Geauga County Event Listing Inside!
Amish Nurse Navigator at University Hospitals Geauga Medical Center.

Our Amish nurse navigators are here to listen to your needs and connect you to resources and support throughout our health system. We help patients access screening, diagnosis, treatment and supportive care services to achieve the best possible health outcomes.

To learn more about this program, call 440-285-6731.
Editor’s Note

Thank you for your genuine interest to learn more about Geauga County’s Amish community. Oliver Wendell Holmes said it best, “A mind that is stretched by a new experience can never go back to its old dimensions.” Destination Geauga has made it a goal to help introduce visitors to many new experiences. Although many people are drawn to our area because of our Amish Community, once they arrive they realize Geauga County has so much more to offer. With historical locations, unique shopping, a food lover’s paradise, farms and farm markets, a world-class park system, unbeatable rural vistas and fabulous year-round events it makes the perfect location for a weekend get-a-way or a tranquil vacation in the country.

This magazine will offer answers to your questions about Amish culture. In addition to an overview on history and beliefs, you will find tips on what to see and do and etiquette in Amish Country. Whether you are considering making Geauga County your home, visiting for a day, or staying for an extended vacation, we hope you find this information useful. Please enjoy the countryside and visit our advertisers, as they make this publication possible.

We invite you to share your new experiences with us. In addition to this magazine, a wealth of information is available on our website, www.DestinationGeauga.com. The website also offers the opportunity to share your visit experience and to post a photo of something you enjoyed. We’d love to hear your story and it will also help future travelers plan their excursions.

Thank you for visiting and remember... “Travel is the only thing you buy that makes you richer.” – Anonymous

-Lynda Nemeth, Executive Destination Geauga director

Visit our New Website to build your Custom Itinerary!

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Published by Geauga Amish Country Magazine 2015-2016
While Geauga County is only 35 miles east of Cleveland, it truly is a world away! Samuel W. Weaver, his wife and their nine children, were the first Amish family to migrate to Geauga County in 1876. They traveled from Holmes County by horse and buggy. The abundance of open land and farming opportunities brought many more Amish families looking for inexpensive land to Geauga County. In the late 1800s, land was selling in Geauga County for $20 to $40 per acre. The Amish population is estimated at 15,000 and divided into 113 church districts with approximately 75 Amish schools. Today, Geauga County is home to the second largest Amish population in the state and fourth largest in the world! The Amish of Geauga County belong to the Old Order, and you will find them to be less commercialized than some of the other large Amish settlements.

In the past, farming was a common trade for many Amish families. Farming was chosen as an occupation so that they could stay separated from the world at large, as much as possible. Today fewer Amish families are able to maintain a family farm, often relying on their home-based shop or business to supplement their family income. As you drive through the county and see small signs dotting the countryside, take advantage of these unique shops! Amish craftsmanship is second to none, so you can rest assured you will receive great service and quality products.

The abundance of dairy farms that led to the creation of Middlefield Swiss Cheese Co-op began in 1956 as a central location for the Amish farmers' to sell their milk. Hans Rothenbuhler and his family journeyed from Switzerland to fulfill his dream of becoming a cheese maker. Middlefield Cheese (as it is now known) is celebrated for its award winning Swiss cheese.

The Middlefield Original Cheese Co-op opened for business in January of 1994. The 90 co-op members operate small farms and are 98 percent Amish. They support their families by living off the land and their small herds are still hand milked. Both stores offer a wonderful opportunity to sample flavorful cheeses of all varieties and are a must stop when you are in the area.

In addition to being the largest producer of maple syrup in Ohio, Geauga County is known throughout the world as one of the best places to produce maple syrup. To get the real “maple experience,” you must explore the back roads of Geauga County in February and March. Nearly every sugar maple tree will have a bucket hanging from it collecting sap. Keep an eye out for steam rising from busy sugarhouses and maple leaf shaped signs declaring “Maple Syrup Sold Here”. These back roads often lead to many small Amish home-based businesses including bakeries, produce stands, furniture stores, quilt shops, fabric stores, kitchenware shops and salvage stores.

The heart of the Amish community is located in Middlefield. Every Monday there’s a line auction and flea market. Visitors as well as the local community find this very popular. Warmer months bring everything from farm fresh eggs to plant material, furniture and tools. It offers quite an assortment of commodities! The Flea Market building is also open on Saturdays, making Monday and Saturday the perfect days to visit. You may find things a bit quieter and occasionally a business closed on Tuesdays and Thursdays, as these are wedding days within the Amish community. Two more useful hints to keep in mind: several of the smaller businesses are unable to accept credit cards, so be ready to pay by cash or check. Since you are going to stumble upon so many delicious goodies you will want to take home, bring an empty cooler (and an ice pack) to make sure those fresh products make it home safe and sound!
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Etiquette in Amish Country

Visiting Amish Country can be one of the most relaxing, and rewarding travel excursions you plan. Delight in the scenery of the countryside, dine at an Amish-themed restaurant and enjoy fresh produce from a roadside stand, then stay overnight at a quaint bed and breakfast tucked under an authentic Amish quilt.

But please remember ... the Amish are private people. They are not costumed interpreters. They are real people living in our community going about their lives, and it is very important to be considerate of them and their lifestyle. So when visiting, please keep the following basic courtesy rules in mind:

- **DO NOT** stare or point or otherwise be disrespectful of the Amish. If you see an Amish family in town, they are likely there to do some shopping, stop by the bank or do some other errand just like you do with your family.

- **DO** keep an eye out for slow-moving Amish-driven buggies, (especially at night) while driving, and give them plenty of room when following or passing. Keep headlights on low beam.

- **DO NOT** honk your horn. Honking can “spook” or frighten horses and cause a wreck. Give them the benefit of the doubt and be ready for anything.

- **DO** feel free to stop at an Amish home if you see a sign in the yard inviting you to stop. Many Amish homes will offer crafts, baked goods, groceries and other items for sale to the passerby.

- **DO NOT** enter private property without permission. The lack of a No Trespassing sign does not give visitors the right to enter the property.

- Amish **DO NOT** pose for photographs or videos. However, many Amish will not resent visitors taking photos of their buggy, or general ‘landscape shots’ from a distance (work being done on the farm, etc). Just be careful and respectful. If you feel uncomfortable taking the photo, ask permission. The answer may be no, but your polite request will be appreciated and may open the door to a conversation.

- **DO NOT** feed or pet horses that are tied to a hitching rail or harnessed to a buggy. It’s always best to ask permission to touch the animal or buggy.

- **DO** respect their privacy. It is best to avoid approaching the Amish unless they appear open to company. When you do have a need to approach a group of Amish, it is polite to speak to a male, if possible. If you are sincerely interested in talking to the Amish to learn more about their culture, your best bet is to patronize an Amish-owned business and talk with the shopkeepers. In our Amish community all Amish-owned and many of our non-Amish shops are closed on Sundays. It’s always best to call ahead to check before making your travel plans.

---

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Geauga Amish Country Magazine 2015-2016

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**Geauga Events**

**January**
- **Ma & Pa's Horse Drawn Sleigh Rides**: Dashing through the snow in a one horse open sleigh! 440-548-5521 www.maandpas.com

**March**
- **Pancake Breakfast**: Served with 100 percent Geauga maple syrup over several locations (Every Sun-except Easter) 440-632-1538 www.DestinationGeauga.com
- **Maple Sugarin' Open House Weekends**: Enjoy the 'Behind the Scenes' tours of several Geauga County Sugar Houses. 440-632-1538 www.DestinationGeauga.com

**April**
- **Geauga Small Business Expo**: More than 30 different vendors (many Amish participants) offering all types of local products and services. 440-632-0174 www.pinecraftstructures.com
- **Maple Stirs**: Maple Stirs at the Geauga County Maple Festival Sugarhouse in Chardon. 440-286-3007 www.maplefest.com
- **The Geauga Maple Festival**: Oldest Maple festival in the United States, celebrates the production of pure maple syrup in Geauga County and northeast Ohio. www.maplefest.com

**May**
- **Sunrise Farm's Spring Garden Party**: Spring Garden Party with colorful annuals, perennials and herbs. 440-834-1298 www.facebook.com/sunrisefarmgifts
- **Opening Day/Annual Plant Sale - Geauga Fresh Farmers' Market**: The market season begins with the Annual Plant Sale and continues EVERY Saturday 9 a.m. - noon. South Russell, Route 306 and Bell Road. 440-474-9885 www.geaugafarmersmarket.com
- **Spring Drive-It-Yourself Tour**: Family-friendly, fun and prizes! Various locations throughout the County. Details on website! 440-632-1538 www.DestinationGeauga.com

**June**
- **Chardon Square Flea Market**: More than 100 vendors selling antiques, collectibles, produce, plants, homemade items, pies and so much more. www.chardonsquareassociation.org/events/flea-market
- **Strawberry Season at Ridgeview Farm**: Pick your own strawberries, call ahead for start date and picking forecast. 440-693-4000 RidgeviewFarm.com
- **Pick Your Own Strawberries**: Pick your own strawberries. Check daily for picking information at 440-729-9809 www.patterstonfarm.com
- **Chardon Square Farmers Market & Concert**: Every Friday night. (weather permitting) Farmers Market opens at 4 p.m. Open air concert on the Square in the bandstand at 7 p.m. Historic Chardon Square 440-285-3519. www.chardonsquareassociation.org

**July**
- **Support Our Vets**: Buy 1 pound of fudge and we will donate $2 to Wounded Warriors. 440-834-3133 www.whitehousechocolates.com
- **Summer Tent Sale at Mullet's Footwear & Country Cedar**: Join Us for our Annual Summer Tent Sale! 440-693-4363.
- **Mesopotamia Ox Roast & Antique Market**: Wide variety of and vendors. 440-693-4295 www.mesopfire.com
- **Antique Power and Steam Show**: Exhibition and demonstration of several hundred power-driven machines and steam driven engines. 440-834-4656 www.centuryvillagemuseum.org
- **2nd Annual St. Mary Chardon Festival**: Festival, featuring homemade foods, beverages, rides, music, dancing, entertainment, fireworks. 440-285-7051 www.stmarychardon.org

**August**
- **Annual Nature Arts Festival**: Media include woodcarvings, paintings, photography, handcrafted jewelry, and other forms of nature art 440-286-9516 www.geaugaparkdistrict.org
- **Chardon Arts Festival**: Over 100 artists, in a park like setting. www.chardonsquareassociation.org
- **Raccoon County Music Festival**: A day of dancing, music and sing-alongs for all ages. 440-834-4656 www.centuryvillagemuseum.org
- **Football Kick-Off**: Our own hand-made peanut butter and chocolate buckeyes on sale to kick-off the football season. 440-834-3133 www.whitehousechocolates.com

**September**
- **Sunrise Farm's AppleTime**: Apple picking has become a fall tradition at Sunrise Farm. 440-834-1298. www.facebook.com/sunrisefarmgifts
- **The Great Geauga County Fair**: Bring the family and visit Ohio's oldest county fair, the Great Geauga County Fair. www.geaugafair.com
- **Patterson Family Fun Fest**: (Sept through Oct) A young family-oriented, creative, farm-outdoor-play area, reached by a wagon ride, 440-729-1964 www.pattersonfarm.com
- **Ma & Pa's Horse Drawn Hay Rides/Fall Harvest**: (through October) Come join us for our annual fall harvest celebration. 440-548-5521 www.maandpas.com
- **Fall Fun Weekends at Ridgeview Farm**: (through October) Enjoy a hayride, corn maze, pick your own pumpkin, pig races, petting zoo, Amish lunch/bake stand, and other fall activities. 440-693-4000 www.RidgeviewFarm.com
October

**Sisters of Notre Dame Family BBQ/Boutique** - Delicious Chicken or Rib Dinner. Boutique & Chinese Auction. Rain or Shine. 440-286-7101 www sndchardon org

**Burton Antiques Market** - 400 Dealers - something for everyone - inside and out - rain or shine. Geauga County Fairgrounds www.burtonantiquesmarket.com

**October Means Caramel** - Caramel on pretzels, graham crackers, turtles in pecan, cashew, and almonds, sea salt caramels, and flavored caramels. Chocolate caramel apple with or without toppings. 440-834-313 www.whitehousechocolates.com

**Fall Walking & Driving Tours** - Fall Walking & Driving Tours. 440-834-4204 www.burtonchamberofcommerce.org

**Sunrise Farm’s Fall Festival Weekends** - Every weekend in October enjoy apple picking, apple fritters, homemade caramel apples, hot apple cider, or hunt for the perfect pumpkin. 440-834-1298. www.facebook.com/sunrisefarmgifts

**Huntsburg Pumpkin Festival** - A free family day in the country, no entrance fee and all of our games, entertainment and attractions are free. 440-636-5197 www.DestinationGeauga.com

**Mesopotamia Fall Heritage Day** - Step back in time and enjoy the sights, scents and sounds of yesteryear! 440-693-4295 www.mespo.com

**Apples Butter Festival** - Visit Century Village Museum to purchase freshly-made apple butter and apple fritters; tour the historic buildings with authentic artifacts. 440-834-4656 www.centuryvillagemuseum.org

**Octoberfest** - The village green will be filled with vendors, ox roast sandwiches, a beer tent and polka music. 440-834-4204 www.burtonchamberofcommerce.org

**November**

**Sunrise Farm’s Christmas Open House** - Enjoy hot apple cider and gourmet goodies during our open house. Sunrise Farm 440-834-1298. www.sunrisefarmgifts.com

**Christmas in The Country** - Passport Tour & Holiday Open House Join us this year in scenic Amish Country ... featuring 20 local businesses with great holiday gift giving ideas! 440-632-5343 www.CountryArtsandJewelry.com

**Fowlers Mill Store Holiday Open House** - Sample Specialty Foods and Order Holiday Gifts. Pre-made and custom gift basket will be available. 440-286-2024 www.fowlermill.com

**Country Hearth Christmas & Christmas in the Village** - A Dickens of a Christmas. Enjoy the many holiday activities including Santa at the Burton Log Cabin. 440-834-4204 www.burtonchamberofcommerce.org

**Holiday Open House at Amish Home Craft & Bakery** - Local crafters with quilts, wall hangers, place-mats, wooden items, hand-made baskets and more. Bakery will be open. Enjoy free coffee and cookies as you look and shop. 440-632-1888.

**December**

**Chardon Square Christmas Lighting** - Main Street and the Park are decorated for the holiday, complete with musical entertainment and a special visit by Santa and Mrs. Claus. www.chardonsquareassociation.org

**Ma & Pa’s Horse Drawn Sleigh Rides** - Dashing through the snow in a one horse open sleigh! Afterwards warm up by the fire with some fresh maple coffee and cookies made by Ma. 440-548-5521 www.maandpas.com

**Chardon... Home for the Holidays** - Area merchants will have special sales or refreshments; Breakfast with Santa, Carriage Rides around the Square, Christmas lights and Christmas Tree Alley in the Park, and a Gingerbread House Contest! 440-285-3519 www.chardonsquareassociation.org

**Winter Solstice Candlelight Walk** - Explore the roots of our modern holiday celebrations, many of which were derived from Roman, Viking, Druid and other ancient traditions associated with the winter solstice, on a candlelit walk through time. www.geaugaparkdistrict.org
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A Treasure Today... An Heirloom Tomorrow!
Amish Settlements in America

The first Amish immigrants for whom records are available - the Detweiler and Sieber families settled in Berks County, PA in 1736. The first sizable group of Amish arrived in America in the late 1730s, an outcome of William Penn’s ‘holy experiment’ in religious tolerance. The Pennsylvania Amish are not the largest group of U.S. Amish as is frequently thought. Ohio has the largest population (55,000), followed by Pennsylvania (51,000) and Indiana (38,000). The Amish have settled in as many as 24 states, Canada, and Central America, though about 80 percent are located in Pennsylvania, Ohio and Indiana. The greatest concentration of Amish is in Holmes County, Ohio with Geauga County second. Next in size is a group of Amish people in Elkhart and surrounding counties in northeastern Indiana. Then comes the Amish settlement in Lancaster County, Pennsylvania. The Amish population in the U.S. numbers more than 150,000 and growing, due to large family size (seven children on average) and a church member retention rate of approximately 80 percent.

Amish Orders

By some estimates, there are as many as eight different orders within the Amish population, with the majority affiliated with one of five religious orders - Old Order Amish, New Order Amish, Andy Weaver Amish, Beachy Amish and Swartzentruber Amish. These churches operate independently from each other with differences in how they practice their religion and conduct their daily lives. The Old Order Amish are the largest group and the Swartzentruber Amish, an offshoot of the Old Order, are the most conservative.
1. A.H. Christiansons  
   14539 North Cheshire St, Burton 44021

2. Amish Home Craft & Bakery  
   16860 Kinsman Rd, Middlefield 44062

3. Antiques on the Square  
   101 Main St, Chardon 44024

4. Auntie’s Antique Mall  
   15567 Main Market Rd, Parkman 44080

5. Burton Log Cabin & Sugar Camp  
   14590 E Park St, Burton 44021

6. Camp Hi Canoe Livery  
   12274 Abbott Rd, Hiram 44234

7. Country Side Furnishings  
   16403 Nauvoo Rd, Middlefield 44062

8. Countryside Bicycling  
   8663 Cox Rd, Windsor 44099

9. Countryside Gazebo  
   17071 Tavern Rd, Middlefield 44062

10. Creek Side Lawn Furniture  
    17169 Swine Creek Rd, Middlefield 44062

11. D&S Farm & Garden  
    4738 Gates East Rd, Middlefield 44062

12. Daniel Byler Feed Supplements  
    8119 Parker Rd, Orwell 44076

13. End Of The Commons General Store  
    8719 OH-534, Mesopotamia 44439

14. Fisher Flooring  
    16115 Nauvoo Rd, Middlefield 44062

15. Geauga Farms Quality Meats  
    14320 Main Market Rd, Burton 44021

16. J&S Stairs  
    16118 Old State Rd, Middlefield 44062

17. Mary Yoder’s Amish Kitchen  
    14743 Old State Rd, Middlefield 44062

18. MD Realty  
    15618 W High St, Middlefield 44062

19. Mid-Park Metals  
    16654 Hosmer Rd, Middlefield 44062

20. Middlefield Historical Society/ The Depot  
    14979 S State Ave, Middlefield 44062

21. Middlefield Market  
    15848 Nauvoo Rd, Middlefield 44062

22. Miller’s Top Shop  
    16345 Doty Rd, Garrettsville 44231

23. Mullets Foot Wear & Country Cedar  
    4853 Kinsman Rd, Middlefield 44062

24. Nauvoo Family Market  
    15979 Nauvoo Rd, Middlefield 44062

25. Pine Craft Storage Barns  
    13650 Madison Rd, Middlefield 44062

26. Red Maple Inn  
    14707 S Cheshire St, Burton 44021

27. Stoltzfus Variety  
    17160 Farmington Rd, W. Farmington 44491

28. Triple S Construction  
    14409 Grove Rd, Garrettsville 44231

29. UH Geauga Medical  
    13207 Ravenna Rd, Chardon 44024
Day One:

Arriving into the area bright and early on a Monday morning is a great place to start your adventure! Begin with Middlefield Market, for the auction and flea market. The auction is only on Mondays, but the flea market building is also open on Saturdays. There you will also find several small shops: Country Arts & Jewelry, Rustic Rewind, and Country Collections Antique Mall just to name a few. When you leave you can stop at Nauvoo Family Market, an Amish-owned grocery store carrying everything from baked goods to hardware. Just up the road you’ll find Countryside Furnishings, with beautiful hand crafted merchandise. If you are getting hungry you might want to head east to the End of the Commons, where you will find the oldest General Store in Ohio. Take a break in the Commons Cafe and enjoy a lunch and a hand dipped ice cream cone before you continue on your way!

As you head back toward Middlefield, make a stop at Mullet’s Footwear and Country Cedar, as you may need to find a second pair of comfy shoes as a back up during your travels! Amish Home Craft and Bakery offers a wide variety of Amish-made handcrafts and baked goods. Continuing west, White House Chocolate beckons all with tempting chocolates made in their candy-kitchen, and sampling is always encouraged! It’s time to get checked in at the Red Maple Inn, this four-Diamond AAA Rated Bed & Breakfast is like a small hotel, offering all the comforts of home in beautifully appointed rooms. They also offer guided Amish tours five days a week, from 1-3 p.m. After a little relaxation, it’s time to head to Mary Yoder’s Amish Restaurant for a hearty meal of chicken, mashed potatoes, and all the trimmings. Just be sure to save room for pie! To get moving after a big meal, you might want to head to Geauga Park District’s Observatory Park, one of 11 Silver tiered Dark Sky Parks in the World. Here you can take a stroll “around our universe” and get one of the best views of the night sky imaginable!

Day Two:

After you enjoy a wonderful Amish-made breakfast buffet at Red Maple Inn, you may want to do a little antiquing and exploring. A short drive north will bring you to our county seat, Chardon and their historic Village Square. For more than 30 years, Antiques on the Square has been offering three stories of treasures! On the other end of the county, Auntie’s Antique Mall offers more than 100 vendors under one very well organized roof, offering something for everyone. After all this shopping you may want to get out and enjoy the sunshine. Camp Hi Canoe is family-owned and operated and offers a variety of river trips along 25 miles of the Upper Cuyahoga River, designated as both an American Heritage and State Scenic River.

As your afternoon comes to an end you’ll want to make a stop at the Burton Log Cabin, operated by the Burton Chamber of Commerce and offering genuine Geauga County Maple syrup, candy and other local treats. After you’ve enjoyed your time here, you may want to visit with MD Realty before you leave - Geauga County is a great place to call home!

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The Amish have an unwritten code of conduct called the Ordnung (German, meaning: order), which outlines the basics of the Amish faith and helps to define what it means to be Amish. The Ordnung stresses the virtues of humility, obedience, and simplicity. For an Amish person, the Ordnung may dictate almost every aspect of one’s lifestyle, from dress and hair length to buggy style and farming techniques. The Ordnung varies from community to community and, within a community, from district to district, and order-to-order, which explains why you will see some Amish riding in automobiles, while others don’t even accept the use of battery-powered lights. When a member of the community violates the Ordnung, they risk being shunned by their family and community.

Amish Dress

The highly distinctive Amish way of dressing is intended to set the Amish people apart from the rest of the world. The simple, humble clothing displays obedience to the church and conformity to this separatist religious community. The Amish dress in a very simple style, avoiding all but the most basic ornamentation. Clothing is made at home of plain fabrics and is primarily dark in color.

Amish men in general wear straight-cut suits and coats without collars, lapels or pockets. Trousers never have creases or cuffs and are worn with suspenders. Belts are forbidden, as are neckties. The Amish fashion styles are simple and meant to be functional. Clothing is made at home of plain fabrics and is primarily dark in color, including shades of purple, blue, wine, brown, gray and black. Lighter colors are used for younger children and summer shirts and dresses for adults in some groups.

Women and girls wear longer-style dresses that are at least calf length, that are a variety of solid colors depending on the individual community, but are always covered with black or white aprons. Amish women never cut their hair. The hair of Amish women and girls must always be covered in public. Women wear white prayer caps, usually made of organza and stiffened with starch. In some communities, the caps are constructed of softer fabric, held on by strings tied under the chin. Married women wear dark bonnets over the prayer caps, but in some communities, the outer bonnet is worn only in cold weather.

The Ordnung of the specific Amish order may dictate matters of dress as explicit as the length of a skirt or the width of a seam. In most orders men’s shirts fasten with traditional buttons, while suit coats and vests fasten with hooks and eyes. Young men are clean-shaven prior to marriage, while married men are required to let their beards grow. Mustaches are forbidden. Amish women typically wear solid-color dresses with long sleeves and a full skirt, covered with a cape and an apron. They never cut their hair, and wear it in a braid or bun on the back of the head concealed with a small white cap or

Continued on Page 17
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black bonnet. Clothing is fastened with straight pins or snaps, stockings are black cotton and shoes are also black. Amish women are not permitted to wear patterned clothing or jewelry.

Technology and the Amish
Technology is generally where you will see the greatest differences between Amish orders. The Swartzentruber and Andy Weaver Amish are ultraconservative in their use of technology. Old Order Amish have little use for modern technology, but are allowed to ride in motorized vehicles. The New Order Amish permit the use of electricity, ownership of automobiles, modern farming machines, and telephones in the home. Geauga County's Community is Old Order Amish.
The Amish are averse to any technology, which they feel weakens the family structure. The conveniences that the rest of us take for granted such as electricity, television, automobiles, and telephones are considered to be a temptation that could cause vanity, create inequality, or lead the Amish away from their close-knit community and, as such, are not encouraged or accepted in most orders.
Most Amish cultivate their fields with horse-drawn machinery, live in houses without electricity, and get around in horse-drawn buggies. It is common for Amish communities to allow the use of telephones, but not in the home. Instead, several Amish families will share a telephone in a wooden shanty between farms. Electricity is sometimes used in certain situations, such as electric fences for cattle, flashing electric lights on buggies, and heating homes. Windmills are often used as a source of naturally generated electric power in such instances. It is also not unusual to see Amish using such 20th-century technologies as in-line skates, disposable diapers and gas barbecue grills, because the Ordnung does not specifically prohibit them.

Amish Schools and Education
One-room Amish schools are private institutions, operated by Amish parents. Schooling concentrates on the basic reading, writing, math and geography, along with vocational training and socialization in Amish history and values. The Amish believe strongly in education, but only provide formal education through the eighth grade. The Amish are exempt from state compulsory attendance beyond the eighth grade based on religious principles, the result of a 1972 U.S. Supreme Court ruling. Education is also a big part of home life, with farming and homemaking skills considered an important part of an Amish child's upbringing.

Amish Family Life
The family is the most important social unit in the Amish culture. Large families with seven to 10 children are common. Chores are clearly divided by sexual role in the Amish home - the man usually works on the farm, while the wife does the washing, cleaning, cooking, and other household chores. There are exceptions, but typically the father is considered the head of the Amish household. German is spoken in the home, though English is also taught in school. Amish marry Amish - no intermarriage is allowed. Divorce is not permitted and separation is very rare.
Because of their religious beliefs, Amish try to separate themselves from “outsiders,” in an effort to avoid temptations and sin. They choose, instead, to rely on themselves and the other members of their local Amish community. Because of this self-reliance, Amish don’t draw Social Security or accept other forms of government assistance. Their avoidance of violence in
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A bishop, two ministers, and a deacon serve each Amish congregation — all male. There is no central Amish church. Worship services are held in community members' homes where walls are designed to be moved aside for large gatherings. The Amish feel that traditions bind generations together and provide an anchor to the past, a belief that dictates the way they hold church worship services, baptisms, weddings and funerals.

Amish Baptism

The Amish practice adult baptism rather than infant baptism believing that only adults can make informed decisions about their own salvation and commitment to the church. “Rumspringa” has been widely publicized. A youth who is not yet baptized is not officially bound by church standards. Though many groups or families discourage “wild” behavior, there are Amish youth who go to extremes, just like their non-Amish counterparts. It is unfair to imply this is a common practice or approved of. There are many Amish youth who do not participate in “rumspringa” both because of parental or church standards and because of personal convictions.

Amish Weddings

Amish weddings are traditionally held on Tuesdays and Thursdays. A couple’s engagement is usually kept secret until just a few weeks before the wedding when their intentions are “published” in church. The wedding usually take place at the home of the bride’s parents with a lengthy ceremony, followed by a huge feast for the invited guests. Amish weddings are simple, joyous events that involve the entire Amish community. The bride typically makes a new dress for the wedding, which will then serve as her “good” dress for formal occasions after the wedding.

Blue is the typical wedding dress color. Unlike most of today’s elaborate weddings, however, Amish weddings involve no makeup, rings, caterers or photography. Newlyweds typically spend the wedding night in the bride’s mother’s home so they can get up early the next day to help clean up the home.

Amish Shunning

An adult church member who chooses to leave the Amish church might be “shunned,” but this practice varies greatly from group to group. In most cases, the “shunned” person still remains in contact with friends and family and might still attend family functions and social occasions but might be served at a separate table or the family might choose to eat informally while seated in individual chairs. It is not known of a group that requires a shunned individual to sever all ties with family members and friends, though some individual families might react more strongly than others.
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Amish Q & A:

What are the basic Amish beliefs?
The Bible is the inspired word of God. There is one God eternally existing as Father, Son, and Holy Spirit (Romans 8:1-17). God loved the world so much that he gave his only son, Jesus, to die on the cross for the sins of the world. Through faith in the shed blood of Jesus we are reconciled to God. Salvation is by grace through faith in Christ, a free gift bestowed by God on those who repent and believe. As Christians, we should live as brothers. The Holy Spirit convicts of sin and also empowers believers for service and holy living. The church is separate from the State. The Amish are strict pacifists and are strongly opposed to any form of violence. Faith calls for a lifestyle of discipleship and good works service and holy living. Their chief tenet is, “Be ye not conformed to this world.” The Amish, like all Anabaptists, believe in adult baptism, as opposed to baptizing babies who cannot choose for themselves.

Why don’t the Amish use modern technology?
The Amish and Mennonites believe that God has called them to separate themselves from the world. An important aspect of the Amish culture is a simpler lifestyle, such as the use of horses and buggies for transportation, which allows the Amish to maintain a close-knit community. The use of modern time saving technologies could make them less dependent on community, and spark a competition for status goods, or photographs might cultivate personal vanity.

Why don’t the Amish use electricity?
The Bible tells them they are not to be conformed to the world. (Romans 12:2) In 1919, the Amish leaders agreed that connecting to power lines would not be in the best interest of the Amish community. As a result there is a bonding that unites the Amish community and protects it from outside influences such as television, radios and other influences. They did not make this decision because they thought electricity was evil in itself, but because easy access to it could lead to many temptations and the deterioration of church and family life. The Amish value simplicity and self-denial over comfort, convenience and leisure.

Why will the Amish ride in automobiles if they will not own them?
Owning and operating a car is not particularly modern to most of us, but the Amish have decided that having speedy convenient transportation at their fingertips will lead to spending more time away from family, home and the community. Owning a nicer car than your neighbor may promote pride as well as a “keeping up with the Joneses” mentality. By rejecting certain types of modernity and accepting others, some Amish appear to the outside world to be contradicting themselves - hypocrites. However, from the viewpoint of Amish culture, there is no contradiction. Conforming to a modest black buggy and slow moving horse is a sign of commitment to the church.

Continued on Page 22
and community. Cars would speed things up dramatically, disrupting the slow pace of Amish living. So, they will use them but not own them.

Do the Amish use modern medicine and doctors?
Their readiness to seek health services varies from family to family. Most Amish and Mennonites are not opposed to modern medicine. They do believe, however, that good health, both physical and mental, is a gift from God and requires careful stewardship on the part of the individual. Members of some of the more traditional communities prefer homeopathic or alternative forms of medical treatment. Nothing in the Amish understanding of the Bible forbids them from using modern medical services, including surgery, hospitalization, dental work, anesthesia, blood transfusions, etc. They do not have hospitalization insurance, but they band together to help pay medical expenses for anyone of their group who needs financial assistance.

Why do they dress the way they do?
The Amish believe that God has called them to be completely separate from the world and its negative influences. Choosing to wear clothing that sets them apart as different immediately divides them from the English. The choice to dress a certain way strengthens the community’s bonds and declares their commitment to the principles of the Amish church. The plain and simple dress of the Amish is an outward show of their inner convictions of humility and modesty. They also believe it is important to differentiate the roles between men and women, which is why Amish and many Mennonite women wear dresses. The head coverings of the women are related to a biblical reference in I Corinthians 11, which emphasizes a need for women to have their head covered.

What is their education system like?
While the majority of Mennonites embrace high school and college education, the Amish and some Mennonites do not think higher education is necessary. The Amish do not usually educate their children past the eighth grade, believing that the basic knowledge offered up to that point is sufficient to prepare one for the Amish lifestyle. The Amish operate their own schools, which are typically one-room schoolhouses with teachers (usually young unmarried women) from the Amish community. The society itself acts as a vocational school. Children learn how to be farmers, homemakers, carpenters, and tradesmen.

Do the Amish pay taxes?
Since the Amish own a lot of land, they do pay a lot of property taxes and are liable for estate taxes as well. However, any property taxes paid do not benefit them because they have their own one-room schoolhouses. Additionally, the Amish do pay, state and federal income taxes, county taxes, sales tax, etc.

There are taxes that are not paid by the Amish, but in each case, it is because they either do not consume the service or product involved and so do not pay the excise/consumption tax, or they do not take advantage of the government benefit due to religious reasons, and therefore do not contribute towards its upkeep. The Amish do not collect unemployment, social security, or welfare benefits because doing so would be against their religious beliefs. As such, they have been exempt from paying into these systems. Each family takes care of their
own, and the Amish community gives assistance as needed.

Why do Amish men have beards, but not mustaches?
An Amish man does not shave his beard after he becomes married. A long beard is the mark of an adult Amish man. There are quite a few scriptures that mention beards in the Bible. An example would be Psalm 133:1, 2. The mustache is forbidden because in the early days of the Amish, wearing elaborate mustaches was common among those in the military. In their early days, the Amish and other Mennonites in Europe were often persecuted by these groups. In addition to that, the Amish, being a pacifist group, didn't want to associate themselves with those who waged war.

Does anyone ever join or leave?
It is very rare for someone to join the Amish, but it does happen occasionally. To join the Amish, one must learn the Pennsylvania German dialect. One must also learn to leave behind modern luxuries like televisions, appliances, cars and contemporary clothing. Many of the rules particular to certain churches are extremely difficult for someone from the outside to adopt.

Any member is free to leave. A member who has left may even be allowed to return within a short time. A member who leaves permanently will, however, be shunned. Shunning means that the person will forever be considered an outsider -- a stranger -- and will not be allowed to participate in the community ever again. Most people who leave the Amish become Mennonites.
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