

# RIDE

2025 Newsletter Ohio Horseman's Council, Inc.



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## Keep in touch

Stay in touch with the Ohio Horseman's Council through print and social media:

- Chapter activities are reported by chapters and appear every month in the Horseman's Corral County Lines section.
- Chapters and regions have a Facebook group or page. Information is local to the chapter or region. Still, it may be of interest if you're looking for educational seminars, trail conditions, group rides, trail maintenance, meetings, and other equine-related events in a particular part of the state.
- "Google" for information - type in the name of the county chapter followed by OHC or Ohio Horseman's Council.
- The state OHC website is a comprehensive resource, providing a link to all county chapters. You can easily find your local chapter by clicking on 'Find Chapter' at the top of the website's home page. Additionally, the website is the go-to place for current trail maps and mileage, which you can access under 'Ohio Trails' at the top of the home page.

*The Ohio Horseman's Council is more than just an organization; it's a vibrant community of Ohio's equine enthusiasts. With 3,500 members representing all ages of riders, riding disciplines, and equine breeds, OHC is a place where you can connect with others who share your passion. Organized by county chapters, OHC is committed to serving its members, championing the work of volunteers, and proactively pursuing efforts to keep trails open in Ohio, as well as promoting access to public land for recreational use. Give this newsletter to a friend or acquaintance to encourage their membership in OHC.*

## Why Join OHC?

When members were asked, "why join?" their answers were easy:

- 1) Support Ohio's bridle trails.
- 2) Maintain a healthy lifestyle.
- 3) Find others with similar interests.
- 4) Make a difference through volunteer contributions.
- 5) Share and enjoy your equine experience.
- 6) Events for all ages of riders, disciplines of riding, and breeds of equine.



## Inside this newsletter

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## 25<sup>th</sup> Gibby Winner Recognized

The Erie County Metroparks and all Ohio riders can say a huge "thank you" to Lynn and Tim Sparks for their efforts on Edison Woods bridle trails in the NW region. As this year's Gibby winners, they represent dedication and determination. Lynn, a founding member of the Erie County Chapter of OHC, established a vital partnership with the Metroparks to help establish and maintain the trails at Edison Woods. This partnership was necessary due to the strict requirements from the land management agency, which considered the land wetlands and imposed specific maintenance requirements for the trails. For 30 years, the Sparks have led the effort to maintain the trails, which rank 14th out of 100+ trail systems in Ohio for recorded trail mileage.

Congratulations to all OHC volunteers around the state who are committed to improving Ohio's trails for all equestrians to enjoy! Your invaluable work, often done behind the scenes, does not go unnoticed. The Gibby award is named after Wilbur 'Gibby' Gibson, a dedicated volunteer who promoted trails and riding at Barkcamp and changed the relationship between ODNR and horse user groups so equestrians can enjoy bridle trails throughout the state on park and forest lands. In 2025, the Gibby Award celebrated its 25th year, a testament to the enduring commitment of volunteers like the Sparks and you.

OHIO HORSEMAN'S COUNCIL ANNOUNCES

**2026 GRANT MONEY**

APPLICATIONS DUE BY 11.1.2025 [ohconline.com](https://ohconline.com)

**COMMITMENT TO OHIO'S TRAILS**

\$8250 IN GRANT MONEY WILL BE AWARDED TO CHAPTERS WHO SHOW AN EQUINE-RELATED PROJECT THAT BUILDS RELATIONSHIPS AND ENHANCES THE EQUINE RIDING COMMUNITY. \$750 TO A CHAPTER IN EACH OF FIVE OHIO REGIONS + \$5000 MATCHING GRANT TO ONE OR MORE CHAPTERS.

GRANTS CAN BE FOR A VARIETY OF NEEDS: TRAIL SIGNAGE, BRIDGES, DITCHES, ANYTHING TO IMPROVE THE TRAIL RIDING OR CAMPING EXPERIENCE FOR EQUESTRIANS.

APPLICATION FORM AND CONTACT INFO AT OHCONLINE.COM/DOCUMENTS OR EMAIL TO [TRAILS@OHCONLINE.COM](mailto:TRAILS@OHCONLINE.COM). GRANT MONEY RECIPIENTS NAMED JANUARY 2026.

## Grant Money Well Spent

Ohio Horseman's Council annual monetary grant programs are designed to give assistance for equine-related projects that build relationships and enhance the community. There is a \$5000 Matching Grant distributed to one or more chapters and a \$750 Regional Monetary Grant awarded to a county chapter within each of the five regions in the State of Ohio.

To provide additional assistance, Ohio State Parks awarded an additional \$10,000 to East Fork State Park (Clermont) and \$2,500 to Caesar Creek State Park (Warren) under the Ohio Horseman's Council and Ohio State Parks partnership program.

### \$750 Grants from OHC

SE Meigs - AEP Southern Ohio Rec Area  
NE Portage - West Branch State Park  
NW Erie - Edison Woods Metroparks  
SW Ross - Tar Hollow State Forest  
CEN Licking - Dillion State Park

### \$5000 Matching Grants from OHC

Clark - Buck Creek State Park - \$1000  
Preble - Hueston Woods State Park - \$1500  
Stark - Camp Tuscazoar - \$1000  
Wood - Van Buren State Park - \$3000



Before

In process

Complete!

With the \$10,000 for East Fork State Park, Clermont County Chapter spent more than 2 weeks, xx volunteers and their equipment to rebuild 1.2 miles of a heavily ridden blue trail that is a main route from the horseman's campground to more trailheads.



# Around the State With Jr Ambassadors



By Veronica Mertz

*It was a pleasure meeting with some of the other Junior Ambassadors from around the state. They all had*

*something fun to contribute as they were asked numerous questions and I enjoyed listening to their thoughts and opinions on the topics.*

-Veronica



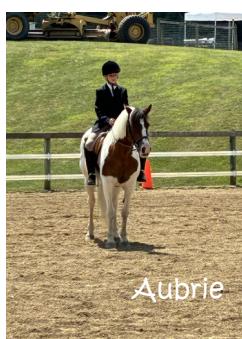
Hazel

Eleven year-old, sixth grader Hazel Lance rides English in hunting and jumping with her Arabian in Knox county in the **Central** region. She emphasized how much fun horses are, and she enjoys having a team. Her trainers are a great help as she learns. Sometimes, it's difficult to talk to people, but even more than that, it's difficult to find something for everyone and a time for it. She enjoys the group that we have, but she's interested in more people joining.



Khloe

In **Southeast** Lawrence county, Khloe Adams is a fifteen year old in her sophomore year. She barrel races with her quarter horse, Reason. A horse lover, she loves riding and having a good time but most of all, she loves how sweet they are. At the moment, Khloe doesn't think any changes to the program is necessary as it is still relatively new and going well. The biggest challenge for her is going out and meeting people, yet this was a huge prompter for joining the Jr Ambassadors.



Aubrie

From Holmes county in the **Northeast** region, the Ollinger siblings, Aubrie, Emilie, and Isaiah enjoy the ambassador program. Aubrie is fourteen in ninth grade and does trail riding and ranch, and Emilie is eleven in sixth grade and enjoys trail and bareback riding, patterns, obstacles, and showmanship. The youngest, Isaiah, is

seven in second grade and enjoys trails and practicing barrels. Aubrie has a halflinger and paint mix named Jewel and she says she loves how horses radiate tranquility, and the program is pretty easy. Emilie, on the other hand, has a bay named Amber, and she loves how dependable her horse is. She loves trail riding and the fun with OHC. Lastly, Isaiah has a bay miniature named Star and enjoys her sweet personality.

He loves going fast and the opportunities available. The Ollingers all agreed that coming together with an activity for the Jr Ambassadors would be amazing, such as riding trails and picnicking.



Keith

In the **Southwest** region, Greene county Keith and Klaira Butler are avid horse riders.



Klaira

Keith, a seventeen year old in his senior year, isn't in the ambassador program but thinks highly of

it. He rides English, ranch, and contests with his Arabian and quarter horses. He loves the mutual respect and how the equines respond, and if he had the time, he would have done the ambassador program. Meanwhile, Klaira, a fourteen year old in eighth grade, is a junior ambassador. With her quarter horse, Duce, and tenneesse walker, Flower, she does English hunt seat, ranch riding, and gymkhana style riding. Klaira loves how attuned her horses are and the bond they share. She enjoys how the Jr Ambassador program operates but thinks communication could use work. The program challenges her by prompting her to meet other people, which she says is hard for her.



Audrey

Audrey Reineke from Auglaize county in the **Northwest** region rides western pleasure with her quarter horse. She's sixteen in her junior year and loves the bond with her horse and responsibility. The program is fun and says the

responsibility is helpful with growing maturity; however, the mental part of the program is hard. The program is about having fun and creating a bond with your horse, and she loves that but remembering you're good and to have fun is difficult when competing with other kids.

*More Jr Ambassadors news on next page.....*



Emilie



Isaiah





*Jr Ambassadors continued from page 3 -*

**At large**, Zane Scott, a thirteen year old in eighth grade, does trail riding and contesting with his spotted saddle horse. His favorite aspect about horses is the reliability. He's had his ups and downs through the years, for example, two years ago his old barrel horse passed away. So, he says reliability is huge for him. He likes knowing that he can trust his horse to know what to do. In addition, he's really enjoying the ambassador program. The only change is adding more members.

*In interviewing these selected ambassadors, I was presented with a new outlook of*



*the program and saw how well received it was. I asked every participant about their struggles to understand their responses. That being said, some surprised me and others didn't. For me, the junior ambassador program opens a whole new world of exploration and fun. The ambassador meets new people and it breaks them out of their shell. It's an amazing experience.*

*- Veronica*

Veronica is a member of the Auglaize County Chapter OHC, is an active Jr Ambassador and is the Auglaize County By Lines editor for the chapter. Including other notable activities at school and her outside accomplishments her career goal is to be a publisher, so it's fitting she is the author of this wonderful piece about the Jr Ambassador program!

**59 Jr Ambassadors  
14 county chapters & At large  
There's room for more!**



## OHC Foundation Offers Value for Donors & County Chapters

As a member of the OHC you are also a member of the OHC Foundation. The function of the Foundation is to assist you in your ongoing efforts to support and promote the recreation equine owner. It provides an avenue for donor contributions, supporting your efforts, to be used as a charitable contribution by the donor for income tax filings.

The Foundation is an Ohio 501(C)(3) not-for-profit organization. One hundred (100%) of all monetary donations are used as directed by the donors. Further, the OHC and its County Chapters and the OHC Foundation are exempt from paying state sales tax. For information on how to process donations and the state sales tax exemption, go to the OHC website, and look in "Documents" for all the appropriate paperwork.

If you have any questions, contact Arden Sims, President OHC Foundation ([finance@ohconline.com](mailto:finance@ohconline.com)) or Bobbi Arters, Grant Money Chair ([trails@ohconline.com](mailto:trails@ohconline.com)).

### **Don't Miss!**

#### **Upcoming Meeting Dates for chapter officers and all members.**

**NOVEMBER 8, 2025** - State general membership meeting at the Elks Lodge in Newark, OH. NE Region hosting. 10:30 am - 3:00 pm - check state Facebook and website for details & ordering lunch.

**FEBRUARY, 2026** - Regional meetings - date and location TBD by regional representative.

**MARCH 8, 2026** - State general membership meeting at the Elks Lodge in Newark, OH.