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August 2016 – NEWSLETTER

2016 Ride Schedules & Other Important Dates

August 6-13.....	August Family Ride.....	Scheck's and Goose Creek
September 8-19.....	September Ride (trophy).....	Oscoda - Lake Huron to Lake Michigan (Mackinaw)
October 1-9.....	Color Ride.....	Goose Creek to Cadillac
October 2.....	Board of Director Meeting.....	Charlie's Truck Stop/4-Mile Rd..... Noon
January	Board of Director Meeting.....	Location and Time TBA
March 25-26..	Annual Banquet & General Membership Meeting...	Evergreen Resort/Cadillac.... Times TBA
March 26.....	Board of Director Meeting.....	Evergreen Resort/Cadillac..... 9:30 AM

BOARD BRIEFS:

1. Due to inclement weather, the meeting was moved to Charlie's Truck Stop at 4-Mile Road in Grayling. We greatly regret the change but safety is always our first concern.
2. A policy was created to avoid all national holidays for official MTRA Work Bees in the future. Members are welcome to bring horses to all Work Bees in the future but a reminder was given that heavy equipment will be used at most Work Bees and members are fully responsible for the risk to their horses.
3. The USFS will be working on the replacement of the Luzerne boardwalk. This is a number one priority due to the disrepair from many years of use. We have been informed that work will begin around September 1st and continue throughout the fall until the project is finished. A company out of Manistee has been awarded the contract for this monumental task. The MTRA responsibility will be minimal but clean-up of the area is a possibility.
4. Many thanks were extended to all participants of the South Branch Work Bee and the Back Country Horsemen, PR&B for their work at Elk Hill.
5. At the June Board of Director's meeting it was decided that a 10 day cut off for pre-registration was much more reasonable than the 30 day cut off. Therefore, the Board has enacted a new policy. The cutoff date for pre-registering for a ride will be 10 days prior to the start of the ride. This means your registration must be in the hands of the secretary, Jan Wolfin, or the treasurer, Chris Rayner, to lock in your \$10.00 per day ride fee. **THIS DOES NOT MEAN YOU CAN NOT ATTEND THE RIDE**, if you do not make the deadline. You may still go on an MTRA ride if your membership is current, but you will have to pay the trail boss \$12.50 per day late ride fee upon check in. This will allow the secretary time to mail the Ride Roster to the Trail Boss prior to the ride. The new cutoff dates are: August Ride – pre register by July 28th, September Ride – pre register by August 29th, October Ride – pre register by September 21st. Questions – call the office at 989-723-1425.
6. The 8th Edition of the **Michigan Trail Riders Association, Inc. Guide Book** was approved at the last Board meeting so Jan is working hard to publish copies to send in the "newbie" packets. There will be extra copies at the Trail Boss's rig and you can get your own copy upon request.

Special Thanks to all of the board members, employees and members who have helped to edit this edition. New maps are coming soon!!!!

7. The next Board of Director meeting is going to be held at Charlie's Truck Stop/4-Mile Rd. on Sunday, October 2nd at noon. Please feel free to attend and see your Board of Directors in action!

Annual Banquet & General Membership Meeting 2017 March 25th - Evergreen Resort, Cadillac

We are headed back to Cadillac for the Annual Banquet in 2017 and the plans for a wonderful weekend are in the works. There will be a few changes this year such as renovations in all of the rooms and another whole floor of rooms available in the main building. We will have eleven (11) pet-friendly rooms available so if you are bringing your pets, book ASAP. It will cost an additional \$25.00 per room to bring your pets. Be sure to call 231-775-9947 to book your room(s) since the web-based hotel booking sites will not be aware of our special rates. We will also have more room for the dance floor in 2017. There will be more information in the December newsletter along with an order form for tickets. Questions? - call the MTRA Office at 989-723-1425. See you there!!!

Life is short, ride your best horse first.....Cowboy logic!!!

HISTORY HAPPENINGS

By Sally Seaver, MTRA Historian

What a great year it's been for trail riding and there are still more rides left. It's always great when we get newbies on the ride as well as seeing families having so much fun with their kids. MTRA has always had kids on the rides, especially since they had June rides. There was one particular person who did not have a child on the ride but made sure the kids had fun. This person was known for initiating two activities for MTRA **that are still practiced to this day**. This person I can actually tell many stories about but I'll leave the two activities for your trivia question. Few could ride with this trail rider because this rider rode with some speed and was always riding ways no others could figure out! This rider was on the MTRA Board. This rider was **well known** for having whatever someone needed when others had problems whether on horseback or in camp. This rider had ridden out west and was an excellent rider. When members first started to ride the trails, they would ride for a bit then get off their horses and walk them. This would go on all day. This rider said that was not the way - at first some followed then eventually all members began to ride to camp without the constant getting off and walking. There is so much more to say of this rider and soon I'll have the whole story in the history books.

TRIVIA QUESTIONS:

1. Who is this amazing trail rider who did so much for MTRA?
2. Name the two activities that this rider started.

Answers on Page 5

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 work commitments, athletic team practices, family activities, 4-H fairs, etc. It is just 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 and your daily fee will be reserved at the \$10.00 per day rate. You can always "drop in" on a ride - as long as your membership is current (2016) - but the daily rate becomes \$12.50 per day due to the late fee. If you are already signed-up for that one day, you can then extend your ride to include more days and/or transfer that fee to a later ride which may be more convenient for you. 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 2016 Ride Registration Form which is posted on the

www.mtra.org website. Ride Registrations Forms are 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 2016 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 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!! 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. The MTRA Office now uses the email address: mtra.office@gmail.com. You should use that address for all official communications and that address will be used to distribute the Newsletters, send Ride Confirmations, etc.
5. The "In Memorium" section of the www.mtra.org website is up and running. Please check it out and help us out with more pictures, information and thoughts you would like to share.
6. Rig Routes are now on the www.mtra.org website linked to the 2016 Trail Rides page.
7. You can still get renewals or new subscriptions to Horsemen's Corral. Send \$10.00 to the office in Hale.
8. When you are riding along paved roads – wear BRIGHT shirts so that drivers will notice you!
9. We will have a Lunch Wagon on the east side of the state for the September Ride. Patty Alexander will meet riders on the Shore-to-Shore trail with water, pop, chips, hot dogs and grilled ham and cheese sandwiches (just like on the August Ride last year!!). Cookies will also be available!!

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. Don't forget – your "free ride days" will carry over from 2011 when this policy was begun so if you have questions as to whether you have any days still available for use on a ride of your choice, just give us a call at 989-723-1425.

NEW – NEW – NEW - At the June Board of Director's meeting Joe Burrill presented the idea of increasing MTRA membership by offering MTRA members a Free ride day for each new member they bring to the Association. One new member equals one ride day FREE – 10 new members equals an entire 10-day ride FREE!!! The Board voted to enact this policy for a year to see how things go. Talk to your friends. Encourage them to join MTRA and have them put your name or MTRA number on their membership application so you can be credited with a FREE ride day.

CAMPING WITH YOUR HORSE CLINIC

Kim Ross will once again hold her "Camping with Your Horse" clinic on the August Family Ride. This clinic will be held on August 7th at the Scheck's Trail Camp at 1:00 PM. This clinic is for newbies and for those who have been camping for years. Kim has a lot of really good advice and tips and input from veteran trail riders is always appreciated. Bring your lawn chair and pencil and paper for notes. This is always a fun time! Check with the Trail Boss for the location in camp.

ATTENTION TRAIL RIDERS ATTENDING THE SEPTEMBER RIDE: The MDNR is requiring our riders to display hunter orange while in the woods this September. What you wear is up to you. It can be an orange shirt or hat or orange streamers on your horse and person. Have fun with this and get creative. Let's see how orange MTRA can be in September.

From the Presidents' desk:

Hi Everyone,

Well, it's August and half of the MTRA rides have passed. For those of you that were unable to attend the May and June rides, we had a great time meeting approximately 40 new members. We had eleven states and Canada represented by those who attended the June rides. All of our newbies were very impressed with the shore-to-shore trail system, and stated they would recommend the ride to their friends, and promised to return.

At any time, anyone willing to help on camp and trail maintenance please feel free to contact any board member to volunteer your assistance. All help is greatly needed and appreciated.

I want to thank everyone for their generous donations to the Youth Riders Fund. Our children are what are needed to keep the MTRA's future secure. Hopefully many will be attending the August Family Ride.

I would like to thank all who completed and submitted a "Comment Sheet" aka "Feedback Form" on the rides. All Comment Sheets have been presented to the board members to see your positives and negatives. We do appreciate knowing your thoughts of what we need to maintain, as well as the areas needing improvement. Thank You Again, and please keep your thoughts coming. Al Davis, President MTRA

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, financial duties and reports. All of these positions are part-time/seasonal jobs.

Jan's ramblings - I want to thank MTRA for the beautiful "50 Crossings" trophy and belt buckle I received last September. I will cherish them always. Many people have asked what it takes to get this award, so I figured it out. It took me 38 years riding with MTRA to get the 50 crossings. We all know it is a hard trip and sometimes you do not make it all the way across. You go home disappointed but knowing you will be back next ride or next year. In those 38 years, I rode 10 different horses. What great memories I have of all 10 of these awesome mounts. The mileage for these rides is approximately 12,500 give or take. Our trail mileage and location has changed over the 38 years and of course there have been a few shortcuts and then there were the shortcuts that didn't work out so they became "longcuts"!!! And I have to laugh thinking about how many times I missed a trail turn because I was with such great people and we were talking or laughing or singing and missed the blue marker. In the beginning, we turned around and rode back to the trail. As I became more experienced in knowing where I was in the woods and especially knowing where the trail should be, I was able to just head off through the woods or on another trail or two track and come out back on the trail. When I added up all the days I rode I was surprised that it was 1 year, 4 months and 3 weeks in the saddle (or in my case, some of it was cart time). What a wonderful way to spend almost 17 months of my life – in the beautiful Michigan forest with great friends, both human and equine. Thank you MTRA for these great memories and opportunities.

South Branch Trail Camp Work Bee – Memorial Day Weekend

The South Branch Trail Camp has been logged due to the oak wilt and there was much work to be done to get it ready for the ride season. Just to mention a little bit that was done prior to the Work Bee, we placed 65 picket poles and ground 72 stumps in the group camping area so that rigs could easily get in and out. During the Work Bee the wood chipper worked endlessly Friday thru Sunday. Special thanks to all the folks who helped out at the Work Bee!! Al Fritzier and Bob Thornton removed over 200 trees from the South Branch to McKinley trail!!! Others who worked hard to get the camp ready for the ride season were: Jenny Duvall, Brian Hager, Judy Nelson, Al & Cindy Kendall, Janet Day, Jeff & Carlee Balzer, Don Kleyer, Helen Walters, Carol Hyzer, Bill Zettel, Dwight Parliament, Katie Fritzier and Darlene Frashier. Super thanks for the great pizzas donated by Eagle Ridge Golf Course/Barb Orefice, Taylor Orefice and Bonnie Perkins - YUM!!! This camp will need to be cleaned continuously for the next few years due to the volume of trees that were removed. Special thanks to the local folks and visitors who have helped clear camping sites and the shorter trails around that area. Also, special thanks to the organizations who have donated to the MTRA to help cover costs for this huge undertaking. The Tri-County Horseman's Association donated \$500 – that's a lot of help!!!

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 I am 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 I 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 me to share your pictures and please let me know if I have missed something that you would like to share with the group!!!! Happy Trails – chris

Trivia Answers:

1. Jane McGuinn MTRA #2
2. Jane was responsible for initiating these two activities:
 - a.) She started all the games for the kids to do while in camp.
 - b.) She started giving gag gifts to those who did funny things at the nightly meeting.This is as we know it, Awards Night on the last night of the trail ride.

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.