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Photo available upon request

Jim White, Past President of Oberlin Heritage Center, Honored by Ohio Association of Historical Societies & Museums

The Oberlin Heritage Center's immediate past-president of the Board, James W. White, has been recognized by the Ohio Association of Historical Societies and Museums (OAHSM) with an Outstanding Individual Achievement Award. White was among several honorees from throughout the state who were feted at an awards luncheon held at the OAHSM Annual Meeting in Dublin, Ohio on Saturday, October 2, 2010.

The Outstanding Individual Achievement Awards recognize dedication and expertise in the field of local history. Nominees must be involved in a historical organization for at least 5 years, and demonstrate excellence in more than one area of an organization's operations. White has been involved with the Oberlin Heritage since 1996, when he joined as a member of the local history education and preservation group. In 1999, he was elected to the Board of Trustees, where he first served as Secretary and Vice President before stepping into the role of Board President in 2005. Due to term limits, White moved to the one-year position of Past President in 2010, upon the completion of five exceptional terms as President.

As Board President, White helped lead the Oberlin Heritage Center to new levels of excellence for the nonprofit organization. He was instrumental in strengthening the Board of Trustees over the past five years, in seeking and attaining the Heritage Center's accreditation by the American Association of Museums, building the endowment, helping to negotiate arrangements for the donation of the Burrell-King House for use as Oberlin Conservatory of Music's Community Music School, and developing and implementing an ambitious five-year Strategic Plan.

White was nominated by the Oberlin Heritage Center's Executive Director, Patricia Murphy, who commented "Jim White is one of the most remarkable and wonderful people I ever have had the pleasure of working with. He inspires me with his passion and dedication for service to the Oberlin Heritage Center and to the community. He knows more about how non-profit organizations work than anyone I've ever met. I view him as a mentor and a great friend." Murphy's nomination was accompanied by 20 letters of support from Oberlin Heritage Center colleagues as well as from members of the greater community. (A list of those who wrote letters of support is included as an addendum to this press release.)

In receiving his award, White joins a growing list of Oberlin Heritage Center staff and volunteers who also have been recognized by this statewide association of peers from the museum and local history fields. Pat Murphy received the honor in 1999, followed by Cathie Radabaugh (past president of the Board of Trustees) in 2005, Pat Holsworth (Financial Assistant and former President of the Board) and Dick Holsworth (Honorary Trustee and super volunteer) in 2006, as well as Mary Anne Cunningham (Assistant to the Director) and Prue Richards (Collections Assistant) in 2007. OAHSM has been recognizing individuals with the Outstanding Achievement Award for over 25 years.

The Oberlin Heritage Center is widely regarded as a model small museum, historical society and historic preservation organization. It offers guided tours, history walks, educational programs for all ages, children's summer camps, and special events both at its complex of historic sites and throughout the community, often in collaboration with other organizations. The Heritage Center also houses a Resource Center for researchers of local history or family genealogies. For more information, visit www.oberlinheritage.org or call 440-774-1700.

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Jim White's Nomination for an OAHSM Outstanding Achievement Award was accompanied by letters of support written by:

Sigrid Boe, Honorary Trustee, Oberlin Heritage Center and Community Volunteer
Scott Broadwell, Member, Oberlin City Council and Board Member, Oberlin Heritage Center
Marianne Cochrane, Board Member, Oberlin Heritage Center
Mary Anne Cunningham, Assistant to the Director, Oberlin Heritage Center
Dr. Walter Edling, President of the Board, Oberlin Heritage Center
Samuel Goldberg, Emeritus Professor of Mathematics, Oberlin College and Vice-President, Kendal at Oberlin Resident Council
Maxine W. Houck, Member, Oberlin Rotary Club
Diane Jones, Church Secretary, The First Church in Oberlin, UCC
Bert Latran, Jr., Board Member, Oberlin Heritage Center
Patricia Murphy, Executive Director, Oberlin Heritage Center
Prue Richards, Collections Assistant, Oberlin Heritage Center
Dina Schoonmaker, Board Member, Oberlin Heritage Center
Elizabeth Schultz, Museum Education and Tour Coordinator, Oberlin Heritage Center
Ruth C. Schwaegerle, Honorary Trustee, Oberlin Heritage Center
Donna M. Shurr, Educator, Oberlin High School and Honorary Trustee, Oberlin Heritage Center
Jean Foggo Simon, 2nd Vice-President, Oberlin Heritage Center
Ken Sloane, President, Oberlin City Council
Sharon Fairchild Soucy, Vice-President, Oberlin City Council and Former Board Member, Oberlin Heritage Center
Barbara W. Thomas, Chief Executive Officer, Kendal at Oberlin
Eugenia P. Vanek, Ed.D., Educational Consultant and Former Board Member, Oberlin Heritage Center