

AUGLAIZE-MERCER COUNTIES

SEPTEMBER

Sept. 4-5 — Riverside Bluesfest, K.C Geiger Park, St. Marys, legendary and up and coming blues acts. For more information, tickets and a complete list of scheduled performers: www.stmarysblues.com. Acts include the Chris Duarte Group, Austin, Texas; Nick Moss and the Flip Tops, Chicago; Shane Dwight, Nashville; The Sean Carney Band, Columbus; The Jimi Vincent Band, Mansfield; The Sonny Moorman Group, Cincinnati; The Sugar Thieves, Phoenix; The Hipsters, Lima; and Ray Fuller and the Bluesrockers, Columbus. Food/soft drink vendors and street-fair merchandise vendors. Beer, wine coolers and wine will be on sale inside the venue. Tickets at www.TicketWeb.com, linked at www.stmarysblues.com.

Sept. 4 — Fryburg Mock Turtle 5K race. The 3.1-mile walk/run starts at 8 a.m. at St. John Catholic Church in Fryburg and leads into Glacier Hill Lakes campground, finishing back at the church. Some rolling hills and gravel areas. Rebecca Manger (567) 356-5122 or becca1122@hotmail.com to register.

Sept. 5 — Baltex Classic for Sunoco, American Late Model Series with UMP dirtcar modifieds/Eldora stock cars, Eldora Speedway, New Weston. www.eldoraspeedway.com.

Sept. 5 — The St. John Catholic Church Fryburg Homecoming, 4-11:30 p.m. on the church grounds at 11319 Van Buren St. (Fryburg), Wapakoneta. Parish festival with food, kiddie tractor pull, hourly attendance drawings, hog raffle, rides, games, bingo and cash raffle prizes. Famous mock turtle soup, chicken noodle soup and homemade pies. (419) 738-6043.

Sept. 6 — Durbin Bean Bake, beans and homemade noodles starting at 10 a.m., 7 miles west of Celina on SR 29, then 3/4 mile north on Erastus Durbin Road in the woods.

Sept. 9, 16, 23, 30 — Bluegrass Café, hosted by Vernon and Kitty McIntyre, music in a homey, relaxed atmosphere at Famous Old Time Music east of Wapakoneta on US 33. 7-9:30 p.m. \$5. (419) 568-1220 or www.fotmc.com.

Sept. 10-12 — Civil War at the Fort, Ambassador Park, Fort Recovery. There will be living history and reenactments of skirmishing and battles, with Friday a school day. Live artillery demonstration, night fire, military ball, payroll, parlor games, ladies tea and a Saturday baseball game. Hay, straw, wood and an evening meal will be provided for participants only. Modern facilities and electrical hookups are on site. Show will take place rain or shine. www.fortpull.com

Sept. 10-11 — 40th annual World 100. Friday: time trials and non-qualifier races. Saturday: heat races, B-Mains and World 100. Eldora Speedway, New Weston www.eldoraspeedway.com.

Sept. 15 — Physically Challenged Children's Fishing Derby, hosted by the Lake Improvement Association. Equipment will be provided at the east bank of Grand Lake St. Marys in St. Marys.

Sept. 17 — McIntyre Duet at Riverside Arts Center. Free. 7-8 p.m. 3 W. Auglaize St., Wapakoneta. (419) 738-2352. Vernon and Kitty McIntyre entertain for the Riverside Arts Center fall opening.

Sept. 24-25 — 4-Crown Weekend. Friday: Crown 1, World of Outlaw sprint cars; Saturday: Crowns 2-4, USAC midgets, USAC sprints and USAC Silver Crown. Eldora Speedway, New Weston. www.eldoraspeedway.com

Sept. 25 — New Bremen Giant Pumpkin Festival. Events include 5k race, giant pumpkin go cart racing, pumpkin pedal tractor pull, pumpkin pie eating contest, pumpkin pie bake-off, OSU on the big screen, antique tractor show, live music by Reagonomics and kids KISS tribute band, giant pumpkin weigh-off and New Bremen Giant Pumpkin Ale made by the Wooden Shoe. A giant pumpkin pie is to be baked to set the Guinness record. www.growgiants.com.

Sept. 25 — Wapak Wing Fest, "Northwest Ohio's Original Wing Competition," American Legion Post 330. Includes the P.T. Works co-ed sand volleyball tournament, starting at 9 a.m. Early registration is suggested but not required. \$60 entry fee for six-person team. The American Legion Riders are sponsoring a Poker Run, with registration at 11:30 a.m. and first bike out at 1 p.m. Terry Opperman (419) 738-3751 or Dale Bush (419) 738-3997. Vendor fee for chicken wing competition is \$125. A five-person panel will judge contestants in: flavor, sauce, tenderness and uniqueness. Prizes are \$600, \$400 and \$200. Vendors will be open at noon and the winners will be announced about 8 p.m. Live music at 8 p.m. by Dangerous Jim and the Slims (www.dangerousjimrocks.com). Live music will be playing throughout the day and college football will be available on big-screen TVs.

Sept. 25 — Dulci-Jam for dulcimers, autoharps and other folk instruments, Famous Old Time Music, 20322 US 33, east of Wapakoneta, 1-3:30 p.m. Free.

Sept. 25 — Appalachian Opry, Famous Old Time Music, 20322 US 33, east of Wapakoneta. Guest artists join staff musicians Vernon and Kitty McIntyre and the Opry staff band for an evening of bluegrass, old country music, comedy and fun. Comedy skits with Laura's Comedy Crew. Refreshments are available on site. 7 p.m. \$10.

OCTOBER

Oct. 1-3 — Minster Octoberfest. All the German heritage and pride Minster has to offer, plus German food, games, competition, drinks, live entertainment and 10k. www.minsteroctoberfest.com or (419) 629-0313.

Oct. 1-3 — Halloween Campout, Grand Lake St. Marys State Park Campground. Reservations can be at (866) 644-6727 or www.ohiostateparks.org.

Oct. 2 — Sprintacular, by University of Northwestern Ohio, with 410 sprints (\$3,000), NRA sprints (\$2,000) and 305 sprints (\$1,000). Eldora Speedway, New Weston. www.eldoraspeedway.com.

Oct. 8-9 — UMP dirt car championships for late models and modifieds, preliminary events Friday, consolations and main events Saturday. Eldora Speedway, New Weston. www.eldoraspeedway.com.

Oct. 9 — Art Walk by Pumpkin Glow, Celina. Free. For artists to demonstrate or sell their art, Kids Imagination Zone at The Potter House on Main. Sidewalk chalk art contest; prizes awarded. Venetian Gardens is the host. Live music. Beer tasting at Club 211. Noon-8 p.m. Lighted by pumpkin glow along Main Street in downtown Celina.

Oct. 10 — Western Roundup Days/Wingfest, 11 a.m.-11 p.m., Mercer County Fairgrounds, Celina. Wings that are sweet, medium, hot and nuclear. Live music, tourneys, rodeo and camping. Advance tickets: adults \$2, wingfest and rodeo \$8, children 10 and under wingfest free, rodeo \$3; that day: adults \$2, wingfest and rodeo \$10, 10 and under wingfest free, rodeo \$5.

Oct. 10 — Tri-County Coin Show, Auglaize County Fairgrounds, Wapakoneta, 9 a.m.-4 p.m. More than 30 tables to buy, sell trade and get appraisals. Lee Clausing (419) 394-3070.

Oct. 17 — Walk with Nature along the Miami-Erie Canal, plus a fall festival. St. Marys. (419) 300-4611.

Oct. 21 — Wapakoneta Halloween Parade, downtown. More than 100 entries and thousands of spectators. Trophies are presented in six categories. A children's costume contest is at the review stand prior to the parade. Parade at 6:30 p.m., leaving the fairgrounds and heading east on Auglaize Street and through the downtown business district. (419) 738-2911 or chamber@wapakoneta.com.

Oct. 23 — Appalachian Opry, Famous Old Time Music, 20322 US 33, east of Wapakoneta. Guest artists join staff musicians Vernon and Kitty McIntyre and the Opry staff band for an evening of bluegrass, old country music, comedy and fun. Comedy skits with Laura's Comedy Crew. Refreshments are available on site. 7 p.m. \$10.

Oct. 24 — Celina Halloween Parade. Kids gather on Fulton Street next to the library 1-1:30 p.m. Parade will continue down Main Street and end with costume judging.

Oct. 30 — Dulci-Jam for dulcimers, autoharps and other folk instruments, Famous Old Time Music, 20322 US 33, east of Wapakoneta, 1-3:30 p.m. Free.

AUGLAIZE ATTRACTIONS

Auglaize County Courthouse, 201 Willipie St., Wapakoneta — This neoclassical structure of Berea sandstone features a central gallery open to the second floor making the stained glass skylight visible from both floors. "The Copper Lady," which once stood atop the courthouse tower was restored for the building's 100th birthday in 1994 and now has a place in the gallery. For group tours, call (419) 738-3612.

Auglaize County Historical Society/Mooney Museum, 223 S. Main St., St. Marys — Building once belonged to Daniel Mooney, former ambassador to Paraguay. Early Auglaize historical artifacts

and photos. Open 1-3 p.m. on first and third Sundays of each month. Other tours by appointment, (419) 394-7069.

Belle of St. Marys, Miami-Erie Canal, Memorial Park — 76-foot-long, 14-foot-wide replica of a packet canal boat.

Bicycle Museum of America, 7 W. Monroe St., New Bremen — Opened in 1997 as museum dedicated to the history of cycling. Features more than 250 vintage bicycles. Open year around. Summer hours: 11 a.m.-7 p.m. Monday-Friday, 11 a.m.-2 p.m. Saturday. Winter hours: 11 a.m.-5 p.m. Monday-Friday, noon-2 p.m. Saturday. (419) 629-9249, www.bicyclemuseum.com.

Cridersville Historical Museum, West Sugar Street, Cridersville — An 1890 church depicting history of the town and surrounding area and an 1836 log house, which is the original home of Daniel Bowsher. Open the first and third Sundays of each month. (419) 645-5955.

Fort Amanda Park, SR 198, 7 1/2 miles northwest of Wapakoneta — Monument and park mark the site of a War of 1812 fort erected under order of Gen. William Henry Harrison. The remains of 75 soldiers, marked "Unknown Soldier, War of 1812," lie beside the Auglaize River. Picnic area, hiking trails. Part of Lima's Johnny Appleseed Metroparks. Open dawn-dusk May-November. (419) 657-6782.

Grand Lake St. Marys, Auglaize and Mercer counties — Constructed as a feeder lake for the Miami-Erie Canal, the lake, at its completion in 1845, was the largest man-made lake. The reservoir rests on the summit between the Ohio River and Lake Erie. Now Ohio's largest inland lake, it covers 13,500 acres and 52 miles of shoreline. Picnicking, swimming, fishing, boating, camping.

Grand Lake St. Marys State Park, 834 Edgewater Drive, St. Marys — Dedicated as a state park in 1949. Includes 216 campsites, two rental cabins, two rent-a-camps, campers-only swimming beach, boat tie-ups, horseshoe pits, sand volleyball, basketball, tennis court, nine-hole putt putt golf course. Park has four public swimming beaches and swimming areas for boaters, picnic areas, shelter houses, hunting in designated areas and seasonal duck blinds available by lottery from the Ohio Department of Natural Resources. (419) 394-3611.

Memorial Park, downtown St. Marys — Park rests beside old canal flowing through downtown.

Miami-Erie Canal Towpath — 3.5-mile path is a hiking trail from St. Marys Memorial Park to Forty Acre Pond just north of St. Marys. Site of the "Annual Walk with Nature" each October.

Neil Armstrong Air and Space Museum, Interstate 75 exit 111, 500 S. Apollo Drive, Wapakoneta — Ohio Historical Society site honoring Wapakoneta native astronaut Neil Armstrong's historic walk on the moon. Interactive exhibits with a space shuttle landing simulator and a lunar landing simulator. Also features early Wright Brothers airplanes to more modern space-age exhibits such as the earth orbiter Gemini VIII and the Apollo spacesuits. An Infinity Room and Astrotheater give visitors the experience of traveling through space on a moon mission. Opened in 1972. Open year-round 9:30 a.m.-5 p.m. Tuesdays-Saturdays, noon-5 p.m. Sundays and holidays. (419) 738-8811, (800) 860-0142 or www.ohiohistory.org.

New Bremen Historic Museum/ Luellen House, 120-122 N. Main St., New Bremen — One of the first non-log houses in the original plat of 1833. Open 2-4 p.m. Sundays June-August, (419) 629-3321.

New Knoxville Historical Museum, 107 E. German St., New Knoxville — Preserves the history of the New Knoxville area. (419) 753-2721.

Northwood Lighthouse, off SR 703, Northmoor on north side of Grand Lake St. Marys between Celina and St. Marys — No public access. Viewing from the lake only.

St. Marys Memorial Park, East Street, St. Marys — Dedicated to World War I veterans, the park rests beside the old Miami-Erie Canal. Moored in the park is the Belle of St. Marys, a 76-foot-long, 14-foot-wide full-scale replica of a packet canal boat built by local craftsmen. Canal boat open 8 a.m.-5 p.m. daily. (419) 394-3303, ext. 112.

St. Marys Theater/Grand Ballroom Entertainment Complex, 119 W. Spring St., St. Marys — live stage performances. (877) 626-3006

State Fish Hatchery, East Bank Road, St. Marys — One of six hatcheries in Ohio, its the only one that raises yellow perch and largemouth bass. Also raised are channel catfish, fathead minnows, walleye, northern pike and saugeye. Open 7 a.m.-3:30 p.m. weekdays. Free tours available by appointment. (419) 394-5170.

MERCER ATTRACTIONS

Baker Woods State Nature Preserve, between Buscher and St. Anthony roads north and west of Coldwater — Visitor permit required from the Ohio Department of Natural Resources Division of Natural Areas and Preserves. High-quality, old-growth forest remnant with oaks, hickories and maples.

Carousel Dinner Comedy Club, 3769 US 127 South, Celina — Features nationally known entertainment throughout the year. Known for its pink Cadillac salad bar. Opened its new comedy room, Chips and Giggles, in 2001. (419) 925-4496.

Celina-Coldwater Bike Path — 4 1/2-mile long, 10-foot-wide path on an old railroad bed between Celina and Coldwater.

Courthouse, 101 N. Main St., Celina — Corinthian columns; Bedford limestone; bronze doors; marble floors, walls and staircases; colored glass dome. (419) 586-3178.

Eldora Speedway, 13929 SR 118, New Weston (just south of Mercer County line in Darke County) — Nationally known speedway featuring the fastest mile dirt track in the nation. Hosts sprint, midget, modified and stock races including the famous All Star Outlaw Sprints, the annual Kings Royal Race and the USAC Four Crown Nationals. (937) 338-3815, www.eldoraspeedway.com.

Fort Recovery State Museum, SR 119 and 49, Fort Recovery — Two reconstructed block houses, a connecting stockade, and exhibits depicting the Indian Wars of the 1790s. One of the largest collections of Indian artifacts in Ohio. Fort Recovery was site of the defeat of Gen. Arthur St. Clair in 1791 and the defense of the fort by Gen. "Mad" Anthony Wayne in 1794. An 1840 log cabin and blacksmith shop are nearby. Noon-5 p.m. daily June-August, noon-5 p.m. weekends only May and September. Group tours by appointment. (419) 375-4649, www.bright.net/~fortrecovery.

Grand Lake St. Marys (See Auglaize County).

Grand Slam USA Family Fun Center, 911 E. Wayne St., Celina — Roller skating, laserball, indoor roller hockey, slam dunk basketball, space ball, indoor batting cages and outdoor miniature golf course. Open year round. (419) 586-5037.

Maria Stein Heritage Museum, 2291 St. Johns Road, Maria Stein — On the second floor of a former convent building, the museum interprets the German settlements of Auglaize and Mercer counties and the history of the Sisters of the Precious Blood. Open noon-4 p.m. Tuesday-Sunday May-October. (419) 925-4532, www.mariasteincenter.org.

Mercer County Courthouse, 101 N. Main St., Celina — Forty-foot Ionic columns grace the four entrances to the gray Bedford limestone courthouse. Interior is enhanced with large bronze doors, marble floors, walls and staircases and a colored glass courthouse dome. Group tours by appointment, (419) 586-3178.

Mercer County Historical Museum, 130 E. Market St., Celina — Chronicles the past 200 years of county life. Also known as the Riley House. Genealogical materials and local history books. Open 8:30 a.m.-4 p.m. Wednesday-Friday in the summer and Sundays October-April. (419) 586-6065.

National Marian Shrine of the Holy Relics, 2291 St. Johns Road, Maria Stein — The shrine contains 500 relics of the saints and is the second-largest collection of its type in the United States. Built in 1890, the shrine and the adjacent former convent were placed on the National Register of Historic Places in 1976. Open 9:30 a.m.-4:30 p.m. Tuesday-Sunday. (419) 925-4532: www.mariasteincenter.org.

Mercer County Wildlife Area, US 127 and east on 703 — The 1,408-acre wildlife refuge provides resting and feeding areas for local and migrant wildlife. Observation is from parking area only.

Northwood Lighthouse, off SR 703, Northmoor, on north side of Grand Lake St. Marys between Celina and St. Marys. No public access. Viewing from lake only.

Putters Lane Golf and Games, 04331 SR 66, Minster — Miniature golf, redemption arcade, pizza and homemade ice cream, water wars. Open for birthday parties and corporate golf tournaments. (419) 628-1814

Rotary Lighthouse, Main Street (US 127) and Lake Shore Drive, Celina — Built in 1986 by Celina Rotary Club on the west bank of Grand Lake St. Marys to provide a grand view of the lake.

St. Charles Center, 2860 US 127 South, Celina — This former seminary rests on 500 acres. Its first buildings were erected in 1861 by the Society of the Precious Blood. The current structure is a late Gothic Revival building that features a 370-foot frontage and is topped by a five-story octagonal dome. Groups tours by appointment. (419) 925-4516 or ma.noacsc.org/stcharl/.