

Michigan Trail Riders Assoc., Inc.
PO Box 72
Ovid, MI 48866



Proposed pavilion for Elk Hill Group Campground

Elk near Elk Hill Camp



www.mtra.org

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FEBRUARY 2019 – NEWSLETTER

2019 Ride Schedules & Other Important Dates

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| March 23, 2019..... | Annual Banquet & General Membership Meeting..... | Doherty Hotel, Clare |
| March 24, 2019..... | Board of Director Meeting..... | Doherty Hotel, Clare – 9:30 a.m. |
| May, 2019..... | Spring Work Bee..... | TBA |
| May 16 – 20, 2019..... | PROPOSED Blossom Ride..... | 5 days at the Luzerne Trail Camp |
| May 30 – June 9, 2019..... | PROPOSED 1 st June Ride (trophy ride)..... | Oscoda to Empire |
| June 14 – 29, 2019..... | PROPOSED 2 nd June Ride (trophy ride) | Empire to Oscoda |
| August 10 – 17, 2019..... | PROPOSED August Family Ride..... | South Branch to Luzerne |
| September 12 -22, 2019..... | PROPOSED September Ride | Mackinaw to Oscoda |
| October 5 – 12, 2019..... | PROPOSED October Color Ride..... | Cadillac to Rapid River |

Annual Banquet & General Membership Meeting March 23, 2019 – DOHERTY HOTEL, CLARE MICHIGAN

MTRA is headed back to Clare for the Annual Banquet in 2019 and the plans for a wonderful weekend are in the works. Room reservations can be made at (877) 236-4378. The Doherty Hotel is pet friendly at an additional cost of \$20.00 per night. McCarn Entertainment will once again serve as our DJ so be sure to pack your dancing boots. The buffet on Saturday evening will cost \$31.00 per person and will feature baked pork tenderloin, oven roasted chicken, southwestern sauté, herb roasted red potatoes, rice pilaf, California blend veggies, corn with bell peppers, the Doherty's famous salad and bread bar, fountain soft drinks, hot or iced tea, and decaf or regular coffee and double chocolate layer cake. You can order banquet tickets when you renew your membership (form included with this newsletter) or go online to the www.mtra.org website. MTRA has contracted with the Doherty for a minimum 100 meals at the banquet. The MTRA membership has been asking to go back to the Doherty, so get your reservations made. We need at least 100 people to pay for dinner. But let's party like it was the '80's when we had upwards of 150 people at our banquet. As always, dance only tickets will be \$10.00. There will be a silent auction the day of the banquet so begin collecting your donations to share with fellow members to benefit the Youth Riders' Fund. If anyone is interested in being a vendor to sell items the day of the banquet, please remember to request permission from the Board of Directors. Send your request to the MTRA office either by mail or email by the January Board Meeting so you can be approved. Tables will be available for your use at a cost of \$10.00 per table or bring your own. If you have any questions, call the MTRA Office at 989-723-1425 or send an email to mtra.office@gmail.com. Banquet reservations are due by March 10, 2019.

HORSEMEN'S CORRAL – MTRA is once again subscribing to the Horsemen's Corral Magazine. This magazine carries an article each month about MTRA. If you are interested in getting this "horsey" magazine in your mailbox each month, send \$10.00 to the MTRA office or bring it to the annual banquet. In order to put MTRA news in this magazine for free, we need a minimum of 10 Trail Riders to sign up and pay \$10.00 for the magazine.

BOARD BRIEFS:

- 1. INCREASE IN DAILY FEES:** The Board voted to increase the daily fee to \$12.00 if you pre-register and \$14.00 for drop in riders, effective immediately. Also, Riders, please be aware that the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (MDNR) is currently working on an equine Campground Policy. This will undoubtedly mean a rate increase to the State. When the MDNR puts the new policy in effect, MTRA may have to raise the daily fee again to cover these extra costs. The board would like you all to remember when signing up for a ride, you do get a lot of bang for your bucks. A bus ride back to camp when you move your rig, access to fresh water from a generator powered well, a trail boss who knows the area and is there to help you have a great and successful ride, and a marked trail to lead you from shore to shore. All monies collected after ride expenses are put into the general fund and used for camp and trail maintenance and development.

2. The MTRA Board of Directors wishes to thank Terry Meier for his years of service to the Association. Terry resigned at the January board meeting. His expertise in Robert's Rules of Order and his knowledge of the MTRA Bylaws will be missed.
3. After much discussion by the Board Members, the decision was made to not use the bus on the 2019 August Family Ride. With the few riders who use the bus in August, the Board felt it was not worth the added expense. Arrangements for transportation will be made at the nightly meeting before each days ride.
4. Progress is being made towards a pavilion at the Elk Hill Group Campground. The photo on the front of this newsletter is what the proposed pavilion will look like. MTRA wants to make it easier for the membership to make donations towards the pavilion. Donations can be mailed to the MTRA office at Post Office Box 72, Ovid, Michigan. Please write pavilion on your check so we know where to apply the donation.
5. Changing the format for the May Blossom Ride in 2018 was a huge success. Our members have asked that the " staycation" format continue. Please note that the ride dates on the front of the newsletter are **PROPOSED DATES. THESE PROPOSED DATES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE UNTIL APPROVED BY THE MDNR AND OUR PERMITS ARE RECEIVED. APPROVAL USUALLY COMES AFTER MID MARCH.**
6. **WORK BEES** – Jenny Duvall, again, wishes to thank the membership for their hard work at the River Road Trail Camp in May. A recap of the August ride was given by Davis and Fanslow. Even though the turnout was low for this work bee, they accomplished the goal of rebuilding the boardwalk over the dam just south of the Stoney Creek Campground. Davis has had very positive feedback from the MDNR about our work.
7. Plans for 2019 work bees were discussed. MTRA is still waiting for the go ahead from the MDNR on the new campground near Cheboygan. This needs to be a huge work bee as there is a lot of work to be done. The board is still hopeful that this campground can be used in September 2019. The board will let the membership know when a work weekend will occur. No project or date has been set for a May 2019 work bee as the board would prefer to leave plans and date open because of the Cheboygan Campground work bee. This does not mean you cannot help maintain the trail or a campground in the spring. If you have a favorite campground or trail, contact the board member in charge of that section and volunteer to help. Spring clean up on the trail is a huge undertaking for our board members.
8. Because we are unsure of the MDNR timetable for the Cheboygan Campground and our lease with Alice Arnett expires in August 2019, Davis has been in contact with Alice Arnett's family. Alice is the property owner of the Mullet Lake Camp. Alice's daughter has extended MTRA's lease so we may use the Mullet Lake Camp in September 2019 on our way from Lake Michigan at Mackinaw to Lake Huron at Oscoda. Thank you, Alice Arnett and her daughter, Deb Kidder, for your continued support of MTRA.
9. MTRA will be responsible for removing the picket poles, filling in the holes left by their removal and removing the well at the Mullet Lake Campground after the September ride. Please plan to

attend this late fall work bee. We will need lots of people with shovels to fill in the holes. Date TBA.

10. The Board decided not to continue with the program that gives an adult, who brings a child on the ride, a free ride. MTRA will continue with all youth, under the age of 18, ride free. Those rider fees will be paid from the Youth Rider Fund.

FAQ's...

1. Just to remind members and prospective members, it is not a requirement to sign-up for an entire MTRA ride. Many people jump in and out of rides due to other commitments. It is recommended that you sign-up for at least one (or more) day(s) of the ride that you intend to attend so that your name is on the roster. If you sign up for only one day, you can extend your ride for as many days as you wish at the \$12.00 per day rate. You can always “drop in” on a ride without pre-registering – as long as your membership is current (2019) – but the daily rate increases to \$14.00 per day due to the late fee. The Trail Boss will handle all of the details at the ride or you can call the MTRA Office for more clarification. Check out details on the 2019 Ride Registration Form which is posted on the www.mtra.org website. Ride Registrations Forms will be sent to all members who receive their newsletters via US mail with the February newsletter.
2. Don't forget to get your Recreation Passports for your vehicle license plates in 2019 so that you can be “legal” on our rides. Having a Recreation Passport is important since we use the MDNR boat launch next to the Lake Huron access point and they will be checking for the passports. Out-of-state members can purchase the Recreation Passport at the following web address or at any state campground – even at the boat launch: <http://media.state.mi.us/michiganestore/public/categorydisplay.aspx?categoryId=5>
3. Just a reminder – the MTRA does **NOT** share, sell or in any way distribute email addresses or phone numbers with anyone including our membership!! If someone contacts the MTRA office for information about a member, we contact that particular member and have them make contact with the inquirer. Our goal is to protect the privacy of our members!!
4. When you are riding along paved roads – wear BRIGHT shirts so that drivers will notice you!
5. Just a reminder as it is time for membership renewals. According to our bylaws, a family membership is defined as family members living in the same household, and be comprised of father/mother/son/daughter, and excludes children over the age of eighteen or married. If you want to bring your grandchildren on a ride, they are not covered under your membership and will need for their parents to have a membership. FYI, memberships make wonderful gifts for grandchildren who love our rides.
6. The MTRA Office email address is: mtra.office@gmail.com and the mailing address is: Post Office Box 72, Ovid, Michigan 48866. The office phone number is (989) 723-1425. Do not hesitate to contact the office if you have a question.
7. The MDNR is requiring that MTRA riders wear orange on our fall rides. If you are planning on a September or October ride in 2019, start planning now for an orange hat or vest or jacket or sweatshirt. It would not be a bad idea to put orange on your horse also. This is for your safety in the woods.
8. FYI, you may purchase orange apparel with the MTRA logo from our web store at www.mtrawebstore.com or click on the link on the left side of the home page on the MTRA website – www.mtra.org.
9. **Free Ride Days** earned from Work Bee credits can be used on any MTRA Ride. When you fill out your Ride Registration, either in paper or online, just pay for the days that you will need to pay for deducting your “free ride days” from the total number of days on the ride. For instance, if you will attend the Color Ride which is 9 days total and you have earned 4 free ride days from Work Bees in May and August, just pay for 5 days of the Color Ride and be sure to let us know that you are using your “free ride days” to cover the cost of the rest. Just be sure to sign-in at the Work Bees so that you get the credit for the days that you

worked. The MTRA Office maintains a database of who attends the Work Bees and when those days are credited to rides. If you have questions just give us a call at 989-723-1425.

10. Signing in at the work bees allows MTRA to report to the MDNR and the USFS in actual figures what our efforts support the trail riding equestrians in our state. In 2018, 63 MTRA members provided 1059 hours of volunteer hours. They also donated their tractors with loader buckets, flat bed trailers, chain saws, generators, stump grinders, York rakes, side by sides, skid steers, 4-wheelers, post hole diggers, rakes, shovels and other hand tools. Our members traveled more than 10,000 miles in their personal vehicles to get to the trails to volunteer. Congratulation to all the MTRA members who volunteered and thank you.

MTRA IS LOOKING FOR A HISTORIAN. IF YOU ARE INTERESTED IN VOLUNTEERING YOUR TIME TO KEEP THE HISTORICAL RECORDS OF MTRA PLEASE CONTACT THE MTRA OFFICE AT (989) 723-1425.

From the Presidents' desk

Greetings Fellow Trail Riders,

Old man winter has sunk his teeth in with a vengeance this year. I hope all are warm and doing well. Your Board of Directors continue to work hard to insure a great year is ahead of us. With the upcoming Annual Meeting and election of several board members, I recommend everyone read the description of our candidates (new and old), and most importantly vote. There are several projects scheduled for this year that require hard work from your board and much support from the membership.

With any luck and cooperation with the Michigan Department of Parks and Recreation our new Cheboygan Trail Camp will get started. In addition this is the last year of our lease to use the Mullet Lake Camp. The Arnett Family has been very generous in allowing us to use their property for the past 15 years. After the completion of the September ride, much help will be needed to disassemble the Mullet Lake Camp. This includes the removal of the picket poles, fill the holes from the picket poles, and the removal of the well. The poles and well elements will be used at the new camp. According to our agreement with the property owners this work needs to be completed prior to winter. We will provide more information when information becomes available.

At this time I would like to thank everyone for their support and help you have given me the last three years I served as your president. It's time for me to step down to allow some new people and new ideas that better serve the MTRA. I hope to see many of you on the rides, but please support your Board of Directors. The Board of Directors is only as good as the members they serve.

Sincerely,
Al Davis – MTRA President

MTRA Employment Opportunities... If you would like to share your skills with the association we all know and love, please submit a resume and/or letter of interest to: MTRA Employment Director, 13877 Homestead Rd., Beulah, MI 49617, 231-882-4212. The MTRA offers employment in the following areas:

Trail Boss - responsibilities include management of the trail rides including safety of persons and horses on those rides.....**Bus Driver** - responsibilities include all aspects of bus management and transport of riders between trail camps.....**Secretary** - responsibilities include management of the office of the MTRA including all communications, ride management duties and maintenance of files.....**Treasurer** - responsibilities include assistance to the Secretary, website, Forum and Facebook page management, financial duties and reports. All of these positions are part-time/seasonal jobs.

Facebook is one of the best ways to share ideas and activities as well as pictures about all of the Trail Rides, Work Bees and Annual Banquet. It is a wonderful medium of communication but there are times when I cannot attend Work Bees or Rides so we are at a loss for pictures. Here's where the membership comes in ... many members have shared many pictures of MTRA events and we have all thoroughly enjoyed those pictures and the comments we've shared. However, sometimes we cannot "share" pictures due to the specifics of your individual "privacy settings" on your Facebook posts. If you don't mind sharing your MTRA adventures, please go to "settings" and "privacy" and mark "Who can see my stuff?" as **PUBLIC** and then we can share your pictures, comments, etc. This setting does not need to be permanent as you can specify **PUBLIC** on individual posts. Please be advised that the only "official" MTRA Facebook page is called "**Michigan Trail Riders Association, Inc.**" which can be accessed from the www.mtra.org website if you do not have a Facebook page and just want to look at the pictures, etc. Thanks so much for allowing us to share your pictures and please let us know if we have missed something that you would like to share with the group!!!!

MTRA IS CURRENTLY LOOKING FOR A BUS DRIVER FOR THE 2019 RIDE SEASON. If you know someone who loves to camp and be around horses and horse people, has a safe driving record, is able to pass the requirements for a DOT CDL with air brakes and the "P" endorsement and can pass the DOT physical, that is the person or persons we are looking for. The Board would consider splitting this position for the right candidates. This is a paid position. Please contact Al Davis at (231) 884-4212 or the MTRA office at (989) 723-1425 if you know someone who is interested or if you have any questions.

