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April 2018 – NEWSLETTER

2018 Ride Schedules & Other Important Dates

May 4-5-6, 2018.....	Work Bee.....	South Branch Trail Camp
May 17-21, 2018.....	Blossom Ride.....	Luzerne Trail Camp
May 31 – June 10, 2018.....	1 st June Ride (Trophy).....	Oscoda to Empire
June 15 – 30, 2018.....	2 nd June Ride (trophy).....	Empire to Oscoda
June 23, 2018.....	BOD Meeting, Charlie’s Country Corner, Grayling.....	2:30 p.m.
August 24-25-26, 2018.....	Work Bee.....	TBA
August 11 – 19, 2018.....	August Family Ride.....	Scheck’s Trail Camp to Goose Creek Trail Camp
September 7 – 30, 2018.....	Kriss Cross (Trophy X 2).....	Mackinaw to Cadillac, Empire to Oscoda
October 6 – 14, 2018.....	Color Ride.....	Goose Creek Trail Camp to Hopkins Creek Trail Camp
October 7, 2018.....	BOD Meeting, Charlie’s Country Corner, Grayling.....	NOON

Board Briefs:

1. Congratulations to Jeff Balzer, Joe Burrill, Jimmy Corlew, Kathy Moss and Kim Ross for their re-election to the MTRA Board of Directors. Many thanks to Robert Martin for his efforts in running for the board. Thanks to everyone who voted at the General Membership meeting as well as all of the absentee ballots!!!
2. Workers are in great demand this year for the May 4th, 5th and 6th work bee. MTRA will be camping at the South Branch Trail Camp. Workers will be divided in the mornings. One crew will stay at South Branch while another crew will be sent to River Road Camp. Both camps are in need of brushing out of campsites and under picket poles, stump grinding, and a general clean up. MTRA will have chippers and stump grinders at this work bee. We will be in need of tractors with york rakes, shovels, hand rakes, post hole diggers, nippers, loppers, chain saws, 4 wheelers and side by sides, **Remember** – you can earn a **free ride day** for each Work Bee day's participation. Be sure to sign the hold harmless forms and the sign in sheet every day that you work.
3. Welcome back to our Trail Boss – Gale Gunders, our Bus Driver – Barb Crampton, our Treasurer – Mindy Ellis and our Secretary – Jan Wolfen. Employment agreements were signed in March and MTRA is ready for another great year.
4. The MTRA Board member, Kim Ross, MTRA Treasurer, Mindy Ellis and MTRA member Tracy Evans are working hard to put a web store together so MTRA members can purchase MTRA clothing. Keep track of the MTRA website and facebook page. As soon as the web store is up and running, an announcement with the web address will be put on these two sites.
5. Chris Rayner and Sherri Jacobs will be in charge of youth activities on the August Family Ride. For more information, be sure to read Chris Rayner's article later in this newsletter.
6. Equine Affaire was a hit again in 2018. Kim Ross, Don and Mindy Ellis, Samantha Lilly, John Pavelock, Karen Palmer, Lon and Cindy Platte and Kari Bateson spent the 4 day weekend manning the booth to greet old friends and make new ones for MTRA. Thank you to all who worked the booth.
7. In an effort to encourage youth riders on all MTRA rides, the Board has voted to waive the daily fee for any adult that brings a child on ANY of the MTRA rides. Remember, if the youth rider is not your child, his/her parents will need an MTRA membership.
8. Lynn Gosdzinski and Jimmy Corlew are teaming up to do some much needed trail maintenance the weekend of May 11th, 12th and 13th. They will be camping at Rapid River Trail Camp (Kalkaska) and cleaning trail from Scheck's to Rapid River to Goose Creek. They could use your help. Bring horses, chain saws, nippers, and loppers for the weekend. Do some riding, work on trails, enjoy the nightly campfires. Back Country Horsemen-Michigan will be hosting a work bee at Elk Hill Camp on May May 18th, 19th and 20th. BCH-MI will be cleaning up the Elk Hill Camp and doing trail maintenance. If you are interested in either of these work bees and would like more information, call the MTRA office.
9. MTRA apologizes to all those who have been having trouble with the web site (www.mtra.org). There was a coding problem and thanks to our web hosts, Mindy Ellis and Samantha Lilly, the problem has been fixed. Check out the web site often, as new information is being posted.
10. Be sure to mark your calendar for August 24th, 25th and 26th. These are the dates for the August work bee. Location and project will be announced at a later date.
11. There has been some confusion about ride refunds. All refund requests must be made in writing – either e mail or snail mail. If the refund request is made before the ride starts, all monies will be refunded or applied to a later ride. If the refund request is made after the ride starts, it must be received by the MTRA office no more than 30 days after the

end of the designated ride. It should include the reason for missing the ride. All ride refund requests will then be addressed, on an individual basis, at the next Board meeting. If you have any questions, please contact the MTRA office at (989) 723-1425.

12. **Attention May Blossom Riders.** On Saturday May 19th, MTRA will be having a pot luck. MTRA has made arrangements to have a roasted pig. Bring a dish to pass, your chair, your table service, your drink and some money to the Trail Boss Rig at 4:00 in the afternoon. Donations to pay for the pig will be greatly appreciated.

HISTORY HAPPENINGS

Sadly, we do not have History Happenings because we do not have a historian. Due to personal obligations, Sally Sever resigned as MTRA historian. Thank you, Sally, for your years of service. We have enjoyed your articles in the newsletter and the exhibit you made for the museum in Empire. If you would like to volunteer to be the next MTRA historian please call President, Al Davis.

FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK:

Hello Trail Riders – here we go again for another year of great trail riding. May is going to start us off with some massive challenges beginning with the Work Bee based at South Branch Trail Camp the first weekend of May. The more the merrier will be welcomed because many hands make light work. We hope to see as many workers there as possible. Bring hand tools, chain saws, loppers, shovels, rakes are examples of some of the tools needed. Two weeks after this activity will be our Blossom Ride which will be held at Luzerne Trail Camp for all five nights. Please join us for a lot of fun and great riding.

Our 2018 Annual Banquet and meetings seemed to be enjoyed by all who attended. It was discussed at the Board Meeting that various options would be explored concerning location and format for the 2019 Annual Banquet. All suggestions are welcome. Special Thanks goes out to Stuart Neils for his presentation about the mapping of the Shore to Shore Trail. Electronic maps will be available thru the michigan.org/trails website when he completes his project. Thanks to all those individuals who showed interest in running for the Board of Directors. Congratulations to the winners. The following members will be returning as employees who have served the MTRA: Barb Crampton, Mindy Ellis, Gale Gunders and Jan Wolfin.

The Board is currently working with the Federal Forest Service to obtain a Federal Grant to be used for improvements to the trails and trail camps on Forest Service land. This is a mammoth project involving many people. It is hopeful that the MTRA membership will support these endeavors in volunteering their time and effort in making these improvements happen.

Thanks for all the support you have given me, and the Board, and we hope to see you this ride season.

Sincerely, Al Davis, MTRA President

DEADLINES:

Ride reservation deadlines are important because our trail boss, Gale Gunders, needs to have the ride roster, copies of ride registrations, hold harmless forms and other paperwork when he arrives at the ride. These items are mailed to Gale. According to the USPS, it could take a week for a package to get from the post office in Ovid to Gale's home. Therefore, the deadline for having your ride reservation into the MTRA office is 10 days before the ride. If you register for only one day, you may extend your stay when you check in with Gale at the \$10.00 per day pre registration fee. REMEMBER, if you do not get your reservation in by 10 days prior to the ride, you still may drop in and attend the ride. Your 2018 membership must be current and you will need to register with the trail boss and pay \$12.50 per day. Ride deadlines are as follows:

May Blossom Ride-----May 7, 2018
1st June Trophy Ride-----May 21, 2018
2nd June Trophy Ride-----June 5, 2018
August Family Ride-----August 1, 2018
September Trophy Ride X 2-----August 27, 2018
October Color Ride-----September 26, 2018

If you have questions, please contact the MTRA office at (989) 723-1425 or mtra.office@gmail.com.

The numbers are in. In 2017 MTRA members donated 1,920 hours of labor to help maintain the blue dot Michigan Riding and Hiking Trail. They drove a total of 9,380 miles in their personal vehicles to reach the trails and camps. They donated use of their tractors, York rakes, brush hogs, chain saws, stump grinders, side by sides, 4 wheelers, skid steer, rakes, shovels, loppers, nippers and other assorted hand tools. MTRA also rented stump grinders and hired a pole pounder with operator for picket poles. The total value of this effort comes to \$159,478.36! WAY TO GO MTRA. Thank you to Connie Kleinhardt and Deanna Stamp for helping me compile these numbers. These numbers were presented to the Equine Trails Subcommittee. It is important that MTRA keep records of our volunteer hours. Be sure you sign in each day at the work bees and BOD members keep track of your work on your section of trail. At the end of the year, these numbers show MDNR and USFS what MTRA contributes to the equestrian trail system of Michigan.

WORKBEE DATES: MAY 4 – 6 AT SOUTH BRANCH TRAIL CAMP

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 “work bee free ride days” to cover the cost of the rest. 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.

FAQ's...

1. Don't forget to get your Recreation Passports for your vehicle license plates in 2018 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>
2. 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.
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. MTRA's mailing address is Post Office Box 72, Ovid, Michigan 48866.
6. Phone number for MTRA Office is (989) 723-1425.

2018 August Family Ride Proposed Activities

Presented by Sherri Jacobs & Chris Rayner

Depending on weather, we would like to advertise the following activities by publishing a list to be distributed when members check-in to the ride. We will also have a bell, triangle, whistle or something of that nature to let people know when the activities are beginning.

At Scheck's – BYOT,K,C (bring your own tube, kayak or canoe)

At Goose Creek – rent or bring your own T,K,C (see above)

Horse painting, Horse washing, Fire building (with one match), Relays on horseback with obstacles, Scavenger hunt, Cheetoh warriors, Stick horse race, Card games/tournament, Make fly whisks, Walking tacos, Crepes over the campfire, Campfire cooking – to be determined, Homemade ice cream, Campfire apple pies, Rope halter making, Arrowhead name tags, Bear bells, and more. If someone would like to demonstrate or direct an activity, please contact Sherri or Chris. We are always open to suggestions!!!

As stated, these activities will depend on weather and length of ride days. See you all in August!!

FUN – FUN – FUN- ON THE AUGUST FAMILY RIDE