

Michigan
Trail Riders ASSOCIATION, INC.

Chuck Fanslow, President
riverflatranch@yahoo.com

www.mtra.org
5806 E. State Rd.
Hale, MI 48739

Chris Rayner, Sec/Treas
raynechris@gmail.com

December 2013 – NEWSLETTER

Proposed Ride Schedules & Other Important Dates for 2014

Jan 4, 2014.....MTRA Board of Director Meeting.....Ramada Inn, Grayling.....10:00 AM
March 22, 2014...Annual Banquet & General Membership Meeting.....Ramada Inn, Grayling.....6:00 PM
March 23, 2014...MTRA Board of Director Meeting.....Ramada Inn, Grayling.....9:30 AM
May 29-June 8, 2014... **PROPOSED**.....1st June Ride(trophy)..... Mackinaw to Oscoda
June 11-26, 2014.....**PROPOSED**.....2ND June Ride(trophy).....Oscoda to Empire
JUNE 21, 2014.....RE-DEDICATION OF THE SHORE TO SHORE TRAIL.....KALKASKA....TIME TBA
August 9-16, 2014.....**PROPOSED**.....August Family Ride.....Goose Creek to Hopkins Creek
September 4-25, 2014..**PROPOSED**....September Double Cross(trophies)....Lake Huron to Lake Huron
October 4-12, 2014.....**PROPOSED**.....Color Ride.....Goose Creek to Cadillac

FROM THE PRESIDENT'S DESK:

As we have come to the end of another ride season, we can reflect a little over the rides and the position the MTRA finds itself in. Things are actually looking very good. The ride numbers are up and the people got to see some different sites as the ride schedule had some changes instead of the same routes every year. Our bank accounts are also expanded this year due to the insight and application of the finance committee's recommendations. Fifty years and strong and looking toward the next 50 years with the great base we have and continue to work with. With changes in the ride schedules and the way the MTRA does some things, remember, nothing stays the same and we must move forward with the times or be left behind. And we are going forward and things are looking up.

I can't say enough about the busy days we seem to find ourselves in and how much volunteering to help out and be an active part of our organization is needed. People make us what we are! We have superior members, but the few that do most of the work tend to get burned out so we are encouraging others to step up. Whether it is on the Board of Directors or at a Work Bee or simply coming to the rides, we need you!! Please consider helping in these areas or even applying for one of the paid positions we offer. You make us what we are!

Please remember to mark Saturday, June 21, 2014 on your calendar so that you can attend our 50th Year Re-Dedication of the Michigan Shore-to-Shore Riding and Hiking Trail. There will be a ceremony with some speeches and a parade in Kalkaska on our 2nd June Ride layover day. All activities will begin at the Kaliseum. It should be a memorable time in our MTRA history.

Chuck Fanslow, MTRA President
(989-435-9224)
clf222@yahoo.com

ALL 2014 TROPHIES TO SPORT 50TH INSIGNIA

In 1964 the first Shore-to-Shore Ride was held and that is when the Michigan Shore-to-Shore Riding and Hiking Trail was dedicated by then Governor George Romney hence the 50th Anniversary celebration of the trail in June 2014. To extend the 50th Anniversary of the incorporation of the MTRA, the Board of Directors decided to offer the 50th Insignia

on the trophies for all of the 2013 (trophy) Trail Rides. All trophy winners from the June Rides can have the 50th Insignia applied to their trophies if they wish. Just send those trophies to the MTRA office with a check for \$5.00 to cover return shipping. If you would like to send those trophies in and receive them at the banquet or on one of the 2014 Trail Rides, it will cost you nothing, nada, zip!! We apologize for any confusion. Questions? – call Chris @ 989-473-3205.

Only horse people –

Think nothing of eating a sandwich after cleaning out stables and/or after riding for hours on the trail!!

HISTORY HAPPENINGS

MTRA is 50 years old and is still going strong. 2013 has been a very busy year historically speaking!

Here is some history that has been made this year with some changes, some things ending and some firsts!

1. MTRA's Annual March Meeting was a memorable celebration this year. 50 years of history was featured, honorary plaques were presented to four members for outstanding dedication and it was a most exciting time to be able to meet and talk with some of the original MTRA founders and members.
2. For the **first time**, MTRA is in the Empire Historical Museum. When visiting, you'll find two posters in the glass cases and there is also a box of tangible memorabilia.
3. This year's Blossom Ride was the **last** of the May Rides.
4. This was the **first year** for the August Family Ride which was a great success.
5. In September, this was the **first time** that the riding direction was from Mackinaw to Oscoda and the **first time** the Mackinaw/Oscoda trail was ridden in September. As always, September's weather was interesting with one day peaking around 97 degrees and 2 days later we woke to 28 degrees.
6. B&D Classic Sewn are still servicing MTRA's embroidering/decals clothing needs but they're **no longer** coming to the camps during rides. Betty and Deanna have done an extraordinary job coming into our camps twice a ride, **FOR EVERY RIDE**, since 1999!
7. Candy Wagner and friends met riders between Luzerne and McKinley with her "Welcome Wagon" for the September and October Rides. Her efforts are appreciated as she helps MTRA celebrate 50 years with the beautiful banner and the treats for horses and riders.

This year on the September Ride, there were 8 guys 70 years old and older who rode for a trophy and two of them, Malcolm "Doc" Wilson and Joe McCulloch trophied at age 80. This is an inspiration to us all and I offer special congratulations to them.

Sally Seaver, Historian (lrexsal@aol.com)

P.S. I keep track of the youngest crossers and the older crossers. I ask all of the members to please keep me informed of these statistics along with pictures.

HISTORY TRIVIA

How many times has there been a trophy ride solely on the Mackinaw /Oscoda trails? (Answer on page 5)

2013 – Fast Facts for a Great Year

With the finish of another great ride season, we need to keep our thoughts of 2013 in perspective. It began with our Annual Banquet in March which was one of the best attended with lots of dignitaries, former longtime members and many awards given. We shared memories, historical pictures thru the years on display, renewed friendships and enjoyed lots of laughs!!!! Just a few of the facts about this year's rides and the association follows: daily count of participants on rides ran from 17 (Blossom Ride) to 127 (1st June Ride) with a total count of 5372 participant ride days. Trophy winners for 2013 totaled 184. The highest membership number is 6901 with 20 Life memberships, 13 of which are newly assigned since the Board of Directors adopted the new "Life Membership" policy. As of September 1, 2013 there were 928 active memberships with total members totaling 2000-3000. Of those active memberships, 452 receive their newsletters via electronic mailing – either email or website printing. It's been a great year – here's hoping that 2014 is even better!!

Trail Riding in Northern Michigan – YES, there are BEARS

As many of you have learned, there have been sightings and signs of bears along the Shore-to-Shore Riding and Hiking Trail. After the mauling in Wexford County in August, Carrie Barr (MTRA #6269) sent this information to share with all of our members. Thanks, Carrie!!!!

Here are some important facts to remember when you are in an area where bears may be present:

- To avoid surprising bears, travel in small (or large) groups and **make noise**.
- If you encounter a bear, stand your ground and then slowly back away. Do not turn away. Do not show fear and run. Do not play dead.
- Make yourself look bigger and talk to the bear in a stern voice.
- Fight back if actually attacked with a backpack, stick, or bare hands.
- Carry pepper spray, which has been shown to be effective in fending off bear attacks.

For additional information on living with bears, visit the DNR website at www.michigan.gov/bear.

BOARD BRIEFS:

1. The 2014 Ride Calendar is in the process of approval by the DNR so the dates are posted at the beginning of this newsletter as **PROPOSED**. As soon as we receive final approval, the calendars will be posted on the www.mtra.org website.
2. With this year drawing to a close, the Board must make decisions about employees for 2014. The Employment Opportunities page is now posted on the www.mtra.org website and anyone who is interested in applying for any of these positions should send a resume to: MTRA Employment Director, 2475 McNamara Rd., Gladwin, MI 48624, or send via email to: riverflatranch@yahoo.com. For questions, please call: 989-435-9224.
3. Since the potluck dinners were such a roaring success on all of the trophy rides this year, Joe Burrill has graciously volunteered to again sponsor the potluck dinners on Arrival Days prior to the first day's ride on all 2014 trophy rides. Thanks, Joe!!!!
4. The Board of Directors has approved the option to earn one ride day per one Work Bee day to become policy. All details will be published in the next newsletter. Stay tuned for more specifics.
5. All Board of Director meetings are open to the public. Please attend to see your association in action.

MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS ARE DUE

It's that time of year for membership renewals to start rolling in. All memberships **EXPIRE** on January 1st!!! As a reminder, if your membership is current through 2013 it will only cost \$25 to renew if paid by March 31, 2014. If you wish to vote in the Annual Election for Board Members, you need to renew your membership before the voting date which is March 22, 2014. If you've forgotten to renew recently and wish to "re-join" it will cost \$35 and you will be able to keep your former MTRA number. Please check on page 28 of the Guidebook (7th edition) for all the details concerning membership. Refer to page 30 for the March 18, 2007 amendment to the bylaws regarding dues. Enclosed with this newsletter is the renewal form. Email folks will receive a separate email with the form attached including details. If you print your newsletters from the website and have not submitted your email address, you will receive a notice thru the US mail. Yes, you can still renew and/or join using PayPal or credit cards but only thru the website: www.mtra.org. If you have any questions, please call 989-473-3205 or email the office at raynechris@gmail.com.

Horsemen's Corral Update

The MTRA has become a member of the Corral Club thru the **Horsemen's Corral** magazine which is published in Ohio. To be a member of their Corral Club we had at least 10 members purchase

subscriptions to this magazine for \$10.00 per year and that allows us to publish our membership application as well as an article each month. Our Ride Calendar has been published as well – all you need to do is go to: <http://www.thehorsemenscorral.com/>, click on “Calendar” and search for Michigan activities. Please check this out and if you are interested in subscribing to this publication next year, just call or email the MTRA office and get on the list for 2014. For those who have subscribed in 2013, please let other members (and the MTRA office) know if you are pleased with the coverage and content of the magazine.

SOME READING MATERIAL!!!!

1. In **The Trail Rider** – June 2013 – Camping First-Aid Kit
2. In **The Trail Rider** – June 2013 – 3 Savvy Camp Skills
3. In **The Trail Rider** – Sept/Oct 2013 – Mountain & Forest Riding (part 5 of the Sharpen Your Skills series)
4. In **Equus** – September 2013 – Shopping for a Towing Vehicle
5. In **The Trail Rider** – November/December 2013 – Safe Travels/Severe-Weather Driving Tips
6. In **The Trail Rider** – November/December 2013 – Trail Tack (part 6 of the Sharpen Your Skills series)
7. In **TrailBLAZER** – September 2013 – Trail Warrior (Sally Seaver from the MTRA) Congratulations!

Just to mention a few articles that I thought you might enjoy – as always, I'm way behind on my reading. Please share any or all of your horsey/camping/riding reading adventures on our Facebook page or let me know so that I can share them with others thru the newsletters - chris.

2014 Annual Banquet – Ramada Inn, Grayling

We are headed back to the Ramada Inn in Grayling for the 2014 Annual Banquet on March 22, 2014. Festivities begin Saturday about noon with vendors in the pool area, displays of MTRA memorabilia and the “MTRA Office” table where you can pick up your banquet tickets, purchase maps, memberships, Rhoda Ritter books, etc. We can begin seating in the banquet room at 5:00 PM with a cash bar available and dinner beginning at 6:00. After dinner and the general membership meeting you can dance your boots off to Best Entertainment with Bernie until 1:00 AM. And if that's not enough excitement, there's a Board of Director meeting in the Birch Room at 9:30 AM the next morning!!! We have a block of rooms reserved so remember to mention that you are with the MTRA to get the special rate. Reservations may be made at: 989-348-7611.

SEE YOU THERE!!!

Mapping 101 – GPS goes techie!!!

All of the Michigan Shore-to-Shore Riding and Hiking Trail has been GPSed – thanks to the members who helped out!! – and now we are trying to get those files to be more usable to those who access the internet for mapping and those who prefer paper copies. Hopefully, with the help of Pat Galloup, some of her students, Kim Ross and other GPS aficionados, we will have a proposal ready for the Board of Directors at their June 4, 2014 meeting. We still have over 800 sets of maps from 2007 which we've been selling on Trail Rides and through the mail. But they won't last forever and we must plan for the future. If you have any suggestions and/or expertise in this endeavor, please share it with us. We need all the help we can get!!!!

Calling All Prospective Board Members!!!

It's that time of year when we need to look at annual elections of Board Members rapidly approaching in March 2014. Just to put it in perspective, when elected, the Board Members serve a term of three years and are responsible for clearing and marking a section of the Michigan Shore-to-Shore Riding/Hiking Trail as well as one of the Trail Camps

located at one end of their section. Check out "Trail Assignments for 2013" for the current assignments. There are four Board Meetings each year in the months of January, March, June and September or October. Depending on Work Bee locations, the Board Member whose camp is closest to the Work Bee is responsible for the Saturday lunch for the workers. Of course, there is lots of help in that regard and all costs for lunch are covered by the MTRA. On the positive side, all Board Members and their spouses are able to camp free on all the rides they choose to attend. They get to know the membership (many on a first name basis) and they get to represent their fellow riders in one of the best organizations around!!!! The terms for the following current Board Members will expire in 2014: Al Dennis, Pat Galloup, Carol Hyzer, Al Kendall and Terry Meier. Al Kendall and Carol Hyzer have chosen to not seek re-election. If anyone is interested in running for a Board of Director position, please submit a short (100 word) paragraph and a picture to be shared with the membership in the next newsletter. Deadline for your submission is January 1, 2014 and you can send or email that information to the MTRA office. For questions, contact any of your current Board Members or the MTRA office.

History Trivia Answer: Three times. A **2nd May Ride in 2004** – [yes a *second* May ride the 14th to 23rd AND it was a trophy ride!] going from Oscoda to Mackinaw, then June 3-12, 2005 trophied going from Oscoda to Mackinaw and this September 6-15, 2013 going from Mackinaw to Oscoda.

MICHIGAN HORSE COUNCIL OFFERS SCHOLARSHIPS IN 2014

The information to apply for the 2014 MHC Scholarships is now on the Michigan Horse Council website. As a member of the MHC, all MTRA members are eligible for these scholarships. If you have any questions or need assistance, please call the MTRA office for help.

http://www.michiganhorsecouncil.com/mhc_member_scholarships.htm

JUST A THOUGHT...

1. When registering for Trail Rides using the www.mtra.org website, please make sure that you register for the number of days that you wish to attend. Don't forget to pull down the arrow to choose the correct number of days for each specific ride.
2. If you wish to receive a trophy for any of the "trophy" rides, please specify on your registration form so that we can order the correct number of trophies!!
3. You can use one registration form for any or all of the rides. You can even pay using one check!!
4. You can jump in and out of rides as your schedule allows. Just be sure to register for at least one day prior to the ride to guarantee your space and daily rate. Don't forget to let the Trail Boss know when you are leaving or will not be in camp. Turn in your window tag when you leave.
5. If you "just show up" on a Trail Ride (without pre-registering), you will have to pay the late fee of \$2.50 per day per person in addition to the \$10.00 per day per person.
6. Questions? Call Chris at 989-473-3205

Special Thanks to the following:

1. All of the members of the Board of Directors who work so hard to keep their sections of trail and their Trail Camps clear and marked for all of us to enjoy. We really love those road signs!!!!
2. Our President (Chuck Fanslow), Vice-Presidents (Al Davis and Jimmy Corlew) and Secretary (Kathleen Moss) for going beyond their responsibilities to keep things running smoothly for the MTRA. Their many extra hours of dedication are greatly appreciated!!
3. The many DNR personnel and USFS personnel who work with our board members and many of us to keep these rides running smoothly. We have had some issues on the rides (loggers, full dumpsters, etc.) but these personnel have gone that extra mile to help us out in our times of need. We couldn't do it without them!!!
4. Our Trail Boss (Theresa Gunders) who has kept the rides running smoothly and efficiently so that we can all have a safe and wonderful experience. Her expertise and dedication is greatly appreciated!!!
5. Our Bus Drivers (Barb Crampton & Tim Jones) who keep us on time and where we need to be so that those horses get ridden and/or transported. Thanks, Barb, for your helpfulness and humor!!! Thanks, Tim, for helping us out when Barb was "under the weather"!!!

6. My Asst. Secretary/Treasurer (Patty Brown) for always being there to pick up the pieces when I'm hitting the ground or trying to get things done in the office. Need I say more?
7. All of the wonderful members of this organization who are always there when we need help, advice or just support!!!

Enjoy this wonderful holiday season – Happy Trails in 2014!!!!

SECRETARIAL NOTES...

1. The updated copies of the MTRA Camp and Trail Rules will soon be posted on the www.mtra.org website. Some of the rules have changed. If you would like a copy, please contact the office and you can receive a copy via US mail.
2. If you don't know if your membership is up to date, please call the office at 989-473-3205 and we can check it out. If it has expired, you will need to pay the \$35.00 to renew. Other questions...please call!!!
3. LIFE memberships make a great Christmas or graduation gift. Let's encourage our young people to stay involved with the organization that they love and help keep the Shore-to-Shore Trail available for their kids and grandkids.
4. There are lots of updates on the www.mtra.org website and work continues. Please clear the history in your search engine so that you can receive the new information. Need help – call the office!
5. Don't forget to plan for the Michigan Shore-to-Shore Riding and Hiking Trail re-dedication to be held in Kalkaska on June 21, 2014. Let's celebrate 50 years of this great trail!!! Mark your calendars now so you can be there!!!
6. Thanks so much to all of you September and October riders for sending pictures and sharing your thoughts/experiences on the Facebook Page. We are getting lots of traffic and we all love to see those great pictures!
7. The Ride Feedback Form is now on the www.mtra.org website at the bottom of the Trail Rides Page so that you can download, fill out and send to the office.
8. Please don't hesitate to call or email the office if you have any questions and/or concerns about the association, the newsletter, the rides, etc. We'll do our best to help you.

- Chris (989-473-3205) raynechris@gmail.com

HORSE CAMPING BASICS WITH KIM ROSS

With the success and useful information gleaned at the clinic on the August Ride, Kim Ross, MTRA #4306, has graciously offered to run another session on Horse Camping between the 1st and 2nd June Rides in 2014 at River Road Trail Camp. She will be incorporating the MTRA regulations and requirements as well as covering the planning stages, camp needs, trail etiquette, safety and much, much more. She and several helpers will be offering their expertise to all campers on June 9-10, 2014. If you need to learn how to set up your first picket line, look for Kim and her helpers. The handouts that she used on the August Ride will soon be posted on the www.mtra.org website and we'll have some more available to take with you. Please bring your questions and comments – we can all learn from each other!! Come join us for lots of fun!! If you need some help planning for that First Trail Ride and it is planned for before this clinic, please contact the MTRA office for assistance.

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.