

## **James Bargar**

Appointed 1989

Jim has lived in Delaware County most of his life, after spending his childhood in the northern Ohio communities of Bucyrus, Findlay and Tiffin.

At the age of 17, Jim was happily enrolled in school, but knew that at the age of 18 he would be required to enter military service as a result of the World War II draft law. So he enlisted in the U.S. Navy and served in China. During his service, he took correspondence courses, earning enough credits to graduate (in absentia) with his Class of 1945 from the old Delaware Willis High School.

Returning home, Jim entered Ohio State University, earning a degree in landscape architecture in 1951. While at OSU, Jim married his high school sweetheart (in 1948); they soon began raising a family – four boys and two girls.

After graduation, Jim worked as a park planner for the Ohio State Parks Division; starting in the Northwest Ohio area, he eventually became supervisor for the entire state. In 1962, Jim was hired as Park Planner for the Columbus Metropolitan Park District (now MetroParks). He prepared plans and supervised construction on a number of parks, including Sharon Woods, Inniswood Gardens, Slate Run (including the Historic Farm), Highbanks, Chestnut Ridge, and others.

Jim retired in 1986, after 35 years of public service. Soon after, he heard about efforts to activate a park system in Delaware County, that had been dormant since its creation in 1974. The system had a Board of Commissioners, but no land, no money and no staff.

The time to start the park system had arrived, in order to preserve natural and historical areas in Delaware County. The county commissioners agreed to provide some funding, and when an opening for Park Commissioner appeared, Jim applied and was appointed.

Since 1989, Jim has volunteered his services to Preservation Parks, working hard to build the Park District, from scratch, into what it is today.