

Michigan Trail Riders ASSOCIATION, INC.

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February 2009 – NEWSLETTER

2009 RIDE SCHEDULE & Work Bees – Ride registration forms available soon!

May 1 - 3....*Work Bee* at McKinley Camp.....Need to replace one more boardwalk along the trail to South Branch
 May 9 – 17.....*Blossom Ride* Mullet Lake to Luzerne.....Pre-register by April 10
 May 22 - 24.....*Work Bee*South Branch Camp(Call Bill Zettel for details)
 May 29 – June 7..... *Oscoda to Empire*..... (Trophy ride)..... Pre-register by April 29
 June 13 – 28..... *Garey Lake to Oscoda* (Trophy ride)..... Pre-register by May 14
 August 14 - 16.....*Work Bee*.....to be determinedMore info to come
 Sept 11 - 20 *Oscoda to Empire*..... (Trophy ride).....Pre-register by August 12
 October 3 – 11 *Color Ride*Goose Creek to Cadillac..... Pre-register by September 4

This year we will be celebrating our 45th Anniversary of the June Rides. There will be special activities, special t-shirts, and special trophies so let's make it a year to remember!!!



2009 Annual Banquet & Meeting
 March 6 & 7
*Atrium Plaza Hotel & Conference Center
 Houghton Lake, MI*

Rooms are filling fast for the 2009 Annual Banquet to be held at the Atrium Plaza in Houghton Lake. This is the former Quality Inn (the same place as last year). We are looking forward to a great weekend with super food, kickin' music and lots of fun with all of our friends. Be sure to order your Banquet tickets or Dance Only tickets using the form included in this newsletter. You will also be able to vote for the location of next year's Banquet using the registration form (even if you do not attend the banquet this year). To reserve a room, call 989-422-5175 and be sure to tell them that you are a member of the MTRA. We are expecting representatives from the Michigan Department of Natural Resources and the US Forest Service who will be available to speak with the group. Let's make this the **BEST** Annual Meeting and Banquet yet! See you there!!!!

May 2009 Work Bee to be held at McKinley

We have another boardwalk to construct and a watering hole at the AuSable to work on so we'll need lots of help with shovels, tampers, rakes, hammers, etc. We'll have a couple of tractors to haul the heavy stuff. However, many hands make light work so we hope to see lots of members who can just help out in any way possible. If you would like to camp, we'll be staying along the powerlines to be close to the work area. A great lunch will be provided on Saturday. If you have any questions, contact Garry Randall at 989-539-6838. Don't miss out on a super opportunity to get to know more members and have a great time to boot! And - you get to assist in the maintenance of our great trail!!!

MHC Horse Expo slated for March 13, 14 & 15, 2009

All MTRA members are welcome to volunteer at the Horse Expo at MSU in East Lansing with the following slots needing to be filled: Friday – 12-3pm, 3-6pm, 6-9pm, Saturday – 9am-noon, 12-3pm, 3-7:30pm, Sunday – 9am-noon, and 12-3pm. Our booth is situated in the "Trails Room" and is open for the duration of the Expo. Therese and Dave Kline have graciously organized our display and handle all of the scheduling of volunteers. Thanks guys!!! Free entrance to the Expo is available to all workers.

All volunteers must remember that the booth cannot be left unattended. Also, the entrance passes **must** be returned to the check-in desk BEFORE the time for the next group of volunteers. If you are interested in helping out at this great event or have questions, please call Therese or Dave at 989-289-2334.



*May your belly never grumble,
may your heart never ache.
May your horse never stumble,
may your cinch never break!*

Cowboy blessing



Board Briefs:

1. At the Board of Directors' Meeting on January 17th it was decided to poll the membership regarding the location of the next Annual Banquet. At the bottom of the Annual Banquet/Meeting form there will be an opportunity to vote for a change of location for 2010. Please make your choice and return the reservation form – even though you may not be attending the Banquet/Meeting this year. **DO NOT include this form in the same envelope with your Board of Director ballot.** Please call 989-473-3205 (or email) if you have any questions.

2. Several of the Board Members attended a meeting with the Department of Natural Resources regarding the relocation of the Goose Creek Trail Camp. President Randall has addressed the content of this meeting in his letter to the membership in this Newsletter. If you have any further questions after you've read the details, please contact him, Ginger Vanderkelen or Al Davis.

3. The next Board Meeting will be Sunday morning, March 8th, after the Annual Banquet, at the Atrium Plaza at 9:30 AM. All of the Board Meetings are open to the membership if you would like to attend and watch your elected representatives at work.

4. Ernie Marsh resigned his Board seat effective January 2009. Garry Randall and all the Board heartily thank Ernie for his undying support of the MTRA citing his attendance at many Work Bees and Trail Rides. Thanks so much for all your time and effort!

5. Special thanks goes to B & D Classic sewn for their donation of \$475 from sales in 2008. Thus far they have donated \$6303 to the association.

6. Each Board Member is responsible for cleaning, marking and maintaining their section of our trail. We have a Work Bee scheduled at South Branch camp for Memorial Day weekend to help Bill Zettel in this endeavor. Terry Meier would also like some assistance with his North Spur section of trail which wasn't used last year. If anyone could help out the end of April/early May – before the Blossom Ride – please contact Terry at 989-330-6021 to volunteer.

2009 Membership Renewals are Due

Check your address label to see when your MTRA membership expires. If it has expired or will by April 1st, you may renew for 2009 with the enclosed form. Our memberships run from January 1st to December 31st each year. The cost of the annual membership is \$25.00 if submitted by March 31, 2009. **After that your membership will cost \$35.00.** Please include your email address if you would like to receive your newsletters and other notifications by email. Your new membership card will be sent through the US mail. If you have any questions, please contact Chris Rayner at the above phone number or email address.

Secretarial Notes

1. The Michigan Trail Horse database is growing. Many thanks to all of you who have submitted your information thus far. Please try to include the number which is associated with your horse included with your registration. If there is no number on your form I will use your MTRA number. Thanks again!!!
2. Please be sure to let me know if you are unable to attend/complete a ride or the banquet so that you can request a refund. Unless you **REQUEST** that refund within 30 days of the end of the ride/banquet I will assume you want to donate the money to the association. I cannot just issue a check if you don't attend or leave early from a ride. Help me keep my files straight and send those requests by email, phone call or US mail.
3. When registering for a ride, each person attending must fill out a separate form. This is **DIFFERENT!** Each person must fill out a separate form so that we will have emergency contact information for everyone. Each form/person will also need to include the number of the rig you will be staying in so that we can find you in an emergency.
4. Another change – you may send in your registrations for all of the rides you wish to attend at the same time. You do not need to write separate checks or use different ride registration forms unless you prefer to do it that way.
5. Please do not hesitate to call or email me with questions or concerns! I'm here to serve this organization and keep things running smoothly. Let me know if you have any ideas or suggestions on how we can best work together to accomplish this task.

Happy Trails - chris

Annual Elections

Included in this newsletter is a sheet describing the candidates for the open Board of Director seats for 2009. Five of the present Board Members are up for re-election. **Ernie Marsh**, after 12 years on the Board has decided to step aside effective at the January Board Meeting. **Kathy Moss, Ron Pouncey, Ginger Vanderkelen and Bill Zettel** would all like to be considered for another 3-year term. Adding their names to the list of candidates are **Joe Burrill, Chuck Fanslow and Therese Kline**. Please read all of their comments and circle your choices on the ballot included on the back of the sheet. You may bring your ballot with you to the Annual Banquet. If you prefer you may send the ballot in to the MTRA Office with your **MTRA number** on the **front** of the envelope with the words **ABSENTEE BALLOT**. **DO NOT** send in a ballot with your Banquet registration or membership renewal unless it is in a *separate envelope and marked as specified above!* It will not be counted unless you follow these directions. You **MUST** be a current (2009) member of the MTRA to be able to vote. All ballots will be counted at the Annual Meeting.

From the President's desk:

WOW 2009 ALREADY! More changes are coming.

It has been ordered by the DNR that the Goose Creek Equestrian Campground be relocated. The camp will be divided into two separate camps; one for group camping only and one for pay the post.

The DNR wants to move the river crossing to a bridge south of County Road 612. The camps will most likely be located north of CR-612 and west of the Manistee River.

The MTRA will not be allowed to help in building the new camps. This will add a couple of miles to the Shore-to-Shore trail system but it will not interfere with our rides. This will be done to eliminate all horse usage of the river. This might happen in 2010, however, a grant is needed which depends on the economic stimulus package proposed by President Obama being awarded. We'll keep you posted on further developments.

HAPPY TRAILS!

Garry

Youth Riders' Fund Update

This past summer was the first year of utilization of the Youth Riders' Fund. Established late in the "Ride" season of 2007, through the generous support of the members of the MTRA, the Fund began the 2008-9 Fiscal Year with over \$7000. During the 2008 rides there was a total of 60 Youth Riders who participated in this program. Of those 60 riders 679 days were subsidized by this endeavor using over \$2500 from the Fund. Through the returnable can/bottle drives, sale of glo sticks, rent-a-kid activity, equipment auctions, and generous donations of our members combining for over \$5000, the Youth Riders' Fund is approaching a \$10,000 balance at the end of 2008. What a profound statement of our support of the Youth Riders and our combined future for the MTRA. Congratulations and special thanks go out to Al and Diana Davis who have promoted this project from the beginning along with Kim and Steve Ross who donated all of the Glo Sticks and were also instrumental in starting this Fund. Also a big thanks goes to Joe Burrill for all of his work returning the cans/bottles and unending encouragement. Of course, this project could not have been so successful without the gracious support - both financially and emotionally - from all of the MTRA members. Let's make it "So Fine in 09"!!



Double cross in the fog! Hey - we found Lake Huron!!!!



**LOOK AT
THOSE
COLORS!**

This institution is an equal opportunity provider.

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