

Vendors



**Valley View Farm
& The Big Red Shed**
Orwell, Ohio



Seasonal Produce, Pumpkins,
Miniature Horses and Livestock

Working Traditions



Bylers Seed & Hardware



LAKE METROPARKS Lake Metroparks Farmpark
8800 Euclid Chardon Rd.
Kirtland, OH 44094
440-256-2122
800-366-FARM (3276)
lakemetroparks.com

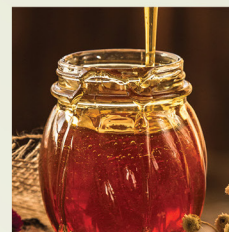
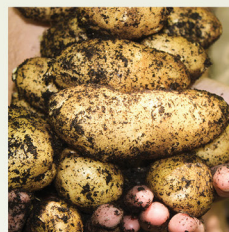
Lake County Probate Judge
Mark J. Bartolotta
Lake Metroparks Board of Park Commissioners
Gretchen Skok DiSanto, Frank J. Polivka
John C. Redmond
Executive Director Paul Palagyi

Lake Metroparks does not discriminate on the basis of race, color, religion, gender, age, nationality, or disability in employment, services, programs, or activities. Should special assistance be required in visiting facilities and/or participating in programs or activities of Lake Metroparks, please call (440) 358-7275 at least 48 hours in advance.

Homesteading WEEKEND 2026



January 17 & 18
9 am to 5 pm
Lake Metroparks Farmpark



JULIE CALDERON

EARL LINABURG



Welcome to Homesteading weekend. It is our hope you will utilize the information presented this weekend to move closer to your goals. As you continue your journey into homesteading or farming, you will come to the realization that each homestead and farm is as unique as the people who operate it. There is no one answer to your endeavor, but each piece of information is a tool that can be used to build your dream. The following questions have been provided to help organize your thoughts and to help you gain the most from the weekend. Thank you again for attending.

Pre-conference:

What is the future goal I hope to achieve?

What skills and knowledge do I currently possess?

What tools and resources do I currently possess to accomplish my goals?

What do I hope to learn from this conference?

Post-conference:

Has my goal changed?

What skills or knowledge did I gain that I can apply to my farmstead?

What equipment do I need to purchase?

FARMPARK Gift Shop

unique country gifts

Take home a little bit of the country.

Take home charming country gifts, unique items for the home and garden, Naked Bee lotion, Dionis goat milk products, homesteading books, sourdough starters, canning kits, dryer balls and more!

440-256-2122 x3161

VISA, MasterCard and Discover accepted • Discount for Farmpark members

**Assorted snacks
and drinks
available**



LAKE METROPARKS FARMPARK Maple Sugaring Weekends

February 28 & March 1, March 7 & 8



Discover maple syrup production, try hands-on activities, samples and much more!

Saturday Sessions

Notes

9:30

- Exploring the fun and science of breadmaking presented by Tony Binkowski, *Café*
- Soil: a world beneath your feet presented by Steve Ohmes, *Theater*
- Exploring hydroponics presented by Danny Wylie, *Plant Science Center*
- Horse care for beginners presented by Lake Metroparks Farmpark Staff, *Arena*

10:45

- Setting up the farmstead presented by Ralph Rice, *Theater*
- Building your backyard flock presented by Jess Nestor, *Well Bred Shed*
- Utilizing native plants in your landscape presented by Megan Hart, *Plant Science Center*
- Making maple candy presented by Andrew McGovern, *Woodland Center*
- Maintaining farmstead equipment presented by Robison Equipment, *Arena*

12:15

- Urban homesteading: from lawn to larder and everything in between presented by Sandy Miller, *Theater*
- Rotational grazing presented by Gallagher, *Classroom 3*
- Beekeeping in general, how it's changed, what it takes to be a good bee-keeper, and be profitable as a business presented by Mark Rinderman, *Plant Science Center*
- Goods from your woods: managing woodlots for a variety of products presented by Holden Arboretum, *Woodland Center*
- Say cheese! Basics of cheese making presented by Lake Metroparks Farmpark Staff, *Dairy processing room*

1:30

- Preserving food by freezing presented by Christine Martello, *Café*
- Wool: using it all presented by Raven Hooves, *Well Bred Shed*
- Caring for animals: basic veterinary care presented by Dr. Rob Schwartz DVM, *Classroom 3*
- Basic equipment needed to run a farmstead presented by Robison Equipment, *Arena*
- Cream separating presented by Lake Metroparks Farmpark Staff, *Dairy processing room*

2:45

- The magic of canning: turning fresh ingredients into shelf-stable foods presented by Sandy Miller, *Café*
- Establishing forages presented by Kevin Fowler, *Theater*
- Intro to incubating and hatching your own chicks presented by Jess Nestor, *Well Bred Shed*
- Good bugs, bad bugs presented by Lake County Master Gardener Diane Monreal, *Plant Science Center*
- Safely hooking implements to a tractor presented by Robison Equipment, *Arena*
- Maple 101 presented by Jen Freeman, *Woodland Center*
- Fencing options presented by Gallagher, *Classroom 3*

4:00

- Dyeing from nature presented by Valerie Reinhardt, *Plant Science Center*
- Growing small fruits presented by Ann Chanon, *Theater*
- Successful goatkeeping for the small farm presented by Carol Kovac, *Well Bred Shed*
- Marketing and setting up the farmstand presented by Kelsey Squibbs, *Classroom 3*
- Composting for everyone presented by Nathan Rutz, *Plant Science Center*
- Chainsaw safety presented by Robison Equipment, *Arena*

Sunday Sessions

9:30

- Exploring the fun and science of breadmaking presented by Tony Binkowski, *Café*
- Soil: a world beneath your feet presented by Steve Ohmes, *Theater*
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- Making maple candy presented by Andrew McGovern, *Woodland Center*
- Maintaining farmstead equipment presented by Robison Equipment, *Arena*
- From farm to freezer: building strong partnerships with a meat processor presented by Mandy Orahoad, *Classroom 3*

12:15

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- The art of beekeeping presented by Valerie Reinhardt, *Plant Science Center*
- Goods from your woods: managing woodlots for a variety of products presented by Holden Arboretum, *Woodland Center*
- Say cheese! Basics of cheese making presented by Lake Metroparks Farmpark Staff, *Dairy processing room*
- Preserving herbs for health & healing presented by Leah Wolfe, *Café*

1:30

- Intro to vegetable fermentation presented by Alan Block, *Café*
- Wool: using it all presented by Raven Hooves, *Well Bred Shed*
- Caring for animals: basic veterinary care presented by Dr. Rob Schwartz DVM, *Classroom 3*
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Jessica Miller Mecaskey & Patrick O'Reilly, *Holden Arboretum*

Patrick and Jessica are Consulting Foresters with Holden Arboretum Consulting Forestry, a professional consulting business operating out of Holden Forests & Gardens. They partner with landowners to meet their goals and manage their forests sustainably. Jessica has a background in ecologically-focused forest management and forest farming (mushrooms, maple, botanicals). Patrick's expertise is similarly in forest ecology with a particular proficiency in timber production and sustainable harvest.

Thank you to all guest speakers and vendors!



Alan Block, *Flannel Dog Farm*

Alan Block has a homestead in Saybrook Township in Ashtabula County. In addition to raising chickens, ducks and bees, Alan and his artist wife Chris host farm-curious campers and tourists at their farm. Alan bakes sourdough bread every week for a range of customers and uses organic and regional grains. He also regularly has many jars of bubbling fermentation experiments on the shelves in his garage dubbed the Bread Lab.



Carol Kovac

Carol grew up on Villa Mir Farm which has been in the Kovac family since 1950. As a kid, she grew gardens, tended sheep and cattle, made hay and absorbed lessons of what we call homesteading today. After years in academia and corporate life, she and her husband moved back to the farm in 2010 and began raising Nubian dairy goats for friends and family and a small herdshare. Her talk will include the joys and challenges of raising goats on a small farm, some economic realities and ways to make goats economical and the practicalities of keeping goats healthy.

Christine Martello

Chris has been a gardener all her life and is passionate about growing and cooking fresh healthful meals. After leaving the healthcare field, she taught culinary classes for 17 years and currently shares neighborhood history with her company, Erie Harbor Ghost Walk. She is currently enrolled in the Master Gardener program.

Mark Rinderman, *Mark's Apiaries*

Mark's Apiaries runs between 125 to 175 bee colonies for pollination service and honey production. Mark has been a beekeeper since 1985 and a business owner since 1993.

Sunday Sessions

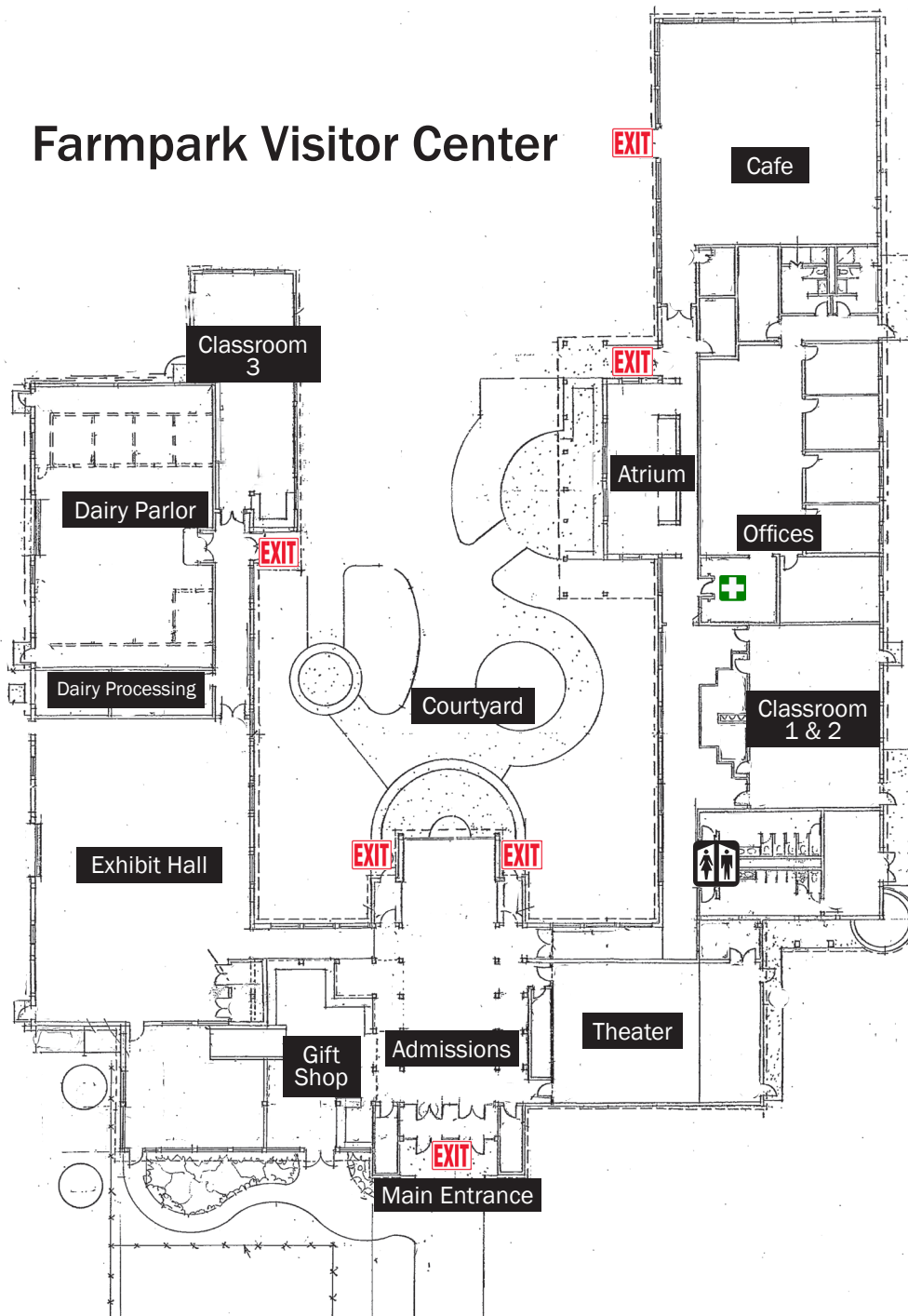
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- Intro to fruit and vegetable dehydration presented by Alan Block, *Café*

Farmpark Visitor Center



Ann Chanon, Ohio State Extension – Lake County
Ann Chanon is a native of Northeastern Ohio. She developed her love for woody plants and flowers at an early age. She turned her passion into a profession by earning a B.S. in Horticulture from The Ohio State University, M.S. in Horticultural Science from Texas A&M University, and Ph.D. in Horticulture and Crop Science from The Ohio State University. The emphasis for all three degrees was woody plant improvement. Ann is currently the Agriculture and Natural Resources Extension Educator for Lake County. She worked for five years as the Agriculture and Natural Resources Extension Edu-

cator for Lorain County. Prior to joining Extension, Ann worked as a Research Associate at the Ohio Agricultural Research and Development Center in the Horticulture and Crop Science Department for 12 years. She contributed to projects including germplasm improvement and domestication of a new crop species, studies on fruit quality and secondary compound production in black raspberries and other small fruits, and the effect of environmental stress on plant metabolites. Other employment experiences include floral and seed biology technician at Pan American Seed in West Chicago, IL., and internships with Herman Losely and Son Inc. Nursery and Holden Arboretum.



Kevin Fowler, Fowler Seed Marketing

Fowler Seed Marketing is a family-owned company striving to provide the highest quality seed, synergistic plant and soil fertility products and experienced consulting for hay, pasture, grain and cover crop production.

The Fowlers currently raise pasture and hay for their beef, sheep, pigs, ducks and horses, along with commercial hay on their family farm in Rock Creek, Ohio. Along with their statewide dealer network, Fowler Seed Marketing offers real-life farming experience and consulting to serve your unique needs.



Jen Freeman, *Richards Maple*

- Ohio Maple Producers President 2009 - 2011
- Ohio Maple Producers Association Board member
- North American Maple Syrup Council member 2009 - 2011
- Geauga County Maple Festival President 2014 - 2015
- Geauga County Maple Festival Board member since 1998
- Participated in the fundraising & building of the Sugarhouse at the Geauga County Fairgrounds
- Heritage House Committee member
- Geauga County Maple Festival, the Ohio State Fair, the International Maple Meetings, Crawford County Fair (PA) and Harrisburg Farm Show (PA) judge

Fair, the International Maple Meetings, Crawford County Fair (PA) and Harrisburg Farm Show (PA) judge

- Maple Producers of Northeast Ohio member

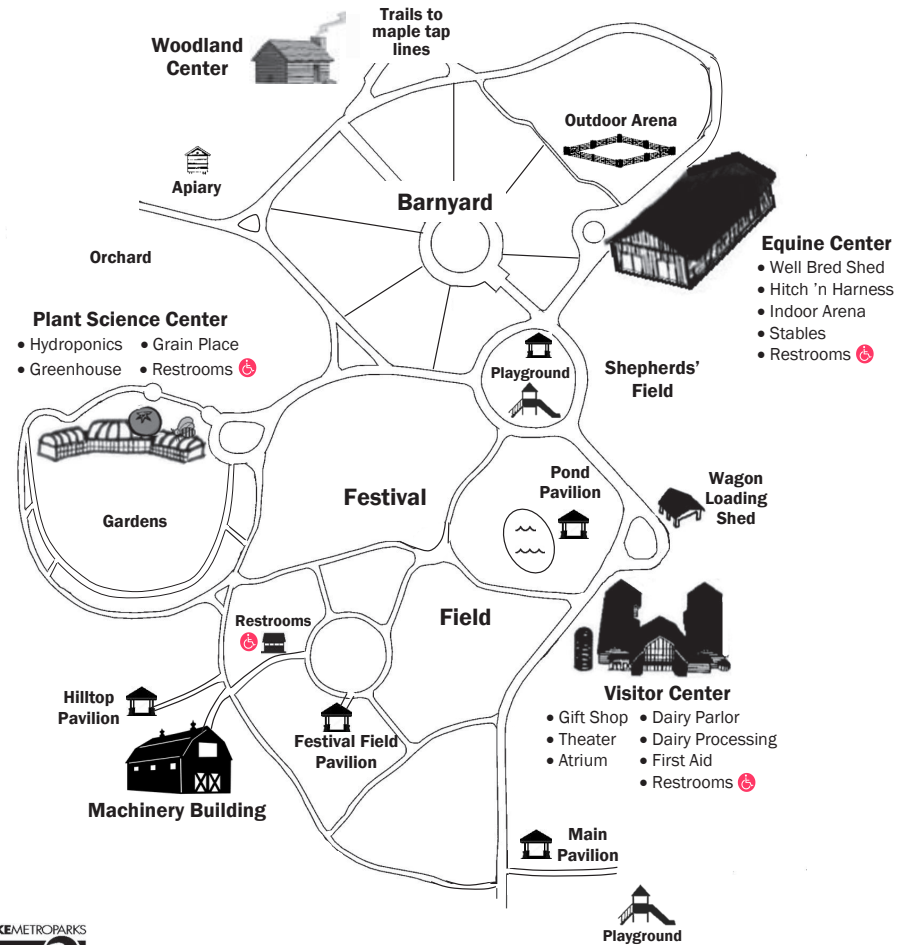


Danny Wylie, *Lake Metroparks Farmpark*

Danny was born and raised in Akron, Ohio. He earned his Bachelor of Science degree from North Carolina State University majoring in Plant Biology and minoring in Horticulture. He has a passion for all things plants and carries a breadth of knowledge that he loves to share. He has particular interest in natural resources, plant propagation, plant identification, ornamentals and landscape design.

Danny worked for Cleveland Metroparks as a seasonal field botanist, a greenhouse assistant

for Lorain County Metro Parks, and as a gardener for Holden Forests and Gardens, where he maintained and improved the Main Display and Old Layer Rhododendron Gardens. At Farmpark, he plans and maintains garden spaces around the Plant Science Center as well as other key areas on the property to enhance aesthetics and enrich programs. He recently finished remodeling the hydroponics greenhouse and has been testing various crops for performance. At home, he grows bonsai, South African bulbs and other unique tropical plants.



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Please wash or sanitize your hands before eating. Encourage children to keep their hands out of their mouths after petting animals.

Guest Speakers



Steve Ohmes, *Lake Metroparks Farmpark and Working Traditions Farm*

Steve is a native of Northeast Kansas. He received his formal education from Kansas State University, receiving a Bachelor of Science in Agriculture.

His early interest in agriculture started with vegetable crop production through his exposure to truck farming from a young age. During and after college he worked in production nurseries for more than ten years.

Since 2013, Steve and his family have lived in Leroy, Ohio on his wife's family farm, which has been in the family for more than 100 years. He and his family raise cattle, pigs, chickens, forages and small grains. He is employed as Assistant Administrator at Lake Metroparks Farmpark where he can pursue his passion for agricultural programming. Steve is currently studying regenerative farming practices and how to implement these practices utilizing fields in Ohio and Missouri.



Megan Hart, *Lake Metroparks*

Megan Hart is the Biologist for Lake Metroparks. She earned her bachelor's and master's degree from Austin Peay State University in Clarksville, Tennessee. Her career before Lake Metroparks was focused on bird conservation in New England and the southeastern United States. In her previous position with Quail Forever, she worked as a Farm Bill Biologist and focused on the creation and restoration of grasslands and meadow habitats in Kentucky. With Lake Metroparks, Megan works throughout the park system with a focus on rare wildlife and plants species, meadow creation, creating habitat management plans, invasive species monitoring and species

inventories. She is passionate about wildlife conservation through promoting habitat quality and diversity and helping others see what they can do on their own properties to promote wildlife.

Jason & Alyson Carroll, *Raven Hooves Farm*

Raven Hooves Farm is an 80-acre farm located in Southeast Ohio. Built and managed by a husband-and-wife team they raise predominantly Shetland sheep but co-op with other local farms to provide fleeces from a variety of wool breeds. The business has grown over the last nine years in an effort to support their motto of "no fleece left behind." Working diligently to utilize all portions of the fleece in order to have no waste, each fleece is sorted into three categories. The best fibers go on to become yarn or are washed and directly sold to hand spinners. The seconds are utilized for felted products such as dryer balls or Christmas ornaments. The skirtings are portions of the fleece that are soiled in manure and vegetable matter. These less-desirable portions of the fleece are run through the pelletizing mill to become all natural fertilizer pellets for gardens and house plants. This process allows all portions of the fleece to have a purpose and to give back what nature has given them. Currently, Raven Hooves Farm products are found in several local farms stores and will be at 16 different Ohio festival events. Each event allows them an opportunity to educate families and individuals on the many benefits that wool can provide. You can stay up to date by following the farm on Etsy, Facebook or Instagram for all the latest updates on products and events.



Mandy Orahod, *Ohio Farm Bureau*

Mandy Orahod grew up in Noble County in Southeast Ohio, where her family raised beef cattle, horses and hay. Active in 4-H and FFA, Mandy always knew her future was in agriculture. She attended The Ohio State University Agricultural Technical Institute and earned her Associate degree in Livestock Science with a specialization in beef and sheep pro-

duction. She then went on to main campus earning her Bachelor of Science degree in Animal Sciences.

Her background includes hands-on experience working at a meat processing facility, a dairy farm, the Ohio State University Equine Hospital, Ohio Beef Council and on a ranch in Ten Sleep, Wyoming. After college, Mandy spent five years as a meat inspector with the Ohio Department of Agriculture, inspecting processing facilities across Northeast Ohio. For nearly ten years, Mandy has served farmers and rural communities in Northeast Ohio as an Organization Director for Ohio Farm Bureau. Alongside her husband and children, she operates a small cow-calf and beef finishing operation, selling beef directly to consumers. She also helps at her in-laws meat market, Piper Processing.



Ralph Rice, *Riceland Meadows Farm*

Ralph Rice was born and raised in Ashtabula County. His life has been immersed in all things farming. He now lives in Jefferson with his wife Connie on a 73-acre farm. In the past, they raised cattle, hogs, sheep, goats, meat chickens and laying hens. They now devote their retirement years to raising, training and using the rare breed Suffolk Punch draft horse. Ralph has used real horsepower on his farm for more than 30 years. He farms with methods proven in the past and his regenerative approach to agriculture has served him well. Since moving onto the farm in 1992 practices such as composting, multi-species rotational grazing along with crop rotations and working with mother nature has turned a landscape of red brush and goldenrod into a productive and profitable

farmstead. Ralph also has a soft spot for wildlife; he was chosen as Ashtabula County's "Conservationist of the Year" in 2021. The farm also has a ten-acre riparian buffer protecting the Mill Creek watershed. The farm's woodlands support a small maple syrup operation and supplies building materials and firewood for the farm.



Johnathan & Kelsey Squibbs, *Valley View Farm*

John, Kelsey and Raylynn Squibbs own Valley View Farm and have been running The Big Red Shed produce stand at their farm for eight years. They sell produce grown at the farm as well as items they source locally. They have a small petting zoo of miniature livestock and several miniature horses that they use to do work around the farm and garden. John is the horseman of the family and can often be found driving horses at home, in parades, in the fields and at the Farmpark where he works. John

comes from a long line of horsemen and has heavy roots in small scale conservative farming. Kelsey works part time for Countryside Veterinary Services and Geauga Growers doing ordering and deliveries. They both enjoy growing produce and hope to help bring the concept of "farm to table" direct to the community.



Valerie Reinhardt, *Lake Metroparks Farm-park (Retiree)*

Valerie has a Bachelor of Art in Art from Texas State University San Marcos and has studied horticulture on the side. She worked for Lake Metroparks for 30 years, starting as an interpreter where she presented a variety of plant-based programs. She later became Grower, Horticulture Education Specialist and finally Horticulture Manager. During that time, she planned and planted a variety of gardens consisting of vegetable and specialty gardens such as a dye garden promoting the importance of plants in human history. She was the beekeeper at Farmpark from 1998 - 2016 and she is currently the vice

president of the Lake County Beekeepers of Ohio. She researched and did natural plant dyeing demonstrations for 25 years. The creative aspect of natural dyeing is a marriage of her art and horticulture backgrounds. Her interest in homesteading stems from her mother, who grew up on a subsistence farm in East Texas providing most of their needs from the farm.

Jess Nestor, *Meyer Hatchery*



Jess joined Meyer Hatchery in 2017 as part of the customer service team, where she quickly discovered her passion for education and video storytelling. As the creative force behind Meyer Hatchery's YouTube channel, her editing expertise and engaging approach have turned it into a go-to resource for poultry enthusiasts. Now serving as Marketing Supervisor, Jess brings big ideas to life with creativity and heart. When she's not sharing her love of all things raising poultry and Meyer Hatchery, you'll find her tending her flock of bantam chickens and ducks or digging into her garden.



PJ & Rachel Robison, *Robison Equipment*

Robison Equipment is a third generation farm equipment dealership. They have been in the industry since 1945. Farming/homesteading has changed some in the last 80 years, but they strive to provide the best equipment, knowledge and service that backs their equipment. Robison Equipment is your one stop shop for homesteading equipment needs.



Andy McGovern, *Lake Metroparks Farmpark Events Manager & Maple Sugaring Supervisor*

Andy has been involved with the maple sugaring program at Lake Metroparks Farmpark for 15 years, becoming the manager of the program in 2017. Andy's interest in maple sugaring started early in his high school years and his knowledge advanced while working at Farmpark. While managing Farmpark's maple sugaring program, he has worked to keep the equipment up to date and formed new partnerships with local maple producers. Andy

and staff created an annual Maple Sugaring Pairing Dinner to offer attendees an evening of learning about maple sugaring while enjoying a maple - themed dinner. The dinner is in addition to Maple Sugaring Weekends, which educate park visitors about the maple sugaring process and products made from maple syrup.



Tony Binkowski, *Reveille Bakery LLC*

Reveille Bakery is representative of Tony and his vision. As a Marine veteran and an early bird, he always enjoyed the reveille wake-up call in the military. In the same manner, he believes our society needs a wake-up call to the harm processed foods are causing and the benefits of eating whole fresh foods. At Reveille Bakery, they do this through sharing their sourdough baking using fresh milled flour with the local community, opening the conversation on health and nutrition.



Sandy Miller

A lifelong Ohio resident currently residing in Painesville, Sandy is a zone 6a gardener, avid food preservationist, cheerleader for edible landscaping and urban home-steading. Just trying to live a little easier on the land for the past 70 years. Favorite words: "Ooooo let's try it!"

From her first job working on a 160-acre organic grain farm in Columbia Station, Ohio to now living on a half acre and producing enough food to fill a cold cellar, it's been a lifelong journey. Along the way she has learned growing your own food is one of the most important things you can do to help yourself and the planet. *"Live simply so that others may simply live".....Gandhi*



Dr. Rob Schwartz DVM, *Trinity Veterinary Hospital*

Dr. Rob graduated from The Ohio State University College of Vet Med in 2005 and has been practicing mixed animal medicine ever since. Rob's focus is on companion animal medicine, but he is active in Lake and Geauga County 4-H and has had livestock of his own at his home in Montville. His four children have raised lambs, goats and hogs for the Lake County Fair. Rob has attempted to provide some food animal medicine services for the tri-county area at Trinity Vet Hos-

pital with haul-in services when needed. Dr. Rob and Dr. Moseley are comfortable treating any homesteading animal and hope to add a third veterinarian in the early summer that has a large animal interest.

Diane Monreal, *Ohio State Extension-Lake County Master Gardener*

Diane has gardened all her life, since a wee sprout. She became a Master Gardener in 2015. She loves flowers and finds growing food to be the most important and most humbling endeavor of gardening. She was recently reminded by a farmer friend that everything wants to eat, which can make gardening quite a challenge!