



MONTGOMERY COUNTY EQUESTRIANS RECEIVE PRESTIGIOUS AWARD FOR CONTRIBUTIONS TO BRIDLE TRAILS AT SYCAMORE STATE PARK

August 8, 2016 – The Ohio Horseman's Council, Inc. (OHC) recently named their 2016 “Gibby” award winner for contributions to the building, maintenance and preservation of bridle trails in the State of Ohio. Jerry and Mary Ann Basham, residents of Brookville and long-time members of the Montgomery county chapter of OHC, received the coveted award for their contributions at Sycamore State Park, located west of Dayton. The Bashams received their award before a large crowd of fellow OHC members and representatives from the Ohio Department of Natural Resources (ODNR) at a presentation ceremony held at Barkcamp State Park in Belmont County.

The “Gibby” award is named after the developer of the bridle trails at Barkcamp. In the early 80's, Wilbur “Gibby” Gibson worked with ODNR and numerous volunteers and land owners to establish a bridle trail system and horseman's campground in the park. Barkcamp is now considered a premier riding destination for horseback riders. Likewise, the same commitment by the Bashams to work with land owners at Sycamore resulted in recognition and appreciation from OHC membership for their efforts to establish the trail system at Sycamore and their commitment to the countless hours of personal time and effort to insure safe and enjoyable trail riding at the park.

Since 1994, the Bashams took ownership and responsibility for maintaining the trails and over the years their great relationship with park management allowed them to spearhead efforts to begin adding to the length and location of trails within the park. Eventually, the mileage grew from 6 to 21 miles of riding for horseback riders. Through use of their own equipment, such as skid steers and tractors, the Bashams have been able to fix areas that were too muddy or unsafe for horse and rider. They are the leaders of coordinating and organizing work days with volunteers to mow, trim, clear and maintain trail signage.

In addition to their personal commitment to preserve the Sycamore Park trails, the Bashams worked with park management to establish a day-riding area as well as an overnight horseman's camp for riders. The horseman's camp has spacious, shady, graveled and leveled trailer pads for horse trailer parking with available picnic tables, fire rings, access to water for horses, overhead tie lines and a wash area for horses.

While working to establish trails and camping for equestrians, the Bashams continued to support the Ohio Horseman's Council Montgomery county chapter by presiding as president and secretary for many years and collecting trail mileage, developing better tools to communicate with chapter members and mentoring new chapter members. Arden Sims, President, Ohio Horseman's Council said, “Jerry and Mary Ann, like many of our volunteers, are an inspiration to our state organization. Their efforts are exemplary, resulting in a bridle trail system in Montgomery county for horseback riders around our state to enjoy.”

There are 21 miles of bridle trails at Sycamore State Park offering loops of one to eight miles of riding. The horseman's campground entrance is located at 8215 S. Wolf Creek Pike Road in Trotwood, OH.

The Ohio Horseman's Council is a non-profit corporation organized in the state of Ohio to provide a positive environment for equine owners and supporters to share ideas and suggestions for horse related issues. Through education, organized trail rides, and other social and service functions, OHC provides financial resources and services to

fellow organizations that support equine related activities. In addition, more than 4,300 members in 69 counties volunteer their time and resources to promote the building and preservation of 1,600 miles of bridle trails in 108 locations throughout the state of Ohio.

The Montgomery county chapter of OHC meets the third Tuesday of every month at 7:00 PM at the Sycamore State Park bridle trailhead during summer months, May-September. Check their website for winter and ongoing meeting information. Horse owners of any age, breed of horse or riding discipline are welcome to attend the monthly meetings. Access the chapter's Facebook page and website at www.montgomerycountyohc.com. For more information about joining an OHC chapter in your area, visit ohconline.com and click on the "chapters" tab to find a listing of all OHC county chapters and their contact information.

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Wilbur "Gibby" Gibson

Gibby Gibson died on April 4, 2008 in St. Clairsville, Ohio at the age of 96. He was a resident of the Bannock community since 1914 and was a retired coal miner and a WWII veteran serving in the US Navy. Gibby was a member of Buckeye Trail Riders and served as an at-large State Delegate for the Ohio Horseman's Council. He was instrumental in the design and development of horse trails at Harrison State Forest and Barkcamp State Park.

Every year, in the first week of August, volunteers from Ohio Horseman's Council, Inc., along with Ohio Department of Natural Resources, participate in a week of trail maintenance and grooming at Barkcamp. At a pot-luck dinner on Saturday night, the "Gibby" award is presented to the OHC volunteer(s) who has been nominated by their peers as setting an example for ownership and pride in the bridle trails in the State of Ohio, as Gibby would have expected.

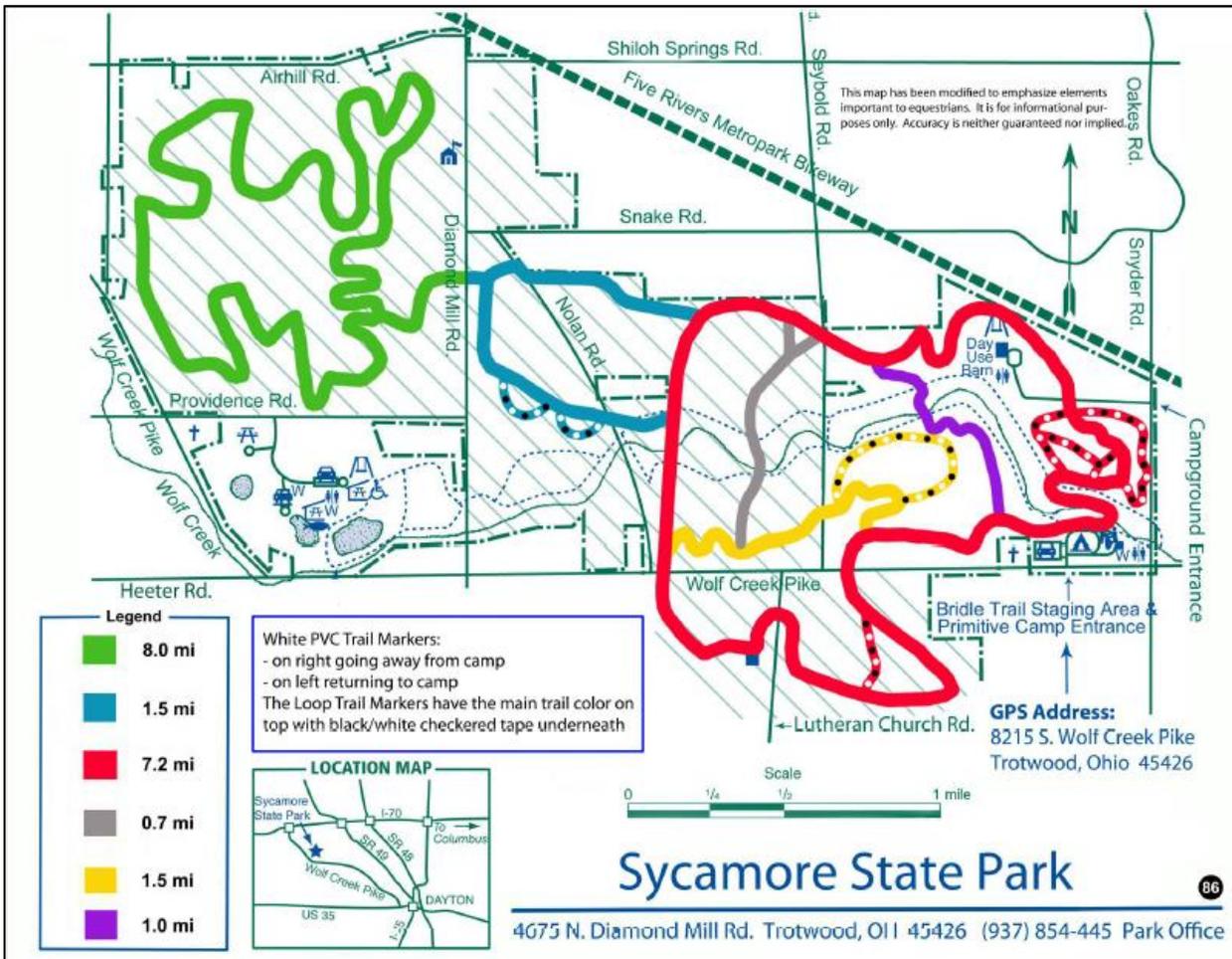


Past Gibby winners with the 2016 winners Jerry and Mary Ann Basham of Montgomery County OHC

Left to right: Don Wagner, Morgan County; Jo Ellen Reickowski, Stark County; Larry Matthews, Washington County; Jerry Basham, Montgomery County; Anne Lindemore, Morgan County; Mary Ann Basham, Montgomery County; Troy Lindimore, Morgan County; and Charlene Santee and Craig Santee, Licking County.



2016 Gibby winners Jerry and Mary Ann Basham of Montgomery County with Kris Green (far left), Awards Chair and Arden Sims (far right), President-OHC



Horseback riders at Sycamore State Park can easily follow 21 miles of color-coded trails meandering through scenic forests and meadows.

Link to trailmap: <https://www.ohconline.com/uploadedfiles/pdfs/TrailFiles/mapFiles/Sycamore State Park Bridle Trails R2.pdf>