

Horst and Gigi Kraus

As immigrants from Germany in the 1960's it is no surprise that Horst and Gigi Kraus were comfortable with nudism. After retiring as a successful plumbing contractor from the outskirts of Chicago, Horst and Gigi spent their winters traveling around Florida. They visited and stayed at almost every, if not all, clubs that were affiliated with AANR (the American Association for Nude Recreation). They were interested in some of the properties that were available for purchase, looking for a retirement investment. However, the winter Florida weather was not conducive to Gigi's health. A longtime friend of the Kraus's mentioned that when they retired they wanted to do so at Shangri-La in Arizona, north of Phoenix. At the time they were not aware of this club because it was not in the guidebook. However, they took a trip and the rest, as they say, is history.

After purchasing Shangri-La in 1997, Horst and Gigi took the struggling club and its reputation and turned it into a destination for visitors from around the world. The club grew from a 50 RV park to the desert oasis it is today. The over 175 site resort now accommodates full time residents, RV travelers, and those looking to get away for a weekend or simply a day.

Horst and Gigi were awarded the Hal O'Neill Award in 1998 from AANR for outstanding public relations. Such an accolade was awarded from the publications that came out because the Kraus's opened the resort's pool during the summer; hosting a local swim camp for young children in the area who otherwise would not have learned how to swim and be safe in the water.

When Horst willingly made part of a local equestrian trail that cut through the resort property open to the public, he received the Glen Eden Award for the Most Outstanding Public Relations Event of the year from AANR.

Horst and Gigi's generosity extended to their guests and members, always putting their experience first. Shangri-La was presented with AANR's Erwin Koch Award for friendliness and cleanliness in 2006 after Horst and Gigi allowed guests and members use of their personal hot tub when the resort's common area one broke down unexpectedly.

Horst became personally involved in not only local and Arizona state politics but with the inside workings of AANR because he saw the benefit of the international organization. Horst was appointed as the membership and marketing committee chair for the western region. He was also elected as a director in 2003. Horst and Gigi were strong advocates for the AANR campaign 1-member-1-vote. They also cared about the future of nude recreation. Horst received a plaque from the Florida region for his "Parade of Dimes" fundraiser that secured funds for the youth camps. This was just one of the many initiatives that Horst and Gigi supported. The Kraus family has hosted many meetings and festivals, both on the regional and international level, at little or no cost to either organization.

Over the past 20 years, Horst and Gigi Kraus have made countless contributions to AANR West and to AANR. None of this would have been possible without the support from the entire Kraus-Faber family who are still heavily involved in day to day operations of Shangri-La Ranch, as well as holding [positions on the Western regional board and the international AANR board.

Horst and Gigi were inducted into the AANR-West Hall of Fame in August 2017.