



Membership Information



Feel free to contact us if you have questions or concerns.

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About the Ohio Horseman's Council

The Ohio Horseman's Council Inc. (OHC) is a non-profit corporation organized in the state of Ohio to provide a vehicle for equine owners and supporters to share ideas and suggestions for all horse related issues, through education, organized trail rides, and other social and service functions. We provide resources to promote the building and maintenance of bridle trails throughout the state of Ohio and provide financial resources and volunteer services to fellow organizations that support equine related activities.

While OHC does have biannual State Meetings, monthly County Chapter meetings offer the best opportunity for folks with a common interest in a local area to socially interact. OHC enhances communication among horsemen, providing an opportunity to network and develop strategies to achieve common goals.

The Ohio Horseman's Council started in 1972 as a grass roots movement of horse people who felt that an organization with neither breed affiliation nor private interest to serve was needed to represent horsemen of Ohio. By 1974, OHC was officially incorporated and joined the American Horse Council. There, OHC learned how horsemen in other states solved zoning and bureaucratic problems. To date, there are more public riding areas in Ohio than in all the adjoining states combined.

About Holmes County Chapter of Ohio Horseman's Council

As horsemen helping horsemen, we provide opportunities for equine owners and supporters to share horse-related topics and activities through trail rides, campouts, social and service functions and by the building and maintaining of bridle trails. We foster the love and understanding of horses for this generation and the next.

We foster camaraderie among members while enjoying chapter events, such as trail riding, camping, fundraising and helping fellow equestrians.

We work closely with the Ohio Department of Natural Resources to assist in the repair and maintenance of trails and facilities in our state parks and forests.

We encourage members to serve on committees to provide input into those areas or projects that will affect equestrians' interests.

We offer opportunities for children to participate in horse related education and activities to foster the love and understanding of horses for the next generation.

We donate time and financial resources to service organizations in Holmes County promoting the interests of horse-loving people and to enrich the understanding of horses in our county.

Meetings

Holmes OHC meets about once a month and develops a Calendar of Events each year outlining meeting locations and other events. Club members meet to discuss club topics and to socialize.

Trail Riding

Holmes OHC develops a Calendar of Events each year with a variety of trail rides. Club members meet for day rides and enjoy weekend camping trips: Ohio's state parks and forests are popular destinations. On most Saturday nights during camping weekends, members host renowned potluck dinners, with entertaining campfires to end the night.

Support of Ohio's Trails

Holmes OHC members donate hundreds of volunteer hours each year in support of bridle trails in Ohio's parks and forests. Throughout riding season, work weekends are held at Mohican Memorial-State Forest. Members clear and improve trails, clean up camp, replace tie rails, etc. The chapter also donates money each year to different horse facilities across the state to support Ohio's bridle trails and typically carries out two fundraising opportunities to support those efforts.

Horse Camping at Mohican During Permit and Work Weekends

Holmes OHC has 1 permit weekend a year (Labor Day Weekend) and 2 work weekends a year. There are some simple rules to keep in mind when camping:

Clean up your campsite when you leave

- Throw horse manure in the woods
- Take your hay home

Dogs must be on a leash

No dogs in the picnic shelter

Generators must be turned off by 10pm

More detailed rules are available on our website(s).

Why Track Trail Miles?

Please keep track of the trail miles you ride at our State Parks. Our Trail Mileage and Saddle Hour Program has three goals:

1. To provide the Ohio Horseman's Council with documented and quantified support to maintain, improve and expand the trail systems/facilities in Ohio.
2. To recognize individuals who have reached various levels of enjoyment and/or accomplishment with their horses that all horsemen respect and admire.
3. To recognize the wide variety of interests and activities that our members and their horses are involved in.

On an annual basis, members report their mileage and hours logged to their county representative, who in turn submits a consolidated report to the State Trail Mileage and Saddle Hour Chairperson. The chairperson compiles all county reports and statistical information.

Membership Info and Benefits

Benefits of Membership

You are joining the largest equine volunteer organization in the State of Ohio. OHC has more than 4,200 members throughout the state and is open to all breeds of equine, disciplines of riding and ages of rider. The slogan, "Horsemen helping Horsemen" represents commitment to Ohio's equine industry. Your membership fee goes direct to Ohio Horseman's Council and supports your right to equine ownership, recreational use of public land, and education.

- OHC advocates for public land use and members work with land managers to volunteer and maintain more than 1,650 miles of bridle trails throughout the state.
- Keep Ohio's trails fee free.
- Meet and ride with others who share your equine passion.
- Access to competitively-priced equine liability insurance from Equisure.
- Discounts from national retailers for your farm, business or personal use.

Membership Information

Membership in Ohio Horseman's Council is effective on an annual basis from January 1 to December 31. To become a member, apply and pay online. You can apply as an individual, family, youth or association. Generally, members are part of a local, Ohio county chapter, but if you would rather support OHC without chapter affiliation, or you are a business or a non-Ohio resident, you can select "At Large" vs a county chapter. If you'd rather print an application and mail your check, use the membership application for the chapter you want to join. Print the appropriate membership application form and mail your check to the treasurer listed on the form.

Membership categories and fees:

- **Individual** membership is open to any person age eighteen (18) or older. An active individual member shall be entitled to 1 vote and may hold office if eligible under Article V.
- **Family** membership is open to spouses or domestic partners, at least one of whom is age eighteen (18) or older, and their dependents. Dependent means that the spouse(s) or domestic partner(s) contribute greater than fifty percent (50%) of the dependent's support. Family members must physically reside in the same household. Active family members, age eighteen (18) or older, shall each be entitled to one (1) vote, with a maximum of two (2) votes per family, and each may hold office if eligible under Article V. Family members under the age of eighteen (18) may not vote nor hold office.
- **Youth** membership is open to any person under the age of eighteen (18) as of January 1. Youth members must be sponsored by an adult member, with written permission of their parent or guardian. Youth members are not permitted to vote or to hold office.
- **Associate** membership is open to any group or individual desiring to support OHC. Associate members must be affiliated with and sponsored by a county chapter. Associate members are not permitted to vote or to hold office.
- Any member may be a **Member at Large** if he or she does not claim a county chapter affiliation. An active member at large shall have the benefits, voting and office holding rights of an individual, family, youth or lifetime member, whichever is applicable. A member at large may not claim a chapter affiliation for the entire membership year.

OHC Basic Membership (does not include Equine Excess Liability Insurance)

- \$20 - Individual (age 18 or older, no dependents)
- \$20 - Youth (under age 18, parental/guardian signature required)
- \$30 - Family (with spouse/partner/other and/or dependents)

OHC Plus Membership (includes Equine Excess Liability Insurance)

- \$40 - Individual (age 18 or older, no dependents)
- \$70 - Family (with spouse/partner/other and/or dependents)

Associate Membership (does not allow Equine Excess Liability Insurance)

- \$35 - Group (provide name of group and primary contact person)

Trail manners

You're out on a pleasant trail ride with several other riders. Without a word, one of the riders suddenly urges her horse forward and gallops off down the trail. The left-behind horses frantically try to follow. The riders struggle to control their mounts. Pandemonium ensues.

This kind of thoughtless behavior on the trail is no fun to deal with and could cause someone to get seriously hurt. Clearly, leaving your fellow riders in the dust isn't what you'd expect of a good riding buddy. "Never again!" you say to yourself. "I'll never ride with her again!"

We all want to be the kind of person other trail riders enjoy being around. By using the eight simple techniques below, you can be a good riding buddy who is fun and safe to ride with on the trail.

Manage expectations

Make sure everyone planning to attend knows how long the ride is, what the terrain is like, and how challenging the trail will be. That way they'll know what to expect and can come prepared or, if they or their horses aren't prepared, bow out ahead of time and wait for a less-taxing ride.

Ride at the level of the least experienced horse and/or rider

For safety's sake, tailor your ride to the level of the least experienced rider or horse in the group. It might be old hat for you and your horse to cross creeks; trot and canter; or share the trail with bicycles, dogs, or motorcycles. But these experiences can be daunting for a green horse or rider, so plan a ride that's appropriate for their level of experience.

Wait for others

Be sure everyone is mounted before riding off. On the trail, make sure everyone has stepped over that fallen log or successfully crossed the creek before you ride away. And when you stop to let the horses drink, allow all the horses to have their fill before you continue down the trail.

Passing

- When passing...if the trail is narrow, the smallest group should get off the trail so the other group can pass. Everyone in your group should try their best to get off the trail on the same side (wherever there is the most space). Some horses do not like to go through a "gauntlet".
- When passing riders, always walk and announce your intentions, especially if you approach from the rear.
- Do not trot or canter up on a rider or group. Bring your horse back to a walk before you reach a rider or group of riders.

Ask before you speed up

If you get the urge to canter your horse up the trail, always ask the other riders if it's okay. If some of the riders don't want to canter, they can stand together with their horses facing back down the trail while the fast riders canter away. For example, if you want to trot or canter and the group is walking, ask the group to wait so you can leave and then when you are a distance away from the group, the speed up. Please be aware that horses do not like being left behind and this can often cause difficulties for others in the group.

Different Speeds and Gaiting

- If you want to ride at a faster pace, it is often best to establish a group to ride that wants to ride the same way you do
- Many riders have horses that are not good in large groups. Generally, rides are established based on your horse's experience, horse speed and length of ride desired. For this reason it is common to have multiple groups at a scheduled function. For riders that would like assistance at a ride, please contact the ride coordinator before the ride so plans can be made. New riders (and new mounts) are best paired with an experienced horse and rider in a small group. If you have special needs, speak up! We want everyone to have an enjoyable ride.

Let others know if you feel you or your horse is having trouble on the trail.

If you encounter an issue on the trail where you feel you or your horse is uncomfortable, please let others know so they can wait or help before something undesirable happens. For example, if the group is crossing a ditch with water, and your horse seems nervous about crossing it, holler out and ask those in front of you to wait. Your horse might feel better about crossing the ditch with another horse right in front of them, or you may need to dismount while others wait for you to safely cross the ditch.

Encourage time-outs

Make sure everybody in the group is comfortable calling a time-out to stop and adjust their tack, get a drink, or take a "training moment" to calm their excited horse or manage his behavior.

Share the lead

Everybody in the group should get a chance to be in the front, middle, and back of the group if they so desire. Not only is it good manners, but it's also a great way to ensure your horse learns to be comfortable in any pack position.

When you encounter low-hanging branches, remember the rider behind you

When you encounter low-hanging branches across the trail, you naturally want to push them forward out of the way as you pass. But if you do, the branches can snap back and whack the rider behind you. Instead, lift the branches and pass under them. They'll fall gently downward into place and won't annoy the next rider. It also doesn't hurt to alert riders behind you of the obstacle ahead so they can prepare to encounter it.

Train your horse to be a good buddy, too

Nobody appreciates a horse that kicks, bites, tailgates, refuses to cross water, or tries to run home. If your horse exhibits antisocial behavior, or if he doesn't know how to deal with common trail situations, find a trainer who can help you resolve the issue so your horse can be a good riding buddy. Your actions and those of your horse will determine whether others will want to ride with you or avoid you. Be the considerate rider you want others to be, and you'll be known far and wide as a good riding buddy.

Campout Trail Rides

- Ride Coordinator is only a coordinator and not responsible for leading rides.
- Ride Coordinator should be contacted if you plan to attend (that way, if a ride is cancelled, you can be notified).
- Ride cancellations will be posted on Facebook and sent out by email. If you do not follow either, make sure you contact the ride coordinator so you can be included in any notifications.
- Generally, potlucks at all rides on Saturday night. Time is set by the ride coordinator.

Day Rides

- Ride Coordinator generally leads the ride or at least one ride.
- Ride Coordinator should be contacted if you plan to attend (that way, if a ride is cancelled, you can be notified).
- Ride cancellations will be posted on Facebook and sent out by email. If you do not follow either,

Emergencies

If you have a serious emergency or discover someone in need, you should call 911. The 911 dispatcher can reach the ODNR officers. Be advised that cell coverage in many areas is limited so you may have to get to a hilltop or road to get service. If you need state park or forest assistance for issues that are not life threatening, you can reach the ODNR Dispatcher at 614-799-9538 (or call #ODNR on your cell).

Trail Problems

If you encounter trees down or any other safety issue that is a problem, please report it. At Mohican and Malabar, you can contact a Holmes or Wayne OHC officer. You may also post it on our Facebook page. If you are at another park or forest, contact their office.

Code of Ethics

As an Ohio Horseman's Council member, my fundamental duty is to better the equine community and to educate, promote, and enhance the equine industry. I will keep my private life unsullied as an example to all and be well behaved in a manner that does not bring discredit to me or the Ohio Horseman's Council. I will be consistently mindful of others, honest in thoughts and deeds in my personal life, and exemplary in obeying the laws. I will cooperate with all legal authorities and their representatives. I know that I alone am responsible for my own standards of performance and will take every opportunity to enhance and improve my level of knowledge and competence.

Social Media Etiquette and Guidelines

Our organization is growing in scope and working to expand the opportunities for today's and future horse enthusiasts. With that in mind, it is important to take this opportunity to review and adopt certain guidelines or etiquette for Ohio Horseman's Council-associated social media formats. These include, but are not limited to, Facebook, Twitter, our State or local chapter websites. It is important to note that these guidelines are meant to enhance the dissemination of pertinent information amongst the membership on a variety of horse-related topics and interests while maintaining an atmosphere of professionalism and fellowship. Guidelines to keep in mind include: When joining our

Ohio Horseman's Council family, the member agrees to adopt and conduct themselves in accordance with the Ohio Horseman's Council Code of Ethics.(a copy can be found in the 2015 Directory and on our State website, ohconline.com) With specific regards to Facebook postings, including those of individual chapters, we ask that users refrain from any negative posts about past or present members or any other equine organization or individual. A person posting anything negative on the page should be given a warning by their respective chapter's designated webmaster, FB administrator or chapter officer(s). Should such negativity continue, the chapter officer(s) may elect to disallow further access to the social media format(s), e.g. Facebook postings, by that individual.

If there is ever any question as to the appropriateness of a particular posting, the chapter officer(s) may always direct the matter to their regional representative, mentor or State President directly. We encourage all chapters with social media format(s) to adopt such aforementioned guidelines for etiquette. Please remember that OHC postings are read not just by members, but by the horse-loving public too!

Our events are usually photographed for sharing information and images on our websites and other social media. It's our practice not to include last names on our websites. If you do not want your image or images of your children posted online, please inform the officers.