

Michigan Trail Riders ASSOCIATION, INC.

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December 2008 – NEWSLETTER

2008 RIDE SCHEDULE & Work Bees

May 2, 3 & 4..... *Work Bee* at McKinley Camp.....31 members worked hard to replace boardwalk along trail!!!
 May 9 – 18.....*Blossom Ride* from Luzerne to River Rd.....19-51 riders participated for a great ride!!!
 May 24 – 26 *Work Bee*South Branch Camp(Call Bill Zettel for details)
 May 30 – June 8..... *Oscoda to Empire*..... (Trophy ride)..... 80 riders received trophies
 June 14 – 29..... *Oscoda to Empire* (Trophy ride)..... 76 riders received trophies
 August 22, 23 & 24 .. *Work Bee*.....South Branch Camp.....348 hours worked
 Sept 6 – 26 *Oscoda to Oscoda(Double Cross)*..... (Trophy ride).....13 E-W, 13 W-E, 37 DX trophies
 October 3 – 12 *Color Ride* from Cadillac to Goose Creek..... 10-91 riders enjoyed the great fall colors

2009 Tentative RIDE SCHEDULE & Work Bees

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

2009 Membership Renewals are Due

Check your address label to see if your MTRA membership expires in 2008. If it does, use the enclosed form to renew your membership. 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.

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Annual Banquet 2009

The dates for the Annual Banquet are March 6 & 7, 2009 which will 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. Plan to come and see the display by the MTRA Historian, Sue Stickle, and purchase lots of great MTRA clothing provided by B & D Classic Sewn. If you would like to make hotel reservations call 989-422-5175 and don't forget to mention that you are part of our group. Reservation forms for the Banquet will be in the February Newsletter.

Great Success at South Branch Work Bee

The South Branch Work Bee in August was attended by over 30 members who worked hard to build fences and shore up the trails. We provided almost 350 man-hours of work-in-kind for the US Forest Service for which they are very appreciative. A big thank you goes out to all of the members present who brought equipment such as tractors, gravel haulers, four-wheelers, a skid-steer, and the many hand tools used by everyone. Super thanks goes to Betty Randall and her crew which prepared a superb luncheon on Saturday and provided drinks and munchies all weekend. Be sure to plan on attending a Work Bee in 2009 to get to know other members better and feel like you've helped out with the maintenance of our trail.



North Spur Camps Open – Mackinaw???

In May of this year, the Michigan Department of Natural Resources opened all of the trail camps along the North Spur. Therefore, the Blossom Ride 2009 will be using that trail once again. However, the Mackinaw Camp – not affiliated with the MDNR – is still not available to us so our ride will begin at the Mullet Lake Camp which is on private property.

For those who were unaware, Mackinaw City requested the removal of the picket poles, filling the holes and moving our campsite to another location east of the current camp which happens to be on a landfill. We had a 15 year agreement to use that location which was owned by the county at that time. They turned the property over to Mackinaw City and after only 5 years and installation of the well; the City wanted us to move. Since we were unable to go to the water by the Mackinaw Bridge, the Board of Directors decided to abandon the current camp and end/begin the Blossom rides at Mullet Lake Camp. The MTRA requested reimbursement of 2/3 of the cost of the well which the city uses for their historic village. We also left the poles for their use. There has been no reimbursement at this time.



A Horse is worth more than riches. – Spanish proverb



Assistant Secretary/Treasurer Position

At the January 2008 Board of Directors meeting the position of Assistant Secretary/Treasurer was created. This job entails support and assistance of the Secretary/Treasurer to be able to step in and smoothly run the office if need be. A thorough knowledge of MS-Excel is critical. Payroll, filing quarterly reports and year-end reports will be required. At this time Betty Randall is the Asst. Sec/Treas. and has done a stellar job. At the Board Meeting in January it was decided to re-evaluate this position in January of 2009. If anyone is interested in applying for the Assistant Secretary/Treasurer position, please contact Chris Rayner by **January 1st**. You should submit by mail/email a written letter of interest including a resume. For questions, contact Chris at the number/email above or Betty at 989-539-2593 or ranchrandall@juno.com.

Secretarial Notes

1. What a year! It has been a learning experience and I cannot express enough gratitude for all of the help and encouragement that everyone has afforded me. I've thoroughly enjoyed getting to know so many of you personally. Please continue to keep in touch, especially if you have any suggestions or comments, by contacting me at raynechris@gmail.com or call 989-473-3205.
2. At this time there are over 330 members receiving their newsletters by email and over 100 who print their newsletters from the website. How exciting! A special "Thank You" goes to our webmaster, Tom Strong, for being so helpful and cooperative. If you are interested in joining the email or website printer group, please contact me, or select those choices on your Membership Renewal Form. Don't forget to include your email address for general correspondence. That is the easiest way to send Ride Confirmations!!!
3. Many of you have suggested "Buddy" lists for names, phone numbers, etc. of people who you may have ridden with on one of the rides and not remembered to get their vital information. For the sake of our members' privacy I cannot publish our rosters for the rides or give out phone numbers of our members but I will help all I can to make some connections. First of all, I would suggest using the Forum on the website www.mtra.org to make contact with other members. If that doesn't work or you don't have computer access, give me a call and I will try to make that connection for you. If all else fails, make sure you write down names, phone numbers, etc. on the next ride!!!!
4. I'm in the process of listing all "Michigan Trail Horses" in a central database. If you have registered your horse in the past, please contact me so that we can add your horse to the list. Please include the name of the horse, name and dates of the ride, owner and rider of the horse. All entries will need to be confirmed. Thanks a bunch!

Happy Trails - chris

May Work Bee at McKinley

Be sure to mark your calendars for the Work Bee to be held at McKinley the first weekend in May 2009. The USFS has requested our assistance in repairing another boardwalk. We will be needing lots of helpers with hand tools like shovels, rakes, tampers, sledge hammers, etc. Please contact Garry Randall for any details if you have something that can be used at that Work Bee. We will begin work around noon on Friday, May 1st and lunch on Saturday will be provided. Come on out and camp to enjoy the camaraderie. Many hands make light work!

Annual Elections 2009

Five of the present Board Members are up for re-election this coming March. **Ernie Marsh, Kathy Moss, Ron Pouncey, Ginger Vanderkelen and Bill Zettel** have all thrown their hats in the ring for another term. If anyone else is interested in running for the Board of Directors, please submit a paragraph of 100 words or less to Garry Randall or Chris Rayner listing your qualifications, interests, reasons for running, etc. Submissions must be received by January 1st to be ready to print in the February newsletter for the March vote.



Who had more fun – the appys or the drivers?

Anyone who attended the September '08 Double-Cross were able to experience the true meaning of fun! Randy Davisson and his three gaited appaloosas, assisted by Bill Zettel, were a big part of the ride this year. Both Randy and Bill received trophies for their efforts! And what an effort it was. After jumping two rigs, they had to harness all three horses and head to the roads because the trail is not smooth or wide enough to accommodate the wagon or three horses abreast. But the camaraderie was the best! Everyone enjoyed their cheerful attitudes and stories of trail rides past. Being more comfortable with their “bucket” seats, both were able to nap from time to time along the way. Congratulations guys – we hope to see you and those fun-loving appys again on the rides!!!!

Calendar Quandry

The Ride Calendars for 2009 have already been submitted to the MDNR and we are waiting for their approval of our dates. Due to calendar constraints, there will not be a Criss-Cross in 2009. According to the By-laws of the MTRA, the October Color Ride is to begin the first weekend in October and there will not be enough time to schedule the three week Criss-Cross in September 2009 and avoid the Labor Day weekend which is a mandate by the MDNR. There has been a great deal of discussion regarding this issue. Your Board Members need to hear from the membership to resolve the problems presented. Many of you have emailed me and those wishes were made known. You will be apprised of further developments.

It's that time of year for reflection. We've had a great year with five successful rides, relatively cooperative weather, renewed acquaintances, new friendships and the most wonderful of all – time with our horses. As we approach 2009, let's be thankful for all of the above and hope for good times, good friends and a wonderfully peaceful new year!
-chris



Happy Holidays!!! See you Next year!!!

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.