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December 2015 – NEWSLETTER

2016 Proposed Ride Schedules & Other Important Dates

January 9, 2016.....	Board of Director Meeting.....	Jay's Sporting Goods, Clare.....	10:00 AM
April 2, 2016.....	Annual 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.....	PROPOSED
June 2-13.....	1 st June Ride (trophy).....	Lake Michigan to Lake Huron.....	PROPOSED
June 17-July 2.....	2 nd June Ride (trophy).....	Lake Huron to Lake Michigan.....	PROPOSED
August ?????.....	Work Bee.....	Luzerne or 4-Mile Trail Camps.....	Times TBA
August 6-13.....	August Family Ride.....	Scheck's and Goose Creek.....	PROPOSED
September 8-19.....	September Ride.....	Lake Huron to Lake Michigan (Mackinaw).....	PROPOSED
October 1-9.....	Color Ride.....	Goose Creek to Cadillac.....	PROPOSED

Board Briefs:

1. The paperwork for the transfer of our classification as a non-profit 501(c)7 to 501(c)3 has been finished needing only a policy on conflict of interest. Pat Galloup presented two possible formats for this policy which will be discussed and finalized at the next Board meeting in January.
2. Many thanks were extended to all the participants at the August Work Bee where the Wilbur Creek Bridge was replaced with financial assistance from the DNR as well as the USFS. Looking toward 2016, the USFS intends to replace the Luzerne boardwalk due to irreparable damage sustained over the years. It will be a major operation in which the MTRA will take a supporting role. As plans are finalized, the MTRA will organize one or more Work Bees for this project. Stay tuned!!!
3. The mentor program was not well supported later in the ride season. 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 Jay's Sporting Goods in their conference room on January 9, 2016 beginning at 10:00 AM. Please feel free to attend and see your Board of Directors in action!

Annual Banquet 2016 – April 2nd – Evergreen Resort, Cadillac

It was brought to the attention of the banquet committee that our choice of March 26, 2016 was during Easter weekend so we have made a slight change to avoid conflicts with family activities. The fun will begin the next weekend on Saturday, April 2nd, 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!!! You can order banquet tickets with your membership renewal form included with this newsletter or you can go online to the www.mtra.org website and order tickets in the Annual Banquet section linked to the main page. 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. The MTRA secretary and treasurer will have a computer set up during the day on Saturday to demonstrate the new MTRA Forum and help with registrations if you are interested.

Tidbits from Angie Marsh:

Whew! The Ride season is over, sure felt like I was chasing my tail more than a few times. Did you know that over 388 MTRA members and their guests participated in our 78 Ride Days this year? There were 4878 camper days, and an overall average of 62.5 campers per day. 141 Trophies were awarded. Though there are a few things that could use improvement the 2015 Ride Season was a great success. Thanks to each and every one of you who did your part to make this happen. Now it's time to begin gearing up for 2016. Get your Membership Renewal sent in. Attend the Annual Meeting and vote for Board of Directors, if you can't attend the Annual Meeting send in your absentee ballots – exercise your MTRA Membership perks! The tentative Ride Calendar is posted and Ride Registrations will be accepted after the 1st of the year. Please remember to indicate which days you plan to attend each Ride. Use your Work Bee Credits, come to a Work Bee and earn more Credits!

OFFICE HOURS: New to the MTRA will be OFFICE HOURS. The MTRA Office will be 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.

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. 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. 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!!
6. 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. 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 office phone (989-473-3205) or my email which is: raynechris@gmail.com. It has been proposed that my title will be Treasurer which will need to be approved at the next Board meeting and I have been spending more time on horseback!! See you on the rides – chris
7. When you are riding along paved roads – wear BRIGHT shirts so that drivers will notice you!!
8. 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.

Membership Renewals are due!!

It’s that time of year for membership renewals to start rolling in. All memberships **EXPIRE** on January 1st except for those “LIFE” memberships. As a reminder, if your membership is current through 2015 it will only cost \$25 to renew if paid by March 31, 2016. 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 21, 2016. If you’ve forgotten to renew recently and wish to “re-join” it will cost \$35 and you may 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 989-345-3225 or email the office at mtra.office@gmail.com. **PS – memberships make a wonderful Christmas present!!!!**

HISTORY HAPPENINGS

By Sally Seaver, lrexsal@aol.com

What a year it's been for trail rides. **For the FIRST time in MTRA history, there were seven trail rides this year! The 2015 riding calendar shows 78 days in MTRA campsites, that is a record too!** MTRA and all members who participate are making history every year!

History making continues as on the second half of the Criss Cross, 3 members completed their 50th crossing making this elite group a total of 9 members.

Congratulations to Jan Wolfin, Joe Burrill and Ray Balzer!

As historian, I do my best to keep track of those who have a story such as 50th crossing, youngest or oldest who trophy ride, achievements and one-of-a-kind feats. I can't be on every ride so I need members to help by letting me know of these events and taking pictures of them. When I'm informed, I send a questionnaire out and upon the return of the answers, I type up their story along with pictures you

send and it goes into the history books. You can see this book when I'm in camp or on the Historian table at the Annual Meetings. Please help me make **you** a part of MTRA history!

I've been interviewing, searching, and compiling information and pictures for two years and finally I have put together information and pictures in a book specifically to honor ALL the MTRA Presidents for the past 50 years. Check it out at the Annual Meeting.

P.S. If anyone has a picture of Ma Deeters - (the building), please send it to me.

HISTORY TRIVIA QUESTIONS

1. We celebrate those who conquer 50 crossings. Thirty years ago, there was one trail rider who made 25 crossings which was the first for anyone to have so many; who was this person?
2. Speaking above of 50 years of MTRA Presidents, how many Presidents have we had in the past 52 years?
(Answers on page 7)

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/Treasurer - responsibilities include management of the office of the MTRA including all communications, financial transactions and maintenance of files

Assistant Secretary/Treasurer - responsibilities include assistance to the Secretary/Treasurer upon request

All of these positions are part-time/seasonal jobs.

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 April 2016. 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 and Hiking Trail as well as one of the Trail Camps located at one end of their section. Check out "Trail Assignments for 2015" for the current assignments. There are four Board Meetings each year in the months of January, March/April, June and September/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 2016: Ron Anderson, Al Davis, Jenny Duvall, Chuck Fanslow and Bob Thornton. Terry Meier, who has been elected thru 2017, has expressed an interest to retire from the Board in March 2016. 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, 2016 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.

Did You Know???? – from Angie Marsh

The 1st Annual Meeting was held in 1966? By-Laws were developed and Officers elected. This year also included a 2nd cross state Ride that started at Gordon Creek and ended in Tawas. The book Shore to Shore on the Michigan Riding & Hiking Trail (by Rhoda Ritter, available for purchase through the MTRA office) tells of many incidents during that Ride including stolen food (loose dogs were known to “help themselves”), minor injuries and unplanned horse breeding! Our group has a long and interesting history, what role will you have in the “history” being read in 2065, 50 years from now?

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.

FROM THE PRESIDENT’S DESK –

With the Ride Season for 2015 ending there are several items which need to be discussed and addressed. Speaking of the positive aspects, the MTRA constructed a bridge over Wilbur Creek in Alcona County with the assistance of both the USFS and the DNR. With a super turnout of MTRA volunteers, it was a successful project making this the first of its kind in collaborative efforts!!! There were three more 50 Crossings buckles and trophies awarded to dedicated members. Congratulations Ray, Joe and Jan!! The number of ride participants was at an all time high with over 90 campers each day at Elk Hill for the Color Ride. And, with higher numbers at Elk Hill, comes the issue of using the bunkers for manure and staying off “pirate” trails. We have had complaints that the Elk Hill group campground was not cleaned properly during and after our layover days there. This will be addressed at the PRCEC meeting in December where I will take responsibility for our members. After much thought and discussion, I will make suggestions for changes in the MTRA rules and possible ideas to help all campers with the cleaning of their picket line areas. Since there are no layover days scheduled for 2016 at Elk Hill, it has been recommended that we do not have any layover days there in the future. We will offer to help mark the trails in the Pigeon River area so that riders are not tempted to ride the “pirate” trails. I will keep you posted of any other developments and/or solutions.

President Chuck Fanslow

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.

Michigan Horse Council Scholarship Applications due soon!!!

The Michigan Horse Council offers 3 scholarships in the amount of \$1,000 each to students who are members of the Michigan Horse Council or a MHC member organization. These awards are not limited to students pursuing equine fields of study, and selection of the winners.

Purpose: The purpose of these scholarships is to support the equine industry by providing educational assistance to outstanding men and women within the Michigan Horse Council and its member organizations.

Eligibility: Application for these scholarships is open to any individual who is a full or part-time student of a college or university, and who is a current individual member or member of the Michigan Horse Council Organization. Children of MHC members (as described above) who are 18 years or younger are eligible to apply if they are completing high school and have been accepted to a college or university. If a person is not a member at the time they apply, they may include an individual membership application and fee to join the MHC. For those who meet the eligibility criteria above, the scholarships will be available on an equal opportunity basis; the MHC will not discriminate on the basis of age, race, gender, religion or physical disability.

Selection of recipients:

Applicants will be evaluated according to these criteria:

- Scholastic achievement
- Duration and extent of involvement with equines and in equine organizations
- Volunteer activities
- Potential for success in chosen field of study
- Potential for contribution to the horse industry
- Financial need

Applicants will provide:

1. Completed official 2016 MHC Scholarship Application form available online at <http://www.michiganhorsecouncil.com/mhc-scholarships>
2. Transcript (Official) from last school attended, through October of 2015, including GPA.
3. A statement of 250 words or less explaining your involvement in the horse industry and your reasons for pursuing your chosen field.
4. Three character reference letters, not from a family member, to include 1 from each of 3 of the following categories: Scholastic/Academic; Volunteer; and Equine

HAND WRITTEN FORMS WILL NOT BE ACCEPTED

Scholarships must be postmarked by 1/3/16

Please direct all scholarship questions to:

Michigan Horse Council

PO Box 22008

Lansing, Michigan 48909-2008

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. This project is a learning experience, so if you have suggestions, please contact me at raynechris@gmail.com. Thanks and enjoy!!

Directions-

1. Click on the link on the left side on the www.mtra.org website main page.
2. "Guest" can view entries but will not be able to view pictures or post any information.
3. Please register following the directions given - you can also use a Social Networking Account.
4. Once your account is confirmed/approved, you will have full access to all entries.
5. To create an entry - choose the area 1) General Discussion or 2) For Sale.
6. Click on "New Topic"
7. Create your entry following the guidelines mentioned above.
8. Notice the restrictions on attachments - ie: file types, picture size and amount allowed.
9. Please "preview" your entry so that it is accurate as to spelling, etc. and your attachments/pictures are the ones you chose.
10. Post away!!!
11. Please call or email if you have questions and/or concerns or just some help with your entry. 989-473-3205 - chris

Trivia Answers:

1. **Jane McGuinn**, an incredible horsewoman who did so much for MTRA which I will write about another time.
2. **16 Presidents** in the past 52years. Two Presidents, Richard (Doc) Lannen and Virginia Franklin had two non-consecutive terms and Otra Lynch, Ray Balzer, Garry Randall and Chuck Fanslow have multiple consecutive terms.

A WALK ACROSS MICHIGAN Hiking the Michigan Shore-to-Shore Riding and Hiking Trail by Will Swartz is now finished and available thru Amazon in ebook/Kindle format or as a paperback. Will joined the MTRA a few years ago looking for the maps and information on the Shore-to-Shore Trail. He interviewed many MTRA members, attended our infamous “black-out” Annual Banquet last year and finally published his book this past summer. Oh yes – he also accomplished this bucket list item. After reading the ebook version, I highly recommend this book to all who love this trail and upper Michigan. He included many details about the trail including historical tidbits of locations. His style of writing is very entertaining as well as informative. Check it out!!!

Swartz, Will (2015-09-10). *A Walk Across Michigan: Hiking the Michigan Shore-to-Shore Riding and Hiking Trail (A Where's Will Series Book Book 1)* (Kindle Locations 22-24). Will Swartz Enterprises. Kindle Edition.

awalkacrossmichigan.com

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