



Wayne County Couple Wins Prestigious Horseman's Award



Ohio Horseman's Council, Inc. awards the prestigious Lifetime Membership award to Barb and Mike Gerard at the recent OHC state membership meeting. Left to right: Kris Green, Awards Chairperson; Barb Gerard and Mike Gerard, recipients of the honored award; Arden Sims, President-Ohio Horseman's Council.

Wooster, OH (April 1, 2016) – The Ohio Horseman's Council, Inc. gave the highest recognition from the Council's membership to a Wayne County couple who have been members of OHC since 1993. The Lifetime Membership award was given to Mike and Barb Gerard of Wooster. Horse riding enthusiasts who enjoy the 27 miles of trails and the overnight campground at Pleasant Hill Lake Park can thank the Gerard's for their efforts in establishing the trails and camping amenities. But the Gerard's efforts didn't stop with Pleasant Hill trails.

Mike Gerard had a vision to link neighboring bridle trails. Mike was instrumental in forming a partnership that provided for the connection of equine and hiking trails at the Mohican Memorial State Forest, Mohican State Park, and Malabar Farm State Park with new equine and hiking trails developed at Pleasant Hill Lake Park. Pleasant Hill is part of the Muskingum Watershed Conservancy District. Gerard held regular meetings with land owners and OHC members from across the state to develop the trails system across all partnering properties. By OHC standards, this had never been attempted due to the complicated weaving of public and private landowners involved. The effort has taken twelve years of volunteer efforts and cooperation with many entities.

While the Gerard's worked to achieve a 70 mile trail system, they continued to support Ohio Horseman's Council at the state and chapter levels. Barb is the current OHC state secretary, serves on the Executive Cabinet, continues to serve as the state membership chairperson and serves on the State OHC Equine Affaire Committee. Barb is a past member of the State Merit Awards Committee and has served as an officer at the chapter level. Mike is a former state vice-president, former Director, and former Northeast Region Mentor. He has joined the Executive Cabinet as a director and is the State Trail Advocacy Committee Chair as well as state legislative committee co-chairperson. Mike is a past recipient of the OHC Gibby Award, which he won in recognition of his volunteerism and work on the trail systems throughout the State of Ohio. Both Gerard's started the Wayne County OHC Chapter in 1993 where Mike served as chapter president for 10 years. The Ashland County OHC Chapter was formed in 2012 and Mike continues to serve as the chapter Treasurer. The Ashland County OHC Chapter is their home chapter and hosts the annual OHC Chili Cook-Off State Ride at Mohican State Memorial Forest in September every year.