



2021 Annual Election and Candidate Information

The Board of Supervisors of the Geauga Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) would like to cordially invite the public to help celebrate their 77th anniversary in conservation while also voting for the next Board Supervisors. The Annual Election & Ice Cream Social is 5:00 - 8:00 pm on Thursday, September 30th at the Patterson Center on the Geauga County Fairgrounds (14269 N. Cheshire Road, Burton, Ohio 44021). Candidates include Dee Belew, Melissa Davis, and Mary Slingluff.



Dee Belew

Dee Belew and her husband Bill have resided in Auburn Township for 50 years and own Messenger Century Farm. Her two children and six grandchildren also reside in Auburn. Dee has been on the Board of Supervisors since 2013 and currently serves as Fiscal Agent. The Belews produce hay, maple syrup, and have a "Pick Your Own" blueberry patch. Their farm has been protected with a conservation easement through Western Reserve Land Conservancy to preserve the land in its current state. Dee loves all types of gardening and volunteers for Western Reserve Land Conservancy. She was the secretary of the Auburn Township Zoning Commission for 24 years. For the love of Auburn Township and Geauga County she would like to continue to be on the Board.

Melissa Davis

Melissa has lived in Hambden Township for 23 years where she raised her 3 sons. As a passionate educator and botanist, Melissa has a Master of Science. She serves as the Horticultural Facilities Director and Herbarium Collection Manager for Kent State University, where she has worked since 2004. In 2009 she completed *The Floristic Survey of Geauga County, Ohio: 50 Years of Change*, and in 2020 she co-authored *Problem Plants of Ohio*, a comprehensive book on invasive and weedy plants. Melissa is a member of the Native Plant Society of Northeast Ohio, the Kent Garden Club, the Kent State University Tree Advisory Board, the Ohio Independent Arborist Association, and the Ohio Prairie Association. She hopes to bring her understanding of natural areas, plant communities, conservation, and agriculture to help maintain and protect Geauga County's land and water.



Mary Slingluff

Mary lives in Chardon with her husband, Jody, and they have four children and a granddaughter. Mary currently serves as Treasurer and has been on the board from 2009 - 2014 and 2015 to the present. As owner of Avalon Gardens Nursery in Munson for the past 24 years, Mary has created this full service nursery and charming Bed and Breakfast as a sustainable green business. Avalon Gardens specializes in landscape design, specialty gardens, and above all, native plants. Mary organically grows, sells, and landscapes with native plants and uses her knowledge and passion to teach of their immense value. In addition to running her business, she also supports other plant sales, hosts many Garden Clubs, presents education programs, and volunteers at the soup kitchen at the Salvation Army in Collinwood. Mary holds a biology degree from Allegheny College. She is committed to preserving and protecting natural resources and enjoys working with the engineers, master gardeners, scientists, and educators at the District to serve the people of Geauga County.



Voting begins September 1st. All voters must be at least 18 years of age the day of the election and must reside or own land within Geauga County. Anyone wishing to vote who cannot attend the Annual Election Ice Cream Social may do so by stopping by the Geauga SWCD office (14269 Claridon-Troy Road, Burton, Ohio 44021) during business hours (7:00 am - 3:30 pm) or by making a request for an absentee voting ballot by calling 440-834-1122 or emailing clair@geaugaswcd.com. All completed ballots must be received by September 30, 2021.

Don't miss this unique outdoor and family-friendly Ice Cream Social! Stop by to get "the scoop" on your yard while enjoying a free ice cream from King Kone. Learn how to access online tools to investigate your property's soil and water, vote for our next two Board Supervisors, see this year's conservation awards and rain barrels, and enjoy a sweet treat on us. Hope to see you there!

Visit www.geaugaswcd.com or call 440-834-1122 for more information.