

Michigan
Trail Riders ASSOCIATION, INC.

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February 2016 – NEWSLETTER

2016 Ride Schedules & Other Important Dates

April 2 nd – 3 rdAnnual Banquet & General Membership Meeting.....	Evergreen Resort, Cadillac
May ??????	.....Work Bee.....	Luzerne or 4-Mile Trail Camps.....Times TBA
May 13-22	.....Blossom Ride.....	Garey Lake to Cadillac
June 2-13	.....1 st June Ride (trophy).....	Empire - Lake Michigan to Oscoda - Lake Huron
June 17-July 2	.....2 nd June Ride (trophy).....	Oscoda - Lake Huron to Empire - Lake Michigan
August 27-28	.....Work Bee.....	4-Mile Trail Camp (planting picket poles, etc).....Times TBA
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

BOARD BRIEFS:

1. The USFS has announced that they have approved the funding for the replacement of the Luzerne boardwalk. This is a number one priority due to the disrepair from many years of use. The MTRA responsibility will be removal of the old boardwalk and repair of the east end of the bridge. Much work and many man-hours will be involved. Many of you have expressed interest in helping out. Please stay tuned for further updates as the times and dates will be announced as soon as defined.
2. Due to unforeseen circumstances, Angie Marsh has resigned as secretary for the MTRA. At the Board of Director meeting January 9th, Jan Wolfen was offered the job as the new secretary and will be taking over that position as soon as possible. Chris Rayner will be filling in during the training/transition period and all correspondence will go thru the former MTRA Office until further notice.
3. The mentor program was not well supported later in the ride season 2015. The 2nd June Riders greatly appreciated this option for assistance. If you would like to see this program continued, please contact your board members and express your wishes. All board members' names, phone numbers and email addresses are listed on the "Trail Assignments for 2015" sheet which was sent to all members and is posted on the www.mtra.org website.
4. The next Board of Director meeting is going to be held at the Evergreen Resort on April 3rd at 9:30 AM. Please feel free to attend and see your Board of Directors in action!

Annual Banquet & General Membership Meeting 2016 – April 2nd Evergreen Resort, Cadillac

Don't forget to make arrangements for your room at the Evergreen Resort and purchase your tickets for the Annual Banquet. We will be held to a maximum number of 150 for the banquet so if you do not have reservations for the dinner you may not get a ticket. The ticket order form is posted on the www.mtra.org website as well as attached to the 2016 Membership Renewal form. You do not have to attend the banquet to

attend the General Membership Meeting directly following the banquet. Please vote at the meeting or return your absentee ballots for your choices of board members. You will receive a list of candidates as well as a ballot with your membership card for 2016. If you have any questions, please call the MTRA Office at 989-473-3205. See you there!!!

HISTORY HAPPENINGS

By Sally Seaver, MTRA Historian

During winter it's a good time to plan your riding season. As you plan your rides and make your list of things to take, make sure your cameras or cell phones are included for picture taking. I would like to remind all members that I have a **Membership Book**. In this book I attempt to collect a picture of every member. Please plan to take time in good weather to take a pic or search your archive of a pic of yourselves to send to me. I put the pics in alphabetical order of last names so it can't be of a group unless you choose to do a family group picture. It's for ALL members whether you ride or not. For riders it's nice to have a pic with you on your horse or standing with your horse. When you send them, please add your MTRA number and if your horse is in the pic, add the name and breed of your horse. You can send your pics by snail mail or email it to me.

Speaking of winter, there has been one brave trail rider who attempted to ride shore-to-shore on his own in the winter. It's an interesting story you can read in the MTRA history book. After trying this once and failing, he educated himself reading survival books and researching equipment then tried again. This rider had a packhorse and started his ride in Empire. Another rider attempted to go with him but left after the second day in Mud Lake because the conditions were too severe. He dealt with ice on the horse blankets and on the trails, he encountered sleet and rain soaking his mattress and clothes, and he endured two snowstorms along with several other challenges. He made it to South Branch camp and his packhorse became lame. Rather than having his friends help with his gear to get to Lake Huron, he quit the ride because his son was in the service and was arriving from the Netherlands. He was extremely anxious to see his son and didn't want to miss one day with him. Still he conquered what no one else has. He successfully rode from **EMPIRE TO SOUTH BRANCH in the worst of WINTER - 200 MILES!**

TRIVIA QUESTIONS

1. Who was this brave trail rider who rode the wintery trails?
2. What other contributions has this rider made to MTRA?

Answers on page 4

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 will be posted soon 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. When you are riding along paved roads – wear BRIGHT shirts so that drivers will notice you!!
6. Please update your membership information with your **preferred** phone number – no matter if cell or land line. Also, please make sure that the email address that you send us is updated as well.

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, 2475 McNamara Rd., Gladwin, MI 48624, 989-435-9224.

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.

Locked Trail Camps are a necessary evil on the Shore-to-Shore Riding and Hiking Trail considering the expanse of the trail and the territory in which it is located. Please respect the locks on these camps and do not expect to enter these camps prior to the MTRA arrival date because this could jeopardize our use of these camps in the future. This warning also holds true for the well connection boxes since they are locked due to minimum requirements of 5000 watt generators to run the wells. The locked camps are “group” only camps where there are no pitcher pumps – only generator run water access. They are: Cadillac Trail Camp (DNR), River Road Trail Camp (USFS), Johnson Crossing Trail Camp (DNR) and Mullett Lake Trail Camp (Private). Some of the Trail Camps have open camping access as well as locked “group only” areas. Those camps are: Elk Hill (DNR), South Branch (USFS) and Walsh Road Trail Camp (DNR). The Garey Lake Trail Camp has a “group” only area on top of the hill but the well there is generator driven and that connection box is locked. If you have any questions regarding this issue, please contact the MTRA Office for further clarification.

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 989-345-3225.

Welcome to the new Michigan Trail Riders Association Forum...aka MTRA

Forum!! Please feel free to post announcements, pictures, items for sale, etc. We would greatly appreciate your consideration of other members and prefer that you treat this forum as if your children are reading it. Sarcasm, swearing and inappropriate responses and pictures are not acceptable. Encouragement is always welcome. There will be a computer and training sessions during the Saturday (April 2nd) prior to the Annual Banquet. This project is a learning experience, so if you have suggestions, please contact me at raynechris@gmail.com. Thanks and enjoy!!

Trivia Answers:

1. Bill Plamondon MTRA #630!
2. Bill was on the MTRA Board from the early 80's to the mid 90's. During that time Bill played a key role in getting back the use of Mayhem Swamp when it's declining swamp conditions made it unusable and he played a key role in getting the Garey Lake trail and the Hopkins Creek trail.

FYI – Jan Wolfin will be holding a **Camping With Your Horse Clinic** on Saturday, April 30th, at Levi's Training and Boarding Center in West Branch. Come on down, share ideas and get some tips.

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.