814, he bought another 70 acres from Davis Ball in section 31. Pearce was not only a farmer, but had by this time become a successful "real estate agent" of the time.

Another man, David Enyeart, arrived in the Northwest Territory in 1802, first settling at Princeton, then at Middletown in 1815, and finally purchasing land next to Pearce's. Though he had a smaller portion of land, he combined a portion of it with that of Pearce's and in order to begin a village. On February 27, 1816, Michael Pearce and David Enyeart filed the plat for Bloomfield, named in honor of a governor from their home state of New Jersey. The name later changed to Trenton for New Jersey's capital, because there was already a Bloomfield in Trumbull County. The new village consisted of 33 lots all on the north side of State Road. State Road, now known as State Street, led from Chillicothe, then the capital of Ohio, to Oxford. Michael began selling lots in the village and acreage south of State Road for farming. The first lot #6 at 103 North Miami Street was sold to Isaac Denman for \$126 on April 27, 1816. On



GRAVESTONE - MICHAEL PEARCE'S STONE IN THE PIONEER CEMETERY DIRECTLY BEHIND WHERE THE HOUSE SAT.

that same date, lot #3 at 10 West State Street sold to John Denman, lot #8 at 109 North Miami Street sold to William Denman for \$80.50, and lot #7 at 107 North Miami Street sold to James Johnson.

Aside from his land dealings and farming, Pearce was a devout Baptist, as were several of his sons-in-law and other settlers on his land. Though a log church may have preceded it, Pearce, along with son-in-law Stephen Gard,

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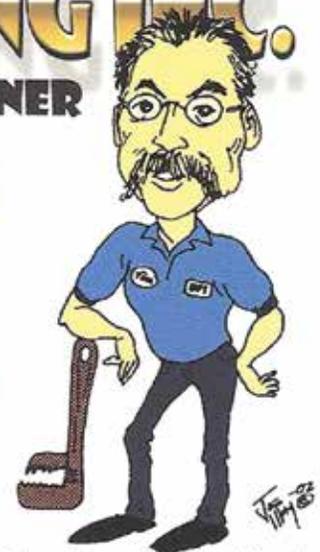
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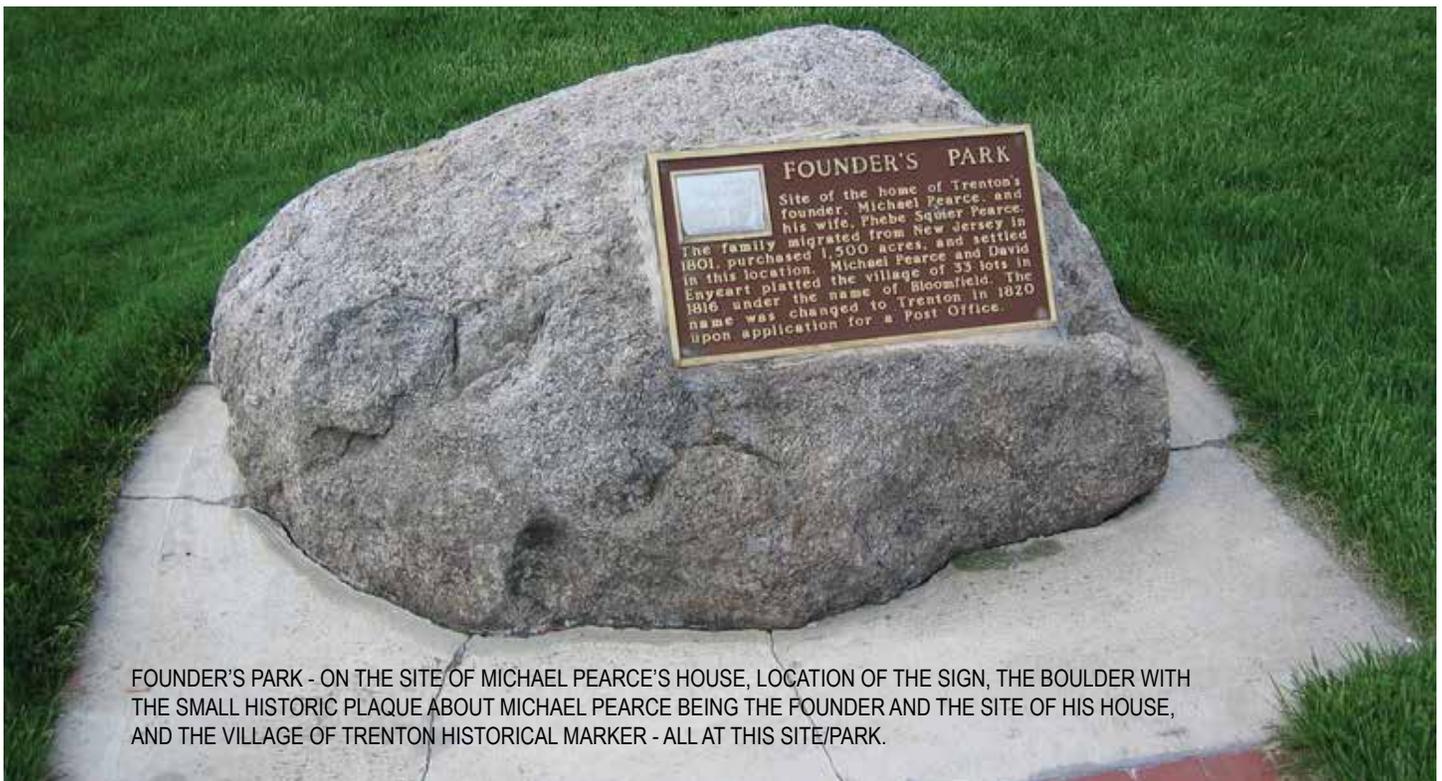


the first Baptist preacher in Butler County, founded the Baptist church on land donated by him in 1802. Pearce served as a deacon in this church for forty years.

Seemingly an important figure in the community, Pearce was only known to participate in one civic duty. He served as an election judge in a Lemon Township election for a justice of the peace on April 1, 1805. He was paid \$1.25 for making an election report. (Note that Madison Township was not created until 1810 from Lemon Township.)

Having lived in temporary quarters at Columbia, it was a relief for Pearce, his family, and others to finally construct and live again in their own houses. The first houses were usually a one-room log structure made from cleared, farmland timber.

Michael Pearce built the first house at 1 South Miami Street, at the five-way intersection. The house was constructed of bricks that were fired at the site, stone and wood. The outside walls were two to three bricks thick and the two chimneys housed four fireplaces. Originally a two-story, a story and a half were added at a later date. The



FOUNDER'S PARK - ON THE SITE OF MICHAEL PEARCE'S HOUSE, LOCATION OF THE SIGN, THE BOULDER WITH THE SMALL HISTORIC PLAQUE ABOUT MICHAEL PEARCE BEING THE FOUNDER AND THE SITE OF HIS HOUSE, AND THE VILLAGE OF TRENTON HISTORICAL MARKER - ALL AT THIS SITE/PARK.

COME JOIN US AS WE LIVE LIFE TOGETHER, AND BUILD GENUINE AND LASTING RELATIONSHIPS.



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lower level was a cellar-like basement built into the hillside, as was the earthen roof covered root cellar. A natural spring provided constant water.

After the Pearce children were grown, Michael and Phebe no longer had the need for such a large house, so they sold it to son-in-law, Dr. Squier Littell in 1819 for \$2,000. They had a six-room, two-story frame house built at lot #4, just west of State Street, with a hand-dug well at the rear for water.

It is interesting to note a few events that took place at the original founder's home after its sale. From 1873 to 1923, it was known as Blust's Castle due to the remodeling done by owner Bernhart Blust. In 1927, owner William Wieland remodeled it so extensively that the original house was no longer recognizable. Then in 1957, now valued at \$24,000.00, it caught fire, burned beyond repair, and was demolished to make way for a lengthy stay as a service station.

The most interesting story that occurred at the home, c.1850, was one of Trenton's few murders. A Mr. Yargus, prisoner of the Butler County Jail, was allowed a bit of freedom by the sheriff. One early morning, he came Trenton, crept up to the third floor of the house and



murdered his wife Sarah and fled just before daylight.

On June 5, 1838, a chapter of Trenton's history came to a close as Michael Pearce passed away at the age of 88, at home, with Phebe having died there as well, in 1832, at age 76. With his death, and later that of Stephen Gard, the English Baptist era in the village was giving way to German influence. Michael and Phebe are buried in the Elk Creek

Continued on page 8.

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Continued from page 7.

THE OHIO SHAPED TRENTON SIGN GREETES YOU AS YOU ENTER TRENTON ON EAST STATE ST.



Baptist Church Cemetery, now known as the Pioneer Cemetery, along State Street behind Founder's Park. Two church steps and a faint outline of its perimeter are also a reminder of earlier times.

The site of the Pearce's first home, long shadowed by service stations, was finally purchased by the City of Trenton in 1998. A park was created honoring Trenton's founder, Michael Pearce. A picture of the house and a plaque adorn a rock monument summing up the founding of Trenton, which acquired city status in 1971 – "Site of the home of Trenton's founder, Michael Pearce, and his wife, Phebe Squier Pearce. The family migrated from New Jersey in 1801, purchased 1,500 acres, and settled in this location. Michael Pearce and David Enyeart platted the village of 33 lots in 1816, under the name of Bloomfield. The name was changed to Trenton in 1820 upon application for a post office." **MT**

MADISON TOWNSHIP

Please send us story ideas or even something you'd like to submit. We are always open for ideas, content and images.

Township meetings are held every 3rd Wednesday of the month at 6:30 p.m. all are welcome to attend.

Please register for Madison Township email notification and always know what's going on in your township. Visit our website home page and click the link.

www.madisontownshiponline.com



MADISON LOCAL SCHOOLS

Achieving Excellence One Student at a Time

Play

In the winter of 2002 Madison High school put on their first performance in the William E. Caudill performance theater. It opened in a small town, much like Madison township, which is one reason why the director chose it. It portrays small town America in timeless fashion. As it seems history is repeating itself. We see the Madison thespians reenact this ageless performance, but with a slight twist. Instead of being transported to Grover's Corner, New Hampshire, you may just feel at home. Home after all is where you witness the everyday lives of your friends, family, and neighbors, who seem just like the characters of our town. A memorable story with them atmosphere of our madison community. These actors and actresses hope to captivate the township and the hearts of their audience with the timeless and relatable story of Our Town. And the previous cast is just as excited to see this new rendition.

Our friends Our families Our lives
Our memories Our teams Our work
Our loves Our legacy
Our faith Our children Our parents
Our stories

OUR TOWN

by Thornton Wilder

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"I am so happy to see you go after this piece of timeless theatre once again. I know it's a huge undertaking and I applaud you and wish you the very best!"

-Andrew Morris, Stage Manager, 2002

"This was, by far, my favorite play and role out of any theater production I have done. The role of Emily was very special. Nothing felt as powerful as Emily's monologue when her parents can't see her. I actually cried each time I performed it! I can't wait to see this from the audience!"

-Laura Hammond Emily Webb, 2002

"I would love to revisit and see another adaptation of Our Town in the theater. I haven't seen it performed since we did it and I think I will enjoy seeing some fresh faces who are hopefully learning and growing as performers; and have possibly gained some insight into how beautiful and short life is. I'm sure I will have a completely different perspective watching it after over 17 years. Break a leg!"

-Chelsea (Wells) Gorham Mrs. Gibbs, 2002

"This is a show with a lot of depth and a lot of meaning, and it has a message that rings true for everyone. I will not give too much away, because I want people to see it for themselves. But to sum it up: It is beautifully chilling."

-Layla Miller Emily Webb, 2018

"Our Town is so immersive and emotional. You, yourself, feel like you are in the play."

-Dylan Roll Simon Stimson, 2018

"Our Town will be a heart touching play that will let the community connect with the characters and all the things they deal with in their everyday lives."

-Trent Wood George Gibbs, 2018

So this fall 2018, grab friends and family and come to see the cast of our town walk in the footsteps of their predecessors on a stage that will begin and end with this encore performance. A full circle moment for past and present Madison thespians as we hear this timeless tale once more.



MADISON LOCAL SCHOOLS

Achieving Excellence One Student at a Time

Homecoming

Senior Class of 2019



(Back Row) Evan Crim, Dylan Roll, Levi McMonigle, Ryan Duritsch, Maxwell Evans, Shay Cobb, Mason Whiteman
(Front Row) Hailey Thomas, Eva Adams, Jessica Blevins, Callie Bunnell, Quincey Sullivan, Danielle Wagner, Kinzey Bronnenberg

Sophomore Class of 2021



Trent Wood, Taylor Johnson,
Hunter Bechtel, Mattison Cole

Freshmen Class of 2022



Alexander Coldiron, Madison Beach
Preston Brown, Brooklynne Davis

Junior Class of 2020



Korbil Kilbarger, Faith Auvil
Kosuke Omine, Sofia Hernandez Mendez

Homecoming Queen & King



Eva Adams, Dylan Roll

Upcoming Dates

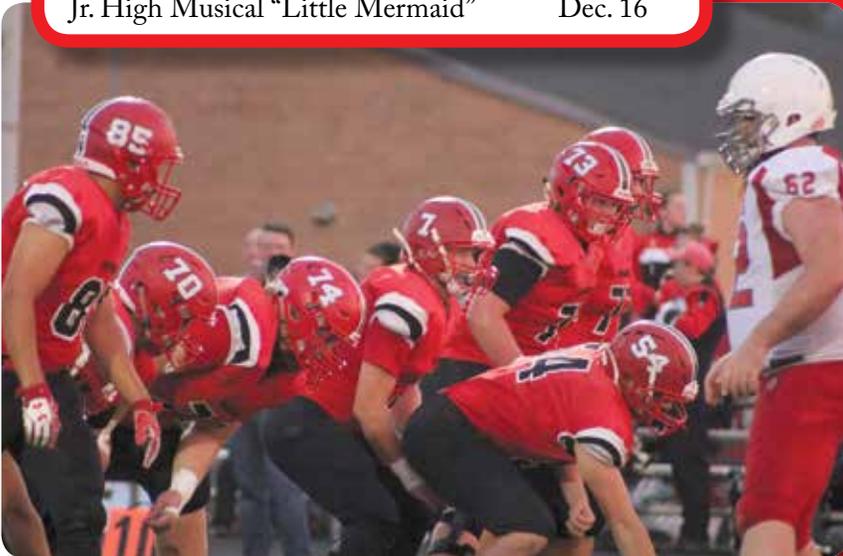
Marching Band MSBA Championships	Nov. 3
MES Skating Party	Nov. 8
MES Veterans Day Assembly	Nov. 9
Fall Play "Our Town"	Nov. 16-18
Thanksgiving Break	Nov. 21-23
Holiday Band Concert (5-8)	Dec. 11
2nd Grade Musical	Dec. 13
Meet Santa	Dec. 15
Jr. High Musical "Little Mermaid"	Dec. 16

Football

This past year the football team made it to the playoffs for the first time in school history. They have plans to do the same this year. So far the team is sitting with a 6-0 record with only 4 more games left in the season. With this record it is looking very promising that the team will be able to achieve their goal of attending the playoffs once again and maybe even winning State. This season has been nothing but excitement from the energy from last year has been carried on and put into place this season. We wish the boys best of luck for the rest of their season!

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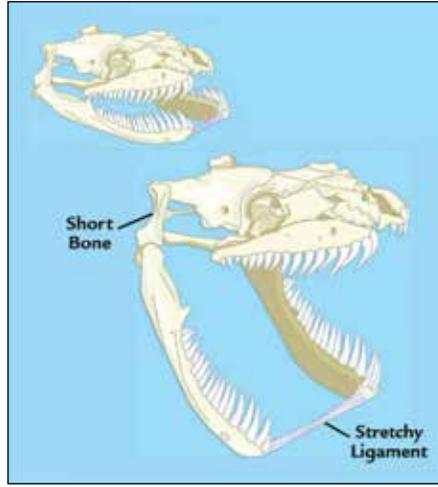


Snakes in Our Surroundings

By Alan B. Cady Ph.D. Professor of Biology, Miami University

Snakes... Unfortunately human superstition and lack of knowledge has given them an image problem for a long time, usually to their detriment. There are no official records of venomous snakes in Butler County, so the snakes you'll encounter locally are not dangerous. This article will help acquaint you with some of the more common snakes living here and perhaps give you a better appreciation of these ecologically important, beneficial, and interesting reptiles.

There are approximately 3,400 species of snakes on Earth, with about 50 species in the United States, and around 27 species in Ohio. They are found in a wide variety of habitats and eat a range of food items, making them an important predator in ecosystems. Snakes are generally shy, retiring, and docile. Their lack of legs gives them some advantages but also creates restrictions that they have had to overcome, leading snakes to display a number of different and remarkable behaviors to capture their food or defend themselves.



SNAKE BASICS

Snakes are thought to have evolved from burrowing or ground-dwelling lizards. The first true snake fossils were dated to over 100 million years ago, so snakes have been on Earth for a long time. That they arose from an ancestor with legs is reflected in pythons and boas which have small 'spurs' where their hind legs used to be. Snakes' lack of limbs has led to a number of adaptations allowing locomotion, feeding, and defense. All snakes are ectothermic, which means they take the temperature of their environment, explaining why snakes are not generally found in cold places. They shed their outer skin when they grow, and these shed skins may be found in various places.

FEEDING

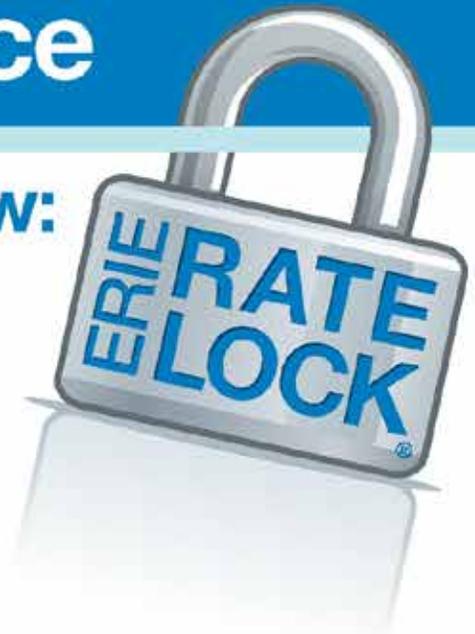
All snakes are carnivorous, eating a variety of mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians, fish, insects, worms, and eggs. They subdue their prey by constriction (preventing breathing and stopping the

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heart), using venom, or simply by grabbing and eating. Like most other reptiles they do not chew their food but swallow it whole. The tip of their lower jaw is adapted to 'disengage' (disarticulate) allowing significant expansion in order to swallow prey many times larger than their head. (Fig. 1) The jaw bones then return to their original positions after swallowing. They have very powerful digestive juices capable of digesting bones, fur, feathers, and even teeth.

LOCOMOTION

Snakes have very muscular bodies which they use to propel themselves employing at least 5 methods. They will use curves in their body to push against objects in their environment or sometimes 'push & pull' their bodies in a concertina-like motion. They also may move across smooth surfaces by using many small, 'reach-and-pull' movements of their large belly scales. Snakes on soft shifting surfaces like sand move by 'sidewinding'. Snakes are experts at using any small surface feature to grip, and some are able to climb directly up the side of a tree by gripping the rough bark. Most snakes also are good swimmers.

SENSES

One of the most distinctive characteristic associated with snakes is their 'tongue flicking'. It is erroneously thought that snakes may 'sting' using their tongue. In reality, their tongue is for their sense of smell! When they extend their tongue and wave it around they are collecting molecules in the air. When the tongue reenters their mouth those molecules are deposited on a special organ on the roof of the mouth which then sends signals that are interpreted by the brain as odors.

Some snakes known as 'pit vipers' have special sensory 'pits' on the front and sides of their head. These sense the body heat of their mammalian and bird prey and help direct their strike. Let's take a look at some of the more common snakes you might see in our vicinity.



(FIG. 2) EASTERN GARTER SNAKE

EASTERN GARTER SNAKE

(*Thamnophis sirtalis sirtalis*) (Fig. 2)

Garter snakes are fairly common around moist areas of yards and gardens. They vary in coloration, but generally have

Continued on page 14.



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Continued from page 11.

yellowish stripes on a dark background. The depth and pattern of color varies across the 5 species of garter snakes (a.k.a. garden snakes) found in Ohio. The Eastern garter snake is most common and its coloration is the most variable. They like wet areas and eat frogs, toads, salamanders, earthworms, and occasionally minnows and mice. If you decide to hold one of these snakes, beware! They have defensive 'musk glands' which expel a very odiferous substance that is difficult to wash off.

NORTHERN RING-NECKED SNAKE

(*Diadophis punctatus edwardsii*) (Fig. 3)



(FIG. 3) RING-NECKED SNAKE

These are small snakes with a yellow to yellow-orange ring around their bodies just behind the head. Their species name 'punctatus' means 'dotted', and many Ring-necked snakes have black spots on their yellow belly. They like drier places than garter snakes, and often are found in cut woodlands. They are active at night, and have musk glands like garter snakes.

BLACK RATSNAKE

(*Eastern Ratsnake*) (*Pantherophis alleghaniensis*) (Fig. 4)



(FIG. 4) BLACK RATSNAKE

These may grow to be the largest snake in Ohio. They go through a pattern and color change as they age, starting life with distinctive dark patches on a light background as juveniles. As they age this pattern gradually disappears until it is barely visible on their black body. Black ratsnakes have some interesting defensive behaviors such as vibrating the tip of their tail in dry leaves (sounds like a rattlesnake), repeatedly trying to bite (they can be feisty!), and discharging their musk glands. However, black ratsnakes may be kept as pets since they often become accustomed to people.

Black ratsnakes live mostly in and near woodlands, but may be found around structures (like barns). They are very good rodent predators and are important in controlling rat populations. They are not dangerous (they are constrictors), and people sometimes have resident black ratsnakes instead of cats to control rats and mice. Thus, you should not harm them and support their activities.

Racer snakes (*Coluber* spp.) are similar to Black ratsnakes but have no patterning.

COMMON WATERSNAKE

(*Nerodia sipedon sipedon*) (Fig. 5)

This is one of the most abundant snakes in Ohio and may be found in almost any permanent body of water. Because Watersnakes live around water and are fairly heavy-bodied, they often are confused for the Water Moccasin (a.k.a. Cottonmouth).



(FIG. 5) COMMON WATERSNAKE

THE COTTONMOUTH

(*Water Moccasin*)

IS NOT found in Ohio. Water snake coloration is highly variable. They often are seen basking on rocks or branches next to water, and are quick to dive into the water when discovered. If you decide to handle a Watersnake be prepared to be bitten (they can draw blood) and have their musk liberally distributed on you.

EASTERN MILK SNAKE

(*Lampropeltis triangulum triangulum*) (Fig. 6)

These are fairly common around any place with mice and other small rodents. They often live in barns and so were thought to draw milk from cows. They have a distinct but variable

Continued on page 18.



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ON THE FIRE SIDE: **FALL IS HERE AND WINTER IS ON THE WAY**



With the colder temperature's approaching we will be turning on the furnace and starting up the fireplace's and wood burning stoves. We are asking you to please do a routine check on both before you start using them this year. With the Furnace, please check all air filters and the air ducts. Have a certified technician (HVAC) come out and so a safety check.

For wood burning stoves, make sure you clean the stove pipes and check the outsides for any damages. Make sure you are always alert and keeping a close eye on everything while it's in use.

For fireplaces, make sure the chimney is cleaned, there are self-cleaners and companies that will come out and clean them. Make sure the front of the fireplace is safe, and has proper front's in place.

Of course, the most important things to do, make sure all smoke detectors are working properly. Replace batteries. Codetectors are also very important. If you do not have one please try to get one. They also need to be checked for working properly and replace batteries. Another aspect of fire safety is have a fire plan for your family.

On the medical side: It's FLU season, and yes it does not hurt to pre-plan for better health. Always wash your hands periodically, keep a clean house from GERM'S free. Always, always, check with your family Doctor, on check-up's. lots of baby wipes and Kleenexes can never hurt.

MADISON TWP. FIRE & EMS:

We have completed our summer training's with a few that is very important to firefighter's. We recently completed a few very good techniques on vehicle extrication that will help us on getting an injured person out of a crashed vehicle. Here is a picture of what our training looked like.



Extrication Training held by Madison Township Fire Dept.

As school started it is now into October, for us this is Fire Prevention month. We have always been there for the kids at school or brought them to our firehouse.

This year they came over to the firehouse and got to see the fire trucks, our station and a puppet show on fire safety. It is our goal to help the kids learn about Fire and Smoke. Teaching them that fire can be dangerous. We also encourage them when they are at home to help with fire safety, and a fire plan for their family. Here is a brief look with the kids, at the firehouse this year.

From the Madison Township Fire & EMS, we wish all of you and your family to stay safe, and if you have any questions or concerns, or that we might be of assistance for you and your home, please call any of the fire stations and a representative will help you. Thank you.

Stay safe and have a great fall and winter! **MT**

**IMPORTANT THINGS TO DO:
MAKE SURE ALL SMOKE DETECTORS ARE WORKING PROPERLY.
(REPLACE BATTERIES)
HAVE A FIRE PLAN FOR YOUR FAMILY**



(FIG. 6) EASTERN MILK SNAKE



(FIG. 7) EASTERN HOGNOSE SNAKE

patterning with a ‘checkerboard’ pattern on their belly. They are harmless (they make good pets) and are valuable for rodent control, sometimes capturing and eating multiple young mice at one time. One snake can consume an entire nest of young mice.

EASTERN HOGNOSE SNAKE

(*Heterodon platirhinos*) (Fig. 7)

This snake has one of the most interesting behavioral ‘bag-of-tricks’ of any reptile. It is completely harmless, but does a number of things to mimic dangerous snakes. When first encountered, the snake flattens its neck (resembling a cobra), coils its body with the head held in an ‘S’-curve (like a rattlesnake), and it hisses and strikes (with mouth closed). Unfortunately, these actions often motivate people to kill the snake. When these actions fail, it turns on its back, opens its mouth, and pretends to be dead. Hognose snakes are named from their distinctive upturned snout which they use to dig for their favorite prey, toads.

VENOMOUS SNAKES IN OHIO

There are no venomous snakes in Butler County, but the three found in Ohio are mentioned here. Two of them are endangered in Ohio. These snakes are easily identified by their broad head and heavy body. Two are rattlesnakes. And, to repeat, The Cottonmouth (Water Moccasin) **IS NOT found in Ohio.**

THE NORTHERN COPPERHEAD

(*Agkistrodon contortrix*; Fig. 8)

Is mostly in southeast Ohio. It is a master of hiding in leaves and is often missed. They are very slow to strike.

THE EASTERN MASSASAUGA

(*Sistrurus catenatus*; Fig. 9)

is a small rattlesnake and likes swampy areas. It is slow to bite and does not deliver much venom.

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(FIG. 8) NORTHERN COPPERHEAD



(FIG. 9) EASTERN MASSASAUGA



(FIG. 10) TIMBER RATTLESNAKE

THE TIMBER RATTLESNAKE

(*Crotalus horridus*; Fig. 10)

Has a distinct coloration and pattern. Both of these rattlesnakes are endangered in Ohio due to persecution and habitat loss.

I hope you now know a bit more about our local snakes and will appreciate their position in ecosystems and benefits to us. **MT**

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Venue: Chrisholm MetroPark Historic Farmstead
Times: Sunday 2-4pm, Thursday 10-11am
Admission: Free

PUBLIC ICE SKATING AT GOGGIN ICE CENTER

Oct 10, 2018 to Dec 31, 2018
Location: Goggin Ice Center
Address: 610 South Oak Street, Oxford, OH
Venue: Goggin Ice Center
Times: 7:15-9:15pm
Admission: See Event Website for Details

FITTON FAMILY FRIDAYS

Oct 10, 2018 to Apr 12, 2019
Location: Fitton Center for Creative Arts (Hamilton)
Address: 101 S. Monument Ave., Hamilton, OH
Venue: Fitton Center for Creative Arts (Hamilton)
Times: Free Family Reception - 6:30pm/Show-7:30pm
Admission: \$5 for members, \$7 for non-members

MIAMI UNIVERSITY REGIONALS ARTIST SERIES

Oct 10, 2018 to Apr 13, 2019
Location: Hamilton Campus and Middletown Campus
Address: 4200 N University Blvd, Middletown, OH
Venue: Miami University - Middletown
Times: 7:30pm
Admission: See Event Website for Ticket Prices

MIAMI PERFORMING ARTS SERIES

Oct 10, 2018 to Feb 02, 2019
Location: Various Locations
Address: 10 S. College Ave., Oxford, OH
Venue: Oxford Community Arts Center
Times: See Schedule for Performance Times
Admission: See Event Website for Ticket Prices

MASTERWORKS OF POST-WAR AMERICAN PHOTOGRAPHY

Oct 10, 2018 to Nov 30, 2018
Location: Sculpture Museum at Pyramid Hill
Address: 1763 Hamilton Cleves Rd, Hamilton, OH
Venue: Ancient Sculpture Museum at Pyramid Hill
Times: 12-5pm
Admission: Included with regular park admission

ENTERACT FAMILY PRODUCTIONS

Oct 10, 2018 to Mar 08, 2019
Location: Fairfield Community Arts Center
Address: 411 Wessel Dr., Fairfield, OH
Venue: Fairfield Community Arts Center
Times: 7pm
Admission: See Event Website for Ticket Prices

WINE, WOMEN & SONG PERFORMANCES

Oct 12, 2018 to Apr 26, 2019
Location: Fairfield Community Arts Center
Address: 411 Wessel Dr., Fairfield, OH
Venue: Fairfield Community Arts Center
Admission: See Event Website for Ticket Prices

HOLIDAY LIGHTS ON THE HILL

Nov 16, 2018 to Jan 01, 2019
Location: Pyramid Hill Sculpture Park & Museum
Address: 1763 Hamilton-Cleves Rd., Hamilton, OH
Venue: Pyramid Hill Sculpture Park & Museum
Admission: Monday-Thursday \$20; Friday-Sunday \$25 (Per carload). Members \$15 everyday

CHRISTMAS AT ENTERTAINMENT JUNCTION

Nov 17, 2018 to Jan 01, 2019
Location: EnterTRAINment Junction
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Times: Normal Business Hours
Admission: See Event Website for Ticket Prices

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Venue: Jungle Jim's International Market
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Gardening

ALTERNARIA & TOMATO PLANTS

By Rick Henry

This past growing season someone asked me about a problem he was having with his tomato plants here in the township. After he described it, I replied that I had never heard of such a problem. Then not long after I experienced the same issue with my plants here in Madison Township for the first time. I lost about 35% of my tomato harvest this past summer to this same problem. Recently, I asked another friend and fellow gardener here in Madison Township if he had ever experienced anything like this . . . where the tomatoes you pick look fine when you harvest them and bring them into the house, but after a day or so you notice they have developed dark spots. The dark spots grow rapidly, and in these areas the tomato is rotten and inedible. In sometimes a matter of hours, a kitchen counter full of very nice tomatoes can quickly turn into infected tomatoes fit only for the trash can (these should not be composted—see below). My friend said that he has experienced this in the past, and he sent me some information about this problem from the University of Maryland extension office. This problem is called “fruit rot” or “pod rot” and it is caused by a fungal disease pathogen in our vegetable gardens known as Alternaria. It is not a dangerous thing to humans in terms of health issues. One can simply cut away the affected parts of the fruit and eat the remainder, or bathe freshly harvested tomatoes in a 10% bleach solution, and then rinse to kill and remove the fungus spores. But, since this is a fungi that can also affect the overall health of the plant (as well as other vegetable plants in the garden) this is something to consider addressing in order to control and prevent next year.

In terms of preventative measures it is helpful to know that this disease needs a moist warm environment in order to survive. As in my case, Alternaria germinated and the subsequent fruit rot made an appearance in my garden just after a period of extended rain followed by hot humid weather. The disease is spread by spores blown into the garden by the wind, or spores left in the garden in debris over winter. As well it can be spread by compost applied to the garden if the affected fruits are put in a compost bin (so these should be bagged and put in the trash). So if this is the first year you have experienced this problem make sure to clean your garden well this fall leaving no debris to overwinter. And, next year highly monitor your



plants from April through June. At the first sign of any blight or yellowing or brown spots on your plants apply a fungicide immediately. And, then during the high heat and humidity of the remainder of the summer continue monitoring your plants and repeat fungicide application as necessary. But, if your garden has a history of disease then this may not be enough to eradicate the Alternaria spores. You may need to address this issue from below, so to say, in terms of using soaker hoses instead of overhead watering with a garden hose sprayer or traditional sprinkler heads. As shared simply on the University of Maryland’s website, “Because this is a fungal pathogen that thrives off of wet environments, overhead irrigation is never advised when irrigating. This causes the moisture to remain on the leaf tissue and increased susceptibility to the disease and an optimal environment for the fungus to survive and grow.” So by using soaker hoses/drip irrigation, the majority of the plant stays dry and does not give Alternaria the environment it needs to survive. Monitoring your plants and using fungicide if necessary, and possibly switching from overhead irrigation to drip irrigation should provide adequate controls. These things combined with clean gardening practices at the end of the season should make this a non-issue again. Some growing seasons present more challenges than others, but ultimately we usually get out of our gardens what we put into them. So, if this has been something new for you in your garden this year as it was for me and some others in our township, hopefully this article has been helpful and provided both understanding and a remedy. **MT**

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