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## August 2014 – NEWSLETTER

### Ride Schedules & Other Important Dates for 2014 & 2015

August 9-16.....	August Family Ride.....	Goose Creek to Hopkins Creek
August 23-24.....	Work Bee.....	Garey Lake Trail Camp (picket poles, etc.).....
September 4-25.....	September Double Cross (trophies).....	Lake Huron to Lake Huron
October 4-12.....	Color Ride.....	Goose Creek to Cadillac
October 11.....	Board of Directors' Meeting.....	Cadillac Trail Camp 3:00 PM
January 3, 2015.....	Board of Directors' Meeting.....	Jay's Sporting Goods, Clare 10:00 AM
March 21, 2015.....	Annual Banquet & General Membership Meeting.....	Doherty Hotel, Clare 6:00 PM
March 22, 2015.....	Board of Directors' Meeting.....	Doherty Hotel, Clare 9:30 AM
2015 Trail Ride Calendars (tentative) to be announced soon..... (Patience is a virtue)		

### BOARD BRIEFS:

1. The MTRA blue bandanas were displayed and will be for sale at all Trail Rides thru the Trail Boss for \$5.00 each. Similar bandanas (different colors) were awarded the first 3 places at the Fun Horse Show on our Re-Dedication day in Kalkaska.
2. Please notice that the August Work Bee has been relocated to Garey Lake Trail Camp. Picket poles and trail work needs to be done. Bring your horses to ride after working. Free lunch will be provided on Saturday, August 23.
3. The Annual Trail Ride calendar committee presented their suggestions for 2015 and with just a bit of tweaking, the rides were approved as corrected. The Calendars will be submitted to the DNR for approval in September. Tentative dates will be announced in the December Newsletter and will be posted on the [www.mtra.org](http://www.mtra.org) website as soon as possible.
4. A new way to honor members and former members of the MTRA was presented by Pat Galloup. It will soon be possible to purchase brass nameplates of those you wish to honor which will then be posted on trail marker posts in the areas where they have helped maintain or worked on the Shore-to-Shore trail. More information to follow as this process gets developed.
5. Al Davis shared the generosity of the 1<sup>st</sup> June Ride participants with a check for \$538.73 dedicated to the Youth Riders' Fund from the sale of glow sticks and the "Match It" contest.
6. There's a new bus for the MTRA which will be used on the August Family Ride. More information to follow. Yes, it will be blue!!

### 50<sup>TH</sup> YEAR RE-DEDICATION OF THE SHORE-TO-SHORE TRAIL

What a blast! Over 135 horses in the Rocking Horse Arena, over 170 horses total in the parade thru Kalkaska, lots of fun by the Fun Show participants, mounted shooting demonstrations, super barbecue chicken dinners and wonderful ice cream. What more could we ask for? The weather was superb, the participants were friendly and cheerful and the celebration of the century was a resounding success. Special

thanks goes out to so many but we would really like to mention just a few: Speakers – Chuck Fanslow (MTRA), Anna Sylvester (MDNR) and Jan Wolfin (MTRA & MHC), Organizers – Pat Galloup and the entire MTRA board of directors, Flag carriers – Kim Ross, Rose Bos and Marsha Putnam, Wagon drivers and wagons and carts - NW Draft Horse & Mule Association, Kalkaska members of the Horse Project, the Rotary Club of Kalkaska and the list goes on... We hope you enjoyed the celebration as much as we did!

## **Youth Riders' Fund is Healthy...**

The Youth Riders' Fund has taken a beating in the past few years but due to the generosity of the MTRA members, we are back up to a balance of almost \$10,000 in the fund. This year has been very successful with the donation of \$1200.00 from the silent auction at the Annual Banquet, \$250.00 from Tractor Supply Company, \$600.00 of donations from glow sticks, returned cans and bottles and the Match-It competition on the 1<sup>st</sup> June Ride, \$588.00 from the Annual Kim & Steve Ross South Branch Ride, and \$1900.00 from the 2<sup>nd</sup> June Ride which included glow sticks, cans and bottles returned, the auction and Rent-a-Kid. And there have been many members who donated to the Youth Riders' Fund when they renewed their 2014 memberships as well as several members who donated the funds from their returned cans and bottles. Special thanks goes out to all of the generous folks who have supported the Youth Riders' Fund in the past and especially this year!!!! Those Youth Riders are our future!!!!

## **2014 Ride Statistics – thus far...**

The 1<sup>st</sup> June Riders began their adventure at Mullett Lake on May 29<sup>th</sup>. With 71 trophy hopefuls on the trail to/from Mackinaw the next morning, the skies were blue and the weather excellent. Only one problem – the Big Blue Bus was ailing! After jumping rigs and riding back to camp in trucks making multiple trips, the ride continued with only a few hiccups. Finally, the bus was “fixed” and 52 trophies were awarded at the end of the ride – Lake Huron at last! What an initiation for our new Trail Boss, Gale Gunders, who handled all of the adversities in stride!!!! Thanks to everyone for sharing their photos on Facebook.

Between the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> June Rides, there was a Camping With Your Horse Clinic at River Road Trail Camp with Kim Ross sharing tips and hints to all interested campers. There were only a few but those were given individual attention and all were greatly anticipating an MTRA ride in their futures.

The 2<sup>nd</sup> June Riders began their trip to/from Lake Huron on June 11<sup>th</sup>. Beginning their adventure, 112 trophy hopefuls enjoyed great weather (again) and then headed west toward their final goal of Lake Michigan. Luckily Big Blue was working – with lots of help and extra water provided by Barbie – so the rig jumping was back to normal. One of the highlights of this ride was the wedding between Randy Mayhew and Laney Pelton held at 4-Mile Trail Camp. Congratulations to you both!!!! Upon reaching Kalkaska, everyone rode into town for the great Re-Dedication of the Shore-to-Shore Trail and all of the fun associated with that occasion. We have pictures galore of all of the activities so be sure to check them out on Facebook. After the big day, 84 trophies were awarded to those successful riders and their trusty steeds as they finished this adventure in Empire.

It's been a great year thus far and we are looking forward to a fun filled August Family Ride, the September (single or double cross) Ride and the Color Ride. Hope to see you on the trails....

***MTRA Employment Opportunities...*** If you would like to share your skills with the association we all know and love, please send a resume to the MTRA Office. There are four positions which are filled on an annual basis: Trail Boss, Bus Driver, Secretary/Treasurer and Assistant Secretary/Treasurer. If you are interested in any of these positions, please call or email the office.

## SECRETARIAL NOTES...

1. For out-of-state riders - you can use the MTRA Office address as your destination on any travel papers since there are no addresses at the Trail Camps.
2. Don't forget to get your Recreation Passports for your vehicle license plates so that you can be "legal" on our rides. This issue is even more important since we have been given permission to use the DNR boat launch next to the Lake Huron access point and they will be checking those passports. Out-of-state members can purchase the Recreation Passport here or at any state campground – even at the boat launch:  
<http://media.state.mi.us/michiganstore/public/categorydisplay.aspx?categoryId=5>
3. The Michigan Shore-to-Shore Riding and Hiking Trail has been "created" on the **www.everytrail.com** website. Come on down and check us out. You'll find the trail and the "rig routes" listed with key words MTRA and Shore-to-Shore Trail. The trail sections that are finished have pictures. You do not need to have an account to access these files.
4. The Shore-to-Shore Trail is also listed on **www.opentrail.us** which is a new website designed specifically for horseback riders. You can find us in the Michigan section.
5. Plan to bring your horses to the Work Bees to enjoy the trails around the camps. We can't work ALL the time and the area around Garey Lake is spectacular!!
6. Just to clarify – after you register and pay for a ride, you can **cancel** 24 hours prior to the beginning of the ride to receive a "cancellation check". In order to receive a **refund** after the ride has begun, you must make a formal request to the Board of Directors which will be addressed at their next regularly scheduled meeting. Questions??? – call the MTRA Office!!
7. The Salsa Lady will be available for the September Ride during the following dates: September 4-10 and 19-25. She has a wonderful selection of food along the trail and dinners will be available.
8. Since the potluck dinners were such a roaring success on all the trophy rides in 2013 and June 2014, Joe Burrill has graciously volunteered to again sponsor the potluck dinners on Arrival Days prior to the first day's ride on all trophy rides. Don't forget to bring a dish to pass and your own table service and drink.
9. The Board of Directors has approved the option to earn one ride day per one Work Bee day to become policy. This policy originated in 2011 and will continue inclusive of the past two years. In order to earn "Credit" for days worked, you must sign-in at a **regularly scheduled MTRA Work Bee** and work all day. Call the MTRA Office if you have questions.
10. If you would like to receive the "approved" minutes from the Board of Director Meetings, please contact the MTRA Office and they will be sent "free" via email to any members' email address. If you would like them via US mail, please submit \$5.00 to cover printing and mailing costs for the year.
11. Don't forget those **Coggins** tests for this summer's rides. Coggins tests are "current" for a full year after the date the blood is drawn and tested so be sure that your Coggins tests are "up to date" before the rides on which you plan to participate. These tests, along with "travel papers" or health certificates are also required of all out-of-state horses. Bring these "papers" with you when you check in with the Trail Boss on the rides.
12. Just a reminder – the MTRA does **NOT** share, sell or in any way distribute email addresses or phone numbers with anyone!! 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!!
13. Just to clarify – **Cancellations** of rides must occur prior to the beginning of the ride (2-3 days preferably) to be able to receive a check. **Refunds** must be applied for and addressed by the Board of Directors. All ride days canceled after the beginning of the ride will be only considered for refund and must be approved or denied by the Board.
14. If you have any questions and/or concerns about your membership, the association, the workings of the MTRA Office or anything regarding the rides, etc., please do not hesitate to call or email the office. We'll do our best to help you.

This is just a reminder of the **Bus Ticket Criteria** as determined by the Board of Directors:

1. **Work Bee Attendance**
2. **Double Cross – Criss/Cross Trophy**
3. **Trophy Rider**
4. **Full payment of ride/date signed up**
5. **Group Riders**

### ***Special notice to September Ride participants - - -***

It will be possible for the “East-West” trophy winners to ride all the way to Lake Michigan on Sunday, Sept. 14. They will receive their trophies on that day or they can wait until Monday, Sept. 15 and ride to/from the lake and finish the ride then. The cost of the ride will be the same – 11 days = \$110 per person. The Double-Crossers may also ride to Lake Michigan and back to Garey Lake on Sunday and then use Monday as a layover day. For details and specifics, please talk to the Trail Boss and attend nightly pre-ride meetings!!!

### **SMILE – YOU’RE ON CANDID CAMERA...**

Some of you who attended the Re-Dedication of the trail in Kalkaska may have been interviewed or were on camera with several TV stations in attendance. One of those groups was the **RFD-TV** camera crew who were filming for the **Michigan Magazine** which is broadcast on  **DirecTV, Dish Network** and elsewhere. They got some great footage during the celebration, the parade and at the Rapid River Trail Camp. This crew is also going to attend one day of the August Family Ride – August 11<sup>th</sup> – where they will be getting more footage of riders on the trail between Goose Creek and Rapid River. So wear your smiles and make sure those horses are looking super nice because you may see yourselves on TV soon. Thanks to the crew and organizers for taking the extra time to see our group in action!!!

### **Bus questions... and answers...**

With the replacement of Big Blue comes many rumors. To squelch the rumors, we would like to share the following information. Big Blue is a 1987 Chevrolet bus with a gas engine and has served us very well since 1998 when it was purchased by the MTRA. However, reliability is the operative factor, and we have come to realize that it was time for an upgrade. Therefore, the Board of Directors approved purchase of a 2003 Thomas bus from the L’Anse Creuse School District with 100,000 miles on it. It has a Cummins diesel engine, a Freightliner chassis and is a 71 passenger with one more row of seats than the old bus. This raises the number of MTRA bus riders to 48 rather than the previous 44 per run. It is being painted and prepared for service as we read these words and will be ready for the August Family Ride for its maiden voyage into the history of MTRA. We’ll post lots of pictures of Bigger Blue on the [www.mtra.org](http://www.mtra.org) website and Facebook as soon as we can. What’s going to happen to Big Blue? She will be auctioned on e-bay. If you have any more questions, call the MTRA Office. We’ll do our best to keep you informed.

### **2015 ANNUAL BANQUET HEADED BACK TO CLARE**

Get your calendars out and be sure to block off the weekend of March 21-22, 2015 for the Annual Banquet and General Membership Meeting of the MTRA. The Doherty Hotel will be the headquarters this coming year and we all look forward to their gracious hospitality and wonderful food. We will have more information in the December Newsletters but you might want to call the Doherty at 989-386-1562 to make your reservations. Be sure to mention that you are with the MTRA to get the special group rate. Be there or be square!!! --- P.S. --- We need feedback on the Annual Banquets in the future. We are in the process of creating surveys to be distributed at the Trail Rides and a

“Survey Monkey” will be linked to the [www.mtra.org](http://www.mtra.org) website in the near future. A Survey Form will be included with this newsletter. Please take the time to give us your input regarding the Annual Banquets.

**Thanks so much to everyone who returned their “Ride feedback forms”!! Please keep them coming in or send an email to the Office with your comments. All forms/comments will be shared with the Board of Directors.**

### **Calling all worker “bees” –**

The Summer Work Bee coming up on August 23rd - 24th will be held at the Garey Lake Trail Camp and will be spent replacing picket poles, working on some low spots on the trail between Garey Lake and Lake Dubonnet as well as general camp clean-up. We are in serious need of workers who can bring and operate heavy equipment such as tractors w/loaders, 4-wheelers with dump boxes on the back, wheel barrows (which are not high tech but definitely heavy), etc. Lunch will be provided on Saturday! Don't forget that you will be eligible for a “free” ride day for every “work” day on an official Work Bee and this is as official as it gets!!!! So, please bring shovels, rakes, loppers, hammers, chain saws, wheel barrows, etc. and chairs for lunchtime. If you would be able to bring any of the heavier equipment, please call the MTRA Office or Al Davis (231-882-4212) so that we can confirm what can be accomplished. And don't forget to bring a horse or two to enjoy the great riding in the Garey Lake area. Camping is free and we can't work ALL the time!!!

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

This institution is operated under special use permit with the Huron-Manistee National Forest and the Michigan Department of Natural Resources.

## Annual Banquet Questionnaire

Please fill out the following questions, fold, tape and mail back to the MTRA Office (the address is on the back) or go to [www.mtra.org](http://www.mtra.org) or <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Michigan-Trail-Riders-Association-Inc/251022338302416> and complete the survey.

How often do you attend the annual banquet?

- Always I rarely miss it.
- Occasionally
- I have not attended.

Evaluate the following statements.

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Disagree Nor Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree
I would like the banquet combined with the March Stallion Expo.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
.I would like the banquet combined with an early May work-bee.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I would like the banquet left as is.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I would like to see the banquet in March but in a different format; cheaper, different activity etc.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

What are some of the reasons you attend and enjoy the Annual Banquet?

What are some ideas that you have to improve the Annual Banquet?

How long have you been a member?

- Over 30 years
- Over 15 years
- Over 5 years
- Under 5 years