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For immediate release: February 19, 2018

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Trail Magic: The Grandma Gatewood Story

Warm up to spring and Women’s History Month with a viewing of “**Trail Magic**,” a documentary about Emma “Grandma” Gatewood, the first woman to solo thru-hike the 2,050-mile Appalachian Trail in 1955 (at the age of 67). The Oberlin Heritage Center has partnered with Kendal at Oberlin’s Third Thursday program series to host the 50-minute Emmy-nominated film in Kendal’s Heiser Auditorium (600 Kendal Drive) on **Thursday, March 15 at 7:15 p.m.** The screening will be followed by a Q&A session with film producer **Bette Lou Higgins** of Eden Valley Enterprises. The event is free and open to the public, with special thanks to program sponsor, the [1830 Hallauer House Bed & Breakfast in Oberlin](#).

Emma Caldwell (1887-1973) was born in Gallia County, OH and married Perry Gatewood at the age of 19. Although the marriage was an abusive one for Emma, she remained with Perry until their eleven children were grown. In 1940, she divorced her husband and began a new life seeking peace, adventure and fulfillment. Later, she would become the first person (male or female) to hike the Appalachian Trail *two* – and later *three* – times. In addition, during her lifetime, she completed the 2,000 mile hike of the Oregon Trail and traveled to every state in the continental United States.

The Grandma Gatewood documentary grew out of a one-act play about Emma Gatewood, created by local writer Kelly Boyer Sagert, and presented by Eden Valley Enterprises in 2013. The film debuted two years later, and featured local actress Anne McEvoy as Emma Gatewood. (*Local audiences may remember McEvoy’s marvelous portrayal of 19th century presidential candidate Victoria Woodhull in an Oberlin Heritage Center-sponsored program at Kendal in 2016.*) “Trail Magic: The Grandma Gatewood Story” was directed by Peter Huston of Film Affects, produced by Eden Valley Enterprises, and made possible, in part, by a grant from the Ohio History Connection’s History Fund. The History Fund is supported exclusively by voluntary donations of Ohio income tax refunds and designated gifts to the Ohio History Connection. For more, visit www.ohiohistory.org/historyfund.

Eden Valley Enterprises is a local nonprofit dedicated to providing unique educational experiences for all ages, primarily through the medium of theatre. The organization specializes in living history programs and storytelling. For more information, visit www.edenvalleyenterprises.org.

Kendal at Oberlin is a continuing care retirement community with a full, engaging calendar of resident-coordinated events. Many of them, like the Third Thursday program series, are open to the public.

The Oberlin Heritage Center is accredited by the American Alliance of Museums and is widely recognized as a model small museum, historical society and historic preservation organization. For more on this Heritage Center program or other upcoming events, please call (440) 774-1700 or e-mail members@oberlinheritage.org.

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