

This year's Distinguished Citizen of the Year was born in Marion County, Ohio, and graduated from River Valley High School. For those who don't know River Valley High School, it was built on a radioactive waste disposal site. This fact alone explains a lot about our honored guest.

Upon graduating from high school, he attended the Marion branch of The Ohio State University for 2 years. But, there was a girl. She enrolled at David Lipscombe University, a small private university on outskirts of Nashville TN. Our Honoree left OSU and followed this girl to TN. There, he earned his Bachelor of Science degree in Mathematics from David Lipscombe University in 1974, and in the process, he lost the girl. He then started his post graduate work in mathematics at Vanderbilt University. Upon earning his Masters degree in Mathematics from Vanderbilt in 1978, he journeyed to Ohio and was offered a position in the mathematics department of Ohio Northern University in the fall of 1979.

For two years our Honoree was comfortably ensconced in the Village and at ONU when - well - there was a girl. After a whirl-wind courtship, the two were married and have been married for a short 33 years. They have a daughter Missy who lives in Columbus and is married to her husband Felix and they have a 4 year old daughter, Eva. A son, Bryan, a 2008 graduate of ONU and his wife Heather also a 2008 graduate of ONU live in Dayton, Ohio.

Our Honored Guest is an Associate Professor of Mathematics and Computer Science at ONU and to my knowledge is one of the few if not the only professor to hold a dual teaching position (in the math and computer science dept.) at the University. His love is computer science and he regularly expands his grasp of the subject by attending many seminars and workshops. His teaching interests are Programming, Software Engineering, Smart Client and Web Application Development, Theory of Computing and of course, Mathematics. In the 2012-2013 academic year, he earned the Henry Horltdt outstanding teacher award and held the Herbert F. Alter Chair in the College of Engineering for the 2013-2014 academic year. His hobby, along with writing code and software, is woodworking, at which he is very accomplished. A notable project is his building of flag cases which he donates to the families of all deceased veterans of VFW Post 9381.

I first met my friend twenty some years ago. Our kids were in 4-H together and our wives were advisors for the Ada All Americans 4-H club. We two guys were in charge of starting the bon-fire at one of the meetings. When I found out I would be spending an evening with a math professor, I wasn't too excited and mentioned to my wife that I probably wouldn't be attending. But, being married, I was given two options. I could either go - or - I could go. I went. By the end of the evening, I realized I had found a truly good friend.

I define a good friend as someone with which you can discuss any topic, large or small, without needing to walk on egg shells or worry about being politically correct; where you can speak honestly and not worry about being misunderstood. But most importantly, a friend allows you the ability to comfortably laugh - unconstrained - and this is something at which we both excel.

Our friendship has evolved into our two families becoming traveling companions. The four of us have traveled the eastern half of the United States and Canada by car and by train. And even though my friend doesn't like to fly, he and his wife did visit New Zealand several years ago and London, England, this past summer.

Over the years, my friend and I have done some neat things (our wives call them stupid things.) Punkin' Chunkin' comes to mind. When we first suggested to our wives that we were going to build a trebuchet and throw pumpkins, they said we were stupid. Well - I am here tonight to tell you that the two of us do stupid very very good!

We have been known to eat steak and ice cream (which we had given up for lent) at 12:01 a.m. at the end of the lenten season. We have cooked burgers on the grill during a blizzard. We have built a camp fire on the hottest day of the year so we had a place to go and cool off. Why do we do these things? I guess because we can. Fortunately for us, we have very understanding wives (we like to think they just love us that much).

The four of us also like good food, especially when it encompasses a pleasant view; ideally, the view should include a river, lake, bridge or rail road or any combination of the above; a patio is a bonus. And we are not particular about the accommodations. They can range from white table cloth establishments to Bozo's, a pulled pork eatery in Mason, TN.

Over the years, I have watched as he interacts with his students; not just in the classroom but on and off campus. He is very approachable and the students seem to feel at ease around him even to the extent of stopping at his home, where his wife makes certain they are always welcome. At least once a quarter/semester, he invites his students to his home for a cook-out, after which they sit on the deck (rain or shine) and converse until the wee hours of the morning. It is this interaction with his students that makes him such a good mentor. Several students, I have been told, after being off campus for a number of years, returned to campus and were delighted to see that the "Legendary Professor" was still on campus. Legendary Professor ??? I told you, these are not my words.

My friend has always been active in his neighborhood. For 28 years, he hosted a pig roast in his back yard. He would buy a mature hog and roast it for 24 hours over an open fire. Friends and family would stay up all night to tend the fire and fix the spit when ever it would break. And yes there were adult beverages available which would help keep us awake and attentive. Over 200 guest would descend on his back yard for the meal and his only requirement was to bring your appetite and your conversation.

He is an ardent supporter of veterans and is a member of the Men's Auxiliary of Ream McElroy VFW Post 9381.

He is also very active in the community. He has become the voice of the village, promoting it at every opportunity. He is the first to meet and greet a prospective new employer or just smooze with those businesses already in town. When he flies across the country to attend a computer seminar or a workshop, he always makes certain that those around him know about Ada and all it has to offer. As Mayor, he is in a unique position to promote the business and family attributes of the village. Under his mayorship, the village has grown and several new businesses have opened their doors. Several major projects have been completed or are nearing completion, **but** there are things that have happened during his mayorship that I find pleasure in reminding him. We have had a flood and a drought, an ice storm and a blizzard, a tornado and a derecho. About the only thing we haven't had is a tsunami and I hope he's not working on that. Should he campaign for another term as mayor, I have offered this slogan for his campaign: Disaster? Vote for (my friend.)

In summation, I would like to thank the individual who put my friend's name in nomination and congratulate the committee for making such a well deserved selection. So now - it is my pleasure and honor to introduce your 2014 Distinguished Citizen of the Year, my good friend Dave Retterer.