



# Over The Fence

## Michigan Horse Council – July/August, 2011

### MHC Meeting Dates, 2011:

September 13

October 4

November 1

December 6

All meetings are held at the MSU Livestock Pavilion, East Lansing, Michigan, and begin at 7:30 p.m., with the Trails Committee immediately following the regular meeting. All members and guests are welcome at these meetings.

(Information: [www.michiganhorsecouncil.com](http://www.michiganhorsecouncil.com) or

[marilyn.graff@michiganhorsecouncil.com](mailto:marilyn.graff@michiganhorsecouncil.com)

### Other Important Dates:

**November 11, 12, 13 – Novi Equestrian Expo, Novi, MI ([www.noviequestrianexpo.com](http://www.noviequestrianexpo.com))**

**March 9, 10, 11, 2012 – MHC Horse Expo, Lansing, MI ([www.michiganhorsecouncil.com](http://www.michiganhorsecouncil.com))**

**New Coggins Legislation Signed by Governor:**

H.B. 4567, sponsored by state Rep. Pat Somerville, which reinstates the Equine Infections Anemia (EIA) testing requirements which expired at the end of 2010, was signed by Governor Rick Snyder on Thursday, July 21. It is now P.A. 121. We will keep you informed of details of this legislation as more becomes available.

**MHC to Offer Liability Insurance to Individual and Family Members Beginning with the 2012 Calendar Year.**

Beginning with the 2012 calendar year, Michigan Horse Council will partner with Equisure Insurance and offer members a million dollar excess liability insurance with membership to MHC. All individuals and families who own horses, but are not industry professionals, will qualify for this liability insurance. Details are still being worked out, and as they are, MHC will present more specifications regarding this insurance, which will be included as a part of your MHC membership.

Details for the new membership classifications were given in the May, 2011 Newsletter.

**From the Equine Trailways Subcommittee:**

July 26, 2011

Dear Fellow Trail Rider:

Attached to this note you will find a press release announcing the public release of a draft of The 2011 Recommendations Report of The Equine Trailways Subcommittee (ETS). The report has been provided to the Michigan Snowmobile and Trails Advisory Council (MSTAC), as required by Public Acts 45 and 46, sometimes referred to as "Right to Ride". As you can see, there are 60 days of open comment period, after which time the Report will be finalized. *Please send any comments you might have to the link listed in the press release.* MSTAC has a year to respond to the ETS Report and to advise the Michigan Department of Natural Resources and the Governor on the creation, development, operation, and maintenance of motorized and non-motorized trails for multiple users throughout the state. Two ETS members are on the MSTAC (Mike Foote and Sandra Batie).

As you can see by the length and contents of the report, the ETS has been hard at work since it had its first meeting on September 23, 2010. You can see all the 46 recommendations in one place in the Executive Summary of Recommendations on pages 7-14. I would like to draw your attention to what the ETS hopes is a clear statement of the implications of the use of fish and game funds for the management of equine uses of state-owned lands—found on pages 28 -30. Another section of the report that you may find particularly informative is that of the proposed DNR Equine Access Plan for the Pigeon River Country State Forest, found on pages 30-32. The Equine Trail Survey—that many of you completed—results are found in Appendix B.

I want to add my thanks to that of the ETS to all of you who have assisted and been supportive of our efforts. We could not have completed this Report without you! The ETS looks forward to collaborating

with equine riding, packing, and carriage driving associations, equine trail riders, and other recreational trail stakeholders throughout the next year.

Sincerely,

Sandra S. Batie, Chair  
Equine Trailways Subcommittee

**July 25, 2011**

**Contacts: James Radabaugh 517-373-1276 or Mary Dettloff 517-335-3014**

**DNR Seeks Public Input on 2011 Recommendations Report of Equine Trailways Subcommittee**

The Department of Natural Resources is seeking public comment on recommendations to develop a statewide network of pack and saddle trailways contained in the *2011 Recommendations Report of the Equine Trailways Subcommittee*.

The Equine Trailways Subcommittee (ETS) draft report contains 46 recommendations that were developed after substantial input from the equine riding community.

The ETS was created under a 2010 state law and was charged with preparing and submitting a plan for a statewide network of pack and saddle trailways within one year of their appointment.

The draft report is available for public review and comment at [DNR - Equine Trailways Subcommittee](#). On the left side of the DNR homepage found at [www.michigan.gov/dnr](http://www.michigan.gov/dnr), click on *Commissions, Boards and Committees*, then click on *Michigan Snowmobile and Trails Advisory Council*, followed by *Equine Trailways Subcommittee*.

Public comment on the Draft Report will be accepted until Sept. 30, 2011. Comments may be submitted electronically to [DNR-RTS@michigan.gov](mailto:DNR-RTS@michigan.gov). Written comments can also be sent to DNR-Forest Management Division, P.O. Box Lansing, Michigan 48909-7952, Attn: James Radabaugh, State Trails Coordinator.

The Michigan Department of Natural Resources is committed to the conservation, protection, management, use and enjoyment of the state's natural and cultural resources for current and future generations. For more information, go to [www.michigan.gov/dnr](http://www.michigan.gov/dnr).

### **Racing is back on at Mt. Pleasant Meadows.**

Mt. Pleasant Meadows received word from the state gaming board Wednesday afternoon that it could hold its first race in almost a year.

Twelve races were held Sunday, July 24, 11 thoroughbred races and one quarter horse race.

"This year with the unknown, we're late getting our track open, so we just have tons of things to take care of that most people wouldn't normally think of," Mt. Pleasant Meadows racing secretary Robert Berryhill said. "I'm just relieved that we got things up and running. When we get this first race in, you can tickle me to death."

With the closing of the Detroit Pinnacle Race Track, several of those racers have made their way up to Mt. Pleasant. Jockeys from all over have intentions of racing at Mt. Pleasant Meadows this weekend. We're getting horses from quite a few different states," Berryhill said, "Illinois, Ohio, Indiana and Connecticut."

Making the odds for these horses is no easy task. Berryhill puts in a lot of hours on the phone with jockey agents, looking at numbers and watching time trials. After watching the time trials Berryhill makes up a sheet called an "overnight." Riders will be named to race on several different horses, obviously they can only ride one.

This is when Berryhill works the phones with jockey agents to fill the post positions. "I tell (the jockey) agents what's open and they contract the trainers," he said. "This year we had no idea who was coming as far as riders, (it is going to) take us a little longer to get done. "Then I will go through the program and assign the odds to the horses, and the race secretary does that. By the end of the day we have a program."

Having held its last race almost a year ago, Mt. Pleasant Meadows was held up because of issues with the gaming commission. When Detroit Pinnacle closed, the Horsemen's Benevolent Protective Association wanted to be represented with Mt. Pleasant Meadows. It is required by law that each track be represented by one organization approved by the gaming commission. Mt. Pleasant Meadows was already represented by The Great Lakes Quarter Horse Racing Association.

"Now we got two organizations that want to be represented by us," Berryhill said. "One of the obstacles for us was getting the two, who have historically feuded over the years, to come together and approve each other to represent us." The Great Lakes Quarter Horse Racing Association is going to represent the horses that include Quarter Horses and Arabians. The HBPA is going to represent the Thoroughbreds. It took a long time and numerous meetings for the two organizations to come to terms with each other and Mt. Pleasant Meadows.

Last year, horse racing fell under the authority of the gaming commission. According to Berryhill, there was a lot of back and forth with the gaming commission trying to figure out what the best way to control horse racing was. It took some time but everything got worked out and the horse racing season in Mt. Pleasant can finally begin.

"There were obstacles that had to be overcome and it finally got done," Berryhill said. "The order was issued (Wednesday, July 20) and they issued us all of our dates, everything is set to go."

2011 Amended race dates:

- Sunday July 24 and 31
- (County Fair no racing 6th, 7th or 13th)
- Sunday August 14
- Saturday August 20 and Sunday August 21
- Saturday August 27 and Sunday August 28
- Saturday Sept. 3, Sunday Sept. 4 and Monday Sept. 5
- Saturday Sept. 10, Sunday Sept. 11
- Saturday Sept. 17, Sunday Sept. 18
- Saturday Sept. 24, Sunday Sept. 25
- Saturday Oct. 1, Sunday Oct. 2
- Saturday Oct. 8, Sunday Oct. 9
- Saturday Oct. 15, Sunday 16
- Friday Oct. 21, Saturday Oct. 22 and Sunday October 23
- Friday Oct. 28, Saturday Oct. 29 and Sunday October 30

**Horse Fairs-Five of the Best from Around the World**



## *A quick look at the most historical and unique horse fairs and festivals*

by Jill Overacker

Horses have always had the power to bring people together. For centuries individuals and communities have gathered to bet on their speed, showcase their abilities, buy and sell, or simply to celebrate their beauty. To this day, people still gather at annual events around the world in celebration of the horse. Below is a list of five of the most exceptional and historical horse fairs and festivals from around the world.

**5. Festival of the Horse, Mackinac Island, Michigan:** The final festival to make our list did not do so because of its long history. In fact, this festival is only in its third year. It is the location of this festival that makes it a “must-see” for equestrian enthusiasts. Mackinac Island is famous because it has outlawed the use of any motorized vehicle on the island. Horse, horse and buggy, bicycle and walking are the only means of transportation. Everything that is normally done by vehicle is done by horse and buggy on Mackinac Island. Highlights for the 2011 festival include tours of Victorian era stables, Carriage Parade, Breeds of Mackinac Island presentation and a fundraising barn-dance. The 3rd Annual Mackinac Island Festival of the Horse was held July 20-24, 2011. The Mackinac Island Festival of the Horse website has more information on this event.

*Photo: The Carriage Parade during Mackinac Island's Festival of the Horse celebrates the working horse.*

### **Import requirements for horses have changed.**

On June 1, 2011, equine piroplasmosis testing of horses being imported into Michigan from states that have had cases of equine piroplasmosis in the past 12 months has been discontinued. However, the following health statement is required to be included on the health certificate signed by an accredited veterinarian for exhibiting at Michigan fairs.:

***"I have examined the animal(s) listed on this certificate. At the time of the examination, the animal(s) listed on this certificate is/are not under quarantine for piroplasmosis, not displaying signs of piroplasmosis, and either did not have evidence of live ticks or was/were successfully treated for ticks if ticks were present."***

Reports received monthly from the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) reveal that the greatest number of horses found to be positive for EP are those being used for racing. In an effort to stop the introduction and spread of this disease within the racing industry, many racetracks around the U.S. have voluntarily instituted a requirement for a negative test for EP from any horses being raced at their track. In addition, educating race horse owners, trainers, handlers, veterinarians, and others involved in the industry that EP may be spread by multiple use of needles will go a long way in preventing the spread of the disease.

Many county fairs include some form of horse racing in their schedule. We encourage fairs that accept race horses from infected states (list enclosed) to require a negative test for EP in order to prevent the introduction of the disease into Michigan, and also to prevent the possibility that the disease could transmit from out-of-state race horses to local 4-H horses.

**Judith Lynn Lessard**



It is with great sadness that we report Judy Lessard; Mason, Michigan; Age 60; passed away Friday, July 15, 2011; after a courageous two-year battle with a brain tumor. Judy received compassionate and loving care during recent weeks at the Stoneleigh Residence of the Hospice of Lansing. She was born in Pontiac, Michigan on February 10, 1951, the daughter of Marian (Kaul) and Louis W. Lessard. Judy is survived by her mother, Marian Lessard of East Lansing; sister, Catherine Lessard Virskus (Vytou) of Mason; brother, Dr. Louis W. Lessard (Alicia) of East Lansing, brother, Dr. Joseph G. Lessard of Traverse City; numerous beloved nieces and nephews; and her devoted dog Chewy and horse McKenzie.

Judy graduated from Clarkston High School in 1969 and earned a degree in Resource Development from [Michigan State University](#); following which she moved to Wyoming where she worked for several years in water resource development projects for the Missouri River Basin Commission. She eventually returned to Michigan and was employed at Michigan State University, first in the African Studies Center and later as an Editorial Assistant in Publications and Media Relations in the College of Veterinary Medicine.

Judy showed a passionate love of all animals and during her lifetime cared for numerous dogs, cats, horses, goats and sheep. She developed extensive knowledge of animal care and gladly shared her knowledge with hundreds of people throughout the years through her work at Vet-Med and with her many friends who also owned and loved animals. Judy was also a supporter of the MSU Block and Bridle Club and the MSU Rodeo Club.

Although she was constantly busy with her work and her animals, Judy found time to pursue her interest in genealogy and writing and eventually published several books on her family's history including "The Childhood Memories of Earl Kaul", a book about the lives of her maternal grand-parents Elsie and Earl Kaul; and most recently "The Lessard Chronicles: Louis W. Lessard's Recollections of WWII", the story of her father's life and service during World War II. Judy found time to serve as an officer for both the Kaul and Larsen Family reunions and was also a published photographer. She was especially proud of a remarkable photograph of an eagle in flight which was published on the cover of the Michigan Natural Resources Magazine.

After owning Angora goats and several sheep, Judy became an accomplished "fiber artist" she was an enthusiastic member of the Spinner's Flock. She enjoyed learning, discussing and sharing her knowledge of fiber with friends and acquaintances she encouraged to pursue this craft. Her work was exhibited in many craft shows throughout Michigan. Judy always had a steady stream of requests for pieces of her art.

Throughout her life, Judy selflessly cared for any animal which crossed her path, and she will be missed by hundreds of people whose lives she touched through her work and her art.

Judy was also active in the MHC for several years, serving as the photographer for the Expo and assisting with the MHC booth at the Great Lakes International Draft Horse Show, among other projects.

A Memorial Mass will be held for Judy at 10:30 a.m. on Saturday, August 6, 2011, at St. Thomas Aquinas Catholic Church, 955 Alton Road, East Lansing, Michigan. Visitation will begin at 9:30 a.m. at the Church. The family suggests that memorial contributions be made to the Capital Area Humane Society, 7095 W. Grand River Ave. Lansing, MI 48906 or Hospice of Lansing, 4052 Legacy Pkwy., Ste 200, Lansing, MI 48911 in Judy's memory. The family is being served by GORSLINE RUNCIMAN FUNERAL HOMES, East Lansing. On line condolences may be made at [www.gorslineruncimaneastlansing.com](http://www.gorslineruncimaneastlansing.com)

#### **From the Unwanted Horse Coalition - Equine Welfare Report**

Sometimes the top news crossing our desks isn't an article or feature story from a local paper or broadcast, but a new study or report that has the potential to affect the agriculture industry. This week, some of the news includes a report by the United States Accountability Office titled "Horse Welfare - Action Needed to Address Unintended Consequences from Cessation of Domestic Slaughter."



The full report is available online at: <http://www.gao.gov/new.items/d11228.pdf>. The 63-page report includes a summary, which we've shared below.

The report summary (as written by the United States Accountability Office):

### **What GAO Found**

Since domestic horse slaughter ceased in 2007, the slaughter horse market has shifted to Canada and Mexico. From 2006 through 2010, U.S. horse exports for slaughter increased by 148 and 660 percent to Canada and Mexico, respectively. As a result, nearly the same number of U.S. horses was transported to Canada and Mexico for slaughter in 2010—nearly 138,000—as was slaughtered before domestic slaughter ceased. Available data show that horse prices declined since 2007, mainly for the lower-priced horses that are more likely to be bought for slaughter. GAO analysis of horse sale data estimates that closing domestic horse slaughtering facilities significantly and negatively affected lower-to-medium priced horses by 8 to 21 percent; higher-priced horses appear not to have lost value for that reason. Also, GAO estimates the economic downturn reduced prices for all horses by 4 to 5 percent.

Comprehensive, national data are lacking, but state, local government, and animal welfare organizations report a rise in investigations for horse neglect and more abandoned horses since 2007. For example, Colorado data showed that investigations for horse neglect and abuse increased more than 60 percent from 975 in 2005 to 1,588 in 2009. Also, California, Texas, and Florida reported more horses abandoned on private or state land since 2007. These changes have strained resources, according to state data and officials that GAO interviewed. State, local, tribal, and horse industry officials generally attributed these increases in neglect and abandonments to cessation of domestic slaughter and the economic downturn. Others, including representatives from some animal welfare organizations, questioned the relevance of cessation of slaughter to these problems.

USDA faces three broad challenges in overseeing the welfare of horses during transport to slaughter. First, among other management challenges, the current transport regulation only applies to horses transported directly to slaughtering facilities. A 2007 proposed rule would more broadly include horses moved first to stockyards, assembly points, and feedlots before being transported to Canada and Mexico, but delays in issuing a final rule have prevented USDA from protecting horses during much of their transit to slaughtering facilities. In addition, GAO found that many owner/shipper certificates, which document compliance with the regulation, are being returned to USDA without key information, if they are returned at all. Second, annual legislative prohibitions on USDA's use of federal funds for inspecting horses impede USDA's ability to improve compliance with, and enforcement of, the transport regulation. Third, GAO analysis shows that U.S. horses intended for slaughter are now traveling significantly greater distances to reach their final destination, where they are not covered by U.S. humane slaughter protections. With cessation of domestic slaughter, USDA lacks staff and resources at the borders and foreign slaughtering facilities that it once had in domestic facilities to help identify problems with shipping paperwork or the condition of horses before they are slaughtered.

### **Sales of Recreation Passports top 1 million - SoS Johnson, DNR Director Stokes announce milestone**

Secretary of State Ruth Johnson and Department of Natural Resources Director Rodney Stokes announced today that more than one million Recreation Passports have been purchased since the program began eight months ago, bringing in \$10 million for the benefit of Michigan's parks and outdoor recreation in general.

The Passports replace the old window sticker system and allow annual access to all of Michigan's 98 state parks and recreation areas and 1,000 boat launches for just \$10 (\$5 for motorcycles). They can be purchased at the time motorists renew their vehicle registration with the Secretary of State-or when visiting a park. Motorists who elect to buy a Passport have a "P" indicator printed on their license plate tab, which park rangers will check for either at the entrance booth or in the parking areas.

"Many people are discovering what a tremendous value the Recreation Passport is-and in buying one, they are helping preserve our parks for future generations," Johnson said. "The Secretary of State's Office is proud to team with the DNR as it strives to conserve, protect and promote our natural resources."

"Our great partnership with the Secretary of State and her personal commitment to the success of the Recreation Passport shows in the sales numbers, which are on target to meet our projections," Stokes said. "Michigan residents are passionate about outdoor recreation, and we continue to see strong support for the Recreation Passport across the state."

Johnson said with summer arriving, she expects that more Secretary of State customers who are renewing their registration will take the opportunity to purchase a Recreation Passport.

"Michigan's state parks and recreation areas are wonderful destinations for residents and visitors alike," Johnson said. "I encourage anyone who loves the great outdoors to get a Passport, pick some parks and explore our state!"

For more information on the Recreation Passport, visit [www.michigan.gov/recreationpassport](http://www.michigan.gov/recreationpassport). For information on the programs and initiatives of the Secretary of State's Office, visit its website ([www.Michigan.gov/sos](http://www.Michigan.gov/sos)) and sign up for the official Twitter feed ([www.twitter.com/Michsos](http://www.twitter.com/Michsos)) and Facebook updates ([www.facebook.com/Michigansos](http://www.facebook.com/Michigansos)).

### **Horse Owners Reminded to Vaccinate for Mosquito-borne Diseases - Eastern Equine Encephalitis, West Nile Virus cases could be high this year**

Lansing – The Michigan Department of Agriculture & Rural Development's State Veterinarian Dr. Steven Halstead today reminded horse owners to vaccinate against mosquito-borne illnesses and prevent mosquito exposure to themselves and horses during this year's rainy season and warm weather months. Eastern Equine Encephalitis (EEE) is suspected of being the cause of 129 out of 133 horse deaths in 2010, 56 of the deaths were laboratory confirmed; and West Nile Virus (WNV), another mosquito-borne illness has been found in Michigan in past years. Both can affect humans, birds, deer and horses.

"The viruses circulate in mosquito and bird populations throughout the spring and early summer, and gradually spill over to horses, and potentially to humans," said Halstead. "Owners should plan to vaccinate horses now to protect them against these diseases. Michigan typically sees an increase in the number of cases of EEE and WNV in late summer and early fall each year."

EEE, commonly called sleeping sickness, and WNV are both caused by specific viruses found in wild birds. Mosquitoes that feed on birds carrying EEE or WNV can transmit the disease to horses and humans. Some birds are able to harbor the viruses without becoming acutely ill, thereby serving as reservoirs for the diseases.

Clinical signs of both viruses in horses include: depression, fever, muzzle weakness, the horse is often down and unable to get up, sweating, dehydration, seizing, grimacing, not feeding, head down, stumbling, blindness and circling.

"We encourage diagnostic testing because EEE and WNV can look like rabies and while rabies is not very common in horses, rabies is contagious from infected horses to people," Halstead said. "Horses do not develop high enough levels of EEE or WNV in their blood to be contagious to other animals or humans; however, vaccinations against EEE, WNV and rabies are always critical to protect horse health."

Horse owners should follow these tips to prevent mosquito-borne illness:

- Vaccinate your horses. Inexpensive vaccines for EEE and WNV are readily available and should be repeated at least annually. It is never too late to vaccinate horses. Talk to your veterinarian for details.
- Use approved insect repellants to protect horses.

- If possible, put horses in stables, stalls, or barns during the prime mosquito exposure hours of dusk and dawn.
- Eliminate standing water, and drain troughs and buckets at least two times a week.

For more information about WNV or EEE in horses, contact MDARD's Animal Industry Division at 517-373-1077 or visit [www.michigan.gov/mda](http://www.michigan.gov/mda).

MDARD encourages horse owners to report suspect cases to the department at 517-373-1077 or, after hours, at 1-800-292-3939. When disease surveillance begins, weekly updates of affected animals will be posted on the Emerging Diseases website at [www.michigan.gov/emergingdiseases](http://www.michigan.gov/emergingdiseases)

### **Buck Brannaman Film Open Nationwide:**

"Your horse is a mirror to your soul, and sometimes you may not like what you see. Sometimes you will." - Buck Brannaman

"A lot of times, rather than helping people with horse problems, I'm helping horses with people problems." So says Buck Brannaman, a true American cowboy and sage on horseback who travels the country for nine grueling months a year helping horses with people problems.

BUCK, a richly textured and visually stunning film, follows living legend Buck Brannaman from his abusive childhood to his phenomenal success as a real life Horse Whisperer. For this true cowboy, horses are a mirror of the human soul. Reared by an abusive father, Buck eschews violence. By teaching people to communicate with horses through instinct, not punishment, he frees the spirit of the horse and its human comrade. Crisscrossing the world with Zen-like wisdom, Buck promulgates grace in the bond between man and horse. The animal-human relationship becomes a perfect metaphor for meeting the challenges of daily life, whether they consist of raising kids, running a business, or finding your flow with a dance partner.

Buck possesses near magical abilities as he dramatically transforms horses - and people - with his understanding, compassion and respect. Full of sage wisdom and wit, he reminds us "You allow a horse to make mistakes. The horse will learn from mistakes no different than the human. But you can't get him to where he dreads making mistakes for fear of what's gonna happen after he does."

What is extraordinary about Buck Brannaman, the man, leaps off the screen in this strikingly cinematic film by first-time director Cindy Meehl. Part guru, part psychologist, the adult Buck, who was once a beaten kid, has now beaten the odds. Buck Brannaman can transform your troubled horse. Buck the movie will transform your soul.

A truly American story about an unsung hero, BUCK is about an ordinary man who has made an extraordinary life despite tremendous odds.

BUCK will open in theaters in New York and Los Angeles on June 17th followed by a national roll-out.

### **An Urgent Request from ELCR (Equine Land Conservation Resource):**

There is an urgent issue that needs your attention having to do with federal recreational trail spending. The Recreational Trail Program (RTP) - the primary source of trail funding in this country - is in great jeopardy.

Horsemen should contact their federal legislators immediately to help preserve funding for recreational trails. If we do not act, many trails will be closed and there will be little in the way of new trail construction or federal funds for maintenance (which will lead to more closures).

RTP is a program of the U.S. Department of Transportation's Federal Highway Administration (FHWA), providing funds to the states to develop and maintain recreational trails and trail-related facilities for both motorized and non-motorized recreational trail uses.

On July 7th, U.S. Congressman John Mica, Chairman of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, released an outline of a "Transportation Reauthorization Proposal." As reported by Stuart Macdonald, Chair of the National Association of State Trail Administrators, here are the key points for the Congressman Mica's proposal:

- Consolidation or elimination of most "special" programs, including RTP, Enhancements, Safe Routes, etc.
- States will be permitted to fund such "non-highway activities" but will no longer be required to set aside funds.
- Funding is reduced from the \$50 billion authorized in 2010 to something closer to the \$35 billion in annual revenue from current fuel taxes.

The Coalition for Recreational Trails (CRT), formed in 1992 to ensure that RTP receives adequate funding, is encouraging an amendment to the proposal, should it be introduced as a House bill. "This would require serious commitment from enough members of Congress to challenge Rep. Mica's austere budget," said Macdonald.

How do we save the RTP? By speaking up to our Senators and Congressmen and telling them how important recreational trails are to our families. Trail riders and equestrian trail clubs - everyone needs to participate. The voice of many is more effective than the voice of one. We need to think beyond the next ride, sit down at the computer or pick up the phone and take action, otherwise RTP may be eliminated and the future of equestrian trails will be in great jeopardy.

When speaking with your elected official or his/her staff member, you can make your case even stronger if you point out just how much RTP funding is at risk in your state. Michigan's share of RTP funding is \$4,246,002.00

Please contact your legislator TODAY and let them know how important the RTP program and equestrian trails are to you.

Thank you,

Deb Balliet  
Chief Executive Officer, ELCR

### **Hosting a Stihl Chainsaw Safety Course**

A Chainsaw Safety Course on May 22, presented by a Stihl Territory Manager. The course included information about chainsaw safety, care, and equipment. This course was very interesting, even for those who have never used a chainsaw. Those who attended the course received certification.

Organizations interested in holding a Chainsaw Safety Course may request a training session by inquiring at a local dealer, visiting <http://www.stihlusa.com>, or contacting Susan Pence of Bryan Equipment at [susanp@bryanequipment.com](mailto:susanp@bryanequipment.com).

According to Bryan Equipment Sales Territory Manager Michael Witkowski, discounts for non-profit entities are available within the Bryan territory (Michigan, Indiana, Ohio, Kentucky, West Virginia & portions of Tennessee). They are available for any wholegood (serialized unit) and accessories that are purchased in groups of \$100 or more at a time. Additional information and specifics should be discussed with a local dealer. Discounts may be available elsewhere, but may be different. Contact your local dealership for details.

Use the following to locate your nearest STIHL dealer: <http://www.stihldealers.com> or <http://www.stihlusa.com>. Dealers that have the Elite and/or Master Wrench emblems have made significant investments and have some of the best technicians in the business.

**Remember, the next meeting is September 13, 7:30 p.m., MSU Livestock Pavilion, East Lansing, Michigan.**

Marilyn Graff

MHC Horse Expo Administrator

[m.marilyngraft@frontier.com](mailto:m.marilyngraft@frontier.com)

