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August 2015 – NEWSLETTER

Ride Schedules & Other Important Dates

August 8-9, 2015.....	Work Bee (replace Wilbur Creek Bridge, camp work).....	South Branch Trail Camp
August 8-15, 2015.....	Family Ride.....	South Branch to 4-Mile
September 5-28, 2015... ..	Criss-Cross Ride (Trophy+).....	Mackinaw to Cadillac, Empire to Oscoda
October 3-11, 2015.....	Color Ride.....	Stoney Creek to Walsh Rd.
October 10, 2015.....	Board of Director Meeting.....	Walsh Rd. Trail Camp.....Noon
January 9, 2016.....	Board of Director Meeting.....	Jay's Sporting Goods, Clare.....10:00 AM
March 11-13, 2016.....	Michigan Horse Council Expo.....	East Lansing, MSU Pavilion
March 26, 2016.....	Annual Banquet & General Membership Meeting.....	Evergreen Resort, Cadillac

Board Briefs:

1. Lots of positive feedback was received regarding the re-instatement of the Blossom Ride. Thanks to all who attended and donated funds to support the continuation of this ride. Don't forget to support the August Family Ride coming up.
2. The Youth Board Member policy was adopted and will begin in 2016. Interested applicants will need to apply prior to February 1st so that their applications may be reviewed with recommendations made by the March Board meeting.
3. Workers are in great demand for this year due to the projects planned. We will be replacing the Wilbur Creek Bridge just north of Curtisville and need lots of help!!! Check out the specifics and make plans to attend the Work Bee August 8-9th to help out. We will be camping at South Branch Trail Camp. **Remember** – you can earn a **free ride day** for each Work Bee day's participation.
4. All Board members are encouraged to attend at least one day of a Work Bee each year as well as attend MTRA rides and activities when possible.
5. There will be a sign-up sheet at the Trail Boss rig if you would like to be a mentor or would like to be assisted by a mentor. Newbies are encouraged to sign-up to be assisted. Those who took advantage of this new program at the 2nd June Ride were greatly appreciative of the extra support.
6. Since everyone on the trophy rides greatly enjoys the potluck dinners, please feel free to help out with monetary donations. There will be a "can" for your generosity on the food table.
7. Another donation will be greatly appreciated at the September Ride potluck. A local person along the trail between Mackinaw and Cheboygan always has water out and available for the horses on that lengthy first day of the ride. He generously donates his time and efforts to our thirsty mounts so we like to support his endeavors. There will be a "can" available at the potluck for this donation as well.
8. The next Board of Director meeting is going to be held in Walsh Road Trail Camp on October 10, 2015 beginning at Noon. Please feel free to attend and see your Board of Directors in action!

August Work Bee needs WORKERS!!!

A few years ago – 2012 – we replaced a boardwalk thru the Mayhem Swamp reinforcing lots of trail and redoing the boardwalk over the creek in that area. We had a wonderful crew with lots of workers accomplishing this task in short order!! This year the US Forest Service and the Michigan DNR have joined forces assisting financially to replace the bridge over Wilbur Creek just north of Curtisville between South Branch and McKinley Trail Camps. Much like the Mayhem Swamp Work Bee, there will be lots of labor needed since the location is not easily accessible with large equipment. Ron Anderson will be coordinating efforts for equipment and material storage so if you have questions about what to bring “equipment wise” please call Ron at 989-728-7250. The work will begin at 9:00 AM sharp on Saturday (August 8th) with lunch being provided by the MTRA around noon. If you would like to donate goodies to share, please call Chris at 989-473-3205. Please feel free to bring your horses to the South Branch Trail Camp as the August Family Ride will be beginning that weekend and there will be time in the evenings to ride and enjoy. Camping is free for Work Bee workers!!! PLEASE, PLEASE, PLEASE make an extra effort to help out at this Work Bee – it will be fun and “many hands make light work”!!!

“Do the right thing. It will gratify some people and astonish the rest.”
~ Mark Twain

Trail Warrior Award – Ron Wolfin

Please check out the April 2015 issue of TrailBLAZER Magazine in which this MTRA member was honored as Trail Warrior. He was nominated by the MTRA for his dedication and endless hours of work on the trails, Work Bees, etc. Congratulations goes out to Ron – we are proud to honor you and be a big part of your horseback riding passion!!

Tidbits from Angie Marsh:

As I’ve muddled through a good bit of the 2015 Ride Season I have some things to share and a few things to apologize for. Apologies: There were typos in several e-mails, I misspelled a few names, and sometimes my calls or e-mails were to ask a silly question. Shares: Kudos to all you grandparents who bring your grandchildren along on a Ride. Remember the child’s family adult must be a current member; this is a liability issue that we cannot get around. I have processed close to 40 new Memberships just since March – that’s better than awesome! It is always interesting to hear the stories of the “Newbies” who have joined our group, it’s even better to meet the Newbies. I am very impressed by the generosity of MTRA as a whole; the Youth Riders Fund exemplifies this generosity. Add to this the willingness of folks to step up and offer advice; offer a hand, to lend needed supplies, to grab an extra bag of ice when at the store, to share a meal or a drink, the camaraderie, and the just plain old fashioned kindness. I’m sure these all are part of what makes the MTRA such a successful group and I am so lucky to be actually employed by this group.

OFFICE HOURS: New to the MTRA will be OFFICE HOURS. Angie will have the MTRA Office open on Tuesdays from 9am – noon, Wednesdays from 5– 7PM & Thursdays from 2 – 4PM. This means I will be in the office and available to take your calls during these times. The MTRA Office is located in my home so calls can certainly be made at other times (actually I am an early riser so calls as early as 5:30AM will usually find me at home and awake!). During times when I can’t keep to these Office Hours I will post alternatives on the Forum and the MTRA Facebook page.

Great appreciation goes out to the MTRA members and friends who assisted at the May Work Bee at Hopkins Creek. Many of the workers were attending the Blossom Ride and many others volunteered their time to help plant picket poles, shovel gravel at the water crossing at Hopkins Creek, some workers helped feed everyone lunch and others just helped to clean up the trail camp. Special thanks goes to Bob Martin who lives in Fife Lake and brought his heavy equipment to the Work Bee to help haul poles, grind stumps and move brush. Thanks Bob for all of your help!!! And thanks to all who assisted the MTRA at the Work Bee – it is such a wonderful sight to see all the smiles and waves from the workers!!

“Success depends on preparation, and without preparation there is sure to be failure.” ~ Confucius

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 (2015) – 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 2015 Ride Registration Form.
2. Don't forget to get your Recreation Passports for your vehicle license plates in 2015 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. 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 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 areas around Hopkins Creek and South Branch are spectacular!!
6. Don't forget – fellow members who assist you in “rescues” whether they be horse or vehicle related, would appreciate your consideration with a donation to their “fuel fund”. We are all on vacation during the rides and would always be there to help out when needed. But, sometimes we appreciate the offer of monetary assistance when our rigs/trucks are being used.
7. 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!!
8. 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.....
9. 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. At this time, the Office phone number will remain the same and will probably continue to do so perhaps “forever”!! During this transition, please be patient as Angie works hard to learn all there is to know about the MTRA Office, etc. If you have any questions or concerns, you can contact me on my

cell phone (719-641-2969) or my email which is: raynechris@gmail.com. My title is now Assistant Secretary/Treasurer and I hope to spend more time on horseback!! See you on the rides – chris

10. Thanks to all of the hard work from Diana Davis and Helen Meier, our **Vet & Farrier List** has been updated for this year. Copies will be available thru the Trail Boss. The “Good to Know” list will be updated soon and includes the veterinarians and farriers as well as places to shop, shower and have fun, etc. Talk to the Trail Boss for more information.
11. The MTRA will soon have its own Forum which will be linked to the main www.mtra.org webpage. There will be places for posting pictures and a special section for “For Sale” items. There will be no cost to post ads. Please stay tuned for more information.
12. When you are riding along paved roads – wear BRIGHT shirts so that drivers will notice you!!

Shore to Shore with the MTRA – June 2015

Both June Rides were well attended with lots of happy riders and campers. There was a lot of rain on the first few days of the 2nd June Ride but the sun finally arrived to dry out the gear and the trail. Over 50 trophies were awarded at the shores of Lake Michigan on the 1st June Ride with another 40 trophies received on the 2nd June Ride. There are lots of great pictures of smiles of happy trail riders on our Facebook page!!! Congratulations to all of the trophy winners and we hope to see you again in August and September and October...

HISTORY HAPPENINGS

As many know of the passing of John Timmons this past March, for those who didn't know John, he is another MTRA historical icon. Here are some highlights as there are TOO MANY stories to tell about John. John joined MTRA in September of 1978. His membership number was 875. He knew how to navigate the woods and he knew how to ride well and train horses. In the earlier years, you saw John ride many breeds. In those times there was a group of riders who (in a fun way) competed to find an alternate way to camp. John was one of the best. Some riders attempted to follow his better ways. Since he was a farrier, he fooled them by putting his horses shoes on backwards so the prints showed a horse going in the opposite direction. John was a very good farrier who helped numerous trail riders, especially those who had trouble keeping shoes on their horses.

John was a serious horse trader especially when he got into Fox Trotters. Later into his membership John decided to become MTRA's caterer, catering many rides. John most always set his kitchen up where the trail and alternate trail intersected and most usually near the halfway point. He always had a simple menu of a couple items but he would have a special something for a very few of us who had special diets. John told me he learned to cook from his mother. He claims he never measured anything, just enjoyed keeping it simple as that also was the way to make money.

HISTORY TRIVIA QUESTIONS

1. In the past, many riders had nicknames. John had **two** nicknames, one was very popular and one not as well known, what were they?
2. What was the name of John's horse trailer kitchen, what year was it started and when ended?

(Answers on page 7)

Annual Banquet 2016.... Thanks to the hard work of Joe Burrill, Al Davis and Jimmy Corlew, next year's Annual Banquet will be held in Cadillac at the Evergreen Resort. The fun will begin on Saturday, March 26th, with room reservations to be made at 231-775-9947. The rooms will run from \$89.00 to \$149.00 which includes a continental breakfast buffet and (yes) there are 14 pet-friendly rooms available at an additional nominal fee of \$20.00 per room. The Resort has

blocked 50 rooms for the MTRA so be sure to let them know that you are one of our members to get the special rate. The banquet on Saturday evening will cost \$30.00 per person with two buffet entrees, one carved entrée, two starches, one vegetable, tossed garden salad with choice of house dressings, fresh baked dinner rolls with butter, fountain soft drinks, hot or iced tea, and decaf or regular coffee. The dessert will be a scoop of Chef's choice Ice Cream!! After doing such a great job last year under adverse circumstances, our DJ on Saturday night will be McCarn Entertainment again!!! More specific information about the menu, activities, tickets, etc. will be available with the next newsletter. If you have questions about the location, their website is www.evergreenresortmi.com or you can call the MTRA office and we will do our best. There will be a silent auction the day of the banquet so begin collecting your donations to share with fellow members to benefit the Youth Riders' Fund. If anyone is interested in being a vendor to sell items the day of the banquet, please remember to request permission from the Board of Directors so that you can be approved. Tables will be available for your use.

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.

A BIG Thank You goes out to Candy Wagner and the Hardy Memorial Trail Ride. Candy is our "cookie lady" who generously bakes cookies and provides water and treats for both riders and horses on the MTRA rides traveling near Mio. You can't miss the trailer which is parked on Evans Road roughly half-way between camps. We sure love those cookies and it is a great opportunity to get down off our horses and visit a while. Candy is also instrumental in organizing and participating in the Hardy Memorial Ride which donates money each year to the MTRA. This year Candy has donated \$134 to the Youth Riders' Fund from the Cookie Stop and the Hardy Memorial Ride donated \$145. The Hardys were instrumental in the formation of the Michigan Shore-to-Shore Riding and Hiking Trail as well as the MTRA. This Ride is a great testimonial to the dedication of the members and their families.

Friends of Trails Award – 1st of its kind

The American Trails' National and International Trails Awards Winners were announced at the 22nd International Trails Symposium in Portland, Oregon on May 19, 2015. American Trails presents the National and International Trails Awards Program to recognize the tremendous contributions of volunteers, professionals, and other leaders who are working for the betterment of trails both nationally and internationally and in both rural and urban settings. These awards are presented every two years at the International Trails Symposium.

View complete descriptions and photos of each 2015 awards recipient by visiting www.AmericanTrails.org/awards/2015.

Friends of Trails Award: Michigan Trail Riders Association

Michigan Trail Riders Association, Inc.

This new award recognizes a friends volunteer group which has shown outstanding support of their local trail(s). The first Friends of Trails Award is presented to the Michigan Trail Riders Association. The Michigan Trail Riders Association maintains 500 miles of trail and 18 trail camps in partnership with the US Forest Service and Michigan Department of Natural Resources. Since its creation in 1963, the Michigan Trail Riders Association has continually worked toward developing, maintaining, and expanding a system of camps and trails stretching across Michigan. The MTRA has organized over 200 trail rides.

This award is on display at the Empire Museum Complex which is managed by the Empire Area Heritage Group. This location has a wonderful display of MTRA historical information with many pictures and artifacts. It is located just 2 blocks north of the blinker light in Empire on LaCore Rd. The MTRA riders ride right by there going to their rigs after completion of their visit to Lake Michigan. Be sure to check it out. More information about the museum including hours of operation can be found at www.empiremuseum.org.

The generosity of the MTRA continues to impress everyone with almost \$2400 donated to the Youth Riders' Fund from the Blossom, 1st June and 2nd June Rides. These donations come in various forms from overpayment of ride day fees, returnable cans and bottles donated, tree savers made by Joe Burrill and purchased at the rides thru the Trail Boss, sale of glow sticks, the Barker Boys Pancake Breakfasts, Rent-a-Kid, Auction and just general donations. As members we all want to support the Youth Riders' Fund so that more kids can attend rides. However, there are more ways to support youth involvement and exposure to the MTRA and the rides. Our own board member Carol Hyzer donated money to support a "Trail Class" sponsored by the MTRA at the Kent County Youth Fair on August 8-15, 2015. If you have connections with 4-H groups and would like to share MTRA information with these or other riding groups or have speakers attend a meeting, please contact the MTRA Office and we will assist in promotional information to be sent or connections with appropriate members. Our future depends on our young people so let's be proactive and get these kids involved!!!!

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.

Youth Board Member Policy

1. Interested applicants need to apply prior to February 1st so that their applications may be reviewed with recommendations made by the March Board of Director Meeting.
2. Applications need to be submitted to the MTRA Office and will then be forwarded to the chairperson of this committee.

3. Term – one year, non-voting position, term will end at 18th birthday if applicable
4. Upon approval, at the March Board of Director meeting, the new member will be assigned at least two specific tasks by the Board reflecting recommendations of the committee.
5. Applicants will be under 18 years of age.
6. Applications will be available thru the MTRA Office and linked to the www.mtra.org website.

Did You Know??? The very first Ride, from Empire to Tawas, started on June 20, 1964 and ended 9 days later on June 28th. There was a Trail Boss, point, flank and drag riders as well as a Camp Boss. On day 3 of this Ride, riders were tired but decided that they could certainly ride “4 More Miles” - the “4 More Miles” phrase is still in use today! One of the Riders very nearly started a forest fire with his pipe, luckily there were enough riders to jump off and stomp out the flames before the fire took hold. On day 7 someone captured a rattle snake (she apparently carried the skin of this snake over her canteen for years!). They stopped off at the Curtisville store (sad to have the Curtisville store closed after all these years). 16 riders completed this very first Ride. What an adventure they had! Want to know more? You can purchase the book Shore to Shore on the Michigan Riding & Hiking Trail by one of our own MTRA veterans Rhoda Ritter from the MTRA Office or online linked to the main webpage. It is full to bursting of stories of the origination of our trail system and the MTRA.

Trivia Answers:

1. He was most frequently called "Black John", the other was given so not to confuse him with the other blacksmiths, he was called their "White Smith"!
2. KIS - Keep It Simple, started 1992, ended 2005.

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