

# Bonnybrook Farm combines history with fun fall activities

By Justin McClelland  
Staff Writer

When city life becomes too complex, people may take a jaunt to the country to relax. But what happens when the country starts to disappear?

Bonnie and Joe Mercuri, who operated Bonnybrook Farm near Centerville for 40 years, ran into just such a problem. Their solution: Pull up the tractors and head out to new farmlands.

"My husband and I both grew up in the city, but I think we always yearned for the country," Bonnie said. "We had the country in our hearts."

The Mercuris started Bonnybrook Farms as an equestrian center before adding haunted hayrides in the fall. Eventually the farm blossomed into a full-scale tourist attraction, providing school children and day-trippers with lessons about farm life.

In 2007, however, the Mercuris felt that their Centerville location was becoming too developed. They moved to a new location outside of Clarksville, just across the Warren County line in Washington Twp. "We chose this area for its beauty," Bonnie said. "It's an absolutely beautiful farm."

Bonnie said she was also excited by the history of the area, which includes the old Sheepskin railway that ran through the farm, pioneer ruins and old wagon roads.

This fall the new site will be hosting its first events, includ-



After 40 years in Montgomery County, Bonnie and Joe Mercuri have moved their Bonnybrook Farms to 350 acres in Warren County. "The size isn't a big challenge," Bonnie said. "It's just things done on a larger scale." Staff photo by Linda Weisenborn

## How to go

**What:** Bonnybrook Farms Fall Farm Days

**Where:** 3779 Ohio 132, Washington Twp., outside of Clarksville

**When:** Noon to 5:30 p.m. Saturdays and Sundays, Oct. 11-12, 18-19, 25 and 26

**Admission:** Free (Separate fees for hayride and pony rides)

**Information:** (937) 289-2500 or [www.bonnybrookfarms.com](http://www.bonnybrookfarms.com)

ing Fall Farm Days, open to the public Saturdays and Sundays in October. The festival will include hayrides, a corn maze, pony rides, a petting zoo, and a farmyard play area.

The country store, located in the newly built 6,300-square foot barn, will serve home-cooked food and seasonal snacks and have country decorations for sale.

The new Bonnybrook Farms is over three times the size of the original, growing from 95 acres to 352.

"The size isn't a big challenge," Bonnie said. "It's just things done on a larger scale."

Bonnie said that farm work can be difficult, but also enjoyable.

"People can come and really enjoy what we do," Bonnie said. "People these days are really missing out on the farm experience and we hope to provide that. It's not busy, there's no sirens. It's a very secluded life."

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